

# PETITE MESSE SOLENNELLE

## ROSSINI

Grace Hope-Gill (*Soprano*)

Clover Kayne (*Alto*)

Owen Lucas (*Tenor*)

Alex Bower-Brown (*Bass*)

Francis Pott (*Piano*)

Edward Dean (*Harmonium*)

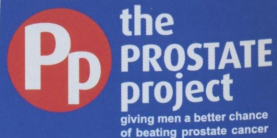
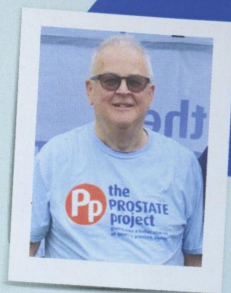
**Conductor:**  
Jeremy Backhouse

**Saturday**  
**22 March 2025**  
**at 7.30 pm**

**Vivace**  
Chorus

Holy Trinity,  
Guildford High Street.

A message from Martin Davies  
Chairman of the Prostate Project



Over the last 25 years, the Prostate Project has raised more than £11 million, money that has been used in the research, diagnosis and treatment of prostate cancer.

Based at The Stokes Centre for Urology at Royal Surrey Hospital, our charity has helped to establish Guildford as a world leading centre of excellence, supporting research, sponsoring PhD studies, purchasing equipment, and raising awareness of the need for more men to 'Get Tested'.

The PSA blood test is an effective early indicator of potential problems for a disease that usually presents no symptoms in its early stages. More than 14,000 men in the UK die each year from prostate cancer, and many of these deaths are preventable because caught early enough, prostate cancer is usually curable.

If you, or someone you know is a man aged between 50 and 70, has a family history of the disease, or is black, you should ask your GP for a free PSA blood test. It really is a simple fact that this quick test can save, and prolong the lives of a great many men.

The Prostate Project is a volunteer led charity, and if you would like to know more about our work or have any questions about the PSA Test, or prostate cancer, please visit our website.

Thank you to the Vivace Chorus for allowing me the opportunity to say a few words about the Prostate Project, together we can give men a better chance of beating prostate cancer.

Regards,

*Martin Davies*



*Man Van*



*Our volunteers*

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Vivace  
Chorus

# Petite Messe Solennelle

## Gioachino Rossini

Grace Hope-Gill  
Clover Kayne  
Owen Lucas  
Alex Bower-Brown

Soprano  
Mezzo-Soprano  
Tenor  
Baritone

Francis Pott  
Edward Dean

Piano  
Harmonium

Vivace Chorus  
Conductor: Jeremy Backhouse

## Petite Messe Solennelle

### Gioachino Rossini (1792 - 1868)



Photo © Palazzetto Bru Zane  
Colourised using palette.fm

Rossini is remembered primarily for his immense contribution to the Italian operatic repertoire, but he also produced two important pieces of sacred music that are notable, amongst other things, for their overtly operatic style.

This incorporation of the music of the opera house into the sacred repertoire may appear to have been a bold innovation, but in terms of dramatic content it was a well-established practice. Most

composers who were familiar with the theatre as well as the church used elements of the operatic style in order to give their sacred compositions greater impact. A prime example is Handel, but the tradition goes back to Monteverdi, the first great opera composer, who even borrowed his own overture to *The Coronation of Poppea* for the opening movement of his *1610 Vespers*.

What is original about Rossini's sacred music is not so much its dramatic power, impressive though that is, but its unashamed romanticism.

Like so many of the great composers, Rossini was born into a musical family. His father was the town trumpeter in Pesaro and his mother was an opera singer. Both parents worked in various theatres in the region, and from an early age Gioachino went with them. As a talented boy soprano he was soon in great demand, and by the time he had reached his teens he could play the viola and the horn and was rapidly acquiring a

reputation as a first-rate harpsichord player and pianist. He went on to study at the Bologna Academy of Music, composing his first opera whilst still a student. From then on his rise to fame was meteoric. He received his first professional commission in 1810, which led to a string of further commissions. With the enormous success of his first full-length opera, *Tancredi* (1812), and the even greater triumph of *The Italian girl in Algiers* (1813), he became celebrated throughout Italy and his international reputation was firmly launched.

