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OPERA IN SONG

RECITAL SERIES

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OPERA HOLLAND PARK 2022 SEASON PROGRAMME

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Content editors **Chloe Bridgen**, **Anna Picard**

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www.operahollandpark.com

Box Office: **0300 999 1000**

Main Office: **020 3846 6222**

Registered Address: **37 Pembroke Road, London W8 6PW**

Theatre Address: **Ilchester Place, London W8 6LU**

/operahollandpark

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@operahollandpark

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#OHP2022

Find our podcast, **From the Producer's Office**, on all the main podcasting platforms, including Apple Podcasts, Spotify and Soundcloud. The series tracks Opera Holland Park's CEO and Director of Opera, James Clutton, in conversation with creatives and collaborators across the industry, exploring the process of putting opera on stage, and how the artists involved approach their craft.

Cover artwork by illustrator Lucy Sharp for Opera Holland Park, 2022.

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WELCOME FROM THE CHAIRMAN

On behalf of everyone at Opera Holland Park, I should like to extend our warmest thanks to all of our many supporters. Our Founders, who invested in the artistic excellence of the company at the very beginning of our independence in 2015 and whose support has been critical to our success. The members of the Jubilee Society, created last year to mark our Silver Jubilee, whose support will be equally critical to our success. The Trusts and Foundations which have been so generous. Those corporates which have supported us despite the difficult economic situation. And all of our Major Donors, Benefactors, Ambassadors, Envoys, Members, Friends and Volunteers, many of whom have been advocates of the company from its foundation. Thank you also to each of you in our audience — our work would not be possible without you.

As many of you will know, our ticket prices remain significantly lower than those of our peer group of leading opera companies, although our musical and dramatic ambitions do not. Keeping our ticket prices down is a vital part of our mission to make opera as accessible as possible. Our box office income covers only about 40% of our costs in a normal year, and we receive no subsidy from Arts Council England. It is only thanks to the generous support of our donors that we are able to make this model work and continue our journey towards financial sustainability, especially since 2020. To those of you who have given more generously than ever to support the 2022 Season by upgrading your membership or by declining the benefit of reduced ticket prices we are especially grateful.

Our commitment to accessibility remains at the forefront of all of the work we produce. Our award-winning education and outreach scheme, Inspire, has continued to go from strength to strength, working online and in person to reach a greater level of engagement across the Tri-Borough and beyond. We are also pleased to have retained our percentage of free and accessibly-priced Inspire tickets as we increase our greatly reduced capacity of 2021 to today's capacity of 700. We look forward, as always, to welcoming new faces to the theatre at our two Schools Matinee performances, at the five Discovery Matinees, which will also be Relaxed Performances, and at a range of extra events from spoken word events to song recitals and activities for young families.

Our work does not end when the season is over, regardless of the challenges posed in recent years. Since we were last here together the company has premiered its film of William Walton's comic opera, *The Bear*, marked Holocaust Memorial Day with a film of Ilse Weber's *Ich wandre durch Theresienstadt*, hosted talks and masterclasses with the Opera Holland Park Young Artists, and celebrated past and present Young Artists at Wilton's Music Hall. We have also commissioned a new opera for the 2023 Season, *Itch*, composed by Jonathan Dove and based on the novels by Simon Mayo. I would like to thank our CEO and Director of Opera James Clutton and his team for their inspirational work and unflagging determination to realise the full potential of Opera Holland Park, and our Board of Trustees for their invaluable support and guidance.

Thank you again, and we hope you enjoy this year's summer of opera at Opera Holland Park.

Charles Mackay CBE
Chairman

WELCOME TO THE 2022 SEASON

Welcome to the 2022 Season. Thank you for your support over the last year, and thank you for joining us today. Last summer was the busiest we have known at Opera Holland Park, with over 80 performances of live music from operas by Mozart, Verdi, Janáček and Cilea to song recitals, calypso, jazz, chamber music and a Broadway musical, keeping your safety as our priority, and establishing a creative hub for the community.

Thanks to your generosity and continued engagement in writing to us, taking part in our discussions, watching the work we have put online, buying tickets and encouraging your friends to support us, we have a similarly ambitious programme this year, with some returning artists and ensembles, including British Youth Opera and Notting Hill Carnival, and some who will be making their Holland Park debuts. We will be producing regular free recitals on the steps to the theatre, and have introduced spoken word events. You will also notice further changes on site as we improve the redesigned auditorium and stage introduced last year in collaboration with takis.

The first and most important of these changes is that there are more of us here to share the collective experience of live performance, whether the music is intended to make you laugh, make you cry or simply pause and breathe freely, enjoying the moment and the surroundings. The hospitality industry, like the arts, has faced extraordinary challenges since 2020. To enhance your overall experience, we have sourced food and wine from independent local suppliers, and it is a pleasure for us to work with like-minded companies. We have also adjusted the seating levels to improve sightlines, adding balcony seats with a panoramic view of the auditorium.

The Young Artists Scheme remains at the heart of Opera Holland Park's work, with alumni returning in senior roles as singers, directors, conductors and, as of 2021, producers and co-curators.

We were delighted when former YA Julien Van Mellaerts suggested launching a recital series last year. Co-curated with the pianist Dylan Perez, and designed to complement the operas in our season, Opera in Song was a perfect fit for the redesigned auditorium. It's a pleasure to host the second edition of this series, with a programme that extends from Schubert to Sondheim, a world premiere from the Belize-born British composer, Errollyn Wallen, and a stellar line up of young and established singers and collaborative pianists. Thank you for joining us for Opera in Song, and thank you for being a part of Opera Holland Park.

James Clutton
CEO and Director of Opera

STEINWAY & SONS



Songbird in an Evergreen by Christoph Ludwig Agricola
© Wikimedia Commons

AN IMMEDIATE CONNECTION

Julien Van Mellaerts and Dylan Perez talk to Opera Holland Park about the second edition of the *Opera in Song* series and reveal their favourite works in the programme

***What was the inspiration for starting* Opera in Song?**

Julien: During the pandemic Dylan and I met up to discuss performance opportunities after having lost so much work in the first lockdown. We decided to start a song series and approached Opera Holland Park to partner with us. The idea was to use the operas in the OHP season as the springboard, employing singers from the productions and creating programmes that would retell the operatic stories. Our aim was to bridge the traditional gap between opera and song.

Dylan: The inspiration for me was twofold: to bring the drama of song to an opera audience and to give singers more opportunities coming out of the pandemic. I think song is considered opera's less successful cousin but I believe opera audiences will find similarities between the two: the connection between drama, text, and vocal expression can be found in both.

Julien, you've sung several roles at Opera Holland Park. How different was it to sing a recital here?

Julien: I was really surprised how well the theatre lends itself to song recital. The new layout is ideal for this intimacy. With the piano in front of the stage, the audience are all around you, so it is an immediate connection. With all the wood panelling and the concrete floor, there is also a lovely live acoustic for voice and piano. I love performing opera on stage, but I also love the immediacy between performer and audience in a recital. Any chance to sing at OHP is good for me!

How did you select the themes and repertoire for this series?

Dylan: We wanted to illuminate the operas on stage and show different sides to them. Whether it is retelling a story, like *Carmen in Song*, or bringing music from another culture to the stage in the American song recital, these recitals aim to help audiences put the music and characters they are about to experience into context.

Julien: This year we have taken a bit more liberty with the themes. There are so many powerful female characters in the season: Micaëla, Carmen, Tatyana, Margot and Anna in the double bill, and the whole cast of *Little Women*. We wanted to celebrate that with a focus on female composers and librettists. And with the UK premiere of *Little Women*, what better way to celebrate than with a recital showcasing the variety of American song.

The OHP Young Artists have a showcase in the series, as well as some younger pianists. Was it a deliberate choice to feature artists at the start of their careers as well as those who are well-established?

Julien: Absolutely. In the early stages of the pandemic the artists who suffered most were the younger ones. We wanted to make sure that we could give them performance opportunities, not only in isolation, but alongside more established artists. You learn so much from performing alongside world class artists.

Dylan: There are a lot of wonderful young artist programmes for collaborative pianists but what sets *Opera in Song* apart is our excitement at pairing younger pianists with more established singers. This is how pianists got jobs decades ago!

How do you select music from different eras and composers to create a coherent recital?

Dylan: It involves a lot of research. We want to bring something special to each programme and also make it digestible for an audience. It's a big mix of marrying repertoire we think the audience might know with new songs that will expand their already broad horizons.

Julien: We are used to recitals being grouped together by composer, which works well of course, but when we think more of an overarching story or theme, it is interesting and exciting to explore a theme in a more unorthodox way. Dylan and I come up with the themes, then we discuss the specific song choices with the artists for each recital. It is a collaborative process.

There's a huge variety in the composers who are featured this year. Did you feel it was important to highlight more music by female and Black composers?

Dylan: Yes! There are wonderful songs by cis white male composers but only recently has the spotlight been put on more marginalised composers. I think with the variety of composers we get a melange of stories told from all different angles and therefore a truer view of humanity and the human condition.

Julien: I am particularly excited about Errollyn Wallen's new work *The Lake*. We made sure that we are including stunning music by underrepresented composers but we have also used our platform this year to commission a new work to be performed alongside one of the most famous song sets ever, Schubert's *Schwanengesang*.

Julien, how does performing something like a Schubert song cycle compare to performing a role in an opera?

