



A NIGHT AT THE OPERA

The Brandenburg Sinfonia
Conductor: Jeremy Backhouse

Vivace
Chorus

Saturday
17th March 2012
7.30 pm @ G Live

vivacechorus.org

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A Night at the Opera

A selection of opera arias and choruses, with an overture, from Bizet, Dvořák, Mascagni, Mozart, Mussorgsky, Puccini, Purcell, Tchaikovsky, Verdi and Wagner

Sara Lian Owen	Soprano
Philip Modino	Tenor
Gareth Brynmor John	Baritone
Thomas Faulkner	Bass

Narrators: Gill Perkins and Jon Long

The Brandenburg Sinfonia
Conductor: Jeremy Backhouse

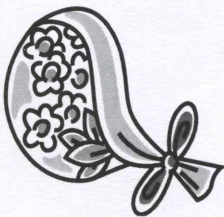
PRE-CONCERT TALKS

Before our concerts in Guildford Cathedral, Vivace Chorus offers ticket holders a free talk, given by an acknowledged music expert who has a special interest in the works to be performed. Our next concert, on May 15th, is a programme of the music of Rachmaninov, including not only two choral works, but also his ever-popular *Piano Concerto No.2*. The pianist will be Francis Pott, and we are delighted that Francis will be giving the pre-concert talk that evening himself – there can surely be no greater 'special interest' than to be about to perform such a well-known work to a cathedral full of eager concert-goers!

Francis is perhaps best known as a composer, particularly of sacred choral music and works for the organ. He sees himself as one of a long line of composer-pianists – Rachmaninov himself was one – for whom advanced pianism is a means to another end, and less as a 'career' performer. Nonetheless, he has been heard several times playing his own piano music on BBC Radio 3, has participated in a number of commercial CD recordings and has appeared at prestigious venues such as London's Wigmore Hall.

Come and hear Francis speaking before the concert to get an insight into this glorious work and Francis's own interpretation of it.

Parry and Brahms, November 2011



"The soloists and the Brandenburg Sinfonia were superb, but the Vivace Chorus was just sensational ... we are very lucky in Guildford to be able to enjoy such talent and enthusiasm for music."

"Brahms Requiem is one of my top 3 favourite pieces of music, I have several different recordings of it ... your performance on Saturday was incredibly moving and powerful and right up there with the best of them."

Flash photography, audio and video recording are not permitted without the prior written consent of the Vivace Chorus. Please also kindly switch off all mobile phones and alarms on digital watches.

PROGRAMME

Mozart: Overture to <i>The Marriage of Figaro</i>	Orchestra only
Bizet: March of the Toreadors from <i>Carmen</i>	Chorus
Bizet: <i>Au fond du temple saint</i> from <i>The Pearl Fishers</i>	Tenor, Baritone
Purcell: Dido's Lament and final chorus from <i>Dido and Aeneas</i>	Soprano, Chorus
Tchaikovsky: Waltz Scene from <i>Eugene Onegin</i>	Bass, Baritone Tenor, Chorus
Dvořák: Song to the Moon from <i>Rusalka</i>	Soprano
Wagner: Procession and chorale from <i>Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg</i>	Chorus
Mussorgsky: Coronation Scene from <i>Boris Godunov</i>	Tenor, Bass, Chorus

Interval

Mascagni: Easter Hymn from <i>Cavalleria Rusticana</i>	Soprano, Chorus
Puccini: <i>Che gelida manina</i> from <i>La Bohème</i>	Tenor
Puccini: <i>O mio babbino caro</i> from <i>Gianni Schicchi</i>	Soprano
Verdi: Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves from <i>Nabucco</i>	Chorus
Puccini: <i>Vissi d'arte</i> from <i>Tosca</i>	Soprano
Verdi: The <i>Brindisi</i> from <i>La Traviata</i>	Soprano, Tenor, Chorus
Puccini: <i>Nessun dorma</i> from <i>Turandot</i>	Tenor, Semi- chorus
Verdi: Triumphal Scene from <i>Aida</i>	Chorus

OPERA: 'A dramatic work in one or more acts, set to music for singers and instrumentalists'.

Tonight's concert, with 16 pieces from 10 composers, gives a taste of the world of opera, with the emphasis on the dramatic in some of its many interpretations: passion, despair, grandeur, joy and, of course, romance.

Composers featured tonight range from Purcell and Mozart, both early exponents of the genre, through to the enduringly popular Puccini, whose later works were written less than a century ago.

Decade	Extracts to be performed tonight from:	First performed	The development of opera
1680s	<i>Dido & Aeneas</i> /Purcell	1689	An early opera – a landmark in English dramatic music
↓			
1780s	<i>The Marriage of Figaro</i> /Mozart	1786	Mozart the first to introduce humour into opera
↓			
1840s	<i>Nabucco</i> /Verdi	1842	Heralding the 'golden age' of opera, led and dominated by Wagner in Germany and Verdi in Italy
1850s	<i>La Traviata</i> /Verdi	1853	
1860s	<i>The Pearl Fishers</i> /Bizet <i>Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg</i> /Wagner	1863 1868	In this 'golden age', the popularity of opera spread throughout Europe and into eastern Europe and Russia
1870s	<i>Aida</i> /Verdi <i>Boris Godunov</i> /Mussorgsky <i>Carmen</i> /Bizet <i>Eugene Onegin</i> /Tchaikovsky	1871 1874 1875 1879	
1880s			
1890s	<i>Cavalleria Rusticana</i> /Mascagni <i>La Bohème</i> /Puccini	1890 1896	Opera continued to be popular into the next century, dominated by Puccini, one of the last major Italian opera composers, several of whose arias have entered popular culture today
1900s	<i>Tosca</i> /Puccini <i>Rusalka</i> / Dvořák	1900 1901	
1910s	<i>Gianni Schicchi</i> /Puccini	1918	
1920s	<i>Turandot</i> /Puccini	1926	

Mozart: Overture to *The Marriage of Figaro*

Orchestra

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 – 1791) was a prolific and influential composer, composing over 600 works across a wide range of genres, and is among the most enduringly popular of classical composers.

