



# *The Chiltern Choir*

President: Patricia Parkes

Conductor: Michael Cayton

**Handel: *Dixit Dominus***

**Cayton:**

**The Way Through the Woods**

*World Premiere*

**Saturday March 16, 2024**

**Clarendon Muse Concert Hall,**

**Watford WD18 7JA**

## A welcome from the Chair

This is a really special concert for the Chiltern Choir, so thank you for being here to be part of it.

Tonight we are singing a new composition, commissioned by one of our members, Helen Heenan, and written by our Musical Director, Michael Cayton. You can read more about the inspiration behind this piece later in the programme. We are all very excited to be singing at the world premiere of this music. I'm really grateful to Helen and to Michael for the energy and commitment that has gone into making this happen – it is a very special occasion.



In tonight's concert we also revisit a previously cancelled performance of Handel's *Dixit Dominus*. Back in the days approaching the first covid lockdown, this was something we were ready to perform, but we had to cancel a week before the scheduled concert. Not surprisingly, after four years we felt a bit rusty in the early rehearsals, but we hope that you enjoy tonight's performance.

In April we will be collaborating with Chorleywood Orchestra – a first for us. We plan to have a day's workshop together, focussing on Beethoven's Choral Symphony, and later in the day we will perform a scratch concert. It will take place in St Andrew's Church, Chorleywood, so all very local; please keep an eye on the Choir website for further details.

It is lovely to see you here tonight.

Lyndsay Ward  
Chair

# Programme

Handel: *Dixit Dominus*

Soprano – Victoria Mulley

Soprano – Helena Raeburn

Mezzo-soprano – Helen Stanley

Tenor – Matthew Pochin

Bass – Barnaby Beer

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*Interval*

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Cayton: The Way Through the Woods  
(World Premiere)

Mezzo-soprano – Helen Stanley

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**The Chiltern Chamber Orchestra**

*Leader: Anastasia Stahlmann*

# Choir members singing this evening

## Sopranos:

Caroline Bartlett  
Hilary Broadbent  
Mary Bungard  
Anni Facer  
Gabrielle F  
Jenny Gorsuch  
Christine Guy  
Jill Haslam

Barbara Johnson  
Sue Kesteven  
Sue Lloyd  
Sarah Moreton  
Gillian Proctor  
Lyndsay Ward  
Gill Watson

## Altos:

Cathy Amos  
Sue Canderton  
Marian Davies  
Ana de'Ath  
Rita Fryer  
Philippa Goss  
Clare Hearnshaw  
Helen Heenan

Anne Keyworth  
Charlotte Kornhorst  
Fiona Lean  
Miriam Morgan  
Gillian Pugh  
Maggie Shrive  
Marian Wax  
Beryl Whittaker

## Tenors:

Gijs Crone  
Mick Currey  
Andy Etchells

Anju Sharda  
Isabel Walker

## Basses:

Paul Davies  
John Haslam  
James May

Martin Robinson  
Robert Thackery  
Richard Watson



## *Dixit Dominus*

1 *Dixit Dominus Domino meo: sede a dextris meis, donec ponam inimicos tuos scabellum pedum tuorum.*

The Lord said unto my Lord: Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

2 *Virgam virtutis tuae emittet Dominus ex Sion: dominare in medio inimicorum tuorum.*

The Lord shall send the rod of thy power out of Sion: be thou ruler, even in the midst among thine enemies.

3 *Tecum principium in die virtutis tuae in splendoribus sanctorum: ex utero, ante luciferum, genui te.*

In the day of thy power shall the people offer thee free-will offerings with an holy worship: the dew of thy birth is of the womb of the morning.

4 *Juravit Dominus et non poenitebit eum: tu es sacerdos in aeternum secundum ordinem Melchisedech.*

The Lord sware, and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedech.

5 *Dominus a dextris tuis: confregit in die irae suae reges.*

The Lord upon thy right hand: shall wound even kings in the day of his wrath.

6 *Judicabit in nationibus, implebit ruinas: conquassabit capita in terra multorum.*

He shall judge among the heathen; he shall fill the places with the dead bodies: and smite in sunder the heads over divers countries.

7 *De torrente in via bibet: propterea exaltabit caput.*

He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up his head.

8 *Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto: Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. World without end. Amen.

[The translation of the Latin text given here is from The Book of Common Prayer.]

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Handel was a prodigiously gifted musician who, by the time he had reached his twenties, was already an experienced composer and performer with an established reputation. Like many ambitious musicians he was drawn to Italy, the birthplace of opera, and so in 1707 he went to Rome for three years, where he hoped to further his career as an opera composer. Though raised in the Lutheran faith, Handel always willingly composed for other denominations and was soon patronised by the Catholic Church in Rome, and by many of the city's principal movers and shakers.