Julien: They are very different beasts to prepare, I have to say. Preparing a song cycle is much more personal. It is just you and a pianist with the score and poetry and it is 100% your version of it. Unlike an opera where there is staging, sets, props, costumes etc, and you are part of a much larger team to bring a vision to life. They are both incredibly satisfying artistically and musically, but they do require different skills. A Schubert song cycle is essentially a monodrama for 70-75 minutes, so it is the job of the singer and the pianist to transport the audience to your world, your imagination, and take them on a journey with just the poetry and music. In performance, the intimacy and immediacy of just voice and piano allows every member of the audience to have their own drama playing out in their own imagination, and that's what I love about song.

Lastly, if you had to choose just one song from the series, which song would it be and why?

Dylan: I find the text of 'To What You Said' from Leonard Bernstein's *Songfest* to be very moving. Whitman's text of repressed love was found as a scribble, as though it wasn't meant to be read. Bernstein may have been drawn to this poem because of his own struggle with his sexual identity, just as Whitman's sexuality has been an argument of many historians and biographers.

Julien: For me it would be *Don Quichotte à Dulcinée* by Ravel, not technically one song but a set of three. I love this work. We get the character of Don Quixote singing about his love for Dulcinea and we see three very different sides of him in the space of 8 minutes - the charmer and seducer in the first song, the devout and adoring in the second, and the drunk in the third! ●

Interview by Lucy Hicks-Beach and Anna Picard



CARMEN IN SONG

Tuesday 28 June, 7.30pm

Mezzo-soprano Adèle Charvet, baritone Julien Van Mellaerts and pianist Simon Lepper retell the story of *Carmen* through the music of Ravel, Poulenc, Granados, Ginastera and Massenet.

Adèle Charvet mezzo-soprano

Julien Van Mellaerts baritone

Simon Lepper piano

Turina	from *Poema en forma de canciones*
	Dedicatoria (solo piano) Nunca Olvida Cantares Los dos miedos
Fauré	Le parfum impérissable
Viardot	Aime moi Les filles de Cadix
Saint-Saëns	Guitares et Mandolines
Poulenc	from *Chansons Gaillardes*
	V. Couplets bachiques VII. La belle jeunesse VIII. Serenade
Ravel	Don Quichotte à Dulcinée
Duparc	La fuite
Massenet	Crépuscule Nuit d'Espagne
Fauré	C'est l'extase Prison
Poulenc	Je nommerai ton front
Granados	El mirar de la Maja
Guastavino	La rosa y el sauce
Granados	Oriental (solo piano)
Ginastera	Triste
Ravel	Vocalise étude en forme de Habanera

Pauline Viardot by Ary Scheffer, 1840
© Wikimedia Commons



FIERY CHARACTERS

Julien Van Mellaerts introduces the programme for *Carmen in Song*

The idea of *Opera in Song* was born out of the pandemic to create work for singers and pianists and to create imaginative song programmes that reflect the repertoire on stage at Opera Holland Park. After such a successful first series last year, we are incredibly excited to be returning and to be able to double the number of performances with three operatically themed recitals, and three Schubert song-cycles.

Carmen is one of the most famous operas in the world, and for good reason. Everyone knows Bizet's music from adverts, movies and Formula 1 podium celebrations. It is a truly dramatic story with love, lust, revenge, murder, and even the odd smuggler thrown in for good measure. For *Carmen in Song* we have taken the core themes from the opera and created a programme of French and Spanish songs and piano solos, to give a real taste of Bizet's fiery characters.

Adèle and I met years ago at a competition in the Netherlands. We have sung together several times at the Heidelberger Frühling and Verbier Festivals and have been great friends since. Last year she sang the title role in *Carmen* at both Bordeaux Opera and the Palais Garnier in Paris, and made her Royal Opera House debut singing Mercédès a couple of years ago. It is really exciting to be able to perform together again in this programme, alongside pianist Simon Lepper.

To celebrate the wonderful French-Spanish fusion in Bizet's opera, we have some amazing new discoveries in songs by Turina, Viardot, Ginastera and Granados, as well as some favourites by Ravel, Duparc, Fauré, and Massenet.

To mark the halfway point of the programme, we have the song equivalent to the Toréador's song – Ravel's *Don Quichotte à Dulcinée*. Virtuosic and beautiful, it is a triptych of Don Quixote's love for Dulcinea. First comes his poetic song of romance, saying how he will illuminate the night sky with more stars if she just says the word. In the *Chanson épique* he prays for divine guidance in his relationship with Dulcinea, so that he may please and defend her. The final song, however, is a drinking song where he is less than complimentary about fickle women and drinks only for joy!

The programme ends with Ravel's own version of the Habanera – *Vocalise étude en forme de Habanera*. Unlike Carmen's Habanera it is a song without words, in which Ravel takes the slow sultry Hispanic dance and creates a stunning virtuosic work for voice and piano. ●

Notes by Julien Van Mellaerts

A female bullfighter, with flowers in her hair, wearing a matador's jacket.
Photograph by Castillo, ca. 1900
© Wellcome Collection



UNSUNG

Wednesday 29 June, 7.30pm

Soprano Louise Alder, the Opera Holland Park Young Artists and pianist Gary Matthewman celebrate the work of female composers including Clara Schumann, Fanny Hensel, Lili Boulanger and Libby Larsen. The recital will be held in support of Solace Women's Aid.

Louise Alder soprano

Gary Matthewman piano

Olivia Boen soprano

with OHP Young Artists:

Lucy Anderson soprano

Phillip Costovski tenor

Rory Musgrave baritone

Portrait of Fanny Hensel by Wilhelm Handel/Eduard Mandel
© Wikimedia Commons

HEROINES

Clara Schumann Er ist gekommen Op.12, No.1
Warum willst du and're fragen Op.12, No.3
Liebst du um Schönheit Op.12, No.2

Fanny Hensel Bergeslust Op.10, No.5
Warum sind denn die Rosen so blass? Op.1, No.3
Nach Suden Op.10, No.1

Songs to be announced from the stage, performed by OHP Young Artists

Lili Boulanger from *Clairières dans le ciel*

Elle était descendue au bas de la prairie
Vous m'avez regardé avec toute votre âme
Au pied de mon lit
Nous nous aimerons tant
Si tout ceci n'est qu'un pauvre rêve

Songs to be announced from the stage, performed by OHP Young Artists

Amy Beach *3 Browning Songs,* Op. 44

The Year's at the Spring
Ah, Love, but a day!
I send my heart up to thee!

Poulenc from *Les Mamelles de Tirésias*

Non, mon monsieur mari

Interval

Aaron Copland from *Twelve Songs of Emily Dickinson*

Nature, the gentlest mother
Why do they shut me out of Heaven?
Going to Heaven!

Songs to be announced from the stage, performed by OHP Young Artists

Libby Larsen *Try Me, Good King! (Last words of the wives of Henry VIII)*

Katherine of Aragon
Anne Boleyn
Jane Seymour
Anne of Cleves
Katherine Howard



RICH & VARIED

Gary Matthewman introduces the programme for *Unsung Heroines*

It is difficult to imagine the worlds of opera or song without the heart-wrenching power, tenderness, strength, sensuality, rage and suffering of its female voices. That said, it hardly needs stating that female composers and poets have over the centuries been hugely under-represented. This programme, sung by Louise Alder with contributions from Opera Holland Park Young Artists, is a celebration of these still too often unsung heroines, and of the rich and varied contributions they've made and continue to make to the vocal repertoire. The concert will also help Opera Holland Park to raise funds in support of Solace Women's Aid.

Beginning with German settings by Clara Schumann and Fanny Hensel, almost no corner of the natural world is left unexplored as their music carries us through a windswept and emotionally stirring volley of storms, rain, sunshine, mountains and woodlands, encountering streams, roses, violets, larks, mermaids, and migrating birds.