Mozart's operatic career blossomed following his move in 1781 to Vienna, where he won a commission from Emperor Joseph II to write a cheerful opera, which resulted in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. Mozart was perhaps the first composer to inject humour into his operatic works.

1786 saw the successful premiere of *The Marriage of Figaro* in Vienna. It proved to become one of Mozart's most important works and is a mainstay of the operatic repertoire today. Its lively and effervescent overture is a fitting curtain-raiser, not just to the opera it usually heralds, but also to our concert tonight.

Bizet: March of the Toreadors from *Carmen*

Chorus

Georges Bizet (1838 – 1875) is best known for *Carmen*, an operatic masterpiece. He died at the tragically early age of 36, just three months after its first performance, unaware that *Carmen* was to bring him fame and indeed was to become one of the most popular and frequently performed works in the entire opera repertoire.

A story of love, betrayal and murder, *Carmen* tells of a rather naïve soldier, Don José, who falls in love with a beautiful gypsy named Carmen. Careless of his feelings, she leaves him for the bullfighter Escamillo. When Don José begs her to come back to him, she scorns him and, overcome with jealousy, he stabs her to death.

In the March of the Toreadors, an excited crowd greets the procession of toreadors (les Toreros), including Carmen's new lover, the great Escamillo. As the procession approaches, you hear the excited shouts of 'les voici' (here they come) and later, calls of appreciation for Escamillo.

Bizet: *Au fond du temple saint* from *The Pearl Fishers*

Tenor, Baritone

The Pearl Fishers, or *Les pêcheurs de perles*, the other favourite from Bizet, is set in ancient times on the island of Ceylon. The opera is a story of how a vow of eternal friendship between two men is threatened by their love for the same woman, whose own dilemma is the conflict

Vivace Chorus

between secular love and her sacred oath as a priestess. The friendship duet *Au fond du temple saint*, generally known as 'The Pearl Fishers Duet', is an instantly recognisable firm favourite.

Purcell: Dido's Lament and final chorus from *Dido and Aeneas*

Soprano and Chorus

Henry Purcell (1659 – 1695), was an English organist and Baroque composer of secular and sacred music. Although Purcell incorporated Italian and French stylistic elements into his compositions, his legacy was a uniquely English form of Baroque music.

Dido and Aeneas, as one of the first genuine English operas, is a landmark in the history of English dramatic music. It recounts the love story of Dido, Queen of Carthage, and the Trojan hero Aeneas, and her despair at his abandonment of her.

Dido expresses this despair just before she dies in an aria known as Dido's Lament - *When I am laid in Earth* - and the chorus then concludes the opera by ordering the cupids to 'scatter roses on her tomb, soft and gentle as her heart. Keep here your watch, and never, never, never part'.

Tchaikovsky: Waltz Scene from *Eugene Onegin*

Bass, Baritone, Tenor, Chorus

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840 – 1893) was a Russian composer of the Romantic era. He wrote a wide range of compositions including symphony, chamber music, ballet and opera, including some of the most popular concert and theatrical music in the classical repertoire.

Based on the novel in verse by Alexander Pushkin, the opera *Eugene Onegin*, tells of a selfish hero, Onegin, who lives to regret his blasé rejection of a young woman's love and his careless incitement of a fatal duel with his best friend. This opera is full of dance music, the most famous piece being this exuberant waltz scene, where the provincial gentry gossip about the sophisticated Onegin, who is provoked by what he hears to pick a quarrel with his friend, Lensky, with devastating results.

Dvořák: Song to the Moon from *Rusalka*

Soprano

The Czech composer Antonín Leopold Dvořák (1841 – 1904) often employed the idioms of the folk music of Moravia and his native Bohemia

in his music. His works include symphonic, choral and chamber music, concertos, operas and many other orchestral and vocal-instrumental pieces. His best-known opera is *Rusalka*, based on the fairy tales of his native land.

Rusalka, a water nymph, has fallen in love with a human prince who comes to hunt around the lake, and she wants to become human too. Rusalka sings her 'Song to the Moon', asking it to tell the prince of her love.

Wagner: Procession and chorale from *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*

Chorus

Richard Wagner (1813 – 1883) was a German composer, conductor and theatre director primarily known for his operas. His works are notable for their complex texture, and rich harmonies and orchestration.

Set in the 16th century, in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* a goldsmith's daughter, Eva, and a knight, Walther, fall in love, but Eva's father has promised her to the winner in a forthcoming song contest. Walther must quickly learn the mastersinger's art under the wise tuition of cobbler-poet Hans Sachs in order to win his sweetheart's hand.

The citizens of Nuremberg have gathered to greet the procession of mastersingers as they arrive for the contest. They greet the dawn and hail their beloved Hans Sachs: '*Heil Nürnbergs teurem Sachs*'.