*Dixit Dominus* is a setting of Psalm 110 (109 in the Latin Vulgate) which Handel composed in 1707, when he was only 22. Along with other Latin psalm settings and motets composed at about the same time, it very probably formed part of a setting of the Carmelite Vespers for the feast of the Madonna del Carmine. The work is in eight movements, scored for five-part chorus, soloists, strings, and continuo.



At that time the talents of the finest Italian instrumentalists were regularly on display in the brilliant concertos of Vivaldi, Corelli, and others, and singers were similarly able to parade their skills in opera, the exciting new musical theatre that had become all the rage thanks to composers such as Alessandro Scarlatti and Antonio Caldara. *Dixit Dominus* is a showpiece for both singers and players alike, and whilst its unremitting energy and dramatic intensity presents all the musicians with considerable challenges, the demands that Handel makes on the choir are extremely testing, and seldom equalled in his later works. The piece is an extraordinary *tour de force*, particularly for a 22-year-old composer, and demonstrates Handel's precocious mastery of counterpoint, of harmonic and melodic invention, and, perhaps most impressively, of powerful dramatic gesture. Clearly, he viewed the commission as an opportunity to display his total command of the Italian style, and so make the most memorable impression possible on his hosts. Not surprisingly, *Dixit Dominus* is regarded as one of his finest works.

It seems likely that the text was originally intended for a coronation, later becoming part of the liturgy for Sunday Vespers and the ordination of priests. It is one of the most frequently referenced psalms, and from early times has been seen as one of the primary portrayals of Christ as prophet, priest, and king, not only of his own people but of all nations. Nowadays it seems uncomfortably bellicose, but in Handel's time it would have been cheerfully read as a prophecy of Christ's victory over not only his Earthly enemies, but also over the devil and all his works.

The psalm is set by Handel to music of exceptional brilliance, the dramatic contrasts within and between movements vividly illustrating and reinforcing the words. The work is unified by a plainsong *cantus firmus* – a melody in greatly extended notes, against which the remaining parts weave decorative lines – which appears in both the opening and closing movements. After the energetic opening chorus comes a simple and elegant alto solo, followed by a beautifully lyrical movement for soprano, built on a repeated triplet figure. The drama resumes in the fourth movement, one of alternating slow and fast sections, the measured *Juravit Dominus* being notable for its daring chromatic harmony and bold dissonances.

The sixth and longest movement combines verses five and six of the psalm text. The unmistakable influence of Corelli can be heard in the instrumental introduction, with the two violin parts and then the voices constantly overlapping in a series of striking suspensions. The ensuing section, *Judicabit in nationibus*, is a busy fugato which appropriately disintegrates at the word '*ruinas*'. There follows one of the most remarkable passages in this unique work: a series of percussive chords repeated to the same syllable (a device very reminiscent of Monteverdi) graphically depicts a crushing military victory. The *Gloria* brings back the *cantus firmus*, this time set against even more brilliant figuration than in the opening movement, and the work closes with an extended and superbly executed fugue.

*John Bawden*



# The Way Through the Woods

## *Prologue*

Look to this day for it is like  
The very life of life.  
In its brief course lie all  
The realities and truths of existence.  
The joy of growth, the splendour of action,  
The glory of power.  
Look well, therefore, to this day.  
Such is the salutation of the dawn.

*Kalidasa*

I'm sorry my Friends,  
I didn't want to stop you  
When you were having such a fine time.  
But this is an emergency,  
Your house is all on fire.  
And if we do not rise up now,  
All this will turn to ashes.

©Blythe Pepino (*Extinction Rebellion*)  
*Used with the kind permission of the author*

## *Spring*

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now  
Is hung with bloom along the bough,  
And stands about the woodland ride  
Wearing white for Eastertide.

*A.E. Housman*

A wisp of smoke springs from a small flame at  
the end of a match. The entire forest holds its  
breath as it falls to the mossy floor. Black acrid  
smoke dances through the air, burning all life.

*Anon*

Vanishing! Saving!  
Standing in nature's way!  
Life-saving cures wiped out.

*Anon*

I'm sorry my Friends,  
I didn't want to trouble you,  
When you were having such a hard time.  
But this is an emergency,  
Your house is all on fire.  
And if we do not rise up now,  
We soon will all be burning.

