



# PETITE MESSE SOLENNELLE ROSSINI

Piano: Francis Pott

Harmonium: Martin Hall

Conductor: Jeremy Backhouse

**Vivace**  
Chorus

**Saturday**  
**20th Nov 2010**

**7.30 pm Guildford Cathedral**

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**President Sir David Willcocks CBE MC**

*Rossini: Petite Messe Solennelle*

<b>Deboragh Abbott</b>	<b>Soprano</b>
<b>Natalia Brzezinska</b>	<b>Mezzo-soprano</b>
<b>Stephen Aviss</b>	<b>Tenor</b>
<b>Charles Rice</b>	<b>Baritone</b>
<b>Francis Pott</b>	<b>Piano</b>
<b>Martin Hall</b>	<b>Harmonium</b>

**conductor**  
**Jeremy Backhouse**

## PRE-CONCERT TALK

### Rossini – A Maestro Misunderstood

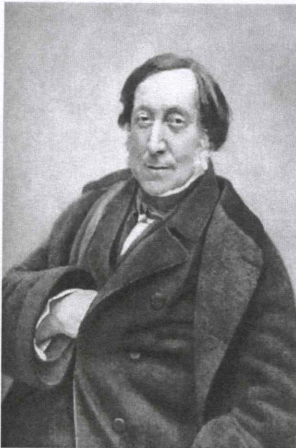
This will start at 6.30pm in the Chapter House of the Cathedral. The speaker will be Gillian Ramsden. Yorkshire-born, into a musical family, Gillian went on to study singing and piano at the Royal College of Music.

She began her singing career in the Royal Opera chorus, Covent Garden. Whilst a member of the company she was chosen by Pierre Boulez to sing a boy's role in Debussy's *Pelleas and Melisande*, which led to a career specialising in similar roles, with Scottish Opera, Welsh National Opera Company and companies on the continent, as well as on radio and television.

On retiring from the professional stage, Gillian moved to Cranleigh, becoming Musical Director of several choirs and a teacher of singing, as well as taking the position of Singing Co-ordinator at Guildford School of Acting. Gillian continues to direct a choir which she formed at Elmbridge Retirement Village and to work as a private singing teacher.

Please note: Members of the audience who wish to attend the talk and do not already have reserved seating can reserve their concert seats beforehand in the appropriate unreserved areas of the Cathedral. The talk should finish at 7.10pm, allowing time to order refreshments etc.

### Gioacchino Rossini (1792 – 1868)



Rossini is renowned largely for his prolific operatic output and, with the one notable exception of the work being performed tonight, little else.

He was born into a musical family in Pesaro, Italy, learnt the horn and singing, and as a boy, sang in at least one opera in Bologna, where the family lived. He studied there and began his operatic career when, at 18, he wrote a one-act comedy for Venice. Further commissions followed, from Bologna, Ferrara, Venice and Milan; seven operas were written in 16 months, all but one of them comic.

This level of activity continued in the ensuing years. His first operas to win international acclaim date from 1813: the serious *Tancredi* and the farcically comic *L'italiana in Algeri*. In 1815 Rossini went to Naples as musical and artistic director of the Teatro San Carlo, where he concentrated on serious opera. He was, however, allowed to compose for other theatres, and two of his supreme comedies, *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and *La Cenerentola*, date from this time.

In 1823 Rossini moved to Paris, where he took on the directorship of the Théâtre-Italien, composing for that theatre and the Opéra. His last opera, and his 36th in 19 years, was *Guillaume Tell*, completed in 1829. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that he wrote no more stage works during the remaining 40 years of his life. After a period in Italy, during which his health was poor and he composed very little, he returned to Paris in 1855, where his health, humour and urge to compose all returned.

One product of his late period was the *Petite Messe Solennelle*, which is neither very 'petite' (it fills an entire concert programme), nor very 'solennelle' (solemnity surfaces only rarely). It was written in 1863 when Rossini was 71 and falls under the broad group of works which he described as the "sins of my old age". The over-riding mood is light-hearted and joyous; however, if one can enter both the spirit of the age in which it was written and Rossini's idiom, its depth of sincerity can be clearly understood. As Rossini himself said when he had completed the work: "Here it is then, this poor little Mass. I was born for *opera buffa*, as you well know. A little science, a little heart, that is all. So blessed be thy name, and grant me a place in Paradise!"

A few years after the first performance, Rossini was persuaded to score the work for full orchestra, but nothing is added to the stature of the work and Rossini remarked "I prefer it with the accompaniment of piano and harmonium as we performed it." In fact, a significant part of the appeal of the piece lies in its original keyboard parts. The harmonium, also known as the 'orgue expressif', was developed in France during the mid-19th century. Its sustaining power, combined with the melodic and percussive quality of the piano, creates a well-balanced and colourful accompaniment.

Rossini set the normal mass text, apart from the unusual inclusion of the soprano solo *O Salutaris* as the penultimate item. Particular high points in the music are the two contrapuntal passages for the choir – *Cum sancto Spiritu* and *Et vitam venturi saeculi* (in the *Et resurrexit*) and a tribute to the keyboard works of Bach – the *Prélude religieux*.

The Italian critic, Filippi, described the work as "The greatest seal on his genius and his glory."