Mussorgsky: Coronation Scene from *Boris Godunov*

Tenor, Bass, Chorus

Russian composer Modest Petrovich Mussorgsky (1839 – 1881) was an innovator of Russian music in the romantic period. He strove to achieve a uniquely Russian musical identity, often in deliberate defiance of the established conventions of western music.

Many of his works, including the opera *Boris Godunov*, were inspired by Russian history and folklore. The opera tells the story, based on fact, of Boris's rise to the Russian throne, and his struggle with his guilt over the killing of the rightful heir, the young son of Ivan the Terrible.

In this coronation scene, in 1598, Boris is hailed by the people as he emerges from the Cathedral of the Assumption, with shouts of 'Hail to Thee' (*Da zdrastvuyet*) and finally, 'Glory! Glory!' – *Slava! Slava!*

~ Interval ~

(20 minutes)

Mascagni: Easter Hymn from *Cavalleria Rusticana*

Soprano, Chorus

The Italian composer Pietro Mascagni (1863 – 1945) wrote 15 operas, an operetta, several orchestral and vocal works, as well as songs and piano music, demonstrating an unusual versatility of styles. Although he enjoyed immense success during his lifetime, both as a composer and a conductor, he never repeated the international success of *Cavalleria Rusticana*.

This one act masterpiece, a rural story of love, betrayal and death written with Sicilian passion and warmth, caused one of the greatest sensations in opera history, ushering in a new era of post-Romantic operatic realism.

The Easter hymn, included to signify the religious side of Sicilian life, is sung by an off-stage small choir representing those inside the church, with the village girl, Santuzza, and other villagers being outside in the village square.

Puccini: *Che gelida manina* from *La Bohème*

Tenor

The operas of Italian composer Giacomo Puccini (1858 – 1924) are among the most frequently performed in the standard repertoire, and several of his arias have become part of popular culture. One of the greatest exponents of operatic realism, he is regarded as one of the last major Italian opera composers. Common themes within his operas include the important role of his heroines, such as Tosca, Turandot and Mimi in *La Bohème*, and there is a strong presence of exoticism in his operas, with several being set in faraway locations.

La Bohème tells of the tragic love story of Rodolfo, one of a group of young artists living in an attic in the Latin Quarter of Paris and their neighbour, the little seamstress Mimi.

Rodolfo sings *Che gelida manina* (literally, 'What a cold little hand', but known in English as 'Your tiny hand is frozen') to Mimi when he meets and falls in love with her.

Puccini: *O mio babbino caro* from *Gianni Schicchi*

Soprano

The less well known *Gianni Schicchi* is a comic opera in one act, the final part of Puccini's *Il trittico* (The Triptych) - three one-act operas with contrasting themes, originally written to be presented together.

The opera concerns the money-grubbing relatives of a wealthy man attempting to change his will after they discover that he has left all his worldly wealth to the local monks. They beg cunning Gianni Schicchi (pronounced ski-key) to find a solution. At first Schicchi does not want to help the scheming family. He eventually agrees, but he double-crosses them, managing to give most of the disputed possessions to himself!

Schicchi's daughter joins the family in persuading him to help, singing *O mio babbino caro* – 'Oh, my dear papa'.

Verdi: Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves from *Nabucco*

Chorus

Giuseppe Verdi (1813 – 1901) is best known for his operas. He was one of the most influential Italian composers of the 19th century and many of his 28 operatic works are still frequently performed a century and a half after their composition. Three of the most enduringly popular – *Nabucco*, *La Traviata* and *Aida* – feature in tonight's concert.

Nabucco follows the plight of the Jews as they are exiled from their homeland by the Babylonian King Nabucco (Nebuchadnezzar).

The Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves, which begins *Va, pensiero, sull'ali dorate* ('Fly, thought, on golden wings'), is sung by the Israelites, lamenting the loss of their homeland: *O mia patria, si bella e perduta* – 'Oh, my homeland, so beautiful and lost'. So compelling is this great chorus that when the opera was first rehearsed all the stage hands and construction workers stopped work to listen and applaud.

Puccini: *Vissi d'arte* from *Tosca*

Soprano

Tosca is a melodramatic story set in Rome in 1800, with the Kingdom of Naples' control of Rome threatened by Napoleon's invasion of Italy. It contains depictions of torture, murder and suicide, yet also includes some of Puccini's best-known lyrical arias.

Tosca is a singer whose lover she can only save by giving herself to his persecutor. As she hears the drums announcing an execution, she sings *Vivace Chorus*

a fervent prayer: *Vissi d'arte* ('I lived for art, I lived for love, never did I harm a living creature ... O Lord, why dost thou repay me thus?')

Verdi: The *Brindisi* from *La Traviata*

Soprano, Tenor, Chorus

La Traviata, based on Alexander Dumas' novel, *La Dame aux Camélias*, is a tragic love story which ends with the heroine, Violetta, dying of consumption.

The word *brindisi* simply means a drinking song and here, at a lavish party to celebrate Violetta's apparent but misleading return to health, her lover Alfredo is exhorting the guests to join him in a toast, calling to them '*libiamo!*' – 'let's drink!'

Puccini: *Nessun dorma* from *Turandot*

Tenor, Semi-chorus

Sadly Puccini never heard this opera as it was unfinished when he died and performed for the first time two years later, completed by a lesser known Italian composer, Franco Alfano.