He was still only 23 when he was engaged as Musical Director of the two opera houses in Naples, for each of which he was required to compose a new opera annually, the ever-popular *Barber of Seville* being one of the happiest results. Rossini was always greatly attracted to a life of leisure, and as he was of a somewhat indolent nature he would frequently put off until the last possible moment the completion of his latest commission. He would then work at an incredible speed; several of his operas were written in under three weeks, an astonishing feat by any standards. He travelled widely throughout Europe, and in 1824 settled in Paris as Director of the Théâtre Italien. A string of new compositions followed, culminating in his acknowledged masterpiece, *William Tell*, completed in 1829 when he was still only 37.

At this point Rossini's life changed dramatically. For no apparent reason he gave up composing, and apart from two important religious works, the *Stabat Mater* (1842) and the *Petite Messe Solennelle* (1863), he wrote nothing of significance during the last forty years of his life. It may be that he had run out of energy and inspiration - *William Tell* had been his thirty-sixth opera in nineteen years - or perhaps simply that he was by now so immensely wealthy that he had no particular incentive to go on working. He retired to a luxurious villa

specially built for him at Passy, on the outskirts of Paris, where he was able to live the life of idleness and self-indulgence that, as a renowned gourmet and bon vivant, he had always found so appealing. A visit to his villa was obligatory for every musician of importance visiting the capital, and here Rossini would hold court, entertaining everyone with his sparkling wit and good food, and revelling in the adulation of the constant stream of admirers and eminent visitors. These included Wagner, of whom he once wryly observed, 'His music has lovely moments but awful quarters of an hour!'

In his latter years Rossini turned once again to composition, producing what he called his *Péchés de Vieillesse* (Sins of Old Age), a collection of light-hearted pieces for piano, some also with voices. Despite his withdrawal from the operatic world, he continued to be held in such enormous esteem that when he died 6,000 mourners, four military bands, a chorus of 400 singers and several of the finest opera soloists of the day attended his funeral.

The *Petite Messe Solennelle* is the most substantial of the works written during Rossini's Indian summer of composition. It was composed in 1863 for private performance and is scored for four soloists and chorus, with harmonium and piano accompaniment. It was not heard in public until 1869, the year after his death, when it was performed in the composer's own orchestral version at the Théâtre Italien. The work's title is misleading, since the *Petite Messe Solennelle* is neither petite nor particularly solemn. It lasts well over an hour, and despite the religious text is unmistakably operatic in style, in common with the *Stabat Mater* of twenty years earlier. The music ranges from hushed intensity to boisterous high spirits, and abounds in the memorable tunes and rhythmic vitality for which Rossini became justly famous.

The quiet A minor opening of the *Kyrie Eleison* contrasts sustained choral writing with a running bass part in the piano accompaniment. This soon gives way to a brighter mood as the music moves into the major. For the *Christe Eleison*, Rossini adopted a deliberately archaic style, echoing the church music of Palestrina some 300 years earlier. As the second *Kyrie* unfolds, the movement returns to the serious mood in which it began. The *Gloria* begins with a short introduction for chorus and soloists, followed by four extended solo movements that are operatic arias in all but name. The chorus returns for the final section of the *Gloria*, an extended fugue to the words 'Cum sancto spiritu in gloria Dei Patris, Amen.' This is a real tour de force of musical craftsmanship, reflecting the thorough classical training in harmony and counterpoint that Rossini received all those years ago at the Bologna Academy.

In the *Credo* Rossini ingeniously uses the word 'credo' as a unifying motif to which he repeatedly returns. This section of the Mass concludes with another brilliant fugue for the chorus, at the words 'Et vitam venturi saeculi, Amen.' There follows an extended piano solo, leading to a lyrical *Sanctus* and *Benedictus*, and the work ends with a moving *Agnus Dei* for the alto soloist and chorus.