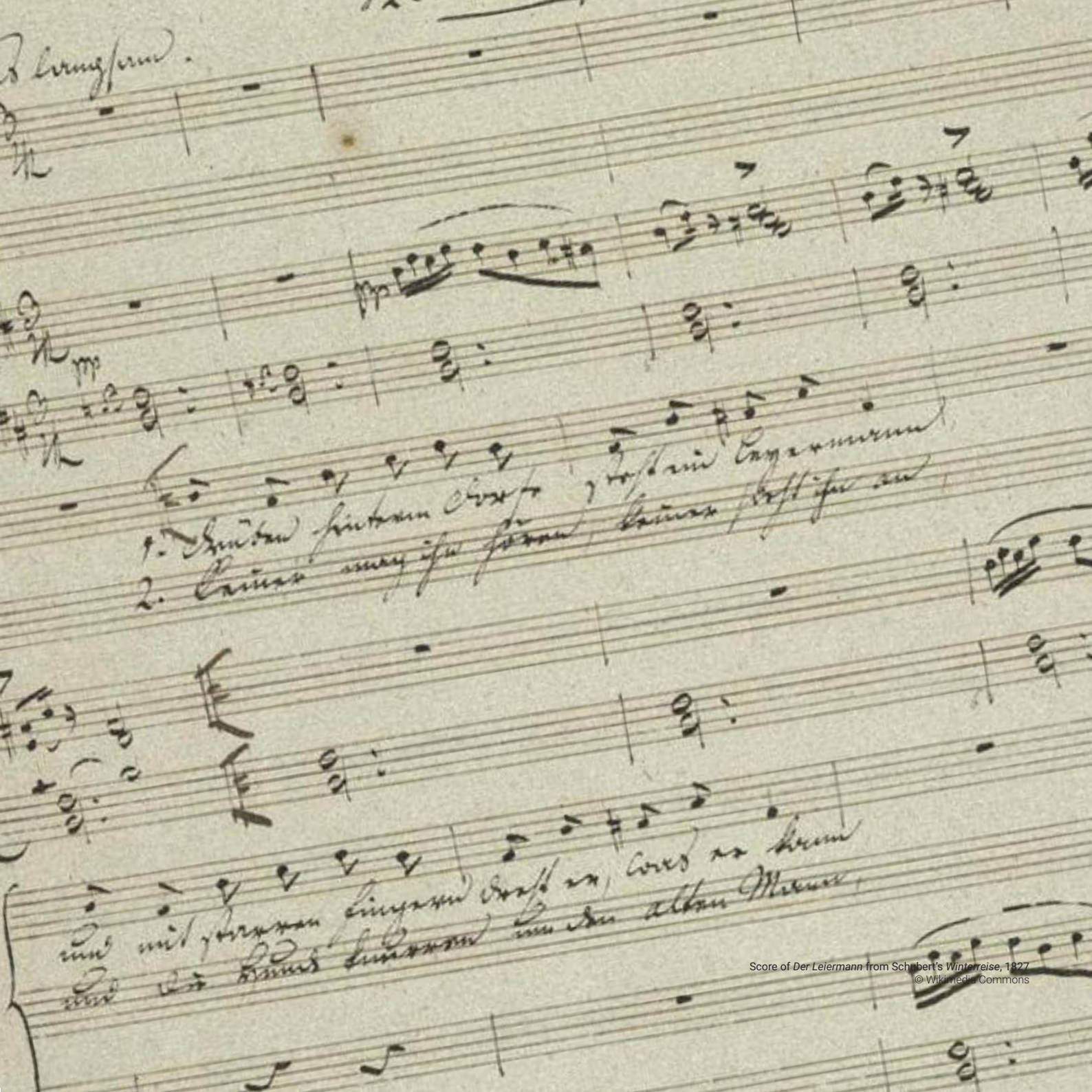
By way of our first set of contributions from Opera Holland Park's Young Artists, we segue to further evocations of nature's glories reflected in the human heart-flooded flowers in low-lying meadows, *fruits de mer* sold on quaysides, the shade of old branches, blue skies — but now delivered in French, and steeped in the crystalline, other-worldly and finely perfumed harmonies of Lili Boulanger.

Our Young Artists lead us next to the home straight of our evening: a broad sweep of settings in English, with the music and the bulk of the texts coming from America. There's plenty more to enjoy by way of nature's beauties and the reflections they can produce in the human heart in Amy Beach's *Browning Songs*: dew-pearl'd hillsides, snails on thorns, deranged skies, a departing sun, swans, doves, and stars. This trio of strikingly memorable songs may bear clear hallmarks of European influence, but there's an unmistakeably American breadth and sweep to her soaring melodic lines and the uncompromising vocal generosity and outpouring she demands of her soprano.

Next comes a group of songs by Aaron Copland, a selection from his twelve settings of texts by the brilliantly witty and wise Emily Dickinson. After a last appearance by our Opera Holland Park Young Artists, the final words go to the wives of Henry VIII, each in turn having her say in wonderfully dramatic and finely wrought songs by Libby Larsen.

Notes by Gary Matthewman

Photo of Lili Boulanger by Henri Manuel, 1913
© Wikimedia Commons



Score of *Der Leiermann* from Schubert's *Winterreise*, 1827
© Wikimedia Commons

WINTER JOURNEY

Friday 1 July, 7.30pm

Baritone Roderick Williams and pianist Ella O'Neill perform *Winterreise* in Jeremy Sams's English translation, *Winter Journey*.

Roderick Williams baritone

Ella O'Neill piano

Winterreise

Song cycle by Franz Schubert

I. Goodnight
II. The weather vane
III. Frozen tears
IV. Frozen solid
V. The linden tree
VI. Life cycle
VII. On the river
VIII. Turning back
IX. Will-o'-the-wisp
X. Rest
XI. Dreaming of spring
XII. Loneliness
XIII. The post
XIV. The grey head
XV. The crow
XVI. Last hope
XVII. In the village
XVIII. Stormy morning
XIX. A mirage
XX. The fingerpost
XXI. No room at the inn
XXII. Courage
XXIII. Three suns
XXIV. The hurdy-gurdy man



Franz Schubert by Otto Böhler
© Wikimedia Commons

AN INVITATION TO THE ART SONG CLUB

Roderick Williams introduces *Winter Journey*

Schubert's song cycle *Winterreise* is generally acknowledged by song aficionados as being the very pinnacle of art song achievement. In its 24 songs, Schubert charts a person's existential journey through a winter landscape of despair and isolation. It is a most extraordinary, unified art-work, immediate in its musical simplicity but also profound in its complexity. It has subtle layers that can reveal themselves over repeated listening.

But how accessible is this iconic piece to those who don't consider themselves aficionados? One barrier for a non-German speaking audience member is clearly the language. Listening to art song in someone else's language can all too easily lead us to feel on the outside of the experience, that we lack the proper credentials to truly enjoy art song; in fact, that art song inherently does not belong to us.

Hearing someone wax lyrical about *Winterreise* in particular, someone who already appreciates the piece in its original language, and as performed by some of the greatest names in Lieder singing, can be especially intimidating to anyone else on the 'outside', looking in. And yet, those who truly love art song (and particularly *Winterreise*) are equally evangelical about sharing their passion for this music and would seek any avenue that might open this repertoire to a wider audience.

This is what inspired Jeremy Sams to begin creating English-language, singing versions of some of his favourite art songs. Jeremy, son of the celebrated art song expert and biographer Eric Sams, grew up with this repertoire. His knowledge and love of these songs runs deep, as does his zeal to share his enthusiasm with as wide an audience as possible. Jeremy is an extraordinary wordsmith, a crafter of text, but he is also a stage and opera director, a composer, a music critic – in fact, he is the definition of a polymath.

His English language texts are not (he says) translations in the true sense but wholly new versions, designed expressly for singing along to the melodies Schubert has already composed. Jeremy's words match the shapes, the cadences, the inflections and the little ironies within the music; so much so that one could imagine Schubert, on being presented with these texts, composing the same melodies to them.

Jeremy has also deliberately mirrored the limited word-pallet of the original author, Wilhelm Müller, who sought to evoke a simple, rustic expressive style. Not for him the rich imagery, simile-ridden language of 19th-century Romantic poetry; Müller's lyrics are plain, direct and consciously artless. Thus Jeremy's *Winter Journey* lyrics are similarly direct, devoid of poetic devices. At times they can sound as immediate and basic as a modern pop song. And this is deliberate.

No longer does an English-speaking audience need to grapple with pages of tightly-printed translations. Nor does anyone need to feel excluded from the 'art-song club'. Everyone is invited. The hope is that this will be a springboard to develop an interest, a curiosity to hear the piece in its original German. We make the emotional journey in our own language so that it focuses our emotions when we return to Schubert's extraordinary original. ●

Notes by Roderick Williams



DIE SCHÖNE MÜLLERIN

Saturday 2 July, 7.30pm

Julien Van Mellaerts and James Baillieu perform *Die schöne Müllerin* in the original language, framed by the poet Wilhelm Müller's prologue and epilogue in English

Julien Van Mellaerts baritone

James Baillieu piano

Die schöne Müllerin
Song cycle by Franz Schubert
Text by Wilhelm Müller

I. Das Wandern
II. Wohin?
III. Halt!
IV. Danksagung an den Bach
V. Am Feierabend
VI. Der Neugierige
VII. Ungeduld
VIII. Morgengruß
IX. Des Müllers Blumen
X. Tränenregen
XI. Mein!
XII. Pause
XIII. Mit dem grünen Lautenbande
XIV. Der Jäger
XV. Eifersucht und Stolz
XVI. Die liebe Farbe
XVII. Die böse Farbe
XVIII. Trockne Blumen
XIX. Der Müller und der Bach
XX. Des Baches Wiegenlied

Oil painting of Franz Schubert by Wilhelm August Rieder, 1875
© Wikimedia Commons



THE BOY AND THE BROOK

Julien Van Mellaerts introduces *Die schöne Müllerin*

Schubert was an obsessive opera composer, writing 16 in total, none of which were performed in his lifetime. Eight are preserved in full score, the others remain only in fragments or are lost. He was undoubtedly one of the greatest composers for voice yet success in the operatic form eluded him. While the music is simply stunning, the operas are generally considered lacking in drama or too complex or difficult to merit a full production. Where Schubert did find dramatic mastery was in his song cycles – a genre he is largely credited with creating. For this year's *Opera in Song* series we wanted to showcase Schubert's contribution to the vocal repertoire and perform his three great song cycles or monodramas: *Die schöne Müllerin*, *Winterreise* and *Schwanengesang*.

I first came across *Die schöne Müllerin* when I was an undergraduate music and language student at the University of Otago in New Zealand. I'd sung some Schubert songs before but became quickly engrossed in this story that develops over 20 songs. I first performed the cycle almost ten years ago now, and I feel I always discover something new in it. It is a simple story, really. A boy leaves home for the first time, seeks work at a mill, falls in love with the miller's daughter, then it all starts to unravel when a huntsman arrives, and ultimately ends in suicide.

What strikes me every time I come across this work is how relevant it is today. I see the boy's journey as a struggle with his mental health. He creates a world in his own mind which bears less and less in common with reality. His only friend is a brook, to which he speaks incessantly. We see few actual encounters with the miller's daughter but witness the creation of wild fantasies based on the tiniest interaction. He is overwhelmingly in love with this young woman in the first few songs yet succumbs to intense jealousy and pride once he realises her feelings towards the huntsman. His fixation on the colour green as being both his beloved and his most hated colour highlights an almost bipolar volatility.