Set in China, the story involves a prince, Calàf, who falls in love with the cold princess Turandot. To obtain permission to marry her, Calàf has to solve three riddles, or die. He passes the test, but Turandot still hesitates to marry him. He offers her a way out: if she can guess his real name before dawn, she can execute him, but if she does not, she must marry him. Turandot then decrees that none of her subjects shall sleep that night until his name is discovered. If they fail, all will be killed.

When Calàf hears this he sings *Nessun dorma* – 'None shall sleep'.

Verdi: *Triumphal Scene* from *Aida*

Chorus

Aida is set in Egypt in the time of the Pharaohs. Aida, an Ethiopian princess, is captured and brought into slavery in Egypt. A military commander, Radames, struggles to choose between his love for her and his loyalty to the Pharaoh. To complicate the story further, Radames is loved by the Pharaoh's daughter Amneris.

This glorious triumphal scene sees Radames returning victorious from battle, greeted by a chorus of '*Gloria all'Egitto, ad Iside!*' – 'Glory to Egypt, to Isis!'

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CENTENARY CELEBRATION 1911 - 2011

Sara Lian Owen – Soprano



Welsh soprano Sara Lian Owen completed her BMus at The Royal Academy of Music and graduated in 2010 with a First Class degree and a Regency Award.

In 2007 Sara was a finalist in the Kathleen Ferrier Bursary Competition and she won the coveted Osborne Roberts Blue Riband Prize at the National Eisteddfod in 2010. Her concert work includes Mozart's *C minor Mass* and *Requiem*, Beethoven's 9th Symphony, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*, Vivaldi's *Gloria* and Will Todd's *Mass in Blue*. She has appeared on BBC Radio Wales, S4C, BBC2 and also at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Royal Albert

Hall and St Martin-in-the-Fields. During summer 2011 she appeared in Glyndebourne Festival Opera's first ever staging of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, under Vladimir Jurowski. Sara joined Royal Academy Opera in September 2011, to continue her studies with Elizabeth Ritchie and Ingrid Surgenor. In her first term she performed the role of Nora in Vaughan Williams' *Riders to the Sea*, conducted by Peter Robinson. Future engagements include First Lady in *Die Zauberflöte* for Royal Academy Opera, a second season in the chorus at Glyndebourne Festival Opera and Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* at the Mayfield Festival.

Sara is extremely grateful for the generous support of the Headley Trust in memory of Howard Milner, Ryan Davies Memorial Fund, The Josephine Baker Trust and The Arts Council of Wales.

The Vivace Chorus gratefully acknowledges the sponsorship of
Sara Lian Owen, Philip Modino, Gareth Brynmor John
and Thomas Faulkner
by the Josephine Baker Trust.

Philip Modino – Tenor



Philip Modino studied singing, piano and conducting at Trinity College of Music, London and was awarded a Bachelor's Degree Honours in Performance. During his time at Trinity he took part in numerous productions including the world premiere of *Cry of Innocence* under Terry Edwards. Since then he has appeared in Greece, England, Italy, Spain and France. Roles that he has sung include Pinkerton, Yamadori (*Madame Butterfly*), Lensky (*Eugene Onegin*), Idomeneo, Gabriele Adorno (*Simon Boccanegra*), Canio, Pepe

(*Pagliacci*), Alfredo (*La Traviata*), Radames (*Aida*), Creonte (*Antigone*), Ishmael (*Nabucco*), Luigi (*Tabarro*), as well as *Stabat Mater* by Dvořák and *Messa di Gloria* by Puccini. He has performed in numerous venues such as the National Opera of Greece, Barbican, St. John's, Smith Square, Teatro de la Feria Valladolid and many more.

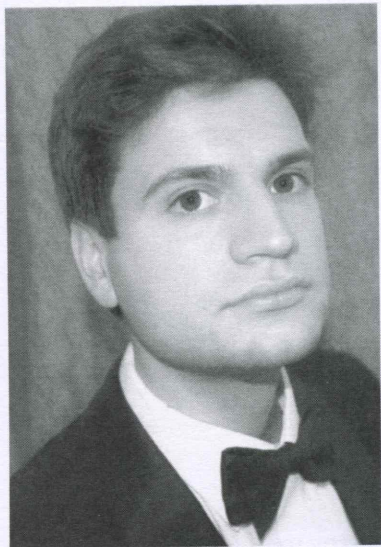
In 2009 Philip took part in the parody *The two orphans* starring alongside some of the most popular actors in Greece in a 60-performance tour around Greece, in which he sang the role of the narrator, which was compiled of famous pieces from the operatic and Neapolitan repertoire (such as *La donna è mobile* and *Sorrento*) but with comedic lyrics that related to the play. He was also the orchestrator and conductor at the recording of the playback used for the performance.

Other recording work includes the children's musical *Pol and Lara* by Dimitris Katis to be published later this year.

As a pianist he has worked very much as an accompanist, but also as a soloist, performing for organisations such as the Liszt Society and the Alkan Society and in venues such as Steinway Hall and the Bluthner Piano Centre in London.

Philip was the co-director of the 2007 revival production of Shakespeare's forgotten play *Cardenio* at King's College London with the Anatomy Players, as well as having served as Artistic Director at the Casa dei Mezzo music festival in Crete in 2008. He was awarded the Onassis Scholarship and the Greek Wagner Gesellschaft Bursary in 2011 and currently attends the Royal Academy of Music doing a Master in Arts. He has also become a beneficiary of the Josephine Baker Trust.