There is a sense in which Rossini's extraordinary musical facility was one of his weaknesses as well as one of his strengths. He once remarked, 'Show me a laundry list and I will set it to music!' and this neatly illustrates his complete confidence in his own ability to produce music to order, whatever the words. To some extent, this is what he has done in the *Petite Messe*. Of course, there are many sections which beautifully reflect the words, such as the *Christe Eleison* and the *Agnus Dei*, but in other places one feels that Rossini has paid little regard to the essential meaning and form of the text.

The two extended choral fugues are good examples of this; they are disproportionately grand in relation to the rest of the Gloria and Credo. Yet at no point in the work does the music become remotely dull or routine.

Such was Rossini's genius that even when the spirit of the music seems to depart from the spirit of the text one can't help but be captivated by the beautiful melodies and sheer joie-de-vivre of the piece. As he himself said, 'Delight must be the basis and aim of this art', and that is what he has achieved – a work not of profound religious insight, but one that is a delightful, life-enhancing musical experience.

### Programme notes © John Bawden MMus (University of Surrey)

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#### 1. Kyrie eleison

##### Choir & soloists

*Kyrie, eleison.*

Lord, have mercy.

*Christe, eleison.*

Christ, have mercy.

*Kyrie, eleison.*

Lord, have mercy.

#### 2. Gloria

##### Choir & soloists

*Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.*

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.

*Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te, glorificamus te.*

We praise You, we bless You, we adore You, we glorify You.

#### 3. Gratias agimus tibi

##### Mezzo, Tenor & Bass soloists

*Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam,*

We give You thanks for Your great glory,

#### 4. Domine Deus

##### Tenor soloist

*Domine Deus, Rex caelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens.*

Lord God, heavenly King, O God almighty Father.

*Domine Fili unigenite Jesu Christe, Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.*

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,

#### 5. Qui tollis

##### Soprano & Mezzo soloists

*Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis;*

You take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;

*Qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram.*

You take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;

*Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis.*

You are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.

#### 6. Quoniam tu solus

##### Bass soloist

*Quoniam, tu solus Sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe.*

For You alone are the Holy One, You alone are the Lord, You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ.

#### 7. Cum sancto

##### Choir & soloists

*Cum Sancto Spiritu: in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.*

With the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

.....  
**Interval (20 minutes)**  
.....

*Refreshments will be available at the back of the church*  
.....

**8. Credo**

*Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, factorem cæli et terræ, visibilium omnium et invisibilium, et in unum Dominum, Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum.*

*Et ex Patre natum ante omnia sæcula. Deum de Deo, Lumen de Lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero.*

*Genitum, non factum, consubstantialem Patri: per quem omnia facta sunt.*

*Qui propter nos homines et propter nostram salutem descendit de cælis.*

*Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria virgine, et homo factus est.*

**9. Crucifixus**

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

**Choir & soloists**

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible, and in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God.

Born of the Father before all ages, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God.

Begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things were made.

Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven.

And by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and was made man.

**Soprano soloist**

For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate, suffered death and was buried.

**10. Et resurrexit**

*Et resurrexit tertia die secundum scripturas. Et ascendit in cælum, sedet ad dexteram Patris.*

*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 in unam, sanctam, catholicam et apostolicam ecclesiam.*

*Confiteor unum baptisma in remissionem peccatorum. Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum, et vitam venturi sæculi.*

*Amen.*

**11. Preludio Religioso (Offertory)**

**Choir & soloists**

He rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again with glory, to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins, and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

*Amen.*

**Harmonium**

## 12. Sanctus

*Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,  
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.*

*Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria  
tua.*

*Hosanna in excelsis.*

*Benedictus qui venit in  
nomine Domini*

*Hosanna in excelsis.*

## 13. O Salutaris

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

## 14. Agnus Dei

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata  
mundi: miserere nobis.*

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata  
mundi: miserere nobis.*

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

### Choir & soloists

Holy, holy, holy,  
Lord God of Hosts.

Heaven and earth are full of  
Your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is He who comes in  
the Name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

### Soprano soloist

O saving victim, open wide  
The gate of heav'n to us below.  
Our foes press on from every  
side; Your aid supply, your  
strength bestow.

### Choir & Mezzo soloist

Lamb of God, Who takest  
away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, Who takest  
away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, Who takest  
away the sins of the world,  
grant us peace.