In the final songs his visions are so beautiful yet so disturbed – he sees his death as the only way for her to understand his love for her. His body will decompose, and blue flowers will spring forth from his grave to remind her of him. In his imagination only then will she realise how much he loved her and realise the error of her ways. The duet in song 19 is touching: we have the voice of both the miller-lad and the brook, and it seems he will finally accept his fate and move on. However, it ends with him seeking 'kühler Ruh' (cool peace) in the depths of the brook, and the cycle ends with a lullaby from the brook to the boy.

New Zealand has some of the highest levels of youth suicide in the western world, particularly amongst young men. Too many of us know someone who has suffered from mental illness, and the more we can learn about it and talk about it, the more we can help those who are struggling with their mental health. ●

Notes by Julien Van Mellaerts

Man in a Forest, by Constant Alexandre Famin, 1870
© Wikimedia Commons



SCHWANENGESANG AND THE LAKE

Sunday 3 July, 3pm

BBC New Generation Artists Ema Nikolovska and Kunal Lahiry present *Schwanengesang* alongside the world premiere of *The Lake*, composed by Errollyn Wallen as a reflection and response to Schubert's final collection of songs.

Ema Nikolovska mezzo-soprano

Kunal Lahiry piano

Schwanengesang
Song cycle by Franz Schubert
Text by Rellstab, Heine, Seidl

I. Liebesbotschaft
II. Kriegers Ahnung
III. Frühlingssehnsucht
IV. Ständchen
V. Aufenthalt
VI. In der Ferne
VII. Abschied
VIII. Der Atlas
IX. Ihr Bild
X. Das Fischermädchen
XI. Die Stadt
XII. Am Meer
XIII. Der Doppelgänger
XIV. Die Taubenpost

The Lake
by Errollyn Wallen

Text by Errollyn Wallen

Songs from *The Lake* will be interpolated through *Schwanengesang*.

With special thanks to Borletti-Buitoni Trust and RVW Trust for their very generous support of this new commission.

Schubert's glasses, photographed 2011
© Wikimedia Commons



A DIALOGUE BETWEEN PAST AND PRESENT

Ema Nikolovska introduces the programme for *Schwanengesang* and Errollyn Wallen's *The Lake*

Schubert's *Schwanengesang* contains some of the last sounds he put to paper. He wrote the cycle with the knowledge that he was reaching the end of his life in a struggle with syphilis. *Schwanengesang* was never designed to be a song cycle in the traditional sense, but was classified as such by Schubert's publisher, perhaps as a promising selling point for a posthumous release of the composer's last songs.

This work, even in its light-hearted moments, often has a haunting quality. Schubert by this point had further honed his abilities to express visceral loneliness and isolation in myriad layers. What I find captivating and rewarding in Schubert's music as a performer and listener is that he encourages us to process loneliness and grief (and thereby beauty) collectively, and not to shy away from these sometimes uncomfortable states of being human, but rather to befriend and welcome them.

The late Schubert, much like late Beethoven or late Schumann, lives in a particularly magical realm. The innovation and experimentation leads to a soundworld that has almost nothing to do with the typical aesthetics of 'classical music'. Rather, at times it has sonic pockets relating to popular music, jazz, folk music or modernism.

We commissioned a companion piece to *Schwanengesang* called *The Lake* by the composer Errollyn Wallen, whose writing is filled with a borderlessness and fantasy which resonates with Schubert. It is important to us that as we engage in dialogues with the repertoire of the past we are also fertilising the present and future of songwriting, allowing multiple eras and voices to coexist in any live performance we undertake.

It is an immense honour to perform Errollyn's music and words alongside the music of Schubert and see what we can discover together. The juxtaposition of these two composers' worlds will create a third entity of energy, and new dimensions from which to understand all the poetry and sounds involved.

We are incredibly grateful to the Borletti-Buitoni Trust and the RVW Trust for their support of this commission.

Notes by Ema Nikolovska

The Swan by Hilma af Klint, 1915
© Wikimedia Commons



AMERICA IN SONG

Sunday 3 July, 7.30pm

Soprano Francesca Chiejina, mezzo-soprano Kitty Whately, tenor Frederick Jones, baritone Alex Otterburn and pianist Dylan Perez explore American song from art song to Broadway.

Francesca Chiejina soprano

Kitty Whately mezzo-soprano

Frederick Jones tenor

Alex Otterburn baritone

Dylan Perez piano

Charles Ives	Memories A & B
George Crumb	*Three Early Songs* Night Let it be Forgotten Wind Elegy
Elinor Remick Warren	We Two
Stephen Sondheim	Agony (from *Into the Woods*) Sunday in the Park with George (from *Sunday in the Park with George*)
Margaret Bonds	What Lips My Lips Have Kissed
Aaron Copland	Nature, the Gentlest Mother (from *Twelve Poems of Emily Dickinson*)
Florence Price	Night My Dream
Stephen Sondheim	It takes two (from *Into the Woods*)
William Schuman	Orpheus with his Lute
Theodore Chanler	I rise when you enter
Leonard Bernstein	To What You Said (from *Songfest*)
Mark Adamo	Things Change, Jo (from *Little Women*)
William Bolcom	Black Max
Samuel Barber	From *Hermit Songs* The Crucifixion The Monk and his Cat
Lori Laitman	I was reading a scientific article (from *Orange Afternoon Lover*)
Richard Hundley	Waterbird
Samuel Barber	Nocturne
Lee Hoiby	The Serpent
Jule Styne	Together we go (from *Gypsy*)

Photo of Margaret Allison Bonds by Carl Van Vechten, 1956

DRAMA AND VIRTUOSITY

Dylan Perez introduces the programme for *America in Song*

To close our *Opera in Song* 2022 series we are paying tribute to American voices in song. So what makes American music genuinely American? This recital is not designed to answer that question but rather to open our ears to the soundworlds found in the cultural melting pot of the world. Each of these songs can be seen through an operatic lens: they utilise all tools in a singer's toolbox, like arias from our favourite femme fatales or power hungry kings. American composers are not afraid to create operatic vocal gestures in their music. After all, Americans aren't known for being demure! I wanted to create this programme to demonstrate that drama and virtuosity are not only reserved for staged works but can be found in small doses that make a big impact.

The 'father' of American music, Charles Ives, created multiple soundworlds in his own music. In 'Memories A & B' he remembers visiting an opera house as a young boy and experiences the aural memory of a song hanging in his ear. George Crumb is known for his graphic scores written on large sheets of paper: the score itself becomes art as it swirls and juts around the pages. His *Three Early Songs* were written when he was young and before his departure from traditional notation; they are evocative and overtly tonal, but still with hints of what is to come.



When other composers were dabbling in atonality, Samuel Barber's music was labelled 'neo-Romantic', hearkening back to the past whilst still maintaining modernity. His *Hermit Songs* set words of monks in the 8th-13th centuries written in the margins of sacred texts they were translating. They oscillate from the sacred ('The Crucifixion'), to the profane

Portrait of Charles Ives by E. Starr, 1889
© Wikimedia Commons

('The Monk and his Cat'). His *Nocturne* is evocative of a night that you are experiencing with your beloved: intimate and comforting.

Leonard Bernstein studied composition with Nadia Boulanger in France and his compositions can change from the popular to the serious on a dime. *Songfest* is a piece for a quartet of singers and orchestra, each singer having solo and ensemble sections. The baritone solo, 'To What You Said', with text by Walt Whitman, is the profound heart of the work, alluding to war and forbidden love between soldiers.

Also a student of Boulanger, Aaron Copland's set of poems by Emily Dickinson are what many would think of as quintessentially American in sound: large soundscapes, brass and woodwind-like counterpoint, and intervallic leaps of fourths and fifths that scatter the rest of Copland's music. Nature, the Gentlest Mother is the first of the set which depicts nature as a carer and a comforting presence in our lives.

The lesser known composers in this recital have smaller outputs overall, but these songs are gems and illustrate the wide stylistic range of American songs in the 20th century. 'Orpheus with his Lute' has been set by many famous composers but William Schuman's setting distils the words into a simple and arresting melody. Richard Hundley's setting of 'Waterbird' depicts a yearning for travel to ethereal lands, while Theodore Chanler's bombastic 'I Rise When you Enter' pays homage to the popular music of the day. A true maverick, William Bolcom wrote dozens of cabaret songs for his mezzo-soprano wife, Joan. 'Black Max' depicts a rugged and enigmatic traveller. Lee Hoiby had a special connection with Leontyne Price and wrote 'The Serpent' for her — a comic song about a delusional wannabe singing snake.

Female composers had huge influence in the American musical world, even if they are only now receiving the recognition they deserve. Elinor Remick Warren set Whitman's text 'We Two' in honour of her husband on their wedding anniversary; it is a declamatory and highly dramatic outpouring of love. Setting verses by Edna St. Vincent Millay multiple times, Margaret Bonds successfully mixes jazz idioms and operatic shapes in the poignant 'What Lips My Lips Have Kissed'. Florence Price illuminates her experience as a Black woman in both 'Night' and 'My Dream', embracing her heritage during a divisive time in American racial culture. Lori Laitman is still writing today and her *Orange Afternoon Lover* sets poetry by Margaret Atwood.