*Blythe Pepino*

## *Summer*

Sumer is icumen in, Lhude sing cuccu!  
Groweth sed and bloweth med and spring the woode nu, Sing  
cuccu!  
Awe bleteth after lomb, lhouth after calver cu.  
Bulluc sterteth, bucke verteth  
Murie sing cuccu! Sing cuccu!

*Traditional*

"Storm Sandy took us by surprise. We didn't expect to be hit hard, and we didn't evacuate. We had to climb up on our roof to get away from the flood. We were scared. It was a terrible night. Many people in our neighbourhood lost their lives."

*Anon*

I'm sorry my Friends,  
I didn't want to frighten you,  
When you were having such a fine time.  
But this is an emergency,  
The waters are all climbing.  
And so we have to rise up now  
Or we will soon be drowning

*Blythe Pepino*

## *Autumn*

Fall, leaves, fall: die, flowers, away;  
Lengthen night and shorten day;  
Every leaf speaks bliss to me  
Fluttering from the autumn tree.

*Emily Brontë*

"Clearing the forest the machine operator slowly pushed over the trees. I picked up the sloths that fell from the canopy. Fourteen quickly turned to two hundred, the sloth lover's dream come true. All to be released soon, although a new patch of forest is slated soon to be cleared."

*Anon*

I'm sorry my Friends,  
That we have all been arguing,  
And now we're nearly out of time.  
But this is an emergency,  
There'll be no food for eating.  
And so we have to rise up now,  
And change our way of thinking  
And join the rebellion.

*Blythe Pepino*

## ***Winter***

Frozen in the present of the accident, the land comes to a standstill. Trees do not decay. The silhouettes of plants are unchanged, caesium-137 is at work.

©Anais Tondeur

*(From the Chernobyl Herbarium,  
by Michael Marder and Anais Tondeur.  
Used with kind permission of the author.)*

Come, come thou bleak December wind,  
And blow the dry leaves from the tree!  
Flash, like a Love-thought, thro' me, Death  
And take a Life that wearies me.

*Samuel Taylor Coleridge*

Storm and destruction shattering  
Strike fear upon the world.  
The winds are out and through high heaven  
Their Bacchanals are hurled.  
Their league is broken,  
Burst the girth,  
And launched their fury  
On the earth.  
The Sirius shines no more at all.  
And heaven is hung with blackest pall.

Yet through the summits of the day  
Flashes afar the livid Levin.  
And cataracts of pallid fire  
Pour from the crests,  
From the toppling crests of heaven.  
Struggling with clouds the mountains stand  
And blow the dry leaves from the tree!  
The dark sea masses on the strand.

*A Scholar of Malmesbury*

They shut the road through the woods  
Seventy years ago.  
Weather and rain have undone it again,  
And now you would never know  
There was once a road through the woods  
Before they planted the trees.

*Rudyard Kipling*

For winter's rains and ruins are over,  
And all the season of snows and sins;  
The days dividing lover and lover,  
The light that loses,  
The night that wins.

And time remembered is grief forgotten,  
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,  
And in green underwood and cover  
Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

*Algernon Charles Swinburne*



# **The Way Through the Woods:**

## **An introduction by Helen Heenan**

In June 2019 Fiona Lean (then Chair of the Chiltern Choir) and I chatted about the possibility of Michael writing another piece for the Choir. We had performed his successful *Missa Beatae Virginis Mariae*, commissioned by Patricia Parkes, and I was sure that he would be capable of writing something more ambitious, more challenging.

On my behalf (but anonymously) Fiona approached Michael, citing: "I'd like him to develop his ideas in a longer piece than the movements of the Mass, based on secular theme – possibly 'for the beauty of the Earth', and our responsibility for it."

When a positive reply came back from Michael I was delighted, but also unprepared with any specific texts or more-detailed ideas. I sat at my computer and wrote to Michael with some of the ideas that came to me then, based on what was happening in the world around me, and on some of my thoughts about the things that matter. Here is some of what I wrote:

"I really love your Mass, and have always thought you could do more. I'll never compose anything myself, but it would be a real pleasure for me to help someone else create something beautiful. I would like the piece to be secular, either a single piece, or three to four 'movements' (I'm thinking of challenging you to write something longer than previously); the style – entirely up to you.



It's currently the 50th anniversary of the Apollo Mission that landed on the Moon, and the first photograph of our blue planet came in 1972 from Apollo 17. This photo is incredibly significant in illustrating not only the sheer beauty of the Earth, but also our place in the universe. Our beautiful planet is in danger of being destroyed by our own hand. We have to act to stop that. Extinction Rebellion have songs, and use them in campaigning; I especially like the 'This is an emergency' theme." I also quoted a couple of video links.