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End

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## Grace Hope-Gill

## Soprano

Welsh soprano Grace Hope-Gill is in her first year at the Royal Academy Opera as a Bicentenary Scholar. Growing up in Wales, she regularly sang in her church choir and attended the junior department at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, before beginning her studies at the Royal Academy of Music, graduating in 2022 with a First-Class Honours degree and being awarded the Eldee Scholarship for outstanding studentship.



Photo © Broadway Studios

In 2024 Grace gained her Master of Arts in Performance with distinction; she is a member of the Academy Song Circle and is generously supported by the Matt Ferrey Opera scholarship and the Josephine Baker Trust. She has had recent successes in a number of prize competitions.

Her versatility and innovative nature have led to an array of performance opportunities, from performing cantatas in the Academy's *Bach in Leipzig* series, premiering new compositional works both as a soloist and within an ensemble, to singing on the CBeebies channel. She was awarded a scholarship at the Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich, making her international recital debut with renowned baritone Christian Gerhaher.

Her other recent engagements include a number of roles associated with the Royal Academy Opera, and performing in Mahler's *Third Symphony* under the baton of Semyon Bychkov at the Royal Festival Hall.

In her spare time, Grace loves to go running, do watercolour painting and is an avid birdwatcher.

## Clover Kayne



Photo © Tara Rooney

## Mezzo-Soprano

Clover is a mezzo-soprano whose journey into music began in a small Wiltshire town, far removed from the opera theatres and concert halls where she now performs.

Raised in a non-musical family, she fell in love with classical music through local youth music groups and school productions, later pursuing her passion at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where she graduated with First Class Honours, and the Royal Academy

of Music, where she earned her Master's degree with distinction. She is now completing her training at the Royal Academy Opera and is supported by the Josephine Baker Trust and the Carr-Gregory Award. Last summer, she was honoured to be a Young Artist at the prestigious Georg Solti Accademia.

Clover's artistry has been shaped by a love of story-telling and collaboration, whether performing on stage or exploring new repertoire. She is equally at home in opera and concert settings, with her warm, flexible voice and expressive performances earning critical praise. Recent highlights include Mahler's *Rückert Lieder*, Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*, and leading operatic roles such as *Hänsel* and *Ariodante*. Clover is also drawn to contemporary music, premiering new works and engaging with innovative projects that connect tradition with the present day.

Beyond the stage, Clover has a deep love for poetry, with some of her performances broadcast on BBC Radio 4. She draws inspiration from the natural world, literature, and her Wiltshire roots, and is passionate about making classical music accessible to all.

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## Join us at the Royal Albert Hall!



Vivace Chorus at the RAH in 2014  
Photo © Ash Mills

Here's a reminder that we will be putting on a grand concert at the Royal Albert Hall in July!

Put the date in your diary now – **Sunday July 13<sup>th</sup> 2025** – and join us to celebrate Jeremy Backhouse's final concert as Music Director of the Vivace Chorus.

Jeremy will soon have been with us for 30 years, and we have had many, many musical adventures during that time, including two astounding concerts at the Royal Albert Hall – Mahler's 8<sup>th</sup> *Symphony* and Verdi's *Requiem*. He's taking a well-earned rest from the end of this season, and we wanted to mark the occasion with something special.

We've invited several choirs to join our ranks, and we are delighted that **Guildford Choral**, **Twickenham Choral**, **The London Chorus**, **Tiffin Choirs** and **Farnham Youth Choir** will be joining us to raise the roof, supported by the **Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra** and two of the world's most celebrated singers, tenor **Nicky Spence** and soprano **Lucy Crowe**. Together, we'll be performing Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé*, Poulenc's *Gloria* and the Berlioz *Te Deum* – a wonderful programme for such an exceptional setting.

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# BERLIOZ

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**Tenor: Nicky Spence**  
**Soprano: Lucy Crowe**

**Conductor: Jeremy Backhouse**

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## Owen Lucas

Tenor

In 2019 Owen successfully auditioned for the Glyndebourne Academy (2019) under the direction of Mary King where his journey towards a singing career began.

