

HANDEL SINGING COMPETITION

13TH YEAR

FINAL

Tuesday 18 March 7pm
St George's, Hanover Square
London, W1S 1FX

ADJUDICATORS

IAN PARTRIDGE *Chairman (all rounds)*
JOHN MARK AINSLEY *(Final)*
EDWARD BLAKEMAN *(Semi-Final and Final)*
CATHERINE DENLEY *(all rounds)*
MICHAEL GEORGE *(all rounds)*
PATRIZIA KWELLA *(all rounds)*

FINALISTS

SUSANNA FAIRBAIRN *soprano*
EDWARD GRINT *baritone*
EWA GUBAŃSKA *mezzo-soprano*
TIMOTHY NELSON *baritone*
MARIA VALDMAA *soprano*

LAURENCE CUMMINGS *conductor*
London Handel Orchestra
ADRIAN BUTTERFIELD *leader*

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London Handel Society
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Handel Singing Competition
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HANDEL SINGING COMPETITION

TUESDAY 18 MARCH 2014 - 7pm
St George's, Hanover Square
St George Street
London, W1S 1FX

FINAL

SUSANNA FAIRBAIRN *soprano*

Recit & Aria: Ah! Ruggiero crudel ... Ombre pallide from *Alcina* HWV34

Aria: Thou didst Blow from *Israel in Egypt* HWV54

Aria: Scoglio d'immota fronte from *Scipione* HWV20

EDWARD GRINT *baritone*

Recit & Aria: O voi del mio poter ... Sorge infausta from *Orlando* HWV31

Aria: Invida sorte avara from *Ariodante* HWV33

Recit & Aria: Vo' Guerra ... Nel mondo e nell'abisso from *Riccardo Primo* HWV23

EWA GUBAŃSKA *mezzo-soprano*

Recit & Aria: Vani sono ... Svegliatevi nel core from *Giulio Cesare in Egitto* HWV17

Recit & Aria: Chi scopre ... Mi lusinga il dolce affetto from *Alcina* HWV34

Recit & Aria: Ove son, qual orrore? ... Qui ti sfido from *Arianna in Creta* HWV32

There will be a short Interval of 10 minutes

TIMOTHY NELSON *baritone*

Aria: Volate più dei venti from *Muzio Scevola* HWV13

Aria: To Pow'r Immortal My First Thanks Are Due from *Belshazzar* HWV61

Aria: La mia sorte fortunata from *Agrippina* HWV6

Recit & Aria: Principessa infelice ... Nel mondo e nell'abisso from *Tamerlano* HWV18

MARIA VALDMAA *soprano*

Recit & Aria: Tis' done! ... Heart, the seat of soft delight from *Acis and Galatea* HWV49

Recit & Aria: Dunque i lacci ... Ah! crudel from *Rinaldo* HWV7

Aria: Scherza in mar from *Lotario* HWV26

LAURENCE CUMMINGS *conductor*

LONDON HANDEL ORCHESTRA

1st Violins

Adrian Butterfield *leader*

Jean Paterson

William Thorp

Stephen Bull

2nd Violins

Oliver Webber

Theresa Caudle

Ellen O'Dell

Diane Moore

Violas

Peter Collyer

Rachel Byrt

Cellos

Katherine Sharman

Melanie Woodcock

Bass

Cecelia Bruggemeyer

Oboes

James Eastaway

Catherine Latham

Bassoon

Nathaniel Harrison

Harpsichord

Laurence Cummings

SUSANNA FAIRBAIRN *soprano*

Recit & Aria: Ah! Ruggiero crudel
... Ombre pallide
from *Alcina* HWV34
Aria: Thou didst Blow
from *Israel in Egypt* HWV54
Aria: Scoglio d'immota fronte
from *Scipione* HWV20

Thou didst blow with the wind, the sea
covered them;
they sank as lead in the mighty waters.

Ah! Ruggiero crudel, tu non mi amasti!
Ah! che fingesti amor, e m'ingannasti!
E pur ti adora ancor fido mio core.
Ah! Ruggiero crudel! ah, traditore!
Del pallido Acheronte spiriti abitatori,
e della notte ministri di vendetta,
cieche figlie crudeli, a me venite!
Secondate i miei voti,
perché Ruggiero amato
non fugga da me ingrato.