Then I thought about what texts I might suggest, but struggled. On the shelf behind my computer screen stood an A4-sized copy of the Sanskrit poem *Look to this Day*. It was an obvious choice, but that was all I had. I mentioned '*Carpe Diem*', the true sense of which is not unrestrained hedonism, but as Horace meant it, "one should not leave to chance future happenings, but rather one should do all one can today to make the future better." *Look to this Day* is quoted throughout Michael's piece, as is the Extinction Rebellion song. The text of *Carpe Diem* is not, but it certainly feels to me as though the subtext is very much present.

And all the rest is Michael's.

Later that summer we got together and discussed what was now a project. The Four Seasons idea was already there, as was the idea of Chernobyl and its legacy, for the Winter section. It's taken longer than we expected for the work to be ready, for some obvious reasons, but now we have something very special from Michael: a unique piece of music, beautiful, innovative, technically accomplished, but above all a joy to perform, and a message of hope.

# The Way Through the Woods:

## Composer's notes

When I was first asked to write this piece, the commission called for a substantial work, secular in nature, with an environmental message. This presented an exciting challenge, as everything I had composed so far had been set to existing texts. Being of a secular nature, there was no pre-existing structure on which to hang this piece; I had to start from scratch.

I had been given some text ideas by Helen, particularly the Sanskrit text *Look to this Day* and the Extinction Rebellion song. I decided to base the piece around the four seasons, which led me on a delightful poetry hunt for texts that might be suitable. There were a number of poems that stood out immediately; Housman's *Loveliest of Trees* and the traditional *Summer is icummen in* were helpful starting points. Internet searches provided the poem<sup>1</sup> *Vanishing! saving!*, which I found extremely useful to set as a fughetta in the 'Spring' section.

I interspersed the poetry with first-hand accounts of environmental issues, some taken from the BBC news archive. 'Spring' deals with forest fires, 'Summer' with hurricanes, and 'Autumn' with deforestation. Each movement contains a verse from the Extinction Rebellion song *I'm sorry my Friends*, which warns the listener of the danger presented by these environmental concerns. For 'Winter', the darkest moment of the piece, I make a link with nuclear radiation through Anaïs Tondeur's first-hand account of the damage done to nature following the accident at Chernobyl. This, coupled with the

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<sup>1</sup> The website where I found the poem did not attribute an author; I would be delighted to find out who wrote it so that I can credit them accordingly.

Malmesbury Scholar's poem *Storm and destruction*, creates a new meaning, warning of nuclear catastrophe. However, the overriding message of the piece is one of hope and of nature's capacity to heal.

The work opens with a solo violin playing the most dissonant interval (minor 2nd), followed by a slightly less dissonant major 2nd, leading to a major triad in the 2nd inversion. This takes the listener from a harsh dissonance to a beautiful consonance. The final section sets Swinbourne's poem *For winter's rains and ruins are over* in the form of a chorale. The text speaks that at the end of the darkest winter frosts will be no more and, blossom by blossom, the spring will return.

The title of the piece, *The Way Through the Woods*, is borrowed from Kipling's poem. This poem has always had a particular resonance for me; on my visits to Yorkshire I often walk along what was, until a few years ago, the York to Harrogate road (A59). The road was straightened and enlarged and the old road abandoned. The land owner had the tarmac dug up and planted trees, and the area is now a small but beautiful woodland. As Kipling wrote, "You would never know there was once a road through the woods". We see time and time again how nature has the capacity to heal itself, if only we let it.

*Michael Cayton*

# This Evening's Performers

## Michael Cayton – Conductor

Last season Michael celebrated his 20<sup>th</sup> year as the Chiltern Choir's musical director. Under his baton the Choir have performed a wide-ranging repertoire, from Monteverdi's *Vespers* to the *Mass in Blue* by Will Todd, and everything in between; he brings a wealth of choral conducting, arranging, and recording experience to his position.

Michael was appointed Director of Music of Watford Philharmonic Society in September 2014. As well as his duties to the Choir and WPS, Michael holds the position of Director of Music at St John's Wood Church, where he directs the critically acclaimed professional choir.

Over the years Michael has written a number of choral works, some of which are performed nationally by church choirs on a weekly basis. His Mass setting *Missa Beatae Virginis Mariae* has been performed by several choirs and is published by Shorterhouse publications. Tonight sees the premiere of *The Way Through The Woods*, a large-scale piece based on poems around the four seasons.