Owen has performed regularly with Northern Ireland Opera through his involvement in the chorus of *Die Fledermaus* (2019) and *La Bohème* (2021). He performed the role of Gastone (September 2022) in Northern Ireland Opera's *La Traviata*.



Photo © David Cavan

Along with frequent appearances with local choral societies, he performs regularly with the Ulster Consort under the direction of Matthew Owens.

He has competed successfully in singing competitions in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland; he won the tenor solo in the Dublin Feis in 2021 and won Northern Ireland Opera's Festival of Voice Deborah Voigt Opera prize and Audience prize (2022).

Owen was pleased to receive The Brackaville Bursary for Vocal Studies from Irish Heritage earlier this year. He has sung with the Glyndebourne Chorus in the 2023 and 2024 summer seasons.

He is currently studying at the Royal Academy of Music under Professor Mark Wildman.

## Alex Bower-Brown



## Baritone

Alex Bower-Brown is a British baritone, currently studying in the opera school at the Royal Academy of Music with the professors Glenville Hargreaves and Iain Ledingham. Alex is gratefully supported by the Norman Ayrton award. Whilst at the Academy, Alex has been a regular performer in the Royal Academy Bach consort, performing with some of the best conductors of our age including

Philippe Herreweghe, John Butt and Jane Glover. A highlight of the series was singing Pilate in a production of Bach's great work, *St John's Passion*, conducted by Philippe Herreweghe. Alex has also sung in various masterclasses whilst at the Academy, the most recent of which was singing for Thomas Quasthoff at Wigmore Hall.

Opera roles include Father in Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel*, Tobias Mill in Rossini's *La Cambiale di matrimonio*, Mr Gedge (the Vicar) in Britten's *Albert Herring*, Die Sprecher in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and Alexander in Martinu's *Alexandre Bis*.

Outside of the Academy, Alex has a wealth of experience singing both as an oratorio soloist and in professional choirs. He has performed as a soloist in a wide variety of works including Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *St Matthew Passion*, Brahms' *Requiem*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Vaughan Williams' *Five Mystical Songs*, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* and Alec Roth's *A Time to Dance*. Alex has made his solo debuts at some of London's most illustrious venues including Wigmore Hall, Cadogan Hall and St John's Smith Square.

## Francis Pott

Francis Pott retired in summer 2023 as Professor of Composition at London College of Music, University of West London. He began musical life as a chorister at New College, Oxford, subsequently holding music scholarships at Winchester College and then at Magdalene College, Cambridge, where he studied composition with Robin Holloway and Hugh Wood while also undertaking piano studies privately in London with Hamish Milne. He holds the qualifications MA and MusB from the University of Cambridge, an FLCM, a PhD and a Principal Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy. Throughout the 1990s he was John Bennett Lecturer in Music at St Hilda's College, University of Oxford, and a member of the Choir of Winchester Cathedral. He joined the staff of London College of Music as its administrative Head in 2001.

Francis's music has been performed and broadcast in over 50 countries worldwide, published by five major houses in the UK and widely recorded. He has received four national and two international composition prizes and in 2021 was a recipient of the Medal of the Royal College of Organists, its highest award, for 'distinguished achievement in the field of sacred choral and organ composition'. He has also composed three major works for chorus and orchestra, a violin concerto, chamber music and works for piano. He has been married for 32 years to Ginny and they have two adult children, both musicians. Francis has been accompanist to the Vivace Chorus since 2008. He has made a number of appearances at Vivace concerts, including the solo role in Rachmaninov's *Second Piano Concerto* in 2012.

## Piano

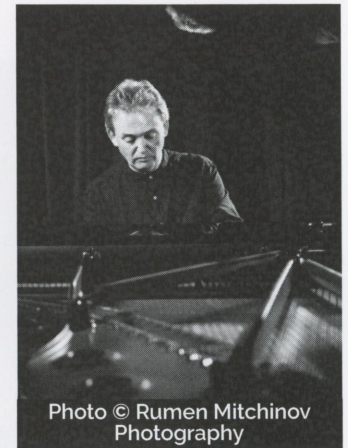


Photo © Rumen Mitchinov Photography

## Edward Dean



Edward Dean is Director of Music and Monastic Organist at Worth Abbey, and is a graduate of both the Royal College of Music and the Eastman School of Music (Rochester NY, USA).

