



GERSHWIN: **PORGY AND BESS**

Gershwin: Overture to Girl Crazy
Copland: Old American Songs

Thursday 7 July 2022, 7.30pm

barbican

Programme: £3

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londonconcertchoir.org



Thursday 7 July 2022, Barbican Hall

GERSHWIN: OVERTURE TO GIRL CRAZY
COPLAND: OLD AMERICAN SONGS

INTERVAL

GERSHWIN: PORGY AND BESS

by George Gershwin, DuBose & Dorothy Heyward and Ira Gershwin
Concert version by Andrew Litton

Mark Forkgen *Conductor*

Rodney Earl Clarke *Baritone*
Francesca Chiejina *Soprano*
Gweneth Ann Rand *Soprano*
Ronald Samm *Tenor*

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George Gershwin (1898–1937)

Overture: *Girl Crazy* (1930)



Born in Brooklyn, of Russian Jewish parents, George Gershwin was a bright, extrovert child, in contrast to his shy elder brother Ira, with whom he was to collaborate so successfully. George's musical talent developed rapidly, and he began to compose songs of his own on leaving school at 15. His career blossomed and the early 1920s saw a steady outpouring of songs for musical comedies and revues.

George and Ira Gershwin's hit musical *Girl Crazy*, about a New York playboy sent to Arizona to take his mind off girls, premiered on Broadway in 1930. The last of Gershwin's twenties-style lightweight musicals, it launched the careers of both Ginger Rogers and Ethel Merman, while the energetic line-up in the orchestra pit included half a dozen jazz musicians: cornettist Red Nichols, Benny Goodman on saxophone, trombonists Glenn Miller and Jack Teagarden, Jimmy Dorsey on alto sax and Gene Krupa on drums.

Although the plot of *Girl Crazy* had become somewhat dated, over 60 years later the songs were successfully incorporated into the 1992 musical *Crazy for You*. The tunes of the three songs included in the overture will be instantly recognisable: 'Embraceable You', 'I Got Rhythm' (Merman's showstopper in the original production) and 'But Not For Me', which was featured as the main theme in the 1994 film *Four Weddings and a Funeral*.

Aaron Copland (1900–1990)

Old American Songs (1950–1952)

Rodney Earl Clarke and the Choir



In 1950, composer Benjamin Britten and tenor Peter Pears commissioned Aaron Copland to arrange a set of American folk songs that they could perform at the Aldeburgh Festival with Britten at the piano. Copland obliged with an arrangement of five traditional American songs scored for voice and piano: 'The Boatmen's Dance', 'The Dodger', 'Long Time Ago', 'Simple Gifts' and 'I Bought Me a Cat'. An arrangement for voice and small orchestra was completed by Copland in 1954 and various composers have since arranged them for choir.

Copland wrote a second set of songs in 1952, of which two, 'The Little Horses', and 'At the River', will be performed tonight. Since their initial warm reception, the songs' popularity has only grown, undoubtedly due to the wide range of historical themes that they embrace: politics, religion, children, love and loss, death and the minstrel stage.

The Boatmen's Dance

An arrangement of an original banjo melody by composer Daniel Decatur Emmett (1815-1904), which was published in Boston in 1843. It celebrates the Ohio River boatmen, bawdy and wily, and includes the repeated clarion cry: 'Hey, ho, the boatman row, sailin' on the river on the Ohio'.

The Little Horses

This lullaby sung to a baby originated in the Southern States and was collected by Alan Lomax in Houston in the 1930s.

The Dodger

The song has been linked specifically with the presidential campaign of 1884 between Cleveland and Blaine, but recent research suggests that its origins may be older: by 1844, a British farce called *The Artful Dodger* was being performed in American theatres and contained a song 'We're all Dodging'. 'The Dodger' satirises several professions, but Copland retained only three in his version: the candidate, the preacher and the lover.

Long Time Ago

Issued in 1837 by the publisher and poet George Pope Morris, who adapted the words, and Charles Edward Horn, who arranged the music from an anonymous original minstrel tune. Copland uses solo flute and oboe along with reflective and tender string writing to convey the sadness of lost love and death.

Simple Gifts

Probably the most familiar of the tunes that Copland uses for his Old American Songs, this also features in his score for the 1944 ballet, *Appalachian Spring*. 'Simple Gifts' is a Shaker hymn from 1848 with words and melody by Elder Joseph Brackett. Several Shaker manuscripts indicate that it is a dancing song and the references to 'turning' mean that when the dance is performed, each dancer ends up where they started: 'come 'round right'.