Gareth Brynmor John – Baritone

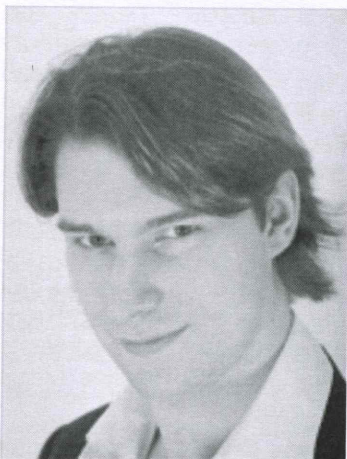


Gareth Brynmor John has performed widely around the UK, with performances including the St John and St Matthew Passions, the Mozart, Haydn, Stanford and Faure *Requiems*, Schubert Masses, *The Messiah* in St Martin-in-the-Fields, and Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* in St John's, Smith Square, and Philharmonic Hall, Ljubljana. Gareth has a keen interest in song repertoire and is part of the RAM Song Circle. Recent performances include Brahms op. 71 in the Duke's Hall and Wolf's *Italienisches Liederbuch* in the David Josefowitz Recital Hall at the Royal Academy of Music. A forthcoming recital at King's Place will feature works of Brahms.

In addition to concert work, Gareth's opera roles have included the Gendarme in the the Cambridge University Opera Society (CUOS) production of Poulenc's *Les Mamelles de Tiresias*; Eliab in Samuel Hogarth's modern chamber opera, *David and Goliath*; the title role in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* as part of the Cambridge Summer Music Festival; the title role in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* with CUOS in West Road Concert Hall; Papageno in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* with Shadwell Opera; Sid in Britten's *Albert Herring* with Shadwell Opera; The Ferryman in Britten's *Curlew River* with Royal Academy Opera (RAO) and Claudio in Berlioz's *Beatrice and Benedict* with Sir Colin Davis and John Copley (RAO). Forthcoming roles include Speaker in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* (RAO) and The Count in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* as part of the Amersham Festival.

Gareth graduated in 2007 from St John's College, Cambridge, where he was a Choral Scholar and subsequently a Lay Clerk under David Hill and Andrew Nethsingha. He is now continuing his studies on the Royal Academy of Music Opera Course with Mark Wildman. Gareth is kindly supported by the Josephine Baker Trust and is the Reizenstein Scholar.

Thomas Faulkner – Bass



Thomas studied at Cambridge University and the Royal Academy of Music, supported by the Countess of Munster Trust, the Josephine Baker Trust and the Musicians Benevolent Fund.

Recently he has performed for Garsington Opera, singing Second Armed Man (*The Magic Flute*), British Youth Opera, as Bartolo (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), and for Wexford Festival Opera in a number of roles. Other roles have included Superintendent Budd (*Albert Herring*) for Royal Academy Opera, Don Pantaleone (*Die Drei Pintos*) for UCOpera, Noye (*Noye's Fludde*), Elviro (Xerxes), Plutone (*Orfeo*), Gremin (*Eugene Onegin*), and Sarastro (*The Magic Flute*). He has sung the parts of Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*), and Traveller (*Curlow River*) in concert. Work in contemporary opera includes the role of Radamanthus in British Youth Opera's Production of Stephen Oliver's *Euridice*, as well as leads in several new works by young English composers, most recently King Saul in Sam Hogarth's *David and Goliath*, and Narrator in Kim B Ashton's *The Boy, the Forest and the Desert* at the Grimeborn Festival. This summer he joins the Glyndebourne Festival Opera chorus.

Thomas is busy as a concert soloist in a wide repertoire, from early baroque German motets to Puccini and Britten, with a particular focus on Bach (*B minor Mass*, cantatas, including all the solo cantatas, *Magnificat*, *Christmas Oratorio*, arias and Jesus in both Passions.) He has sung in the Spitalfields and Bregenz festivals, St John's, Smith Square, many of England's cathedrals, and appeared in the RAM/Kohn Foundation Bach cantata series and on BBC radio. Forthcoming highlights include *St John Passion* (Jesus) with the choir of St John's College, Cambridge, under Andrew Nethsingha, and *Israel in Egypt* at the Queen Elizabeth Hall.

His recital repertoire includes Beethoven, *An die ferne Geliebte*, Schumann, *Liederkreis op. 24*, Brahms, *Vier ernste Gesänge*, and songs by Liszt, Schubert, Wolf, Mahler and Mussorgsky. He has performed new songs written for him, and often collaborates with instrumentalists in baroque repertoire, performing works by Rameau, Bach, Biber, Schütz and Tunder.

Jeremy Backhouse



Jeremy Backhouse began his musical career in Canterbury Cathedral, where he was Head Chorister, and later studied music at Liverpool University. He spent 5 years as Music Editor at the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), where he was responsible for the transcription of print music into Braille. In 1986 he joined EMI Records as a Literary Editor and from April 1990 combined his work as a

Consultant Editor for EMI Classics and later Boosey & Hawkes Music Publishers with his career as a freelance conductor.

In January 1995, Jeremy was appointed Chorus Master and subsequently Music Director of the Vivace Chorus (then the Guildford Philharmonic Choir). Jeremy has presented and conducted some ambitious programmes, including Howell's *Hymnus Paradisi* and Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater*, Mahler's 'Resurrection' *Symphony (No. 2)*, Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony*, Mendelssohn's 'Lobgesang' (*Symphony No. 2*), Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* and *Ivan the Terrible*, and, most recently, Mahler's 'Symphony of a Thousand' (*No. 8*) in the Royal Albert Hall with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Major classical popular works have included Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*, Verdi's *Requiem* and Haydn's *The Creation*.