Finally, we pay homage to a figure in the American musical world who bridged the gap between opera and musical theatre. To sing songs by Stephen Sondheim, the performers need to be true singing-actors. They need to access all the technical abilities they have honed on the operatic stage to bring the characters to the forefront. Just like Puccini, Verdi, and other operatic composers, Sondheim wrote music and lyrics that mirror the trials and successes of the stories that surround them. ●

Notes by Dylan Perez

OPERA HOLLAND PARK

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LOCAL OUTREACH AND EDUCATION WITH AN INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION FOR EXCELLENCE

Established in 2010, Opera Holland Park's Inspire project is at the heart of the company's activities all year around. Inspire works with the very young and the very old, with families, school children and care home residents, with those who are at risk of social isolation, with those who live with dementia and their carers, and with anyone for whom the pleasures of classical music and opera are otherwise inaccessible.

Local partners in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea include Age UK RBKC, Resonate Arts, Mind RBKC, St Charles' Centre for Health and Wellbeing, Open Age, Princess Louise of Kensington Nursing Home, Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, Solace RBKC, the Royal National Institute of Blind People, Kensington and Chelsea Learning Disability Centre, Equal People Mencap, RBKC Virtual School, Avonmore Primary School, Chelsea Community Hospital School, Fox Primary School and Holland Park Ecology Centre. The company also has close partnerships with Refettorio Felix and Rugby Portobello Trust.

In 2018 Inspire won the Education and Outreach Award in the International Opera Awards. Many of the company's innovations – from introducing the first Relaxed Performance of an opera in the UK in 2015 to offering discounted tickets to NHS workers from 2018, and establishing a dementia-friendly theatre in 2010 – have subsequently been taken up by other opera companies. This moves hand-in-hand with Opera Holland Park's longstanding commitment to gender equality in its creative teams and the strength of its Young Artists programme in identifying and nurturing emerging talent. Where other companies talk about changing opera, Opera Holland Park acts.

Children during the 2020 summer family performances of *The Pirates of Penzance* © Ali Wright

During the annual summer festival OHP offers free tickets to under 18s and over 65s, with discounted tickets for NHS workers and other frontline responders and key workers. Introduced in 2018, the Opera Holland Park Schools Matinees have presented works such as *La traviata* and *Un ballo in maschera* in full to children from RBKC and beyond, supported by workshops on characters, storylines, history and music. This year over 1,400 children will experience the music and themes of *Eugene Onegin*. Audio-described performances were introduced in 2017. During lockdown Inspire moved online, increasing its reach and adding vocal warm ups for wellbeing to those stranded at home and free online music lessons for Key Stage 2 and 3 pupils.

In 2021 four Discovery Matinees and Relaxed Performances were added to the festival programme, designed for people who wanted to try opera for the first time in a welcoming and informal environment, and those who love opera but find the usual theatre-going experience inaccessible. Each run of the five main productions in the 2022 Season includes a Discovery Matinee and Relaxed Performance. The redesign of the theatre to maximise the connection with the natural beauty of Holland Park also allowed a significant increase in wheelchair accessibility. Inspire also enjoyed its first collaboration with the Holland Park Ecology Centre in 2021, exploring the characters and themes in *The Cunning Little Vixen*. This collaboration continues in 2022 with a focus on *Le Villi*.

For more details of Inspire's work in the community, from Get Into Opera to OperaUNITY, Out of the Park Opera, Opera for Thought, Learning Disability Ambassadors, and the Discovery and Schools Matinees, as well as more information on how to support the project, please visit www.operahollandpark.com/inspire.

JOIN US IN THE ENSEMBLE

The Ensemble is Opera Holland Park's own private bar for Supporters.

It is the perfect way to elevate your experience with us, offering the perfect place to relax with your guests and enjoy complimentary wine, prosecco and soft drinks each time you visit.

The Ensemble is open for Opera Holland Park operas and featured productions both pre-show and during the interval.

Access to The Ensemble is available to Supporters starting at Envoy level (£300 per year) for up to four guests per membership.

For more information, speak to a member of staff or email our Development Team on **development@operahollandpark.com**.

Full details of food and drink at Opera Holland Park can be found on our website at **www.operahollandpark.com/your-visit**.



Image: Wine served in The Ensemble © Tori Ferenc

OPERA HOLLAND PARK

BIOGRAPHIES



Louise Alder

Soprano (*Unsung Heroines*)

Louise Alder studied at the RCM's International Opera School where she was the inaugural Kiri Te Kanawa Scholar. She won the Young Singer Award at the 2017 International Opera Awards and the Dame Joan Sutherland Audience Prize at the 2017 Cardiff Singer of the World Competition. She also won the 2015 inaugural Young British Soloists' Competition, and is the recipient of Glyndebourne's 2014 John Christie Award.

In the 2021/22 season Louise sings Musetta *La bohème* (ENO), Cleopatra *Giulio Cesare* (Theater an der Wien), Susanna in a new production of *Le nozze di Figaro* (Opernhaus Zurich) and Sophie *Der Rosenkavalier* (Wiener Staatsoper).

Recent successes have included Susanna and Sophie (Wiener Staatsoper), Susanna and Gretel *Hansel und Gretel* (Bayerische Staatsoper), Zerlina *Don Giovanni*, the title role *La Calisto* (Teatro Réal), Zerlina (ROH), Sophie (Glyndebourne, WNO), Lucia *The Rape of Lucretia* and Zerlina (Glyndebourne), Ilia *Idomeneo*, Pamina *Die Zauberflöte* (Garsington) and Gilda *Rigoletto*, Susanna, Pamina, Despina *Così fan tutte*, Cleopatra, Romilda *Serse*, Sophie, Gretel and the title role *The Cunning Little Vixen* (Oper Frankfurt).

On the concert platform particular highlights include the title role *Theodora* (BBC Proms, Vienna Konzerthaus), the title role *Semele* (Monteverdi Choir), Schumann's *Szenen aus Goethes Faust* (Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra), *Messiah* (New York Philharmonic), Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 (Tokyo Philharmonic), Mozart Arias at the Salzburg Mozartwoche (Mahler Chamber Orchestra). She has also appeared at the Aldeburgh, Edinburgh, St Magnus and London Handel Festivals, and at the BBC Proms.

Louise is a passionate recitalist, appearing at Wigmore Hall, BBC Proms, the Musikverein in Graz, Oper Frankfurt, Madrid's Fundación Juan March and the Fundación Privada Victoria de los Angeles in Barcelona, Birmingham's Barber Institute, the Bath Mozart Festival, the Brighton and Oxford Lieder Festivals and in the Perth Concert Hall with pianists Helmut Deutsch, Joseph Middleton, Gary Matthewman, Julius Drake and Roger Vignoles.

Her recordings include *The Russian Connection* featuring songs by Rachmaninoff, Sibelius, Tchaikovsky, Grieg, Medtner and Britten (Chandos) and a disc of Strauss Lieder, *Through Life and Love* (Orchid Classics), both with pianist Joseph Middleton, Lucia *The Rape of Lucretia* (Opus Arte) and Silandra in Cesti's *L'Orontea* (OEHMS Classics/Oper Frankfurt).



Lucy Anderson

Soprano (*Unsung Heroines*)

Opera Holland Park Young Artist

Scottish soprano Lucy Anderson is a former Scottish Opera Emerging Artist and graduate of the Opera Course at the Guildhall. She is a Britten Pears Young Artist and has received critical praise for the "lovely Straussian gleam" and "heartfelt conviction" of her singing. Competitions include first prize in the Bampton Classical Opera Young Singers' Competition, finalist in the Wagner Society Competition, finalist in the Bruce Millar Gulliver Prize, the Mary D Adams Scholarship and the Norma Greig French Song Prize.

Work in opera includes Helen *Paris & Helen*, Asteria *La Corona* (Bampton Classical Opera), First Lady *The Magic Flute*, the Opera Highlights Tour, Countess Ceprano *Rigoletto* (Scottish Opera), Blanche *Dialogues des Carmélites*, Magda *The Consul*, Lady Dunmow *A Dinner Engagement* (Guildhall) and Nella *Gianni Schicchi* (LSSO).

Concert highlights include the premiere of Samuel Bordoli's *Le Trésor des Humbles* with the Orchestra of Scottish Opera, Strauss's *Four Last Songs,* Mahler's *Symphony No. 4* (Northumberland Orchestra), Mozart's *Requiem* (Usher Hall), Schumann's *Scenes from Goethe's Faust* (LSO), *Beloved Friend: Tchaikovsky Project* (BBCSO), Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* (Bournemouth Symphony Chorus), Verdi's *Requiem* (LSO Singing Day) and a performance of Strauss songs (Barbican Hall).

Recent and future engagements include Tatyana *Eugene Onegin* (Opera Holland Park Young Artists), Gutrune *Gotterdammerung* (Hackney Empire, Grimeborn Festival) and performances as part of the Isle of Wight Proms.



James Baillieu

Pianist (*Die schöne Müllerin*)

Described by The Daily Telegraph as 'in a class of his own' James Baillieu is one of the leading song and chamber music pianists of his generation. He has given solo and chamber recitals throughout the world and collaborates with a wide range of singers and instrumentalists including Benjamin Appl, Jamie Barton, Ian Bostridge, Allan Clayton, Lise Davidsen, Jess Gillam, the Elias and Heath Quartets, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Timothy Ridout, Adam Walker, and Pretty Yende. As a soloist, he has appeared with the Ulster Orchestra, English Chamber Orchestra, and the Wiener Kammersymphonie.

During the 2021-22 season James continues his strong relationship with Wigmore Hall with recitals including performers Benjamin Appl, Florian Boesch, Ema Nikolovska, Christoph Prégardien and Fatma Said. He is Artist in Residence of the Lied Festival Victoria de los Ángeles in Barcelona. North American appearances of the season include performances at Vancouver Recital, Celebrity Series of Boston and Dallas Opera.