At Worth Abbey, he accompanies the Benedictine monks daily for Lauds, Conventual Mass and Vespers; he also has responsibility for developing and conducting the Abbey Choir. He was previously Assistant Director of Music,

then later Organist of Holy Trinity Sloane Street: a building once described by John Betjeman as "The Cathedral of the Arts and Crafts".

He is in high demand as an harmonium player, and has restored harmoniums and acted as a consultant for the BBC; he has provided instruments for use by many prestigious organisations and groups, including for the Royal Opera House, The Barbican, and Garsington Opera.



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<https://www.vivacechorus.org/vc/newsletter>

## Harmonium

## Debain Harmonium

The harmonium as an instrument dates from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; this was a great time of innovation for keyboard instruments, and there were many different attempts to make an expressive instrument using brass reeds.



Alexandre-François Debain developed what we now know to be the harmonium, and it is one of his instruments that is being used for this evening's performance (which dates from the same decade as the Rossini *Petite Messe Solenne*).

The person playing the harmonium needs to pump the foot pedals (treadles) all the time; bellows are forced closed (creating pressure) and air is allowed past the brass reeds when a note is pressed.

The player can select which set of different-sounding reeds are allowed to sound by using different stops.

The reeds are like metal springs – and they can produce either a quiet sound (with less wind pressure) or a loud sound (with more wind pressure, or more foot-pumping).

Some of the stops are softer in nature – and others more bright and 'nasal' – exactly the same evocative sounds for which Rossini composed.

## Jeremy Backhouse

## Conductor



Photo © Ash Mills

Jeremy Backhouse is one of Britain's leading choral conductors. He began his musical career in Canterbury Cathedral where he was Senior Chorister.

Jeremy has been the sole conductor of the internationally-renowned chamber choir, Vasari Singers, since its inception in 1980. Since winning the prestigious Choir of the Year competition in 1988, Vasari Singers has performed regularly at major concert venues and cathedrals throughout the UK and abroad. Jeremy and Vasari Singers broadcast frequently on Classic FM and BBC Radio 3 and have a discography of over 25 CDs on EMI, Guild, Signum and

Naxos. Their recordings have been nominated for a Gramophone award, received two Gramophone Editor's Choice awards, the top recommendation on Radio 3's "Building A Library" and two recent CDs both achieved Top Ten status in the Specialist Classical Charts. He is totally committed to the performance of contemporary music and, with Vasari, he has commissioned over 25 new works.

In January 1995 Jeremy was appointed Music Director of the Vivace Chorus. Alongside the standard classical works, Jeremy has conducted the Vivace Chorus in some ambitious programmes including Howells' *Hymnus Paradisi*, Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater*, Mahler's "Resurrection" *Symphony*, Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* and *Ivan the Terrible*, then Mahler's "Symphony of a Thousand" and Verdi's *Requiem* in the Royal Albert Hall with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Until July 2022, Jeremy was also the Music Director of the Salisbury Community Choir. In 2013 the choir celebrated its 21st Anniversary with a concert in Salisbury Cathedral, premiering a specially-commissioned work by Will Todd, *The City Garden*, which they toured to Lincoln (2014) and Guildford (2015) cathedrals. A new work from Alexander L'Estrange was premiered in Winchester Cathedral in November 2018.

Jeremy has also worked with a number of the country's leading choirs, including the BBC Singers, the London Symphony Chorus, the Philharmonia Chorus, and the Brighton Festival Chorus.

## About Vivace Chorus

Jeremy Backhouse

Music Director

Francis Pott

Accompanist

Richard Dacey

Chairman



Vivace Chorus at the Royal Festival Hall, May 2017

Photo © Ash Mills

Vivace Chorus is a flourishing, ambitious and adventurous choir based in Guildford, Surrey. We enjoy singing traditional choral classics alongside the challenge of contemporary and newly-commissioned music – there's something for everyone at Vivace!