Since 1980, Jeremy has been the conductor of the Vasari Singers, acknowledged as one of the finest chamber choirs in the country, performing music from the Renaissance to contemporary commissions. Jeremy is totally committed to contemporary music and to the commissioning of new works. He and Vasari have commissioned over 20 works in their recent history, and this enthusiasm has spread to the Vivace Chorus who, in May 2009, performed the premiere of their first commission – local composer Will Todd's *Te Deum*.

Jeremy has also worked with a number of the country's leading choirs, including the Philharmonia Chorus, the London Choral Society and the Brighton Festival Chorus. For 6 years, to the end of 2004, Jeremy was the Music Director of the Wooburn Singers, following Richard Hickox and Stephen Jackson. In January 2009, Jeremy was appointed Music Director of the Salisbury Community Choir.



Artistic Director – Robert Porter

Associate Music Director – Sarah Tenant-Flowers

The Brandenburg Sinfonia is one of the most dynamically versatile musical organisations in the country. It is renowned for its special quality of sound and poised vivacity in performance. The orchestra performs regularly in the majority of the major venues across the country, and in London at the Barbican, Royal Albert Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Fairfield Halls and St John's, Smith Square. The Brandenburg Sinfonia is also in great demand abroad and has visited France, USA, Bermuda, the Channel Islands, Barbados, Russia, Germany, Japan and Hong Kong. In 1999 the orchestra established major concert series at both St Martin-in-the-Fields and Crystal Palace Bowl.

A large number of artists of international standing have worked with the orchestra including Emanuel Hurwitz, Lesley Garrett, John Georgiadis, John Wallace, Michael Thompson and Gordon Hunt. Its repertoire ranges from Bach to Lloyd Webber and its members give around 100 performances of orchestral, chamber, choral and operatic music during the year. The orchestras for a number of touring companies are formed from members of the Brandenburg Sinfonia including First Act Opera, London City Opera, Opera Holland Park, London Opera Players and Central Festival Opera.

Violin 1

Mihkel Kerem
Andres Kaljuste
Rhys Watkins
Raja Halder
Barbara Zdziarska
Cecilia Romero
Gabriela Nikula
Melissa Reiner

Violin 2

Kokilla Gillett
James Widden
Tom Hankey
Phillip Granel
Dunja Larova
Jenny Lee

Viola

Matthew Quenby
Mark Braithwaite
Francis Kefford
Mariam Ruetschi

Cello

Ben Rogerson
Lydia Shelley
Gabriella Swallow
Emma Vidgeon

Bass

Lawrence Ungless
Jan Zahourek

Flute

Celia Chambers
Kimberley Boyle
Fergus Davidson

Oboe

Alun Darbyshire
Sophie McMillan

Clarinet

Tom Lessels
Sue Gill

Bassoon

Robert Bourton
Tom Hardy

Horn

Dave Lee
Caroline O'Connell
Martin Grainger
Susie Koczur

Trumpet

Paul Archibald
Chris Evans

Trombone

Emma Juliet
Hodgson
Mark Townend
Dougal Prophet

Tuba

Adrian Miotti

Timpani

Tristan Fry

Percussion

Tim Evans
Scott Bywater

Harp

Sue Blair

Organ

Prue Smith

About Vivace Chorus

Jeremy Backhouse Music Director
Francis Pott Accompanist
James Garrow Chairman

Vivace Chorus has two aims: to make music of the highest standard and to have fun while doing so.

The choir has come a long way since it began over 60 years ago as the Guildford Philharmonic Choir, gaining over time an enviable reputation for performing first-class concerts across a wide range of musical repertoire.



Since 1995, the choir has thrived under the exceptional leadership of our Music Director, Jeremy Backhouse, ably supported by Francis Pott. Jeremy's passion for choral works and his sheer enthusiasm for music-making are evident at every rehearsal and every performance, and Francis is not just a very fine rehearsal accompanist but is also a composer of international reputation and a concert pianist in his own right. Come to our next concert, when Francis will be playing Rachmaninov's *Piano Concerto No. 2*, and judge for yourself!

We relish the opportunity to perform more unusual works such as Mahler's *Symphony No. 8*, or Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* as much as the great choral masterpieces of Verdi, Bach, Brahms, Handel or Haydn. At a more intimate level, we are at home with the works of Fauré, Tavener, Allegri or Lauridsen. Contemporary music is an important feature of the repertoire and our 'Contemporary Choral Classics' series, which has featured works such as Will Todd's *Mass in Blue*, is designed both to challenge the choir and to promote the classics of the future.



Our most recent successes have included a sell-out performance of Mahler's *Symphony No. 8*, the 'Symphony of a Thousand', at the Royal Albert Hall in May 2011, involving five choirs and

Vivace Chorus

the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Jeremy, and a performance last November of the Brahms *Requiem* which prompted a reviewer to say, "Guildford is indeed most fortunate to have such a great ensemble in its midst".

This year, as well as the Rachmaninov concert in May, we will be performing Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* in November. Composed and first performed fifty years ago to celebrate the consecration of the new Coventry Cathedral, it has become one of the defining masterpieces of the 20th century.