James Baillieu is a frequent guest at many of the world's most distinguished music centres including Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Vancouver Playhouse, Berlin Konzerthaus, Vienna Musikverein, Barbican Centre, Wiener Konzerthaus, Bozar Brussels, Pierre Boulez Saal, Cologne Philharmonie, and the Laeiszhalle Hamburg. Festivals include Aix-en-Provence, Verbier, Festspillene i Bergen, Edinburgh, Spitalfields, Aldeburgh, Cheltenham, Bath, City of London and Brighton Festivals.

An innovative programmer, he has curated many song and chamber music festivals including series for the Brighton Festival, Wigmore Hall, BBC Radio 3, Verbier Festival, Bath International Festival, and Perth Concert Hall.

James Baillieu is a RAM Professor, a coach for the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme at the ROH, a course leader for the Samling Foundation, and is head of the Song Programme at the Atelier Lyrique of the Verbier Festival Academy. He is also International Tutor in Piano Accompaniment at the RNCM. Highly sought after for masterclasses worldwide, recent sessions of learning have brought him to the Aldeburgh Festival, Cleveland Institute of Music, Metropolitan Opera Lindemann Young Artist Development Program, New England Conservatoire Friends of Chamber Music, Portland, Oregon, Vancouver Academy of Music, and to the University of Waikato, New Zealand. James is also a trustee of the Countess of Munster Musical trust.



Olivia Boen

Soprano (*Unsung Heroines*)

Praised for her "full-bodied, sparkling tone" (Cleveland Classical), Chicago-born lyric soprano Olivia Boen is increasingly in demand both on the operatic stage and in the recital hall. In the 2022-23 season, she will make her role debuts as Musetta and Gretel at the Hamburg Staatsoper, where she will be joining the International Opera Studio. Engagements in the 2021-22 season include Beethoven's concert aria "Ah, Perfido!" with the RPO under the baton of Sir Andrew Davis, Strauss's *Vier letzte Lieder* in the Barbican with the London Schools Symphony Orchestra, a recital tour with the Oxford Lieder Festival, and the International Meistersinger Akademie.

Olivia has been a Gerdine Young Artist with the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, a Vocal Fellow at the Ravinia Steans Music Institute, and an Atelier Lyrique Artist with the Verbier Festival. She has appeared as the title role *Alcina*, Erste Dame *Die Zauberflöte*, Countess Susanna *Il segreto di Susanna* and Queen Mother in Jonathan Dove's *The Little Green Swallow,* among others. Finding connection and purpose in outreach projects, she has performed for *Discovery* events with the LSO, both in the Barbican and St. Luke's Church, as well as with *Inspire* at OHP. Olivia is a current member of the Wigmore Hall French Song Exchange led by Dame Felicity Lott and François le Roux, a City Music Foundation Artist, and a Samling Artist.



Adèle Charvet

Mezzo-soprano (*Carmen in Song*)

Adèle Charvet is considered to be one of the most promising French singers of her generation. Passionate about art song, she formed a duo in 2015 with pianist Florian Caroubi with whom she won the Mélodie Prize at the International Lied and Song Competition Nadia and Lili Boulanger in Paris. In 2016, they won the Grand Duo prize of the International Vocal Competition in 's-Hertogenbosch in the Netherlands – as well as four special prizes.

In 2017, Adèle had the opportunity to study at the Academy of the Verbier Festival. She was awarded the Yves Paternot prize for the most outstanding musician of the Academy. In 2019, with the pianist Susan Manoff, she recorded a programme of American and English songs for her first CD, *Long Time Ago*, released by Alpha Classics.

Recently, Adèle sang Rosina *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Stéphano *Roméo et Juliette*, Carmen (Opéra National de Bordeaux), Ascanio *Benvenuto Cellini* (Monteverdi Choir and Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique), at the BBC Proms, and in Versailles under the baton of John Eliot Gardiner, *Cadmus et Hermione* (Opéra royal de Versailles), Mélisande *Pelléas et Mélisande* (Rouen), *7 Deaths of Maria Callas* (Opéra national de Paris), *Roméo et Juliette* (Opéra Comique) and *Idomeneo* (Metz and Massy).

Other roles include Mercédès *Carmen* (Opéra national de Paris), *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and *La Cenerentola* (Toulouse), title role *Carmen* (Nancy), Cherubino *Le nozze di Figaro* (Glyndebourne). Adèle will debut with the Berliner Philharmoniker in Debussy's *La Demoiselle élue* and will sing *Le Poème de l'amour et de la mer* with Orchestre Français des Jeunes at the Philharmonie de Paris. Adèle is under exclusive contract with Alpha Classics.



Francesca Chiejina

Soprano (*America in Song*)

Nigerian-American soprano Francesca Chiejina is a recent graduate of the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme at the ROH, where her roles included Countess Ceprano *Rigoletto*, Lady-in-Waiting *Macbeth*, Voice from Heaven *Don Carlo* and Ines *Il trovatore*. She also sang Micaëla *La tragèdie de Carmen* (Wilton's Music Hall), Melantho/Love *The Return of Ulysses* (Roundhouse), and the soprano solos in Gorecki's Third Symphony for the world premiere of a new work by renowned choreographer Crystal Pite for The Royal Ballet, and covered Ifigenia *Oreste*, Antonia *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Giannetta *L'elisir d'amore* and Arbate *Midridate, re di Ponto*.

In the 2021-22 season Francesca makes her role debuts as Melissa *Amadigi* and Mimì *La bohème* (ETO), followed by further performances as Mimì *La bohème* (Nevill Holt Opera). She also sings Berg's *Seven Early Songs* with Sinfonia of London and John Wilson at the BBC Proms, Mozart's *Requiem* with Crouch End Festival Chorus, Strauss's *Four Last Songs* with Imperial College Symphony Orchestra at Cadogan Hall, and Bach's *St John Passion* with Huddersfield Choral Society and Manchester Camerata.



Phillip Costovski

Tenor (*Unsung Heroines*)

Opera Holland Park Young Artist

Australian tenor Phillip Costovski recently completed his Master of Arts at RAM with Distinction, generously supported by the Joyce Campbell Lloyd Scholarship. He is a 2021 Samling Young Artist, working with pianist Malcolm Martineau, soprano Joan Rodgers and actor James Garnon of The Globe Theatre in their intensive November programme. He was also the inaugural recipient of the 2021 Lady Galleghan London Award for Australian singers, during which he performed with OHP as Pásek *The Cunning Little Vixen* and in the chorus *L'amico Fritz*. This year he performed the role of Triquet in OHP's Young Artist production of *Eugene Onegin* and looks forward to performing Elvino *La sonnambula* (Random Opera) and The Schoolmaster *The Cunning Little Vixen* (Hampstead Garden Opera).



Frederick Jones

Tenor (*America in Song*)

British-born New Zealand tenor Frederick Jones completed the Opera Course at the Guildhall studying under John Evans. He completed a Master of Arts in Advanced Vocal Studies with Distinction in 2016 at the Wales Academy of Voice & Dramatic Arts, studying with Dennis O'Neill. He attended the 2016 Lisa Gasteen National Opera Studio, the 2017 Georg Solti Accademia di Bel Canto, was a 2019 Jerwood Young Artist with Glyndebourne and completed his studies during 2019/2020 at NOS.

His studies at NOS were supported by a Young Artist Development Award from the Glyndebourne New Generation Programme. He is also a 2019 recipient of a Help Musicians UK Sybil Tutton Award, a 2019 Independent Opera Voice Fellowship, and has been sponsored by The Todd Family Trust, the Tait Memorial Trust and the John and Margaret Hunn Educational Trust. Competition success includes First Prize in both the Wellington Dame Malvina Major Foundation Aria Competition and the New Zealand Aria Competition.

At the Guildhall, his roles included Lysander *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Ferrando *Cosí fan tutte* and Charles *The Long Christmas Dinner,* and he also sang a critically acclaimed run as Tom Rakewell *The Rake's Progress* (BYO). Recent engagements have included his principal debut with Glyndebourne as Tom Rakewell *The Rake's Progress* on the Autumn Tour and *Messiah* with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. This summer he also appears as Laurie in the UK premiere of Mark Adamo's *Little Women* at OHP.

During the 2022/23 season, he will make his debut at Theater Lübeck in the title role *Albert Herring*.



Kunal Lahiry

Pianist (*Schwanengesang*)

Indian-American pianist Kunal Lahiry is a current BBC New Generation Artist and recipient of the 2021 Carl Bechstein Foundation scholarship. Recent performance highlights include recitals at Wigmore Hall, Kennedy Center, Pierre Boulez Saal, Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Carnegie Hall Weill Recital Room, Musée d'Orsay, Ludwigsburg Festival, Life Victoria de los Ángeles Festival, and at the Ravinia Festival's Steans Music Institute. Originally from Gainesville, Georgia, Kunal was a Schulich Scholar at McGill University and graduated with distinction in song interpretation from the Hochschule für Musik Hanns Eisler. He is an Equilibrium Young Artist, Samling Artist, Yehudi Menuhin Live Music Now Artist, and Britten Pears Young Artist. Kunal is currently based in Berlin.



Simon Lepper

Pianist (*Carmen in Song*)

Simon read music at King's College, Cambridge, before studying piano accompaniment with Michael Dussek at RAM and later with Ruben Lifschitz at the Fondation Royaumont. He is currently professor of collaborative piano and a vocal repertoire coach at RCM, where he is also in charge of the collaborative piano course. Since 2003 he has been an official accompanist for the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition. He has given masterclasses at the Mozarteum, Fondation Royaumont and La Chappelle, Belgium.