The choir began in 1946 as the Guildford Philharmonic Choir and was rebranded as Vivace Chorus in 2005. We have an enviable reputation for performing first-class concerts across a wide range of musical repertoire. Particular successes include a sell-out performance in May 2011 of Mahler's *Symphony No. 8*, the "Symphony of a Thousand", at the Royal Albert Hall, a highly acclaimed performance in November 2012 of Britten's *War Requiem* and another Royal Albert Hall success in May 2014 when we performed the Verdi *Requiem*. In 2017 we celebrated our 70th birthday with the Philharmonia Orchestra in the Royal Festival Hall and 2018 saw a sell-out performance at G Live Guildford for our "Concert for Peace".



Photo © Ash Mills

On 13<sup>th</sup> July 2025, we will be returning again to the Royal Albert Hall, where we will be joined by other local choirs, the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra and internationally-renowned soloists Nicky Spence and Lucy Crowe, to perform Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloë Suite*, Poulenc's *Gloria* and the spectacular *Te Deum* by Hector Berlioz.

Vivace has thrived under the exceptional leadership of our conductor, Jeremy Backhouse. Jeremy's passion for choral music and his sheer enthusiasm for music-making are evident at every rehearsal and performance. The Royal Albert Hall concert will be his last with Vivace, as he is retiring after 30 years of dedicated service.

He is supported by Francis Pott, who is an academic and a composer of international repute, and an accomplished concert pianist – who better to accompany our rehearsals?

We have also enjoyed successful European and UK tours, including trips to France, Italy, Germany, Austria, the Baltic states and, most recently, northern Spain.

We are always happy to welcome new members, so if you would like to try us out, do come along to any of our regular rehearsals on Monday evenings at 7.15 in the Guildford Baptist Church, Millmead, Guildford.

Just contact our membership secretary, Becky Kerby, at [membership@vivacechorus.org](mailto:membership@vivacechorus.org) or pay a visit to our website, [vivacechorus.org](http://vivacechorus.org). You can also follow us on Facebook and X (Twitter) - @VivaceChorus.

## Vivace Chorus Patrons

*The Vivace Chorus is extremely grateful to all patrons for their support.*

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James Garrow

John Trigg MBE

### Life Patrons

John and Jean Leston

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### BECOME A VIVACE PATRON

If you have enjoyed this concert, why not become one of our patrons? We have a loyal band of followers whose regular presence at our concerts is greatly appreciated. With the valued help of our patrons, we are able to perform a wide range of exciting music, with world-class, professional musicians in venues such as G Live, Dorking Halls, the Royal Albert Hall and the Royal Festival Hall. If you are interested, please contact Anna Arthur by emailing: [patrons@vivacechorus.org](mailto:patrons@vivacechorus.org).

## Vivace Chorus Singers

### FIRST SOPRANO

Amelia Atkinson  
Helen Beevers  
Mary Broughton  
Jo Haviland  
Isabel Holdaway  
Isobel Humphreys  
Becky Kerby  
Claudia Loiacono  
Fran MacKay  
Suzie Maine  
Sue Norton  
Robin Onslow  
Sian Prentice  
Sarah Smithies  
Joan Thomas  
Hilary Vaill  
Georgie von  
Schweinitz  
Miriam White

### SECOND SOPRANO

Gill Backhouse  
Sarah Badger  
Jane Barnes  
Scarlett Close  
Ann Fuller  
Alex Nash  
Alison Palmer  
Kate Peters  
Mary Somerville  
Valerie Thompson

Sarah von  
Schweinitz  
Olwyn Westwood  
Christine Wilks  
Eiri Williams

### FIRST ALTO

Anna Arthur  
Barbara Barklem  
Jackie Bearman  
Jane Brooks  
Amanda Burn  
Philippa Curtis  
Fiona Davidge  
Valentina Faedi  
Lynne Hargreaves  
Sheila Hodson  
Jean Leston  
Lis Martin  
Charlotte  
Mathieson

Penny McLaren  
Rosalind Milton  
Lilly Nicholson  
Jackie Payne  
Elinor Pinnegar  
Linda Ross  
Catherine  
Shacklady  
Hilary Trigg  
Anna Williams  
Maggie Woolcock