I. KYRIE	Soloists and chorus
II. GLORIA	
<i>Gloria in excelsis Deo</i>	Soloists and chorus
<i>Gratias agimus tibi</i>	Trio: Mezzo-soprano, tenor and bass
<i>Domine Deus</i>	Tenor solo
<i>Qui tollis</i>	Duet: soprano and mezzo-soprano
<i>Quoniam</i>	Bass solo
<i>Cum sancto Spiritu</i>	Soloists and chorus
III. CREDO	
<i>Credo in unum Deum</i>	Soloists and chorus
<i>Crucifixus</i>	Soprano solo
<i>Et resurrexit</i>	Soloists and chorus
IV. PRÉLUDE RELIGIEUX	Piano and harmonium
V. SANCTUS	Soloists and chorus
VI. O SALUTARIS	Soprano solo
VII. AGNUS DEI	Mezzo-soprano solo and chorus

## Part I

### I. KYRIE – Soloists and chorus

<i>Kyrie eleison.</i>	Lord, have mercy.
<i>Christe eleison.</i>	Christ, have mercy.
<i>Kyrie eleison.</i>	Lord, have mercy.

### II. GLORIA

#### *Gloria in excelsis Deo* – Soloists and chorus

<i>Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.</i>	Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace to men of goodwill.
<i>Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te, glorificamus te.</i>	We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee.

#### *Gratias* – Trio: Mezzo-soprano, tenor and bass

<i>Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.</i>	We give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory.
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**Domine Deus – Tenor solo**

*Domine Deus, Rex coelestis,  
Deus Pater omnipotens.  
Domine Fili unigenite,  
Jesu Christe;  
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei,  
Filius Patris.*

O Lord God, heavenly King,  
God The Father Almighty.  
O Lord the only begotten Son,  
Jesus Christ;  
O Lord God, Lamb of God,  
Son of the Father.

**Qui tollis – Duet: soprano and mezzo-soprano**

*Qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.  
Qui tollis peccata mundi,  
suscipe deprecationem nostram.  
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,  
miserere nobis.*

Thou that takest away the sins of the  
world, have mercy upon us.  
Thou that takest away the sins of the  
world, receive our prayer.  
Thou who sittest at the right hand of  
the Father, have mercy upon us.

**Quoniam – Bass solo**

*Quoniam tu solus sanctus.  
Tu solus Dominus.  
Tu solus altissimus,  
Jesu Christe.*

For Thou only art holy.  
Thou only art the Lord.  
Thou only art most high,  
O Jesus Christ.

**Cum sancto Spiritu – Soloists and chorus**

*Cum sancto Spiritu,  
in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.  
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Amen.*

With the Holy Spirit, in the glory  
of God the Father. Amen.  
Glory be to God on high, Amen.

~ Interval ~

**Part II****III. CREDO****Credo in unum Deum – Soloists and chorus**

*Credo in unum Deum  
Patrem omnipotentem  
factorem coeli et terrae,  
visibilium omnium et invisibilium.  
Credo in unum Deum  
Et in unum Dominum Jesum  
Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum,  
Et ex Patre natum ante  
omnia saecula.*

I believe in one God,  
the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
and of all things visible and invisible.  
I believe in one God,  
And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the  
only begotten Son of God,  
Begotten of his Father before  
all worlds.

*Credo in unum Deum,  
Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine,  
Deum verum de Deo vero.  
Genitum, non factum,  
consubstantialem Patri,  
per quem omnia facta sunt.*

I believe in one God,  
God of God, light of light,  
Very God of very God.  
Begotten, not made, being of one  
substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made.

*Qui propter nos homines  
et propter nostram salutem  
descendit de coelis.  
Credo.  
Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto  
ex Maria Virgine:  
et homo factus est.*

Who for us men  
and for our salvation  
came down from heaven.  
I believe. And was incarnate by the  
Holy Ghost  
of the Virgin Mary:  
and was made man.

**Crucifixus – Soprano solo**

*Crucifixus etiam pro nobis  
sub Pontio Pilato:  
passus, et sepultus est.*

And was crucified also for us  
under Pontius Pilate:  
suffered, and was buried.

**Et resurrexit – Soloists and chorus**

*Et resurrexit tertia die,  
secundum scripturas.  
Credo.  
Et ascendit in coelum:  
sedet ad dexteram Patris.*

And the third day He rose again  
according to the scriptures.  
I believe.  
And ascended into heaven, and  
sitteth at the right hand of the Father.

*Et iterum venturus est  
cum gloria iudicare vivos et mortuos:  
Cujus regni non erit finis.  
Et in Spiritum sanctum Dominum,  
et vivificantem:  
Qui ex Patre, Filioque procedit.  
Qui cum Patre, et Filio simul adoratur,  
et conglorificatur:  
Qui locutus est per Prophetas.  
Et unam sanctam catholicam et  
apostolicam Ecclesiam.  
Credo.  
Confiteor unum baptismum  
in remissionem peccatorum.  
Et expecto resurrectionem  
mortuorum.*

And He shall come again  
with glory to judge the living and the  
dead: His kingdom shall have no end.  
And (I believe in) the Holy Ghost, the  
Lord and giver of life: Who  
proceedeth from the Father and Son.  
Who with the Father and Son  
together is worshipped and glorified:  
Who spake by the Prophets.  
And in one holy catholic and  
apostolic Church.  
I believe.  
I acknowledge one baptism  
for the remission of sins.  
And I look for the resurrection  
of the dead.