Performance highlights have included an invitation from Wigmore Hall to present a three concert project on the songs of Joseph Marx, recital tours with Stéphane Degout which have included the Ravinia and Edinburgh Festivals and the opera houses of Bordeaux, Dijon, La Monnaie, Lausanne and Lyon, recitals at Carnegie Hall, New York with Karen Cargill and Sally Matthews and at the Frick Collection with Christopher Purves, performances of the Schubert song cycles with Gerald Finley and Mark Padmore including at the Schubertiade, Hohenhems, recitals with Christiane Karg at Frankfurt Opera and the Rheingau Festival and recitals with Angelika Kirchschlager in Verbier and at Wigmore Hall.

He has presented an all Schubert programme with Ilker Arcayürek in Barcelona, Zürich, New York (Park Armory), San Francisco and at the Wigmore Hall where further appearances have included recitals with Dame Felicity Palmer, Karen Cargill, Sally Matthews and Mark Padmore. With Benjamin Appl he toured to India including recitals in Mumbai and Chennai, and gave the opening performance for the highest concert hall in the world in Shenzhen with Aida Garifulina. Future highlights include a European tour with Stéphane Degout, a performance of Schubert's *Schwanengesang* with Gerald Finley, and recitals with Christiane Karg and Ilker Arcayürek at the Hohenhems and Schwarzenberg Schubertiade.

His discography includes a recital disc with Dame Felicity Palmer, two volumes of Debussy Songs and a Strauss disc with Gillian Keith, a disc of French Song and Mahler songs with Karen Cargill, the complete songs of Jonathan Dove with Kitty Whately and a CD of contemporary violin works with Carolin Widmann which received a Diapason d'Or. Recent releases include the songs of Samuel Coleridge-Taylor with Elizabeth Llewellyn, a CD of Schubert songs with tenor Ilker Arcayürek, a disc of ballads with Stéphane Degout as well as recital disc *Poèmes d'un jour* which was a Gramophone magazine editor's choice. Future CD releases include a *Woman in Gold* fin-de-siécle Viennese songs sung by Robyn Allegra Parton and a song CD with Christopher Purves.



Gary Matthewman

Pianist (*Unsung Heroines*)

Gary Matthewman is one of the UK's leading song pianists, performing worldwide, and began working professionally as a conductor in 2018. A regular artist at Wigmore Hall, other recent and forthcoming appearances include recitals at Carnegie Hall New York, Musikverein Vienna, Rudolfinum Prague, Philharmonie Paris, Bolshoi Theatre Moscow, and in Washington DC, Toronto, São Paulo, Cape Town, Singapore, Melbourne and Sydney. His UK Festival performances include the BBC Proms, Aldeburgh, Brighton, Buxton, Leeds Lieder, Oxford Lieder and Glyndebourne.

Gary's past and future recital partners include Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Dame Josephine Barstow, Sumi Jo, Ailyn Perez, Louise Alder, Joyce DiDonato, Kate Lindsey, Caitlin Hulcup, Mark Padmore, Edgaras Montvidas, Sir Thomas Allen, Roderick Williams, Andrei Bondarenko, Huw Montague Rendall and Adam Plachetka.

He has appeared frequently in both live and recorded broadcasts for the BBC, and his recording of Schubert's *Winterreise* with Matthew Rose received widespread critical acclaim, featuring as 'Recording of the Month' in Gramophone magazine. A passionate advocate of new music, Gary has given premiere performances of songs by Charlotte Bray, Kenneth Hesketh, Nico Muhly, Colin Matthews OBE and Judith Weir CBE.

In early 2019, Gary was appointed Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of London's Orion Orchestra. Highlights from their work together include Handel's *Messiah* and Fauré's *Requiem*, Mozart's Piano Concerto in C minor with Imogen Cooper, Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* with BBC broadcaster Zeb Soanes, and two specially commissioned world premieres by Peter Longworth and Simon Rowland-Jones. Recent and future engagements as an operatic conductor include Donizetti's *Roberto Devereux* and Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* for Chelsea Opera Group, opera scenes for RCM and Argento's *Postcard from Morocco* for the Dutch National Opera Academy**.**



Rory Musgrave

Baritone (*Unsung Heroines*)

Opera Holland Park Young Artist

Rory Musgrave trained at the Royal Irish Academy of Music. Previous roles include Germont *La traviata,* Marcello *La bohème*, Guglielmo *Così fan tutte* (Cork Opera House), Young Kelvin *Solaris* (Tokyo), White Rabbit *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Eumete *The Return of Ulysses*, Junius *The Rape of Lucretia* (Opera Collective Ireland), Camilo *Ein Wintermärchen*, Smirnoff *The Bear*, Magnus *Herculanum* (Wexford), Marco *Gianni Schicchi*, Taddeo *L'Italiana in Algeri*, Belcore *L'elisir d'Amore* (Blackwater Valley), Schaunard *La bohème*, Count Gil *Susanna's Secret* (Opera Theatre Company), Schaunard *La bohème* and Baron Duphol *La traviata* (Lyric Opera),

Future productions include Re di Napoli *La Tempesta* (Wexford) and reprising Young Kelvin *Solaris* (Tokyo).



Ema Nikolovska

Mezzo-soprano (*Schwanengesang*)

Macedonian-Canadian mezzo-soprano Ema Nikolovska grew up in Toronto where she studied voice with Helga Tucker and completed her undergraduate degree in violin at the Glenn Gould School. She received her Masters in Voice at the Guildhall, where she also completed the Opera Course. Ema is a current BBC New Generation Artist from 2019-2022.

In 2019 she won 1st Prize at the International Vocal Competition in 's-Hertogenbosch, the Ferrier Loveday Song Prize (Kathleen Ferrier Awards), and was a prize-winner at the Young Classical Artists Trust International Auditions.

Ema joined the International Opera Studio at the Berlin Staatsoper Unter den Linden in Autumn 2020. Highlights this season include the title roles in Humperdinck's *Hansel und Gretel* and Christian Jost's *Die Arabische Nacht*, along with roles in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, Rameau's *Hippolyte et Aricie*, Janácek's *Jenůfa,* and Verdi's *Rigoletto*.

A prolific recitalist, in the last year Ema performed at the Pierre Boulez Saal, Wigmore Hall, Verbier Festival, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Schubertíada Vilabertran, Konzerthaus Berlin, Leeds Lieder and Toronto Summer Music Festivals, collaborating with Malcolm Martineau, Wolfram Rieger, Graham Johnson, Jonathan Ware, Joseph Middleton, Steven Philcox, and Barry Shiffman, among many others. On the concert platform, recent highlights include Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* with the Musikkollegium Winterthur conducted by Barbara Hannigan and a live recorded concert for the Vancouver Recital Society.

Engagements during 2021-2022 include her BBC Proms debut at Cadogan Hall and her debut with the Goteborgs Symfoniker conducted by Barbara Hannigan. She sings in recital at Wigmore Hall, the Salle Gaveau, Paris, and the Konzerthaus Berlin. As a BBC NGA artist, she has recorded for Radio 3 and appeared as a soloist with the BBC Symphony Orchestra.



Ella O'Neill

Pianist (*Winter Journey*)

Ella O'Neill is in demand across the UK as a pianist for song, chamber music and opera. In April 2019, she won the Help Musicians UK Accompanist's Prize in Memory of Arthur and Gwyneth Harrison in the Kathleen Ferrier Awards at Wigmore Hall. Notable performance venues and festivals have included Snape Maltings Concert Hall, Cadogan Hall, the ROH Crush Room, St Martin-in-the-Fields, Sage Gateshead, Oxford Lieder Festival, Buxton International Festival, Lewes Song Festival, Leeds Town Hall in a live streamed recital for Leeds Lieder, and Brighton Dome in an all-Schubert Brighton Festival recital with Roderick Williams and guests.

At the start of this year, Ella spent a week in New York participating in the Carnegie Song Studio - headed by Renée Fleming - with regular duo partner Laurence Kilsby, during which she made her debut in two of Carnegie Hall's three performance spaces: the Zankel and Weill Recital Halls. Later this season, Ella will join Oxenfoord International Summer School and the Samling Academy as a staff pianist. Ella is a Samling artist.

Away from the concert platform, Ella also works as a répétiteur for opera. Companies she has worked with include Grange Park Opera, ETO, Mid Wales Opera, Tête à Tête Festival and Barefoot Opera.

Ella graduated with distinction from RCM in July 2019, where she studied postgraduate piano accompaniment with Simon Lepper, Kathron Sturrock and Roger Vignoles. During her time there she won the Alasdair Graham Pianist Prize in the RCM Lieder Competition and second pianist prize in the Brooks van der Pump English Song Competition.



Alex Otterburn

Baritone (*America in Song*)

Recent performances have highlighted Alex Otterburn as an artist capable of "ruling the stage" (Opera Magazine) in a dynamic repertoire of contemporary creations and traditional roles alike. His critically acclaimed debut as Eddy in Mark-Anthony Turnage's *Greek* at the Edinburgh Festival, with further performances for Scottish Opera and on tour to the Brooklyn Academy of Arts marking his US operatic debut, defined him as an exciting and important artist of the new generation, described as giving "one of those tour-de-force performances that leave you breathless" (Seen and Heard). This season marks Alex's role and company debut as Ned Keene in Paul Curran's new production of *Peter Grimes* (Teatro La Fenice).

As an ENO Harewood Artist Alex received significant acclaim for his incomparable debut as Pluto in Emma Rice's production of *Orpheus in the Underworld*, as well as the creation of Squibby in the world premiere of Iain Bell's *Jack the Ripper: The Women of Whitechapel* conducted by Martyn Brabbins. This season he returned to the company as Schaunard in Jonathan Miller's *La bohème* under Ben Glassberg.