### SECOND ALTO

Geraldine Allen  
Evelyn Beastall  
Mary Clayton  
Liz Hampshire  
Pauline Higgins  
Penny Macfarlane  
Lois McCabe  
Kay McManus  
Val Morcom  
Pamela Murrell  
Sonja Nagle  
Jo Stokes  
Rosey Storey  
Pamela Usher  
Esther Van Rooyen  
Alison Vincent  
June Windle

### FIRST TENOR

Bob Bromham  
Andrea Dombrowe  
Rosie Jeffery  
Nick Manning  
Martin Price  
John Trigg  
Susie Walker

### SECOND TENOR

Drew Alcott  
Geoff Johns  
Stephen Linton

Charles Martin  
Graham Vincent  
Tim Wray

### FIRST BASS

Phil Beastall  
Richard Broughton  
Richard Dacey  
Brian John  
Jeremy Johnson  
Jon Long  
Keith McClurey  
Malcolm Munt  
Chris Newbery  
Robin Privett  
Andrew Skinner  
Philip Stanford  
Rob Walker

### SECOND BASS

Peter Andrews  
Norman Carpenter  
Nick Gough  
Mike Johns  
Neil Martin  
Chris Peters  
Andrew Robertson  
Richard Wood

**Saturday 17th  
May 2025  
7:30pm**



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**Brahms**  
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**Dvořák**  
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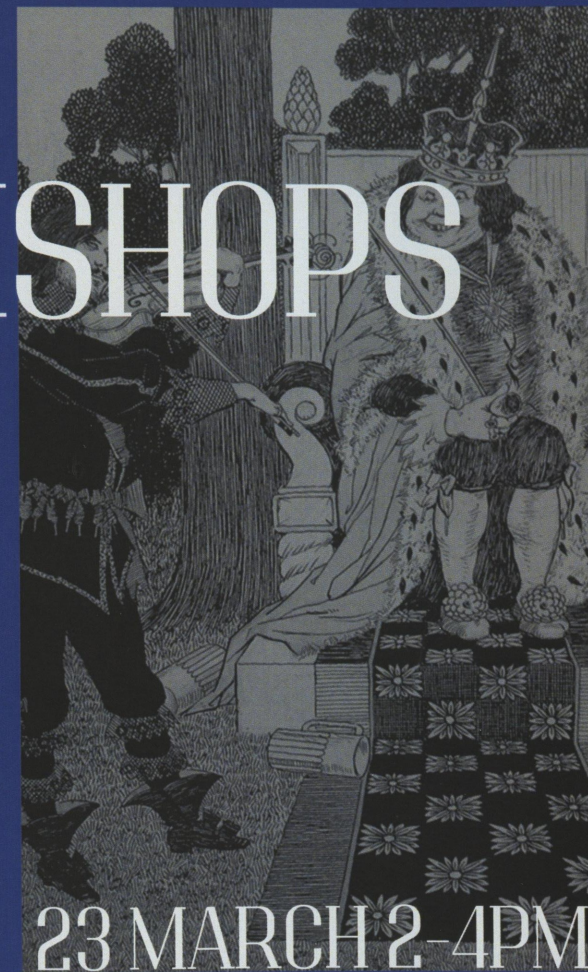
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Royal Albert Hall  
Sunday 13 July 2025

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Photos by: Ki Price (Nicky) /Victoria Cadisch (Lucy)

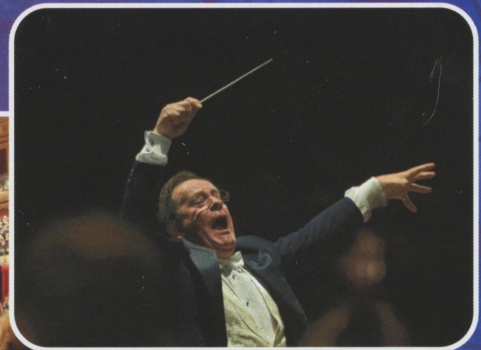
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Conductor: Jeremy Backhouse

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