At the River

An arrangement of a hymn written in 1865 by American poet and gospel music composer Robert Lowry (1826–1899). It has been sung on many US ceremonial occasions, including the memorial concerts for Leonard Bernstein and for Copland himself.

I Bought Me a Cat

A whimsical children's song in the style of 'Old MacDonald', with a verse repeating and adding a new animal with each iteration (the last addition being a wife!). The voices and the accompaniment imitate the barnyard sounds of the cat, duck, goose, hen, pig, horse and cow.

INTERVAL – 20 Minutes

GERSHWIN: **PORGY AND BESS** (1935)

Music: George Gershwin **Libretto:** DuBose Heyward

Lyrics: DuBose Heyward and Ira Gershwin

Concert version: Andrew Litton

Porgy, a disabled man; Jake, a fisherman	Rodney Earl Clarke
Bess, Crown's girl; Clara, Jake's wife	Francesca Chiejina
Serena, Robbins's wife; Maria, keeper of the cook-shop	Gweneth Ann Rand
Sportin' Life, a dope peddler; Peter, the honeyman	Ronald Samm
Inhabitants of Catfish Row	The Choir

The action is set in the 'Recent past', i.e. the 1920s, in Charleston, South Carolina, USA

By the early 1930s, George Gershwin had written a succession of songs and musicals in collaboration with his elder brother Ira (including of course *Girl Crazy*), and had Broadway at his feet. Gershwin now felt ready to compose an opera – but why an opera, why not simply write another musical?

From an early age, Gershwin's musical tastes had embraced music of all kinds. His musical talent developed rapidly from the age of twelve, when his piano teacher, observing the boy's passion for jazz and popular music, insisted on laying a firm classical foundation with the music of composers such as Chopin, Liszt, Debussy and Ravel; George also became familiar with the work of contemporary composers such as Stravinsky and Schönberg, who later became a friend.

In 1924 he had realised an early ambition to compose symphonic music with the celebrated jazz concerto *Rhapsody in Blue* – an instantaneous success which compelled musicians of all traditions to start taking Gershwin seriously. This was followed by the Piano Concerto in F and the tone poem *An American in Paris*.

The idea for an opera had been at the back of Gershwin's mind since 1926, when his imagination had been captured by DuBose Heyward's best-selling novel *Porgy*. Heyward, an aristocratic white businessman living in Charleston, South Carolina, had been immersed as a young man in the black culture of that city. His novel was set in the black community living on the Charleston waterfront, and the character of the book's hero Porgy was loosely based on a man popularly known as 'Goat Sammy', who had lost the use of his legs and travelled round Charleston in a goatcart. When the novel was published in September 1925 it delighted the critics, who hailed it as the first realistic depiction of black life in America.

On reading the book, Gershwin immediately wrote to the author to say that he was interested in turning it into an opera. However, he discovered that Heyward's wife Dorothy had dramatised it as a stage play, and meanwhile Gershwin was pre-occupied with other commitments and also felt not yet technically equipped to compose an opera. Thus Gershwin's most ambitious work, his 'American Folk Opera' *Porgy and Bess*, was not begun until late 1933.

In the summer of 1934, George and Ira escaped from the pressures of New York to rent a beach house on Folly Island near Charleston with Heyward, and immersed themselves in the melodies, rhythms and dialect of the local black Gullah people, who still retained much of their West African heritage. DuBose Heyward recalled one night when Gershwin joined in a local meeting of 'shouting', a complex combination of dance rhythms beaten out by hand and foot. Gershwin is said to have been the only white person who had ever accomplished it correctly.

Heyward wrote the libretto for the opera and collaborated with Ira on the lyrics. Gershwin gave himself the task of setting all the words – there are hardly any spoken words in the whole opera – and creating not simply a vehicle for the individual songs but a continuous drama with nine scenes over nearly three hours, employing a huge variety of musical idioms, most obviously folk music, popular song, spirituals and jazz, as well as operatic arias. The solos and choruses in *Porgy and Bess* which sound like folk music or spirituals are all original compositions by Gershwin.

The opera previewed in Boston with an all-black cast before opening in October 1935 at New York's Alvin Theatre. The critics, however, had difficulty in deciding whether *Porgy and Bess* was really an opera or a musical and it had an initial run of only 124 performances – a success for an opera, but a commercial flop by Broadway standards. The songs themselves quickly won great popularity, but full recognition of Gershwin's total achievement – his masterly control of the elements of song, orchestral colour and dramatic mood – came only after his death. The first London performance was in 1952.