Highlights elsewhere have included Alex's role debut as Demetrius in Paul Curran's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Pallante *Agrippina* (The Grange Festival), Chip in Antony McDonald's new production of *On the Town* (Hyogo Performing Arts Centre and on tour in Tokyo), Harlequin *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Scottish Opera and Opera Holland Park) and his company debut at Opera North as Cascada in *The Merry Widow* under Martin André.



Dylan Perez

Co-curator of the *Opera in Song* series and pianist (*America in Song*)

Dylan Perez is a recitalist, chamber musician and coach specialising in vocal repertoire who is highly in demand across the UK. He graduated in 2018 with Distinction with an Artist Diploma and in 2016 with Distinction with an Artist Masters from the Guildhall where he studied with Eugene Asti, Andrew West, Iain Burnside, Julius Drake and Pamela Lidiard. He was also the Lord and Lady Lurgan Collaborative Piano Fellow at RCM from 2019-2020. Prior to relocating to London, he studied at the University of Michigan with Louis Nagel and Martin Katz.

He has been awarded the Gerald Moore Prize for Accompanists and the Paul Hamburger Prize for Accompaniment in association with a performance of *Die schöne Müllerin*, directed by Graham Johnson. He has also won the Accompanist's Prize at the Bampton Young Singers Competition. He has participated in many international competitions including the Kathleen Ferrier Awards, Wigmore Hall/Bollinger International Song Competition and the Das Lied International Competition.

Dylan has been an Oxford Lieder Young Artist (with contralto Jess Dandy) and has performed at the festival in subsequent years. He is an alumnus of the Franz-Schubert-Institut in Baden bei Wien, Austria, where he performed in masterclasses for Julius Drake, Rudolf Jansen, Helmut Deutsch and Elly Ameling. Dylan is a Britten Pears Young Artist and studied there with Christoph Pregardien, Julius Drake and Richard Stokes. He is a laureate of the Académie Royaumont in association with the Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

Together with mezzo Ema Nikolovska, Dylan gave his debut recital at Wigmore Hall in May 2019. He has performed in recital at other venues in London such as the Barbican, Milton Court Concert Hall, St Martin-in-the-Fields, Cadogan Hall and the Victoria & Albert Museum. Dylan can be heard frequently on BBC Radio 3, whether it is for a Proms Extra concert, a Total Immersion performance, or live on InTune.

Dylan is the founder of *re-sung,* a London based song recital series that focuses on the connection between text and music, with special interest on creating new interpretations of masterworks and championing contemporary songs. He was recently appointed to the Vocal Coach faculty at Trinity Laban Conservatoire in London. He has also recently recorded the complete songs of Samuel Barber for Resonus label.



Julien Van Mellaerts

Co-curator of the *Opera in Song* series and baritone (*Carmen in Song* and *Die schöne Müllerin*)

Winner of the Maureen Forrester Prize and the German Lied Award at the 2018 Concours Musical International de Montréal, Winner of the 2017 Wigmore Hall/Kohn Foundation International Song Competition, the 2017 Kathleen Ferrier Awards, and the 2015 Maureen Lehane Vocal Arts Award, British-New Zealand baritone Julien Van Mellaerts graduated with the Tagore Gold Medal from the International Opera School of RCM. In January 2020, Julien was invited to the staff of RCM to teach English Song.

Engagements during 2021/2022 include Duke of Nottingham *Roberto Devereux* (Chelsea Opera Group), Garibaldo *Rodelinda* (Göttingen Festival), Silvio *Pagliacci* (Israeli Opera), Count Almaviva *Le nozze di Figaro* in a new festival in Ibiza, Masetto *Don Giovanni* (Verbier Festival), further performances of Brahms' *German Requiem* with Ensemble Aedes, the world premiere of John Lubbock's orchestration of *Dichterliebe* with the Orchestra of St John's, Mahler's *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, *Mahler en héritage* for the Fondation Royaumont, Mozart's *Coronation Mass* at the Newbury Festival, *A Dangerous Obsession* for the London Song Festival and Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* at the Royal Albert Hall with RPO.

Singing under conductors including Alphonse Cemin, Valery Gergiev, Stanislav Kochanovsky, Fabio Mastrangelo, Mathieu Romano and Sir András Schiff, recent engagements have included Count Almaviva *Le nozze di Figaro* (OHP), The Ferryman *Curlew River* (St Andrew's Anglican Church, Moscow), Oreste *Iphigénie en Tauride* (Fondation Royaumont), Figaro *Le nozze di Figaro* (Salzburg Mozartwoche), Papageno *Die Zauberflöte* (Verbier Festival), an Opera Gala with the Sevastopol Symphony Orchestra, and Beethoven's *Cantata for the Death of Joseph the Second* with Sinfonia Varsovia and Brahms's *German Requiem* with Ensemble Aedes and Les Siècles.

His debut song CD, *Songs of Travel and Home* with James Baillieu, was released in September 2021 by Champs Hill Records.



Errollyn Wallen

Composer *The Lake*

Errollyn Wallen CBE is a multi award-winning Belize-born British composer. Her prolific output includes over twenty operas and a large catalogue of orchestral, chamber and vocal works which are performed and broadcast throughout the world. She composed for the opening ceremony of the Paralympic Games 2012, for the Queen's Golden and Diamond Jubilees, a specially commissioned song for COP 26, 2021 and a re-imagining of *Jerusalem* for BBC's Last Night of the Proms 2020.

BBC Radio 3 featured her music across the first week of 2022 in the Composer of the Week series. Her critically acclaimed opera, *Dido's Ghost* premiered at the Barbican in June 2021 and will receive its US premiere in 2023. The April premiere and tour of her latest opera, *The Paradis Files,* coincides with the premiere of another new opera, *Quamino's Map*, for Chicago Opera Theater. Errollyn composes in a Scottish lighthouse and her recordings have travelled to outer space.



Kitty Whately

Mezzo-soprano (*America in Song*)

Kitty Whately trained at Chetham's School of Music, the Guildhall, and the RCM International Opera School. She won both the Kathleen Ferrier Award and the 59th Royal Overseas League Award in the same year. Kitty was a BBC New Generation Artist, a Samling Scholar and was part of the prestigious Verbier Festival Academy.

Recent opera highlights include role debuts of Donna Elvira in Sir Thomas Allen's production of *Don Giovanni* (Scottish Opera), Annina *Der Rosenkavalier* (Garsington) and Dog/Forester's Wife/Woodpecker/Owl *The Cunning Little Vixen* (CBSO, touring to Dortmund, Hamburg and Paris). She recently played Kate in the film of *Owen Wingrave* (Grange Park Opera) and Hansel *Hansel and Gretel* (Scottish Opera). Kitty is in high demand as a recitalist and concert artist. She made her debut with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, singing Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and has performed several different solo recital programmes since the pandemic began, in venues including Wigmore Hall, LSO St Luke's, Cadogan Hall, Oxford Lieder Festival, Leeds Lieder Festival, Snape Maltings and Northern Ireland Opera's Festival of Voice.

Coming up Kitty returns to OHP to perform the role of Meg in the UK premiere of Mark Adamo's *Little Women*. She will sing solos in Beethoven's 9th Symphony with Mark Wigglesworth and the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, and returns to Wigmore Hall for a recital of English Song with William Vann. Kitty and Joseph Middleton will release their second album together this Autumn: a programme of early 20th-century German Lieder by Strauss, Mahler, Johanna Muller-Hermann and Margarete Schweikert, on the Chandos label.

Kitty is the co-founder of the charity SWAP'ra (Supporting Women And Parents in Opera).



Roderick Williams

Baritone (*Winter Journey*)

Roderick Williams is one of the most sought after baritones of his generation. He performs a wide repertoire from baroque to contemporary music, in the opera house, on the concert platform and is in demand as a recitalist worldwide.

He enjoys relationships with all the major UK opera houses and has sung opera world premieres by David Sawer, Sally Beamish, Michael van der Aa, Robert Saxton and Alexander Knaifel. Recent and future engagements include the title role *Eugene Onegin* (Garsington), the title role *Billy Budd* (Opera North), Papageno *Die Zauberflöte* (ROH), and productions with Cologne Opera, ENO and Dutch National Opera.

Roderick sings regularly with all the BBC orchestras and all the major UK orchestras, as well as the Berlin, London and New York Philharmonic Orchestras, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Ensemble Orchestral de Paris, Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome, Cincinnati Symphony, London Symphony and Bach Collegium Japan amongst others. His many festival appearances include the BBC Proms (including the Last Night in 2014), Edinburgh, Cheltenham, Bath, Aldeburgh and Melbourne Festivals.

Roderick Williams has an extensive discography. He is a composer and has had works premiered at the Wigmore and Barbican Halls, the Purcell Room and live on national radio. In December 2016 he won the prize for best choral composition at the British Composer Awards.

He recently completed a three year odyssey of the Schubert song cycles culminating in performances at the Wigmore Hall and has subsequently recorded them for Chandos. Future releases include more Schubert, Schumann in English, as well as works by Vaughan Williams.

He was Artistic Director of Leeds Lieder in April 2016, is Artist in Residence for the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra from 2020/21 for two seasons and won the RPS Singer of the Year award in May 2016. He was awarded an OBE in June 2017.

THANK YOU

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Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation (UK)
– c/o Gillian Newson, 23 Prince of Wales Mansions, Prince of Wales Drive, London SW11 4BQ

e: foundation@kiritekanawa.org
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