*Credo.*  
*Et vitam venturi saeculi.*  
*Amen.*  
*In unum Deum credo*

I believe.  
And the life of the world  
to come. Amen.  
I believe in one God.

#### **IV. PRÉLUDE RELIGIEUX (Offertory) – Piano and harmonium**

#### **V. SANCTUS – Soloists and chorus**

*Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus,*  
*Dominus Deus Sabaoth.*  
*Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.*  
*Hosanna in excelsis.*  
*Benedictus qui venit*  
*in nomine Domini.*  
*Hosanna in excelsis.*

Holy, holy, holy,  
Lord God of Hosts.  
Heaven and Earth are full of Thy  
glory. Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who cometh  
in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.

#### **VI. O SALUTARIS – Soprano solo**

*O Salutaris Hostia*  
*Quae caeli pandis ostium.*  
*Bella premunt hostilia,*  
*Da robur, fer auxilium.*  
*Amen.*

O saving Victim, who opens wide  
The gate of heaven.  
Hostile wars afflict us,  
Give strength and bring us help.  
Amen

#### **VII. AGNUS DEI – Mezzo-soprano solo and chorus**

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,*  
*miserere nobis.*  
*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,*  
*dona nobis pacem.*

Lamb of God, that takest away the  
sins of the world, have mercy upon  
us. Lamb of God, that takest away the  
sins of the world, grant us peace.

Some of the printed music for this evening's concert has been hired  
from Surrey County Council Performing Arts Library.

## Deboragh Abbott – Soprano



Deboragh is currently studying with Glenville Hargreaves and Dominic Wheeler at the Royal Academy of Music, London. She has appeared with Opera Ireland, Opera Fringe, the Opera Theatre Company and Anna Livia Opera Festival.

Deboragh recently performed the role of Dame Janet in the première of Irish composer Fergus Johnston's *The Earl of Kildare* for Opera Ireland and La Cugina in their production of *Madama Butterfly*.

Other recent performances include the role of La Ciesca in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* for Opera Fringe and First

Lady and Queen of Night (cover) in *The Magic Flute* for Dublin Institute of Technology. Deboragh was honoured to sing with Norfolk Trust Opera in 2009, where she performed the role of Telaire in Rameau's *Castor et Pollux*.

Her concert performances include Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *Jesu meine Freude* and *Mass in B minor* (soprano II), Mozart's *Requiem*, Messiaen's *Poemes pour Mi* and a concert version of *Porgy and Bess* in the National Concert Hall, Dublin.

In 2009, Deboragh was the recipient of the prestigious Dramatic Cup and Tony Quigley Award at the Feis Ceoil, Dublin, and in June was the recipient of the Mary Brennan Award and Vocal Bursary. Upcoming performances include a concert with Sir Trevor Pinnock, Dvorak's *Stabat Mater*, Brahms' *Zigeunerlieder* and Marcellina in *Le Nozze di Figaro* for Royal Academy of Music opera scenes.

Deboragh is kindly supported by the Royal Academy of Music and the Arts Council of Ireland.

## Natalia Brzezinska – Mezzo-soprano



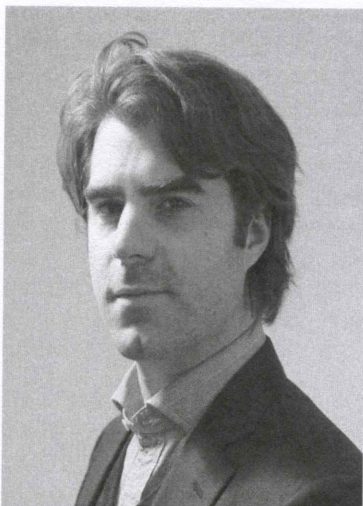
Natalia joined the Royal Academy Opera in September 2008. She graduated with distinction in vocal studies from the Music Academy in Lodz (Poland) before coming to the UK in 2006 to take up postgraduate studies with Anne Howells and Mary Hill at the Academy. She was a finalist in the Richard Lewis Competition (2008, 2009) and highly commended in the Flora Nielsen/Elena Gerhardt Prize Competition (2008). She is supported by the Josephine Baker Trust and the Nan Copeland Award.

Her oratorio experience includes Bach's *Magnificat*, *St Matthew Passion*, *B Minor Mass* and cantatas, Handel's *Messiah* and

*Samson*, Vivaldi's *Gloria* and *Stabat Mater*, Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, Haydn's *Nelson Mass* and *Theresia Mass*, Mozart's *Requiem* and *Coronation Mass*, Zebrowski's *Requiem*, Rheinberger's *Mass in C*, Nicolai's *Mass in C*, Schubert's *Mass in E flat*, Saint-Saëns' *Oratorio pour Noel* and Dvorak's *Stabat Mater*. Operatic roles include Berta in Rossini's *Barber of Seville*, Fidalma in Cimarosa's *The Secret Marriage*, Florence Pike in *Albert Herring*, Larina and Filipievna in *Eugene Onegin*, Emira in Hasse's *Il Siroe* and Enotea in Vinci's *Medea*. In April 2010 Natalia joined Glyndebourne Festival Opera where she sang The Mother in Stravinsky's *Mavra* and was a chorus member in their productions of *Macbeth*, *Don Giovanni* and *The Rake's Progress*.