Ever since its premiere, the opera has provoked debate about racial stereotyping and cultural appropriation and under the terms of George Gershwin's will and the Gershwin estate, English-speaking countries may only produce the opera with black casts. However, this does not apply to concert performances of shortened versions.

Andrew Litton has condensed the opera into a concert suite, reducing it to about three-fifths of its original length by eliminating the minor characters and simplifying the action. His version focuses on the story of Porgy's devoted love for Bess – protecting her from the bullying Crown, only for her to run away to New York with the dope peddler Sportin' Life – and on the tragic impact of the hurricane. The arrangement retains all the best-known solos and choruses, indeed every note you will hear is by George Gershwin and will be performed in its original setting.



LeVern Hutcherson as Porgy and Leontyne Price as Bess in Porgy and Bess, 1952

Synopsis

INTRODUCTION

Catfish Row - Evening

Catfish Row is a waterfront version of the actual Cabbage Row in Charleston, South Carolina: a group of old mansions converted into multiple dwellings, historically inhabited by the descendants of freed slaves.

A short orchestral introduction leads into singing and dancing. A lazy lullaby 'Summertime' is sung by Clara to her baby son. Clara's husband Jake takes the baby and says he will sing him to sleep, with 'A woman is a sometime thing'. The chorus join in, singing more and more loudly until they realise that they are waking the baby.

ACT I

Serena's Room - The Following Morning

Serena's husband Robbins has been killed by Bess's partner Crown in the course of a crap game. Robbins's body lies on the bed, a saucer on his chest to receive contributions towards the expense of his burial. Meanwhile Crown has gone into hiding and Bess has taken temporary refuge with Porgy.

Serena and the chorus are mourning Robbins's death, singing 'Gone, gone, gone'. Porgy and Bess enter and put money in the saucer, while the mourners exhort each other to follow their example. Porgy leads a rhythmic spiritual, 'Overflow, overflow', in which the chorus sees Robbins rising to Heaven. The wake goes on, and Serena begins a grandiose lament, 'My man's gone now', supported by the chorus. Bess then leads the spiritual, 'Oh, the train is at the station ... we're leavin' for the Promise' Lan'', in which the chorus and orchestra imitate the sound of a train. This develops into a 'round': one section of the chorus sings the tune, another group takes over at twice the speed, then the third group joins in at a solemn half speed. An unaccompanied passage follows in which all three versions of the tune are sung at once, and a joyful climax ends the opera's first Act.

ACT II

Catfish Row - One Month Later

It is the day of the organised picnic to Kittiwah Island. Porgy appears at his window, singing his Banjo song, 'Oh, I got plenty o' nuttin"', which causes the chorus to comment on the change in Porgy since Bess has been living with him. Porgy and Bess sing the extended love duet, 'Bess, you is my woman now', at the end of which a military band strikes up a joyful march, and the picnickers excitedly start on their way, singing 'Oh, I can't sit down'.

Kittiwah Island - Same Day, Evening

Kittiwah Island is a version of the real Kiawah Island 25 miles south of Charleston.

The picnickers sing with abandon 'I ain't got no shame' and Sportin' Life treats them to a sermon casting doubt on Bible stories: 'It ain't necessarily so'. Serena comes on the scene and denounces the whole pack of them for sinners, also reminding them that the boat is leaving soon and that they must hurry to get on board.

Catfish Row - Before Dawn, a Week Later

Bess, who was accosted by Crown and forced to stay behind with him on the island after the picnic, has been ill with a fever, but Porgy has cared for her.

Starting to feel better, Bess calls out to Porgy, who says that he knows she has been with Crown, but that it makes no difference to his love for her. She admits that she has told Crown she will go with him if he comes for her, but pleads with Porgy to keep her for himself; she wants to stay but is afraid of the effect Crown's presence may have on her. Bess sings 'I loves you, Porgy' and Porgy tells her he will take good care of Crown if he returns.

Clara is anxiously watching the sea, fearing for Jake's safety, and warns Maria that a hurricane is coming. The wind rises, the hurricane builds up in the orchestra and the sound of the hurricane bell is heard.

Catfish Row - Afternoon, Two Days Later

The storm has abated, but Clara and her husband Jake the fisherman have been drowned. Meanwhile Crown did return for Bess, but was killed by Porgy, who has been taken away by the police for questioning.