Ma ohimè! misera!
e quale insolita tardanza?
eh! non m'udite? (sdegnata)
Vi cerco, e vi ascondete?
Vi comando, e tacete?
Evvi inganno? evvi frode? (infuriata)
La mia verga fatal non ha possanza?
Vinta, delusa Alcina, e che ti avanza?

Ombre pallide, lo so, mi udite;
d'intorno errate, e vi celate,
sorde da me: perchè? perchè?
Fugge il mio bene;
voi lo fermate, deh! per pietate,
se in questa verga, ch'ora disprezzo,
e voglio frangere, forza non è.

Scoglio d'immota fronte
Nel torbido elemento
Cime d'eccelso monte
Al tempestar del vento,
E' negli affetti suoi
Quest'alma amante.
Già data è la mia fe
S'altri la meritò
Non lagnisi di me
La sorte gli mancò
Dal primo istante.



So, cruel Ruggiero, you did not love me!
you continued to pretend, and you deceived
me!

And yet my faithful heart still loves you.
oh, cruel Ruggiero, oh, you traitor!
you native spirits of livid Acheron,
and avenging ministers of the night,
blind, cruel daughters, come to me!
Assist me in my aim, to prevent Ruggiero,
my beloved, fleeing from me
in base ingratitude.

But oh, alas! unhappy woman!
What unaccustomed tardiness is this?
Ho there, do you not hear me?
I seek you, but you hide from me?
I command you, yet you are silent?
Would you deceive me? Cheat me?
Has my dread wand then lost its power?
Defeated, deceived Alcina, what have you
left?

Pallid shades, I know you hear me;
you hover all around me,
but, deaf to my entreaty,
hide from me. Why? Why?
My beloved is fleeing;
stop him,
I pray, out of compassion,
since in this wand,
which I now despise and wish to break,
no power remains.

An immovable rock-face
in the turbulent sea,
the summit of a high mountain
in the raging of the winds,
is this loving soul in its affections.
My pledge is already given;
If another deserved to have it
May he not complain to me
Of the fate which deprived him of first place.

EDWARD GRINT *baritone*

Recit & Aria: O voi del mio poter ...

Sorge infausta

from *Orlando* HWV31

Aria: Invida sorte avara

from *Ariodante* HWV33

Recit & Aria: Vo' guerra ...

Nel mondo e nell'abisso

from *Riccardo Primo* HWV23



O voi del mio poter ministri eletti
Or la vostra virtute unite meco
Si cangi 'l bosco in speco.
Fa segno e la scena si trasforma in orrida
spelonca
Là al fuor dell'eroe siatene attenti
Che fra pochi momenti avrò vittoria
E l'eroe renderò sano alla gloria.

Sorge infausta una procella
Che oscurar fa il cielo e il mare
Splende fausta poi la stella
Che ogni cor ne fa godere.
Può talor il forte errare
Ma risorto dall'errore
Quel che pria gli diè dolore
Causa immenso il suo piacer.

Invida sorte avara,
miserol! in questo di,
nel prence mi rapì
parte del core.

Or nella figlia cara
del cor l'altra metà,
oh Dei! mi rapirà
forse il dolore.

Vo' guerra! la pace è figlia del timor.
Mia bella, perderti è più che morte,
e cederti è viltà.
No, pria si mora;
me impavido feriscan le ruine,
se l'orbe infranto sprofondasse ancora.

Nel mondo e nell'abisso io non pavento
tutto l'orror che mai possa inventar
il ciel, la terra e il mare.
No, perdere non vo' il mio contento;
se mia tu non sarai, d'altrui non ti vedrò
nel mio pensare.

You heavenly beings, the wellspring of my
power, now unite with me.
Change this forest into a cave!
Be attentive to the approaching fury of
Orlando;
And soon we will have victory, restoring
the hero to glory
Mean, envious fate, wretch that I am! this day
in the prince has stolen away part of my heart.

An inauspicious tempest rises
and darkens the sky and the sea
after this good star rises
and makes each heart happy.
Sometimes the hero can err
but, after the mistake,
he feels a great joy
for what was before his great sorrow.

Mean, envious fate,
wretch that I am! this day
in the prince has stolen away
part of my heart.