For 15 years Natalia has been a member of *Con Vigore*, a specialist chamber choir of 12 voices performing a wide range of repertoire from Gregorian chant to contemporary works at prestigious venues across the world. She has participated in master-classes with Jadwiga Rappé, Diane Forlano, Malcolm Martineau, Rosamund Illing and Dennis O'Neill. In the last 6 years she has featured in the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival in Germany. As the mezzo Bach Scholar, she performs regularly as a soloist in the Royal Academy of Music/Kohn Foundation Bach Cantata Series.

## Stephen Avis – Tenor



Stephen Avis was born and brought up in Surrey. Following a chance meeting with a Swedish singing teacher, he moved to Sweden to train, studying at the University College of Opera and Opera Studio in Stockholm. Stephen is currently studying for an MA at the Royal Academy of Music in London, where he was recently awarded the Connell Grabowksy Prize. He has a BA Hons degree in English Literature from University College London.

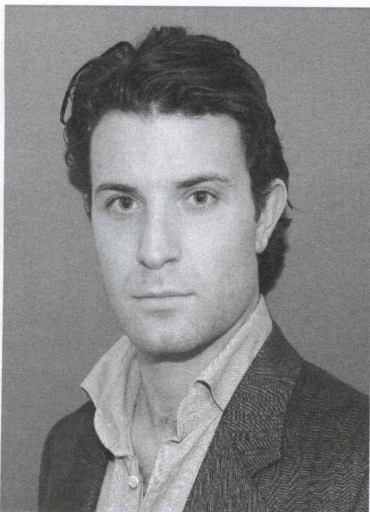
Stephen's operatic debut was at Folkoperan in Stockholm, singing the role of Regi Assistenten in Anders Nilsson's newly written opera *Zarah*.

Whilst studying in Sweden, Stephen sang roles including Ferrando in *Così Fan Tutte*, Danillo in *The Merry Widow* and the title role in Gounod's *Faust*. His British debut was with Surrey Opera, singing the role of Fenton in Nicolai's *Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor*. Recently Stephen covered the role of Ruggero for British Youth Opera's production of Puccini's *La Rondine* at the Peacock Theatre and sang the role of Alfredo in *La Traviata* with the European Chamber Opera in Kuwait.

Stephen has also performed many concerts abroad, including a Viennese evening with the Karlshamn Orchestra in Sweden, a Neapolitan concert at the Place des Vosges, Paris and a concert at the Royal Naval College in London. He has toured extensively in Sweden and Norway singing both lieder and opera. In May 2009, he was delighted to accept an invitation to sing at the Palace of Versailles as part of the 60th anniversary celebrations of the founding of the Weizmann Institute. Television work includes a special performance of *The Office*, *The Opera* for BBC's Comic Relief.

Also a regular performer of oratorio works, Stephen has sung in Handel's *Samson* and Rossini's *Stabat Mater*. Forthcoming events include *Messiah* with The Hurst Green Singers. Stephen will also sing the role of Christoph in Sir Peter Maxwell Davies' new opera *Kommilitonen* for Royal Academy Opera.

## Charles Rice – Baritone



Charles began singing as a music scholar at The King's School, Canterbury, singing in Canterbury Cathedral and on tour in Italy, France, Germany and Hungary. While studying politics at university, he joined Leeds Youth Opera and at Leeds Civic Theatre sang Ned Keene in *Peter Grimes*, Renato in *Un Ballo in Maschera* and Maximilian in *Candide*. Charles is currently on the opera course at the Royal Academy of Music, where he continues his studies under Mark Wildman and Dominic Wheeler.

Recent opera engagements include Vicar in *Albert Herring* for Royal Academy Opera, covering The Keeper of the Madhouse in *The Rake's Progress* and Cavaliere di Ripafrata in Martinu's *Mirandolina* for Garsington Opera, James in *The Pirates of Penzance* at Buxton, Zaretsky in *Eugene Onegin* at Iford Arts and Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus* for Alternative Opera. In 2009, Charles was a finalist at *Les Azuriales* Young Artists Competition in France and winner of the Garsington Prize.

This summer Charles sang for Glyndebourne Festival Opera chorus, covering Mr Redburn in *Billy Budd* and singing the Cat in Stravinsky's *Renard*. He returned to Royal Academy Opera in September, when he sang Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, conducted by Jane Glover and directed by John Cox.

Charles also performs regularly on the concert platform. Recent engagements include Mustique Opera Gala, Haydn's *Nelson Mass* under Jonathan Willcocks, Brahms' *Requiem* for Sleaford Choral Society, Schumann's *Mass* at Leamington Spa and Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* at the Wadhurst Music Festival.

Charles is grateful to be supported by a Worshipful Company of Musicians' Allcard Award, the William Allen Charitable Trust, The Kathleen Trust, The Kohn Foundation Vocal Scholarship and The Josephine Baker Trust.