Sportin' Life gloats to Bess that Porgy will be locked up and seizes the opportunity to offer her some 'happy dust' to tide over her nerves at the prospect of losing Porgy. She tries to refuse but cannot resist it, and Sportin' Life sings a persuasive Blues, 'There's a boat dat's leavin' soon for New York', tempting her to come away with him. He goes out, leaving a second packet of dope, to Bess's fury.

ACT III

Catfish Row - One Week Later

Life is returning to normal: after the orchestral introduction everyone says 'Good morning' to everyone else; the children dance and sing. Porgy comes out of jail to discover that Bess has gone off to New York with Sportin' Life. He sings the final spiritual 'Oh, Lawd, I'm on my way' with the whole chorus, as he drives out of Catfish Row in his goat-cart with his mind made up that, wherever she is, he will find Bess and bring her back.

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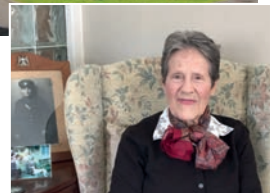
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Mark Forkgen

Conductor



This season Mark Forkgen is celebrating 25 years as the Music Director of London Concert Choir. He is also Music Director of Canticum chamber choir, Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor of Kokoro (the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra's New Music Group) and Director of Music at Tonbridge School. Mark was Organ Scholar of Queens' College, Cambridge, before winning a scholarship to study conducting at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Since then he has conducted major UK orchestras, including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, City of London Sinfonia, English Chamber Orchestra, English Northern Philharmonia and Manchester Camerata, appearing at major venues, including Royal Festival Hall and the Royal Albert Hall as well as the Barbican.

A specialist in the field of choral and contemporary music, Mark has given the first performances of more than 150 works. He has also conducted stage works with the Trestle Theatre Company and Britten Sinfonia, and contemporary opera with the Unicorn Theatre Company and an ensemble from the Philharmonia, at the Linbury Studio, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

Mark's wide range of conducting also includes performances with Deep Purple for the Henley Festival and recreating Pink Floyd's *Atom Heart Mother* in the Chelsea Festival. He also enjoys an active life as a pianist, focusing on twentieth-century and contemporary music.

He has been Conductor and Artistic Advisor for highly acclaimed festivals including Sir Peter Maxwell Davies' 70th Birthday, Stravinsky, 'A Festival of Britten', 'Music of the Americas', 'Britain since Britten' and 'East meets West'. Outside the UK he has conducted in Denmark, Spain, France, Belgium, Germany, Holland, Eire, the Czech Republic and Italy (including Handel's *Messiah* in Siena and *Israel in Egypt* at the Viterbo Early Music Festival), Bulgaria (concerts broadcast for National TV and Radio) and Hong Kong.

Highlights over the last few months have included Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony, Schönberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, Elgar's Cello Concerto and a programme of choral music by Stanford and Howells.

Rodney Earl Clarke

Baritone



UK baritone Rodney Earl Clarke, as seen in *Les Misérables* in London's West End and featuring on the new anthem 'We thank you' for Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee, is hailed by Gramophone Magazine as a "singer to be watched".

Rodney Earl Clarke is recognised for his versatility in performance. Born in South-East London, Rodney enjoyed performing at an early age. Encouraged by his Jamaican parents and surrounded by three brothers and a sister, Rodney knew from early on that his singing voice was to be a huge part of his life.

From his days as a choirboy at St. George's Cathedral in Southwark to being a baritone at home with the music of 1930-1960 Broadway, Rodney has appeared in many shows including *Carmen Jones* at the Royal Festival Hall, Jude Kelly's award-winning production of Bernstein's *On The Town*, Kenneth Branagh's epic film version of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, Sondheim's 80th Birthday Celebration Prom, *The Broadway Sound* BBC Prom with the John Wilson Orchestra, Jake in *Porgy and Bess* under the baton of Sir Simon Rattle and Crown in *Porgy and Bess* under the direction of John Doyle with the Royal Danish Opera in Copenhagen.

He starred in Raymond Gubbay's popular show *Crazy for Gershwin*, which regularly toured the UK, and also performed many times on BBC Radio 2 *Friday Night Is Music Night*, most notably in the David Jacobs Tribute Concert alongside Michael Ball, Gary Williams and Hannah Waddingham.