In addition to our own concerts, we also sing in charity concerts such as the Shooting Star CHASE Carol Concert, at the Mayor of Guildford's Carol Concert and, with our good friends the Brandenburg Sinfonia, we sing twice a year in the superb venue of St Martin-in-the-Fields.

We also, on occasion, venture further afield. Trips abroad have included visits to Freiburg, Germany, to sing with the Freiburger Bachchor and, in June 2009, to France where we gave concerts of music from the early 16th to late 20th centuries in the cathedrals of Paris (Notre-Dame), Rouen and Beauvais. In June we are off on tour again, this time giving concerts in Strasbourg, Heidelberg and Freiburg.

New members are always welcome, so if you love beautiful choral music and want to have fun singing, please contact Jane Brooks at membership@vivacechorus.org to find out how you can be a part of our exciting future. We rehearse in Holy Trinity Church, Guildford High Street, on Monday evenings.

For more information, do visit our website, vivacechorus.org, where you can also sign up to receive information about our concerts, email us on info@vivacechorus.org or follow us on Facebook or Twitter.



Vivace Chorus Singers

FIRST SOPRANOS

Mary Broughton
Elaine Chapman
Rachel Edmondson
Mo Kfour
Susan Norton
Margaret Parry
Margaret Perkins
Kate Rayner
Gillian Rix
Carol Terry
Joan Thomas
Nikki Vale

SECOND SOPRANOS

Anna Arthur
Mandy Freeman
Marianne Illsley
Jane Kenney
Krystyna Marsden
Isabel Mealor
Debbie Morton
Kate Peters
Rosalind Plowright
Isobel Rooth
Ann Sheppard
Judy Smith
Philippa Smith
Paula Sutton
Zowie Sweetland
Christine Wilks
Frances Worpe

FIRST ALTOS

Barbara Barklem
Penny Baxter
Monika Boothby
Jane Brooks
Margaret Dentskevich
Liz Durning
Kate Emerson
Sheila Hodson
Jean Leston
Judith Lewy
Lois McCabe

Kay McManus
Christine Medlow
Rosalind Milton
Mary Moon
Gill Perkins
Lesley Scordellis
Catherine Shacklady
Ann Smith
Marjory Stewart
Hilary Trigg

SECOND ALTOS

Geraldine Allen
Hannah Andrews
Evelyn Beastall
Sylvia Chantler
Mary Clayton
Andrea Dombrowe
Carolyn Edis
Celia Embleton
Elizabeth Evans
Valerie Garrow
Jo Glover
Barbara Hilder
Carol Hobbs
Yvonne Hungerford
Val Morcom
Jacqueline Norman
Sheila Rowell
Prue Smith
Jo Stokes
Rosey Storey
Pamela Usher
Anne Whitley
June Windle
Elisabeth Yates

FIRST TENORS

Mike Bishop
Bob Bromham
Bob Cowell
Tim Hardyment
Nick Manning
Martin Price
Chris Robinson
John Trigg

SECOND TENORS

John Bawden
Ewan Bramhall
Peter Butterworth
Tony Chantler
Stephen Chowns
Geoff Johns
Stephen Linton
Peter Norman
Jon Scott
John Thornely

FIRST BASSES

Phil Beastall
John Britten
Michael Golden
Brian John
Jeremy Johnson
Eric Kennedy
Jon Long
Chris Newbery
Chris Peters
Robin Privett
David Ross
Philip Stanford
Barry Sterndale-Bennett
Kieron Walsh

SECOND BASSES

Peter Andrews
Roger Barrett
Alan Batterbury
Norman Carpenter
Dave Cox
Geoffrey Forster
James Garrow
Stuart Gooch
Nick Gough
Michael Jeffery
Neil Martin
John Parry
Roger Penny
Michael Taylor

Vivace Chorus Patrons

The Vivace Chorus is extremely grateful to all Patrons for their financial support.

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Without the help of Patrons, together with grants and our other fundraising efforts, we would be unable to perform such a wide-ranging and exciting repertoire. Patrons receive certain benefits so if you would like to join do please contact Barry Sterndale-Bennett on 07753 958726 or email patrons@vivacechorus.org.



Guildford Spring Music Festival

18 - 24 March 2012

Sunday 18th March	Rock Choir - from 4pm Rock Choir, the phenomenon of the decade, opens the 2012 Festival with three performances.	
Monday 19th March	Jazz Lunch 12.30pm Jimmy Hastings and his Quartet.	The Will Todd Trio 7.30pm Jazz of a different kind.
Tuesday 20th March	Tormead School Musicians 1pm Outstanding performers from one of Guildford's top schools.	Songs That Go Like This 7.30pm An evening of show-stoppers from the GSA Singers.
Wednesday 21st March	Emily Hooker 1pm Pianist and star of BBC's <i>Classical Star</i> programme.	Surrey Brass 7.30pm Versatile brass playing of the classics, film scores and lighter styles.
Thursday 22nd March	High Scorer's Concert 1pm Some of the best candidates from the Guildford area who achieved high marks in recent ABRSM exams. Guildhall, High Street, Guildford	Jonathan Veira 7.30pm International operatic baritone, raconteur and entertainer in a concert of two halves.
Friday 23rd March	The Santiago String Quartet 1pm Including a world premier of a commissioned quartet by local composer Will Todd Guildhall, High Street, Guildford	Music for Two Pianos 8pm Simon Phillips and Stephen Ridge on two grand pianos.
Saturday 24th March	Surrey Cantata 12.45pm Directed by Sebastian Forbes Choral singing accompanied by an instrumental group in Bach, Vivaldi and others.	The Gala Concert 7.30pm Surrey Mozart Players Weber, Dvorak and Brahms.