## Francis Pott



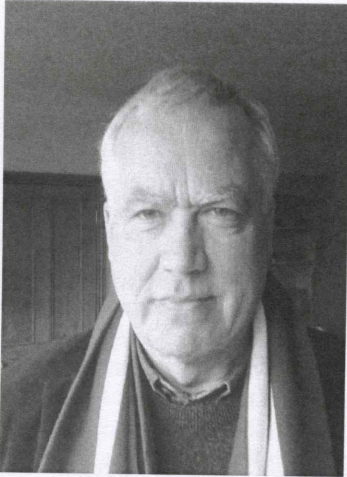
Francis Pott began his musical life as a chorister at New College, Oxford. He held open music scholarships at Winchester College and Magdalene College, Cambridge, studying at the latter with Robin Holloway and Hugh Wood while also pursuing piano studies as a private pupil of the distinguished British artist Hamish Milne in London. He spent several years teaching music in the UK's secondary education sector while pursuing a parallel freelance career as a composer and pianist. He was also a member of

Winchester Cathedral Choir under Dr David Hill from 1991 until 2001, touring the USA, Brazil, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Norway and participating in many CD releases and televised concerts during that period. For many years John Bennett Lecturer in Music at St Hilda's College, University of Oxford, in 2001 Francis was appointed Head of Music at London College of Music & Media, Thames Valley University. Subsequently he became both Head of Composition and Head of Research Development for the Faculty of Arts, embracing Music, Media, Art & Design and Creative Technologies. In February 2007 he was appointed to the University's first Chair of Composition.

Francis has received many national awards as a composer and in 1997 gained first prize in the second S. S. Prokofiev International Composing Competition in Moscow. His works have been heard in some 20 countries worldwide, broadcast in Britain, the USA, Canada and the Irish and Czech Republics, issued extensively on CD (particularly under the innovative British label, Signum) and published by four major houses in the UK. Francis Pott's piano music has been extensively championed in the UK, Canada and the USA by the Russian-Canadian virtuoso, Alexander Tselyakov, and his organ works by the acclaimed British artist, Jeremy Filsell.

Francis remains active as a pianist and accompanist, uniting this with both composition and academic research. He is currently writing a major critical study of the works of the Russian composer Nikolai Medtner, under contract to Ashgate Press, and remains the only Medtner scholar to have examined the major manuscript sources in both Ottawa and Moscow as well as London.

## Martin Hall



Martin Hall received his music education at the Royal Academy of Music, where he was a prize-winner, and New College, Oxford. He has had a busy and wide-ranging career as a conductor, teacher, singer and keyboard player in London, Cornwall and Surrey.

A Fellow of the Royal College of Organists, Martin has been active as a recitalist, continuo player and church musician. In the latter capacity he has accompanied and directed services at St Bartholomew the Great, Truro Cathedral and New College.

As a conductor, Martin directed the Truro Choral Society for several years as well as acting as Chorus Master for Richard Hickox, Paul Daniel and Leon Lovett. He was Director of Music at Reigate VI Form College until 2004 before returning as a member of the music staff at New College. He directs the professional chamber orchestra the Kensington Sinfonia, most recently in a highly successful programme with the virtuoso trumpeter Crispian Steele-Perkins in Abinger (where he directs the accomplished church choir) and Herefordshire. He acts as duo partner with members of the orchestra from time to time.

Martin has had a most cordial association with the Vivace Chorus for a number of years now, as deputy accompanist and conductor. He has taken part in several concerts with the choir in Guildford Cathedral as organist, pianist and harpsichordist.

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**Vivace footnote:** It's an unusual but very welcome experience to have, in both Francis and Martin, two such stalwart supports of the choir sharing the platform with us this evening! Also, a warm welcome back to Natalia Brzezinska after her stunning performance at our evening of Russian music in May.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Jeremy Backhouse



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

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

In January 1995, Jeremy was appointed Chorus Master and subsequently Music Director of the Guildford Philharmonic Choir (now the Vivace Chorus). Jeremy has presented and conducted some ambitious programmes, including Howell's *Hymnus Paradisi* and Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater*, Mahler's '*Resurrection*' *Symphony (No. 2)* and '*Symphony of a Thousand*' (*No. 8*), Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony*, Mendelssohn's '*Lobgesang*' (*Symphony No. 2*), and Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* and *Ivan the Terrible*. Major classical popular works have included Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*, Verdi's *Requiem* and most recently, in November 2009, Haydn's *The Creation*.

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

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



A Russian Evening,  
Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2010  
from Rachel Musgrove's review  
for 'The Surrey Advertiser'



In they clattered - handbags or programmes in one hand, cushions from home in the other. Vivace Chorus's supporters are clearly well-practised in their concert-going rituals at Guildford Cathedral. Had the programme nailed me to the chair I might have felt a hair shirt moment coming on - the cathedral's chairs are designed for the truly devout - but as it was, this programme of Russian music had plenty to keep feet tapping and pins and needles at bay.

And what a following; the place was packed. The Russian programme from this 120-strong chorus proved a popular choice. Borodin's *Polovtsian Dances* launched the first half, followed by the rarely heard choral version of Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture*. Some perfectly placed consonants in the *1812* proved this to be a polished performance. The thunderous gunfire was particularly effective in the battlefield cathedral acoustic; unfortunately the string writing in the Borodin had not fared quite so well in that cavernous space, coming across as muddled, with a slight delay at times between chorus and orchestra.

It was Prokofiev's *Ivan the Terrible* where the spotlight came to rest in the second half. *Ivan*, banned by Soviet authorities due to its complex characterisation of the Russian hero, provided some intense moments for the two soloists from the opera course at the Royal Academy of Music and for the chorus.

A deeply moving solo by the young, poised mezzo-soprano Natalia Brzezinska, 'Ocean Sea, Russian Sea', revealed a treat of a voice with chestnut tones. She was admirably backed by the murmuring chorus. We had the pleasure of hearing her again in 'The Song of the Beaver' in which Brzezinska employed darker tones to emphasise the sinister edge to this seemingly innocent hunting story.