Having overcome the challenges of having a stutter, Rodney also devotes his time to helping others who face challenges in their communication and speech, using the power of singing to guide them towards greater fluency and confidence in his online platform 'Singing Speaking'.

Francesca Chiejina

Soprano



Nigerian-American soprano Francesca Chiejina is a recent graduate of the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. She studied at the University of Michigan and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and was a finalist in the inaugural Glyndebourne Opera Cup in 2018 and the 2017 Kathleen Ferrier Awards.

In the 2021-22 season she makes her role debuts as Mimi *La bohème* and Melissa *Amadigi* for English Touring Opera, followed by further performances as Mimi *La bohème* at Nevill Holt Opera. She has also sung Berg's *Seven Early Songs* with the Sinfonia of London at the BBC Proms, Mozart's *Requiem* with Crouch End Festival Chorus, and Bach's *St John Passion* with Huddersfield Choral Society.

Recent highlights include Miss Jessel *The Turn of the Screw* (OperaGlass Works); the title role in English Touring Opera's film of *Ariadne* by Elena Langer and Glyn Maxwell; Freia *RhineGold* (Birmingham Opera Company); Anne Trulove *The Rake's Progress* (Blackheath Halls Opera); Clara *Porgy and Bess* (Grange Park Opera); Aldimira *Sigismondo* (Capella Cracoviensis); Serena *Porgy and Bess* (Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal); Micaëla *La tragédie de Carmen* (ROH/Wilton's Music Hall); Melantho/Love *The Return of Ulysses* (ROH/Roundhouse); Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* with the BBC Philharmonic and the Royal Northern Sinfonia; Handel's *Messiah* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Albert Hall; Vaughan Williams' *Serenade to Music* at the Last Night of the BBC Proms; and the soprano solos in Gorecki's Third Symphony for the world premiere of a new work by Crystal Pite for The Royal Ballet.

Gweneth Ann Rand

Soprano



Gweneth Ann Rand trained at the University of Exeter, Goldsmith's College and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London. She is a former Vilar Young Artist at The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and in 2001 represented England at BBC Cardiff Singer of the World. She is currently an Associate Artist at Wigmore Hall.

Highlights in recent seasons include acclaimed performances of *4.48 Psychosis* for The Royal Opera/Lyric Hammersmith, Prototype Festival in New York, Opéra national du Rhin and Philharmonie de Paris; *Serena Porgy and Bess*; *Mother Hansel and Gretel* and *Chief Hen and Innkeeper's Wife The Cunning Little Vixen* for English National Opera; and *Mrs Grose* in a new filmed version of *The Turn of the Screw* for OperaGlass Works.

Her operatic engagements include *Aida* (English National Opera, Theater Bremen, Oper Kiel, Finnish National Opera, Macedonian Opera, Opera Poznan, Oldenburgisches Staatstheater); *Senta Der fliegende Holländer* (London Lyric Opera/Barbican); *Leonora La forza del destino* (Oper Köln); *Leonora Il trovatore* (Welsh National Opera); *Amelia Un ballo in maschera* and *Margherita/Helena Mefistofele* (Theater Erfurt); *Tosca* (Teatro Nacional de São Carlos); *Gutrune Götterdämmerung* (BBC Proms), and *Aida, Santuzza, La Gioconda, La Wally* and *Leonora La forza del destino* (Opera Holland Park).

Gweneth Ann is widely known for her acclaimed interpretations of Messiaen's song cycles *Harawi* (including Cheltenham Festival, Wigmore Hall and for Opera North) and *Poèmes pour Mi* (Gürzenich Orchester Köln, Tonhalle Orchester Zürich and BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra).

Ronald Samm

Tenor



Ronald Samm was born and grew up in Trinidad, West Indies. He studied singing and piano at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, followed by postgraduate study at the Royal Northern College of Music and the National Opera Studio.

Highlights in recent seasons include Peter in James Robinson's acclaimed production of *Porgy and Bess* for English National Opera and Dutch National Opera, and in Matthew Wild's production at the Theater an der Wien; *Olim Der Silbersee* for English Touring Opera; and Iro *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* for The Grange Festival.