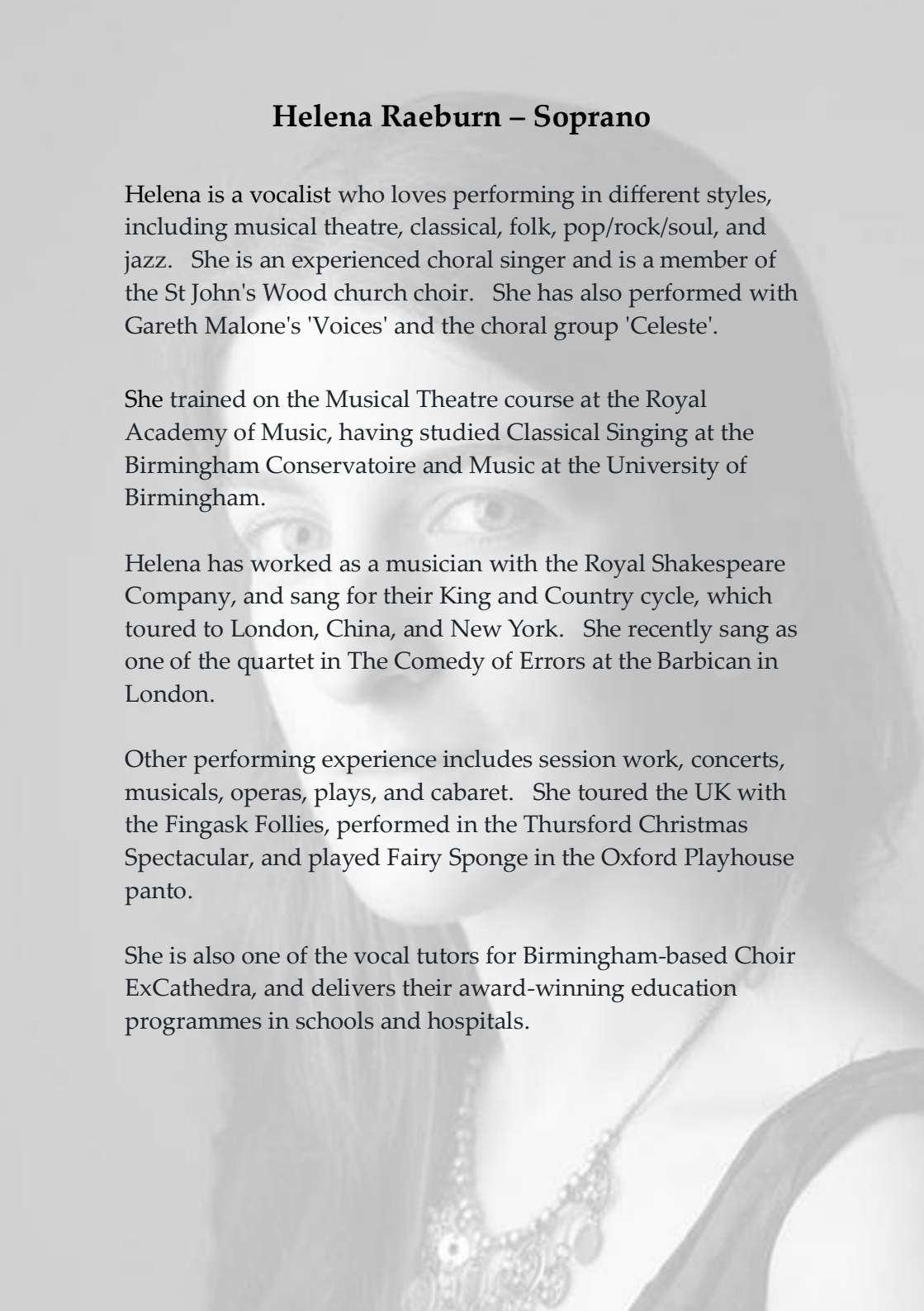
Michael also works as a freelance organist and pianist. He can be heard regularly playing for services and concerts at St Martin in the Fields and St Stephen's Church, Walbrook.

## Victoria Mulley – Soprano

Victoria grew up in Bradford, West Yorkshire; she read Music at King's College London, and later gained a Masters with Distinction in Vocal Performance from Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance. During her time at Trinity Laban she was awarded the Elliot Rosenblatt Memorial Scholarship and the Eva Malpass Scholarship, as well as winning the Paul Simm Opera Prize, the Linda Hirst Prize for Excellence in Contemporary Vocal Music, and the English Song Duo Prize (alongside pianist Francesca Lauri). Victoria was a finalist in the inaugural New Voices Singing Competition at the Northern Aldborough Festival 2023.