Vivace are capable of both a great delicacy of colour and a great show of strength. Adjectives to describe the wordless chorus of benediction in 'Ivan's Sickness', might be, say, 'sweet', 'sublime', 'dulcet', but I'm going to go with 'mellifluous'.

The baritone's drinking song in 'The Banquet' gave us an opportunity to hear the surprisingly big baritone voice of Lithuanian Vytautas Vepstas, backed by the men's humming chorus, who were a little too tentative at first, but with Jeremy Backhouse's firm lead, soon found the right level to project over the orchestra...

...This time next year Vivace Chorus is singing in Mahler's Symphony No.8 at the Royal Albert Hall. This is a tour-de-force of the orchestral world, with its huge orchestra, eight soloists, two large choruses and a children's choir. Put 15th May 2011 in your diaries as a date not to be missed.

## About the Vivace Chorus

Jeremy Backhouse Music Director  
Francis Pott Accompanist

### The Committee

James Garrow	Chairman	Tel. 01403 751552
Isobel Rooth	Hon. Secretary email: <a href="mailto:secretary@vivacechorus.org">secretary@vivacechorus.org</a>	Tel. 01252 702979
Bob Cowell	Hon. Treasurer	Tel. 01483 770896
Jane Brooks	Membership Secretary email: <a href="mailto:membership@vivacechorus.org">membership@vivacechorus.org</a>	Tel. 01483 539088
Michael Taylor	Ticket sales email: <a href="mailto:tickets@vivacechorus.org">tickets@vivacechorus.org</a>	Tel. 07958 519741
Jackie Alderton	Mailings	Tel. 01932 343625
Gill Perkins	Sponsorship	Tel. 01483 458132
Chris Short	Patrons Secretary	Tel. 07703 807250
Hilary Trigg	Publicity	
Hilary Minor	Press Officer	
Neil Martin	Committee member	

### Other (non-Committee) responsibilities

Christine Medlow	Music Librarian
John Britten	Music sales
Margaret Mann	Pre-concert talks
Prue Smith	Auditions accompanist, cathedral & library displays
Brenda Moore	Programme notes, soloists liaison & advertising
Alan Batterbury	Concert staging
Chris Alderton	Front of House
Chris Peters	Website Manager

For other phone numbers and email addresses, please refer to the 'Contact us' page of our website: [www.vivacechorus.org](http://www.vivacechorus.org).

The choir was founded in 1947 as the Guildford Philharmonic Choir but in May 2005, to reflect its new independent status from the Borough of Guildford, 'rebranded' itself as the Vivace Chorus. We enjoy a challenging and varied repertoire from the 16th century onwards; some pieces are well-known, others are rarities deserving to be heard by a wider audience. In the 2004/5 season, we introduced our Contemporary Choral Classics Cycle, an innovative series of works from the late 20th and 21st centuries.

To show the variety of our recent programmes: we started the 2008/9 season with a spectacular performance of Verdi's *Requiem*, in combination with our twin choir, the Freiburger Bachchor, and Romsey Choral Society. Then, as a complete contrast, our Venetian Baroque concert included some of the earliest music we have ever sung. These were masterpieces from Gabrieli, Schütz and Monteverdi, with Vivaldi's uplifting *Gloria* to end the evening. The season finished with Will Todd's *Te Deum* – a world première and first commission by the choir, which we recorded in July of this year and has just been released on CD.

In June 2009, half the choir and Jeremy embarked on what quickly became known as the *Tour de France*. We gave concerts of music from the early 16th to late 20th centuries in the cathedrals of Paris (Notre-Dame), Rouen and Beauvais. This proved to be both inspiring and emotionally moving – and we had great fun too!

The 2009/10 season started in lively fashion with Haydn's *The Creation*, to mark the 200th anniversary of the composer's death. Our Italian evening in March showed the operatic composers Verdi and Puccini in a light new to many, and lastly we brushed up our Russian pronunciation, returning to Prokofiev, this time with *Ivan the Terrible*.

Our biggest project to date, to mark the centenary of Mahler's death, is a performance of his monumental Symphony No. 8 in the Royal Albert Hall on 15th May 2011 – read more about this on pages 22 and 23.

We also regularly sing in a 'Last Night of the Proms' charity concert in the Fairfield Halls, Croydon, and with our good friends the Brandenburg Sinfonia, we sing at least once a year in the superb venue of St Martin-in-the-Fields, performing works such as Mozart's *Requiem*.

If you are interested in singing with us, please contact Jane Brooks, 01483 539088. Rehearsals are held on Monday evenings at Holy Trinity Church, Guildford High Street, and prospective members are welcome to attend rehearsals on an informal basis before committing to an audition. For more information, see our website at [www.vivacechorus.org](http://www.vivacechorus.org).