At The Electric Theatre, Guildford

Lunchtime events £8 (£4 concs). Evening events £14 (£7 concs). Rock Choir £6 (£3 concs).
Concessions under 16s, students, JSA, IB and IS

The Guildford Spring Music Festival has reached its 5th biennial anniversary having started in 2004 as a festival celebrating the musical talents of the Guildford area. All events feature musicians with a significant local connection by birth, education, work or residence.

The performers come from the ranks of seasoned professionals, students and talented amateurs.

The Festival is supported by The Guildford Borough Council.

The Humphrey Richardson Taylor Charitable Trust and many local businesses.

Box Offices: 01483 444789 or 01483 444334
online booking at www.gsmf.org.uk



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Musical Director
Francis Griffin

Tickets £15

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Vivace Chorus
Registered Charity No. 1026337
in the name of
Guildford Philharmonic Choir

Financially assisted by
**GUILD FORD
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'Parry and Brahms', November 2011

From a review by Martin Hall

Guildford Cathedral bore witness to a splendid event when the Vivace Chorus and Brandenburg Sinfonia performed a programme of Parry and Brahms directed by their distinguished conductor Jeremy Backhouse. Jeremy's penchant for programme devising is a miracle in itself; he generally includes popular repertoire alongside undeservedly neglected works such as Parry's moving *Elegy for Brahms*. This expressive piece found in its orchestra and director worthy advocates.

In Parry's two blockbusters, *I Was Glad* and *Blest Pair of Sirens*, the choir showed themselves from the first thrilling chords to be on vintage form. The ensemble was immaculate even in the Cathedral's not always helpful acoustic. The forte passages were robust, the piano sections sensitive; and all this taxing work before a performance of the Brahms *Requiem* one could go far without hearing equalled. Pitch and tone were pleasingly sustained in the unaccompanied sections. The soloists were Michael Bundy who was at once awe inspiring and poetic, and Helen Neeves, deputizing flawlessly at very short notice for an indisposed Claire Seaton. The orchestra rose to all the demands of the score, the lower strings being particularly impressive in the opening bars of the *Requiem*.

It is not an exaggeration to make claims for the Vivace Chorus being one of the best choral groups of its kind. Guildford is indeed most fortunate to have such a great ensemble in its midst.

Vivace Chorus

Vivace Chorus dates for your diary

2012

Rachmaninov *Piano Concerto No 2, The Bells and Vespers*

May 19 – Guildford Cathedral

Rachmaninov was himself a fine pianist and his works for piano reflect his passion for the instrument as well as his extraordinary talent for expansive and romantic composition. Exemplifying this romanticism, his *Piano Concerto No. 2* was an inspired choice for the theme music for the film *Brief Encounter* and has proved enduringly popular, reclaiming the number 1 spot in Classic FM's Hall of Fame in 2011. Rachmaninov's writing for voice is equally impressive. This concert also features a selection of his *Vespers* and *The Bells* – a work for soloists, chorus and orchestra, which explores in turn the contrasting emotions linked to the sounds of various bells: sleigh bells, wedding bells, alarm bells and funeral bells.

Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem*

November 17 – Guildford Cathedral

Composed and first performed 50 years ago for the consecration of the new Coventry Cathedral, the *War Requiem* has become one of the defining masterpieces of the 20th century – a devastating meditation on the pity of war that is every bit as relevant today. This is a large-scale but poignant work, interspersing the war poetry of Wilfred Owen, killed just a week before the end of World War 1, with the text of the Requiem Mass. It is a timeless message to everyone worldwide. There will be a retiring collection in aid of 'Help for Heroes'.

**Further details at vivacechorus.org
or from info@vivacechorus.org**

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Vivace
Chorus

WAR REQUIEM

Benjamin Britten

Saturday
17th Nov 2012
Guildford Cathedral

FUNDRAISING
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This 20th century masterpiece is a huge but intimate setting of the poems of Wilfred Owen - a devastating meditation on the pity of war.

Rachmaninov's concerto, top of Classic FM's Hall of Fame in 2011, with the dramatic Bells – romantic Rachmaninov at his best!

RACHMANINOV

Piano Concerto No 2
Vespers
The Bells

Vivace
Chorus

Saturday
19th May 2012
Guildford Cathedral

vivacechorus.org

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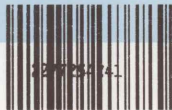
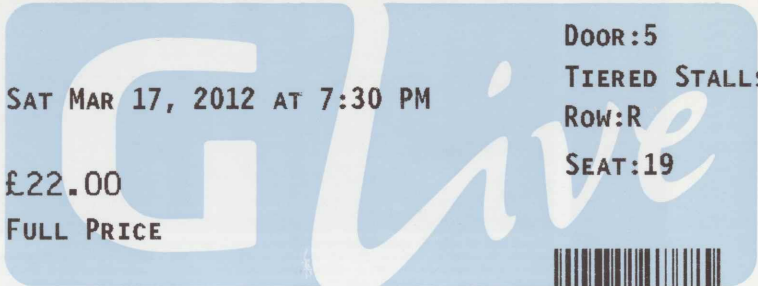
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