Oh, gods! with my dearest daughter
perhaps sorrow
will now steal away
the other half of my heart.

I want war! Peace is the daughter of fear. My
fair one,
to lose you is worse than death;
and to yield you is cowardice. No, I would
die first;
I stand fearless, though I fall in the ruins,
or the shattered world bury me again.

I don't fear on earth or in hell
all the horrors
that could be devised by heaven, earth or sea.
No, I do not want to lose you, my comfort;
if you are not mine,
in my distress I'll not see you another's.

EWA GUBAŃSKA *mezzo-soprano*

*Recit & Aria: Vani sono ... Svegliatevi nel core
from Giulio Cesare in Egitto HWV17*

*Recit & Aria: Chi scopre ...
Mi lusinga il dolce affetto
from Alcina HWV34*

*Recit & Aria: Ove son, qual orrore? ...
Qui ti sfido
from Arianna in Creta HWV32*



Vani sono i lamenti;
è tempo, o Sesto, ormai
di vendicar il padre;
si svegli alla vendetta
l'anima neghittosa,
che offesa da un tiranno invan riposa.

Svegliatevi nel core,
furie d'un alma offesa,
a far d'un traditor
aspra vendetta!
L'ombra del genitore
accorre a mia difesa,
e dice: a te il rigor,
Figlio si aspetta.

Chi scopre al mio pensiero,
or tradito pur son, o s'odo il vero!

Mi lusinga il dolce affetto
con l'aspetto
del mio bene.
Pur chi sa? temer conviene,
che m'inganni
amando ancor.

Ma se quella fosse mai
che adorai, e l' abbandono;
infedele, ingrato io sono,
son crudele e traditor.

Ove son?
Quale orrore?
Spirano da ogni parte
Di quest'orrido claustro i duri sassi?
Che fo', dove rivolgo
Per l'obliquio sentier
Gl'incerti passi?
Qui del mostro biforme
Parmi veder l'orme ferine impresse
Ei non lunge s'aggira.

Lamenting serves no purpose;
the time has come, o Sextus,
to avenge your father;
let your indolent spirit
bestir itself to vengeance,
for - wronged by a tyrant - it cannot rest.

Awaken in my heart
The wrath of an offended soul
So I may wreak upon a traitor
My bitter vengeance!
The ghost of my father
Hastens to my defense
Saying, "From you, my son
Ferocity is expected"

How can I discover
if this is a deception or the truth?

Sweet passion tempts me
at the appearance of my beloved.
But who knows? I fear that
by loving once more,
I deceive myself.

But if it ever should come to pass that
I adore and yet abandon her,
unfaithful, ungrateful am I,
I am cruel and a traitor

Where am I? What horrors
do the hard stones emit from every corner
of this horrid vault?
What shall I do? Where do I direct
my uncertain steps
on the treacherous path?
Here I seem to see imprinted
the savage traces of the two-form monster,
he is roaming not far off.
I fix the guiding thread to the wall,

Il fido condottiero al muro appendo
E nell'aperto vallo, il crudo attendo.
Cielo! Patria! Arianna!
Gloria! Amore dà forza al braccio
Se dai moto al core.

Qui ti sfido, o mostro infame!
Vieni pur, che non pavento
La tua rabbia, il tuo furor.
Caderai, ma se foss'io
Dato in preda alle tue brame,
Perché già non è più mio,
lascia almeno intatto il cor.

and in the open I await the beast.
Heaven! My country! Arianna!
Glory! Love! give strength to my arm,
and courage to my heart.

Here I defy you, vile monster!
Come then, I fear not
your rage, your fury.
You will fall, but if I should be
given as prey to your appetites,
because it is no longer mine,
at least leave my heart unharmed.

INTERVAL OF 10 MINUTES

TIMOTHY NELSON *baritone*

Aria: Volate più dei venti

from *Muzio Scevola* HWV13

Aria: To pow'r immortal my first thanks are due from *Belshazzar* HWV61

Aria: La mia sorte fortunata from *Agrippina* HWV6

Recit & Aria: Principessa infelice ...

Nel mondo e nell'abisso

from *Tamerlano* HWV18



To pow'r immortal my first thanks are due;

My next, great Cyrus, let me pay to you,

Whose arm this impious king laid low,

The bitter source of all my woe.