# Vivace Chorus Singers

## FIRST SOPRANOS

Joanna Andrews  
Helen Beevers  
Mary Broughton  
Elaine Chapman  
Rachel Edmondson  
Mo Kfour  
Hilary Minor  
Susan Norton  
Margaret Parry  
Margaret Perkins  
Kate Rayner  
Gillian Rix  
Rosemary Spalding  
Carol Terry  
Nikki Vale

## SECOND SOPRANOS

Jacqueline Alderton  
Anna Arthur  
Barbara Barklem  
Alison Dawson  
Mandy Freeman  
Judith Lewy  
Krystyna Marsden  
Debbie Morton  
Kate Peters  
Rosalind Plowright  
Isobel Rooth  
Ann Sheppard  
Judy Smith  
Paula Sutton  
Zowie Sweetland  
Philippa Walker  
Christine Wilks  
Frances Worpe

## FIRST ALTOS

Penny Baxter  
Monika Boothby  
Jane Brooks  
Margaret Dentskevich  
Liz Durning

Sue Fletcher  
Sheila Hodson  
Pamela Leggatt  
Jean Leston  
Margaret Mann  
Lois McCabe  
Kay McManus  
Christine Medlow  
Mary Moon  
Penny Muray  
Gill Perkins  
Karen Prodger  
Marjory Rollo  
Lesley Scordellis  
Hilary Trigg  
Maggie Woolcock

## SECOND ALTOS

Valerie Adam  
Geraldine Allen  
Hannah Andrews  
Evelyn Beastall  
Sylvia Chantler  
Ailis Clarke  
Mary Clayton  
Carolyn Edis  
Celia Embleton  
Elizabeth Evans  
Valerie Garrow  
Barbara Hilder  
Carol Hobbs  
Yvonne Hungerford  
Janet Lansdale  
Brenda Moore  
Jacqueline Norman  
Beryl Northam  
Sheila Rowell  
Prue Smith  
Jo Stokes  
Rosey Storey  
Pamela Usher  
June Windle  
Elisabeth Yates

## FIRST TENORS

Bob Cowell  
Tim Hardymont  
Nick Manning  
Martin Price  
John Trigg

## SECOND TENORS

Bob Bromham  
Peter Butterworth  
Tony Chantler  
Stephen Chowns  
John Duke  
Geoff Johns  
Stephen Linton  
Peter Norman  
Jon Scott

## FIRST BASSES

John Britten  
Michael Golden  
Brian John  
Jeremy Johnson  
Eric Kennedy  
Chris Newbery  
Chris Peters  
Robin Privett  
David Ross  
Philip Stanford

## SECOND BASSES

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

## Vivace Chorus Patrons

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

### Honorary Life Patrons:

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Prue and Derek Smith

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Mr H J C Browne

Mr Lionel Moon

Mrs Maryel Cowell

New Patrons are always welcome. If you are interested in participating, please contact our Patrons Secretary, Chris Short, on 07703 807250 or email [patrons@vivacechorus.org](mailto:patrons@vivacechorus.org) [Please see page 26 for more details.]

Our Patrons scheme underwent a re-launch in 2009, the purpose of which was two-fold: to give Patrons additional benefits for their financial backing and to encourage new Patrons to support the choir, which will help us to continue to perform innovative, high-quality programmes.

20<sup>th</sup> November 2010

Dear Concert-goer,

Welcome to our 64<sup>th</sup> concert season; one of the most ambitious and exciting we have ever undertaken. Tonight's '*Petite Messe Solennelle*' is the first of seven concerts planned for the coming season.

Our concert programmes are as varied as ever and include glorious pieces from the early Baroque onwards, but undoubtedly the climax of our season will be Mahler's massive masterpiece – his eighth symphony. As one of the highlights of the London concert season on 15<sup>th</sup> May, we are promoting a performance of this work, created on a grand scale: for full symphony orchestra, eight soloists, two huge choruses and a children's choir.

The vast numbers required to perform this piece mean that it is rarely heard live. Whether it is the thunderous E flat from the organ that launches the symphony, the off-stage brass, the choir of 450, a soprano's voice soaring exquisitely from the top gallery or the finale's huge fanfare, each moment of Mahler's epic work is one to be savoured.

The Vivace Chorus will be joined by four other choirs, including the London Symphony Chorus, and will be accompanied by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Jeremy Backhouse. Such a magnificent work is at its best when performed in a concert hall of the grandeur of the Royal Albert Hall – it will suit our concert perfectly.

Mahler's view was that "the symphony must be like the world, it must embrace everything". We invite you to embrace this masterpiece at the Royal Albert Hall, 7.30 on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2011. A free pre-concert talk entitled '*The universe bursts into song: Mahler and his Eighth Symphony*' will be given by Mahler expert Dr Jeremy Barham of the University of Surrey.

Make a wonderful evening out at one of the world's greatest concert venues even more relaxing by catching the coach from Guildford. For just £12, we will transport you to the concert and bring you back afterwards. If you are interested, please email [tickets@VivaceChorus.org](mailto:tickets@VivaceChorus.org) or call 07958 519 741; better still, see our ticket desk tonight. Tickets range from £5 to £40 and can be purchased tonight from our ticket desk or from the Royal Albert Hall: [www.royalalberthall.com](http://www.royalalberthall.com) or call 020 7589 8212. Ticket sales are already going well, and I urge you not to miss out on a rare opportunity to hear this wonderful masterpiece.

I hope you enjoy tonight's concert, and look forward to seeing you again.

Yours sincerely

*James Garrow*

Chairman

## ADOPT A MUSICIAN

See your name in our programme without  
having to sing a note!



In contrast to this evening's performance, our concert of **Mahler's Eighth Symphony** in May next year will employ a huge orchestra.