His wide range of repertoire and performances includes the title role in *Otello*, Tambourmajor *Wozzeck* and Florestan *Fidelio* (Birmingham Opera Company, Sir Graham Vick); *Otello*, First Armed Man *The Magic Flute*, Big Prisoner *From the House of the Dead* (Opera North); Lazarus in John Adams's *The Gospel According to the Other Mary* (Theater Bonn); Canio *Pagliacci* (Scottish Opera and Everyman, Cork); Orfeo *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Everyman, Cork); Siegfried in Act III *Götterdämmerung* (Oper Wuppertal); Siegmund *Die Walküre* (Teatro Nacional de São Carlos); Walther von Stolzing *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (Fulham Opera); and Security Guard *Between Worlds* (English National Opera). In *Porgy and Bess* he has performed Sportin' Life (Opéra de Lyon/Edinburgh International Festival) and Jake (Lisbon).

On the concert platform his repertoire includes Handel *Messiah*; Bach *Magnificat* and *St John Passion*; Mendelssohn *Elijah*; Beethoven Mass in C; Mozart Requiem; Verdi Requiem; and Stainer *The Crucifixion*. He has appeared as The Preacher in Bernstein's *Mass* at the BBC Proms with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, and with the London Philharmonic Orchestra in a concert commemorating the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death.



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London Concert Choir

London Concert Choir had its 60th anniversary in 2020. Notable for the commitment and musicality of its performances in an unusually varied repertoire, LCC regularly appears with Mark Forkgen at London's premier concert venues, while tours abroad have included visits to France, Germany, Italy, Poland and Spain.

The choir's 50th anniversary saw two performances of Britten's *War Requiem*. Among other major works in recent seasons have been Mozart's Requiem with the London Mozart Players, Rachmaninov's choral symphony *The Bells* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Brahms' *German Requiem* and Vaughan Williams' *Sea Symphony*, all with Southbank Sinfonia.

Other operas in concert performance have ranged from Purcell's *King Arthur* to the London premiere of *The Chalk Legend* by Stephen McNeff. Performances with the Counterpoint period instrumental ensemble include Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *St Matthew* and *St John Passions* and *Christmas Oratorio*, Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610* and Schubert's rarely-heard Mass in E flat. LCC has also performed Ellington's *Sacred Concert*, Will Todd's *Mass in Blue* and a concert to mark Leonard Bernstein's centenary.

The choir often gives concerts for charity and continues to commission new works, including *A Light not yet Ready to Go Out* by Alison Willis, in aid of Breast Cancer Now, and *Per Ardua ad Astra*, a major work by Roderick Williams to commemorate the centenary of the RAF.

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William Durant
Fabyan Evans
Bram Frankhuijzen
Sam Hansford
Graham Hick
Richard Holmes
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Andrew Cullen
David Elkan
Chris Finch
James Finlay
Martin Goodwin
Nigel Grieve
Nigel Hartnell
Keith Holmes
Richard Hughes
Ian Judson
Robert Kealey
Stefan Klaazen
Simon Livesey
Paul Milican
Hamish Naismith
Joseph Pike
Morgan Roberts
Jonathan Rogers
Tom Roles
Anthony Sharp
John Somerville
Ryszard Stepaniuk
Wilson To
Tony Trowles
Dai Whittingham
Peter Yeadon



Canticum

Music Director: Mark Forkgen

Now in its 30th season, Canticum is one of London's leading chamber choirs, praised both for accomplished performances of major works and for exploring contemporary repertoire. The choir commissions new writing and gives regular first performances.

In the autumn of 2021, Canticum recorded an online Christmas carol concert for the Marie Curie charity, which supports people with terminal illness. The choir also performed a Restoration programme, and staged its own carol concert at St Saviour's, Pimlico. The last full season saw a Venetian-inspired programme in the unique layout of St Stephen Walbrook and a concert which combined Victoria's polyphony with Pärt and modern contemplative Tavener to a packed St Sophia's Cathedral in Bayswater.

Canticum joined London Concert Choir in the Barbican for a performance of Brahms's *German Requiem* and recorded a well-received album of sacred music by contemporary British composer Christopher Wright. Other recent highlights have included the premiere of Stephen McNeff's Armistice-inspired *Walking Shadows*, combined with a performance of Mozart's Requiem at St Martin-in-the-Fields, and performances of Poulenc's *Figure Humaine* and a new work by Hywel Davies at the Cheltenham Music Festival.

Canticum was invited to sing BBC Radio 4's Christmas Morning Service, has performed Bach's Mass in B Minor with the Orchestra of The Age of Enlightenment at St John's Smith Square and staged the premiere of the late Sir Peter Maxwell Davies's *Step by Circle*, a work dedicated to Mark Forkgen and the choir.