Tears, sure, will all my life employ,

E'en now I weep, but weep for joy.

Volate più dei venti,

Momenti che scorrete

Innanzi al mio piacer.

Ma siate lenti, lenti

Momenti che verrete

Seguendo il mio voler.

La mia sorte fortunata

dalle stelle oggi mi scende,
se vien oggi da te.

Se in te sol, bella adorata,

la mia stella mi risplende,

per gloria di mia fé.

Principessa infelice,

infido Tamerlano!

Questa, questa è la fede

che dee un monarca

a così illustre erede?

Con generoso core

vuò mostrargli'l suo errore;

corro per rinfacciarlo;

ma sogno, o veglio?

e così incauto io parlo?

Del superbo il furore

ecciterò; ma che tem' io?

Si vada a difesa del giusto,

s'irriti pure il barbaro regnante;

sprezza i gran pergli alma costante.

Nel mondo e nell' abisso

io non pavento

tutto l'orror che mai

possa inventar il ciel, la terra, il mare.

No, perdere non vuò

giusto contento,

Irene, tu vedrai

che virtù sol m'è guida, a grande opraire.

Fly swifter than the winds

the minutes that run

towards my pleasure.

But be slow, be slow,

the moments that come

after I've achieved my desire.

My happy fate

today descends to me from heaven,

it comes today from you.

If for you alone, fair adored one,

my star shines on me,

it's for the sake of my faithfulness.

Unhappy princess,

faithless Tamerlano!

This, this is the faith

a monarch gives

to such an illustrious heiress?

With a noble heart

I want to show him his error;

I run to reproach him;

but am I dreaming, or awake?

do I speak so incautiously?

I'll excite the anger

of that haughty one; but what do I fear?

If I should go to defend the right,

if I should annoy the barbarous sovereign,

a constant heart despises great dangers.

I don't fear on earth or in hell

all the horrors

that could be devised by heaven, earth or sea.

No, I don't want to lose

fair satisfaction,

Irene, you will see

that virtue alone is my guide in these great

acts.

MARIA VALDMAA *soprano*

Recit & Aria: Tis' done! ... Heart, the seat of soft delight from *Acis and Galatea* HWV49

Recit & Aria: Dunque i lacci ... Ah! crudel from *Rinaldo* HWV7

Aria: Scherza in mar from *Lotario* HWV26



'Tis done! Thus I exert my pow'r divine;
Be thou immortal, though thou art not mine!

Heart, the seat of soft delight,
Be thou now a fountain bright!
Purple be no more thy blood,
Glide thou like a crystal flood.
Rock, thy hollow womb disclose!
The bubbling fountain, lo! it flows;
Through the plains he joys to rove,
Murm'ring still his gentle love.

Dunque i lacci d'un volto,
Tante gioie promesse,
Li spaventi d'inferno,
Forza n'avran per arrestar quel crudo?
E tu il segui, o mio core!
Fatto trofeo d'un infelice amore!
No! si svegli 'l furore,
Si raggiunga l'ingrato,
Cada a' miei piè svenato! Ohimè! Che fia?
Uccire l'alma mia?
Ah! debole mio petto,
A un traditor anco puoi dar ricetta?
Su, su, furie , ritrovate
Nova sorte di pena e di flagello!
S'uccida, sì... ah!, ch'è troppo bello!

Ah! crudel,
Il pianto mio
Deh! ti mova per pietà!
O infedel,
Al mio desio
Proverai la crudeltà.

Scherza in mar la navicella
Mentre ride aura seconda:
ma se poi fiera procolla
turba il Ciel, sconvolge l'onda
va perduta a naufragar;
Non così questo mio core
cederà d'un'empia sorte
allo sdegno, ed al furore
che per anco in faccia a morte
so da grande trionfar.

So are the snare of a face,
the promise of so much joy,
and the terrors of hell
not strong enough to hold that cruel man?
My heart, you go with him!
You are the trophy of an unhappy love!
No: let my anger arise,
and find the ungrateful man,
let him fall lifeless at my feet.
Alas! How can it be?
Can I kill the man I adore?
Ah, my feeble heart,
can you shelter a traitor still?
Arise, furies, and discover
new types of pain and punishment;
let him die. Ah, no, for he is too handsome.