She has sung in operatic productions for companies including Barefoot Opera, Opera Loki, About Turn Theatre, and the New London Opera Group, appearing at the Tête à Tête, Grimeborn, and Edinburgh Fringe Festivals, and is equally at home on the concert stage, where she has performed as soprano soloist in oratorios including Haydn's *Nelson Mass*, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*, Fauré's *Requiem*, and Handel's *Messiah*, as well as appearing in recital across the UK.

As well as her solo work, Victoria sings regularly with the choir of St John's Wood Parish Church and is one of the two founders and directors of The Lyra Singers, a chamber choir based in Knightsbridge. She is also a keen composer and improviser; she debuted her first semi-improvised song cycle, *Ave Femina*, in May 2022, and is currently working on a second.



## Helena Raeburn – Soprano

Helena is a vocalist who loves performing in different styles, including musical theatre, classical, folk, pop/rock/soul, and jazz. She is an experienced choral singer and is a member of the St John's Wood church choir. She has also performed with Gareth Malone's 'Voices' and the choral group 'Celeste'.

She trained on the Musical Theatre course at the Royal Academy of Music, having studied Classical Singing at the Birmingham Conservatoire and Music at the University of Birmingham.

Helena has worked as a musician with the Royal Shakespeare Company, and sang for their King and Country cycle, which toured to London, China, and New York. She recently sang as one of the quartet in The Comedy of Errors at the Barbican in London.

Other performing experience includes session work, concerts, musicals, operas, plays, and cabaret. She toured the UK with the Fingask Follies, performed in the Thursford Christmas Spectacular, and played Fairy Sponge in the Oxford Playhouse panto.

She is also one of the vocal tutors for Birmingham-based Choir ExCathedra, and delivers their award-winning education programmes in schools and hospitals.

## Helen Stanley – Mezzo-Soprano

Helen studied at the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama, where she won several prizes including the Seligman Award for Excellence. Her solo concert highlights include J.S. Bach's *St John Passion* and *Mass in B Minor* with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* with the Southbank Sinfonia, Daniel-Lesur's *Cantique des Cantiques* with the BBC Symphony Chorus, and Schmitt's *Tragédie de Salomé* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra. She has also appeared in opera galas with Welsh National Opera and Mid Wales Opera.

Helen's recent opera projects include the UK tour of *Borka: The Goose with No Feathers*, an opera for children featuring puppets and animation. She has also appeared as the Lay Sister in Grange Park Opera's film of *Suor Angelica*, and toured the Netherlands in a production of *Das Wunder der Heliane* with the Nederlandse Reisopera. Most recently, she was involved in a large-scale arena tour of *Aida* across Germany, which will resume in Europe in 2025.

Other recent opera projects have included *The Power of Paternal Love* by Stradella, in its first performance since 1678, and *Gods of the Game*, a new opera written to celebrate the 2022 World Cup, broadcast by Sky Arts. Other roles have included L'Opinion Publique (*Orphée ux Enfers*), Juno (*Semele*), Isabella (*L'Italiana in Algeri*), Witch (*Hansel and Gretel*), Popova (*The Bear*) and Geneviève (*Pelléas et Mélisande*).