In 2008, Canticum opened the Chelsea Festival, providing choral voices for Pink Floyd's *Atom Heart Mother* alongside soloist David Gilmour. The choir has made regular trips abroad, touring with works including Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* and Handel's *Messiah* and *Israel in Egypt* – a performance which opened the Viterbo Early Music Festival.

Canticum's recording catalogue includes: 'Sacred Choral Music' by Christopher Wright; 'In the Gloom of Whiteness', with work by Colin Riley, Fraser Trainer and Keith Roberts; 'A Hymn to the Virgin', featuring Victoria, Poulenc and Panufnik; and two Christmas discs, 'A Christmas Carol' and 'The Christmas Story'.

canticumchamberchoir.com

Members of Canticum

Soprano

Mary Forkgen
Angela Jones
Susan Porter-Thomas
Angela Schmitz
Hannah Shield
Helen Walpole
Laura Willis

Alto

Sarah Beinart
Nancy Buchanan
Claire de Thierry
Ashlee Godwin
Jean Innes
Hilary Norman
Mary Ann Sieghart
Jan Trott

Tenor

Ed Allen
Edward Davison
Nigel Edmund Jones
Harry George
Richard Houston
Sam Olivier
Richard O'Neill
Nicholas Pyke

Bass

Mike Alban
Paul de Thierry
Richard Murray
Angus Saer
Matt Wallker

Children's Voices of Enfield

Children's Voices of Enfield (CVE) is a body of two choirs, aiming to provide young singers in Enfield and the surrounding area with an opportunity to experience quality musical training and performing.

Our vision is to inspire young people, aged between 4 and 16 to achieve a high standard in choral singing, musicianship and vocal production in a supportive and welcoming environment.

We are a non-auditioned mixed choir and enjoy singing a range of musical styles. Our aim is to make singing a fun-filled educational experience for children of all ages and musical ability, therefore inspiring those who may not have the opportunity to enjoy music in this way.

Lena Altuncevahir
Elysia Efstathiou
Clare Haeri
Dora Haeri
Elsie Laughland

Ali Mahmood
Sophia Mahmood
Shenelle Rankothgedara
Anastasia Small
Penny Wisell

The New Beacon Chapel Choir

The New Beacon Chapel Choir sings weekly evensongs in the school's St George's Chapel and has, in the last few years, sung evensong in Winchester Cathedral and Romsey Abbey.

The choir travels abroad every other year and has sung services at St Peter's in Rome and St Mark's Basilica in Venice. This October, the boys will be singing in Dubrovnik Cathedral.

Joel Adams
Edward Bowles
Severo Boyd
Charlie Clarke
Max Cowie
James Dimond

Rocco Frazer
Oscar Harrison
Ryley Johnson
Jasper Jones
Jake Lau
Mofeyintoluwa Obasola

Thomas Peterkin
Ethan Saunders
Hugh Smith
Tom Smith
Fraser Thomas
Oliver Witton

Each year, Southbank Sinfonia welcomes 33 of the world's most promising graduate musicians to embark on its renowned fellowship. The orchestra was founded in 2002 by Music Director Simon Over to provide graduate musicians with a much-needed springboard into the profession.

More than just an orchestra, this is a community where young talents can find their own creative strengths, fulfil personal goals, make lasting contacts, and take their musicianship to new frontiers. Alongside unparalleled opportunities to gain crucial experience in orchestral repertoire, chamber music, opera, dance and theatre, Southbank Sinfonia celebrates how intrepid young players can have a uniquely important voice in the sector, shaping the future of their artform.

Whether in Rush Hour Concerts, the hit production of *Amadeus* at the National Theatre, or through collaborations with the Royal Opera House, Sadler's Wells or boundary-pushing guest artists, Southbank Sinfonia's musicians bring fresh resonance to the stage. To date, almost 600 musicians have completed the programme and can be found worldwide in leading orchestras and acclaimed chamber ensembles, as inspiring music educators, and pioneering their own entrepreneurial musical ventures.