Members of the choir have already been given the opportunity to 'Adopt a Musician' and we invite you, our audience, to do the same. You can sponsor a string player for as little as £25, wind or brass players for £30 or one of our soloists for

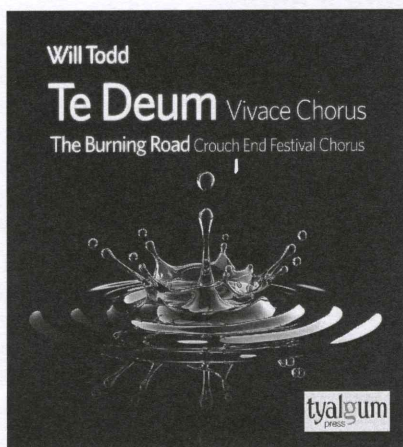
£200. There's even a harmonium – for just £40. All sponsors will be acknowledged in our special edition of the programme for the Mahler 8 concert.

Please see the display at the back of the cathedral tonight or send your cheque, payable to Vivace Chorus, to our Treasurer, Bob Cowell: 1 Penhurst, Shores Road, Woking, Surrey, GU21 4HP. If you pay tax and would like to enhance your donation by using Giftaid, where the Revenue pay the Choir the tax you would have paid before being able to donate, please email our Treasurer on [treasurer@vivacechorus.org](mailto:treasurer@vivacechorus.org) for a suitable form.

Thank you for any assistance you can give us to sponsor this major and exciting undertaking.

The Vivace Chorus gratefully acknowledge the sponsorship  
of Natalia Brzezinska and Charles Rice by the  
Josephine Baker Trust.

## Were you there? Did you enjoy it?



If so, you might like to know that a new Will Todd CD, *Te Deum*, is on sale tonight.

It features the Vivace Chorus, Jeremy Backhouse, soprano Bethany Halliday, the Will Todd Jazz Trio and Guildford Youth Choir, and is coupled with Todd's cantata *The Burning Road*, recorded by Crouch End Festival Chorus and David Temple. [Tyalgum Press label catalogue no TYA 004; £11.00.]

### from Stephen Goss' Review of *Te Deum*, in the Surrey Advertiser, May 2009:

"Todd's brilliant new piece was the highpoint of the evening. From the bold virtuosic timpani writing in the opening bars of the *Te Deum*, it was clear that the audience was in for a treat. Todd's musical language is drawn from a variety of sources which are integrated into a compelling musical cocktail. If there were echoes of Walton and Britten in one movement, there were traces of Sondheim and Duke Ellington in another.

Pupils from Holy Trinity School, Tormead School and Holy Trinity Church Choir joined forces in a touching performance of the 4th movement; a beautiful setting of the Lord is my Shepherd. Elsewhere, soprano Bethany Halliday and saxophonist Paul Fawcus impressed with gripping solo turns.

The Vivace Chorus were excellent throughout the concert, making light work of a challenging programme. Conductor Jeremy Backhouse had the choir's undivided attention; his hard work on detail and bold programming transformed this concert into an event. I eagerly await their next commission."

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The staging for this concert is owned by the Association of Surrey Choirs. To hire, please contact Penny Peters, Guildford Cathedral Office (tel: 01403 547860). It was purchased with financial assistance from the Foundation for Sport and Arts, PO Box 20, Liverpool.

Financially assisted by  
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Tonight's concert has been held in Guildford Cathedral by kind permission of the Dean and Chapter.

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## Did you like what you've heard? Would you like to get involved?

New singers are always welcome; if you'd like to know more, talk to any of the choir members, or contact our Membership Secretary, Jane Brooks, on 01483 539088 or email [membership@vivacechorus.org](mailto:membership@vivacechorus.org)

Even if you don't want to sing,  
you can still be involved!  
Become a Patron.

As a Patron you will receive discounts on tickets for concerts sponsored by the Vivace Chorus and priority booking. You can also reserve seats in sections of the Cathedral which are normally unreserved. You will be invited to our social events and your name will appear in our programmes.

Being a *PLATINUM* Patron costs just £75 a year and entitles you to 20% off all ticket purchases. *GOLD* Patrons enjoy a 10% discount on tickets in return for their £50 subscription. [The *SILVER* level remains only for existing Patrons who prefer not to upgrade.]

For more details contact our Patrons Secretary, Chris Short, on 07703 807250 or email him at [patrons@vivacechorus.org](mailto:patrons@vivacechorus.org)

Looking forward to seeing you at one of our next concerts...

The Rotary Club of Guildford and the Vivace Chorus present

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In aid of the MAYOR'S CHRISTMAS DISTRESS FUND and COMBAT STRESS


Conductor: Jeremy Backhouse

**Vivace Chorus**

**Sunday 12th Dec 2010**  
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Tickets £8 (Adults) and £4 (Children) available from the Guildford Towns Information Centre on 01483 444334 or at the door.

[www.VivaceChorus.org](http://www.VivaceChorus.org)  
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from Allegri to Handel

**Vivace Chorus**

**Saturday 5th March 2011**  
Guildford Cathedral

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**Sunday 15th May 2011 7:30 pm**

# Come and Sing with us again!

Join us for our annual event – there are still a few places left. This year we are BAROQUEing with the exuberant and daring Dixit Dominus by Handel and, as a contrast to this roller-coaster choral ride, we will sing works by Lotti and Gesualdo.

Pick up a leaflet tonight or visit our website for all the details.

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