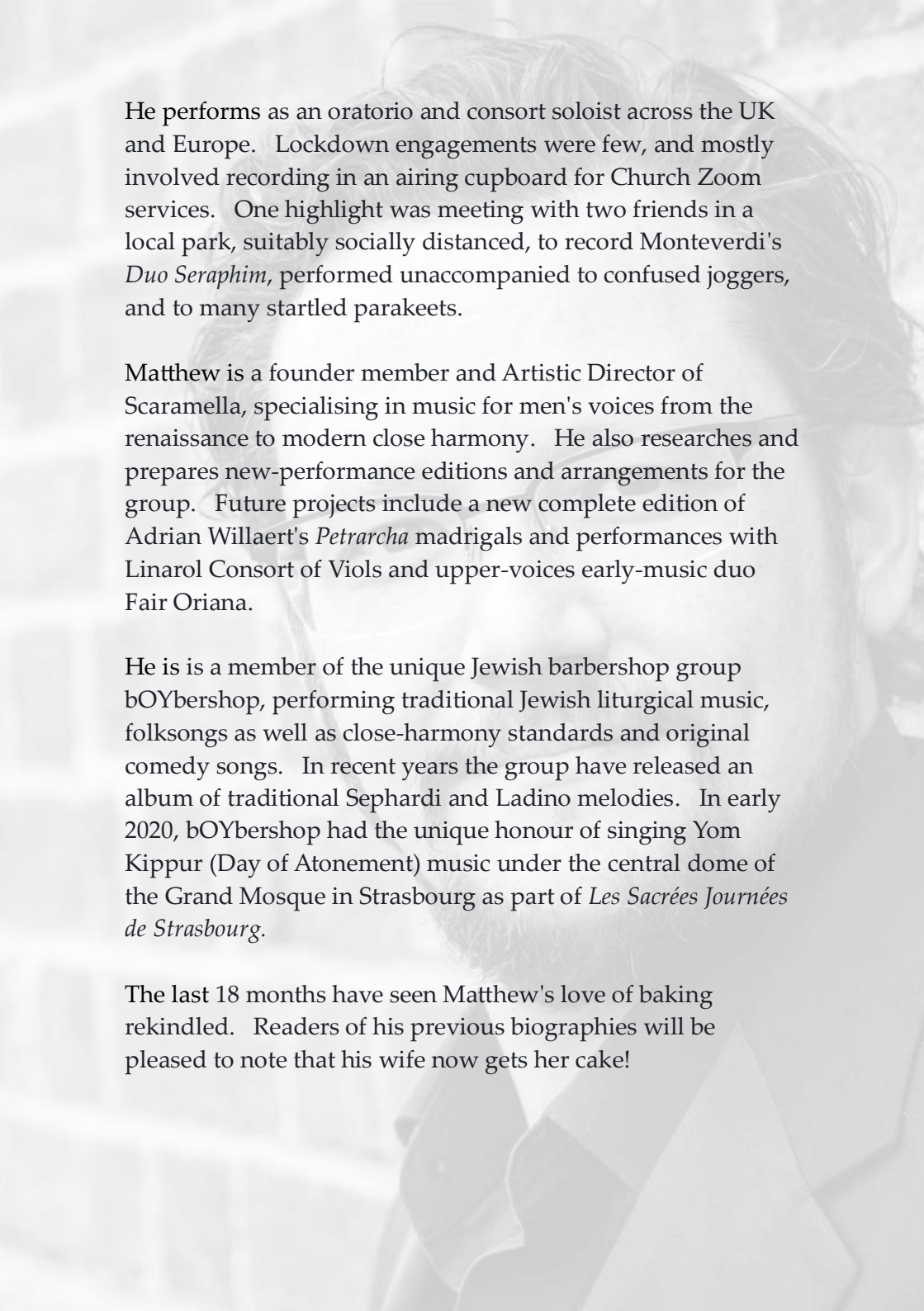


Helen has also premiered works at Grimeborn, Tête à Tête, and the Sage, Gateshead (now The Glasshouse), as well as site-specific performances of new music at the Foundling Museum, Greenwich Observatory and the National Portrait Gallery. She is particularly interested in performing the works of under-represented female composers of the past, and recently appeared as Mary in the UK premiere and subsequent revival of Amy Beach's 1932 opera *Cabildo* at Grimeborn Festival and Wilton's Music Hall in London. Future plans include a recital of baroque works by Barbara Strozzi, Antonia Bembo and Isabella Leonarda, and *Serenade to Music* with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields.

## **Matthew Pochin – Tenor**

Matthew Pochin began his career as a chorister at Hereford Cathedral, where he later became a choral scholar and lay clerk. He went on to study with Marilyn Rees and Buddug Verona Jones at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. He currently studies privately with Gavin Carr.

After several years working as a pastry chef, in 2007 Matthew moved to South London to continue his career as a singer. He has held positions at several churches across the city and now sings with the choirs of St John's Wood Parish Church and Belsize Square Synagogue. He also sings regularly with the choirs of HM Chapel Royal, Hampton Court, Temple Church, and St Mary-le-Bow in the City of London.




He performs as an oratorio and consort soloist across the UK and Europe. Lockdown engagements were few, and mostly involved recording in an airing cupboard for Church Zoom services. One highlight was meeting with two friends in a local park, suitably socially distanced, to record Monteverdi's *Duo Seraphim*, performed unaccompanied to confused joggers, and to many startled parakeets.

Matthew is a founder member and Artistic Director of Scaramella, specialising in music for men's voices from the renaissance to modern close harmony. He also researches and prepares new-performance editions and arrangements for the group. Future projects include a new complete edition of Adrian Willaert's *Petrarcha* madrigals and performances with Linarol Consort of Viols and upper-voices early-music duo Fair Oriana.