Most recently, the orchestra has merged with world-renowned venue St John's Smith Square. As one new charity, Southbank Sinfonia at St John's Smith Square creates a hub for world-class musical development, placing emerging talent at the heart of the organisation. It offers a permanent home for a renowned orchestral fellowship programme and acts as a beacon for the future of classical music, embracing versatility and innovation in everything from great symphonies to bold new musical adventures.

southbanksinfonia.co.uk



Southbank Sinfonia Players

Violin I

Hannah Bell
Flora Fontanelli
Daniel Jung
Rebecca Kohler Baratto
Sophie Philips
Patrizia Lichtscheidl
Emma Lisney
Cora Mina Iordache

Violin II

Eloise MacDonald
Veronica Marziano
Lorenzo Narici
Lydia Caines
Doris Kuo
Marie Lestrelin
Sophie Simpson

Viola

Georgie Davis
Anna Barsegjana
Anna Bielecka
Matt Johnstone
Sam Watkins
Kesari Pundarika

Cello

Idlir Shyti
Sarah Gait
Erlend Vestby
HeeYeon Cho
Melody Lin
Ricardo Tauber

Bass

Enzo Manuel dell'Oglio
Tom Morgan
Mark Lipski

Flute

Cathy Hare
Ellie Blamires

Oboe

Laura Campbell-Roberts
Laura Ware-Heine

Clarinet

Anthony Friend
Guillermo Ramasasa-Mortimer
Greg Hearle
Luke English

Bassoon

James Fisher

Horn

Helena Jacklin
Jack Sewter
Máté Tozser

Trumpet

Katie Lodge
Bradley Jones
Raffaele Chieli

Trombone

Iain Maxwell
Jim Alexander

Tuba

Carl Woodcroft

Timpani

Lewis Blee

Percussion

Aaron Townsend
James Crook

Harp

Daniel de Fry

Piano

James Longford

Banjo

David Massey

London Concert Choir

Supporting the Choir

London Concert Choir greatly appreciates the financial contribution of its regular supporters in helping the choir to maintain its position as one of London's leading amateur choirs. However, we cannot promote our concerts at major venues with professional performers of the required calibre unless we receive income from sources other than ticket sales.

The choir runs a Supporters' Scheme and also offers opportunities to sponsor soloists or orchestral players and to advertise in our concert programmes.

To find out more, please email treasurer@londonconcertchoir.org

Joining the Choir

London Concert Choir welcomes new members, who are invited to attend a few rehearsals before an informal audition. Rehearsals are on Monday nights at Bloomsbury Baptist Church near Tottenham Court Road station. If you are interested in joining the choir, please fill in your details online at www.londonconcertchoir.org

Mailing List

If you would like to receive advance information about our concerts, you can join the choir's free mailing list by clicking on the link on the home page of the website.

www.londonconcertchoir.org

The information you provide is subject to data protection regulations (GDPR) and as such will be used exclusively by London Concert Choir.

LCC Supporters

Sue Blyth
Deborah & Girome Bono
Angela Cooper
Andrew Cullen
Dianne Denham
Geoffrey Deville
Jamie and Serena Ede
Fabyan and Karen Evans
Judith Greenway
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Ian Judson
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Jill Marx
Janet and Michael Orr
Christopher and Jennifer Powell Smith
Caroline Proddow
Michael Shipley
Ruth Steinholtz
Clare Ford Wille
Charles Williams
Anthony Willson
Clare and Philip Ziegler

Life Friends

LCC is delighted to acknowledge the invaluable contribution made by the following individuals:

Peter Barley
Tim and Patricia Barnes
Anne Clayton
Mark Loveday
Sue McFadyen
Gregory and Helen Rose

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- Oar Making* 8-12 August
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Canticum

ANTIPHON

Antiphon settings by Byrd, Tallis, Victoria, Hildegard von Bingen, Perotin & Keith Roberts

Conductor: Mark Forkgen

Tickets: £15 available online at canticumchamberchoir.com or on the door



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311 Twyford Avenue,
Stamshaw **023 9263 9534**
Portsmouth, caseworkers@navalchildrenscharity.org.uk
PO2 8RN

Registered charity number: Royal Navy & Royal Marines Children's Fund 1160182



President: **Roderick Williams OBE**

Music Director: **Mark Forkgen**

FUTURE CONCERTS

Monday 17 October 2022, 7.30pm
Cadogan Hall, Sloane Terrace, SW1

Mozart: Ave Verum Corpus
Symphony No. 36 'Linz'
'Great' Mass in C minor

Saturday 10 December 2022, 7.30pm
St John's Smith Square, SW1

Christmas Concert

Tuesday 20 December 2022, 7.45pm
Holy Trinity Sloane Square, SW1

Carols for Choir and Audience

in aid of St George's Hospital Charity

Wednesday 22 March 2023, 7.45pm
Holy Trinity Sloane Square

Rachmaninov: Vespers (All-Night Vigil)