He is is a member of the unique Jewish barbershop group bOYbershop, performing traditional Jewish liturgical music, folksongs as well as close-harmony standards and original comedy songs. In recent years the group have released an album of traditional Sephardi and Ladino melodies. In early 2020, bOYbershop had the unique honour of singing Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) music under the central dome of the Grand Mosque in Strasbourg as part of *Les Sacrées Journées de Strasbourg*.

The last 18 months have seen Matthew's love of baking rekindled. Readers of his previous biographies will be pleased to note that his wife now gets her cake!



## Barnaby Beer – Baritone

Barnaby studied French and German at the University of Bristol, and completed the Opera Performance Diploma at the Associated Studios. He has performed various roles in Gilbert & Sullivan productions for Opera Anywhere, and also sang Don Alfonso for Felici Opera. For Windsor and Eton Opera he has performed the role of Escamillo (*Carmen*) and Count (*The Marriage of Figaro*).

Other performances include the title role in *Don Giovanni* for St Paul's Opera, Il Conte (*Le nozze di Figaro*) for Dulwich Opera, and Papageno (*The Magic Flute*) for St John's Opera. He has performed the title role of *Gianni Schicchi* in Italy for Handmade Opera and Baron Douphol (*La Traviata*) in France with Westminster Opera Company.

He has sung with the choruses of Bury Court Opera and Winslow Hall Opera. He also works with contemporary composers, creating the roles of Auctioneer (*The Auction* by Karl Fiorini) at the Stara Zagora Opera in Bulgaria and Virmula/Jailbird in Lewis Coenen-Rowe's *Collision*, a comic opera in banalities at the Grimeborn Opera Festival at the Arcola Theatre.

On the concert platform Barnaby has performed numerous works, including bass soloist in Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with the Phoenix Orchestra at St John's Smith Square. Away from singing, Barnaby works as a Monkey Music teacher and also works in the accounts department for HarrisonParrott. He juggles all this work whilst being a stay-at-home father to daughters Josie and Clara!

## **Anastasia Stahlmann – Orchestra Leader**

British violinist Anastasia Stahlmann was born and raised in Buckinghamshire, where she started learning the violin at the age of six.

As a teenager, she was accepted at the Junior Department of Trinity Laban, where she achieved her ATCL recital diploma, and was presented with the Progress Award upon leaving. Subsequently, she studied for her BMus degree with John Crawford and Clare Thompson at Trinity Laban, where she graduated in 2018, achieving First-class Honours. Anastasia completed her Master of Arts degree at Trinity Laban, where she graduated with distinction in July 2020. Her studies were supported, with gratitude, by the Leverhulme Arts Trust, Trinity Laban Award, Dame Susan Morden, and Trinity College London scholarships.

Anastasia is an experienced orchestral player, and has freelanced with orchestras in London and around the UK, including London Sinfonietta, Dorset Opera Festival Orchestra, and London Contemporary Music Festival Orchestra. She is also a Visiting Music Teacher of Violin at Dulwich College, and sings as a soprano in several professional choirs across London.

Anastasia plays on a violin by Ben Conover (2011), kindly funded by the Wolfson Instrument Fund and EMI Music Sound Foundation, using a Vuillaume bow on loan from her mother.

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- Complimentary concert tickets during the season
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Mrs M. Bramall	Mr N.B. Kingon	Mrs B. Tomsett
Mrs C. Dyas	Mrs W.M. Kingon	Mrs S. Treanor

*The following have been made honorary members, in recognition of extended service to the Choir:*

## **Mrs Patricia Parkes – President**

Mrs K. Darby	Mrs S. Lawman	Mr D. Treanor
Mr M. Gaudie	Mr D. Lloyd	Mr N. Wax
Prof. I.D. Howarth	Dame G. Pugh	



The Chiltern Singers, a small group drawn from the Chiltern Choir, is available to sing at events – weddings, funerals, social functions, etc.

Please direct enquiries to John Haslam by email (preferred):  
[chilternsingers@chilternchoir.org.uk](mailto:chilternsingers@chilternchoir.org.uk)  
or by 'phone, 01494 724125

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### **The Chiltern Choir – dates for your diary:**

**2024 April 20:** Beethoven's 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony: workshop with Chorleywood Orchestra, followed by a scratch concert performance.

(St Andrew's Church, Chorleywood)

**2024 June 22:** A family-friendly concert for ages 5 to 95. Includes Rutter, *The Reluctant Dragon*; Horowitz, *Captain Noah and his Floating Zoo*; and Coleman, *The Rhythm of Life*.  
(Christ Church, Chorleywood)

Watch for details at [chilternchoir.org.uk](http://chilternchoir.org.uk) or on [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/chilternchoir).

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