Ah, cruel man,
for pity's sake,
be moved by my weeping.
Or you will feel my cruelty
for having spurned
my desire.
Ah, cruel man, etc

A little boat plays on the sea,
while a gentle breeze smiles on it;
then suddenly a fierce storm
disturbs the heavens, whips up the waves,
and it goes, doomed to sink.
My heart will not yield
in this way to an evil fate,
to disdain, and to rage,
for it knows, even in the face of death,
to triumph.

PROGRAMME NOTE

The first performance of Handel's *Scipione* took place on 12 March 1726, with Francesca Cuzzoni in the role of Berenice, who begins the opera as a prisoner of the Roman general, Lelio, and becomes the object of Scipione's love – although Bernice herself is in love with the disguised Spanish prince Lucejo who is posing as a member of the Roman army in Cartagena. By 1726 Handel had worked with Cuzzoni enough to know her likes and dislikes: when she arrived in London for the 1722-23 season, to sing Teofane in *Ottone*, Cuzzoni initially refused to sing 'Falsa immagine' until the famous incident when Handel called her 'une veritable diablesse' and threatened to defenestrate her. Cuzzoni's strength was for 'enriching the cantilena with all the refinements and embellishments of the time ... she had a creative fancy, and the power of occasionally accelerating and retarding the measure in the most artificial and able manner, by what the Italians call *tempo rubato*', as Dr Burney recalled. In the Act II aria '**Scoglio d'immota fronte**' Berenice declares that she can weather the storms like a rock, using extrovert vocality as a weapon against fearsome forces. The sorceress Alcina of Handel's 1735 opera by the same name is a less confident and robust heroine: despite casting malevolent spells, Alcina is unable to gain the true love of Ruggerio. In Act II, '**Ah! Ruggiero crudel ... Ombre pallide**' is a dramatic *scena* for Alcina, in which she realises she has Ruggiero, and despairs that all her magic is hateful to her. *Israel in Egypt* removes us from the realm of generals, princes, and sorceresses to a more spiritually exalted plain. This oratorio which had its first performance on 4 April 1739 was, according to one contemporary writer, the apotheosis of 'the Sublimity of the great Musical Poet's Imagination'. The audience, he warned, should recall that 'the Theatre on this occasion, out to be enter'd with more Solemnity than a Church; inasmuch as the Entertainment ... is really in itself the noblest Adoration and Homage paid to the Deity that was ever in one.' '**Thou didst blow with the wind**' is from Moses's Song of Deliverance (Exodus XV:10), and Handel makes a play on the text with the lilting woodwind accompaniment which evokes the elements of wind and water which engulfed the enemies of the Israelites.

In Handel's pastoral drama *Acis and Galatea*, Galatea is a semi-divine creature from the sea, entirely true in her reciprocated devotion to Acis. But, she is deprived of the handsome shepherd through the jealous rage of Polyphemus. '**Heart, the seat of soft delight**' is Galatea's final air, sung when she manages to transform Acis's blood into a sparkling river, making him immortal even if he cannot be hers. While Galatea uses her powers for noble ends, Handel's other great sorceress, Armida in *Rinaldo* finds that the capacity to make enchantments does not necessarily bring with it happiness. Although in the 1711 version of *Rinaldo*, Armida reforms and converts to Christianity, in the 1731 revision Armida and her lover Argante fly away in a chariot, unredeemed. '**Dunque i lacci ... Ah! crudel**' is Armida's response to rejection by Rinaldo. However, unlike desolate Alcina, Armida swears terrible vengeance upon Rinaldo. It is difficult to sympathise with Armida, but the embattled Adelaide, in Handel's *Lotario*, is a faithful, courageous woman who endures many trials before marrying Lotario (who is, in fact, King Otho of Germany, already immortalised by Handel in *Ottone*). The librettist for *Lotario* was Paolo Rolli, and unimpressed by the finished piece, Rolli apparently wrote in a letter that it was 'a very bad opera'. Despite his misgivings, and the short run of performances in 1729, the role of Adelaide – first sung by Anna Maria Strada del Pò – has many musical rewards. While Berenice compared her fortune with that of a rock, Adelaide in '**Scherza in mar**' evokes the simile of a little boat in tumultuous seas – fragile yet determined – to describe her resolute heart.

One of the stunning new operas of 1720 was Bononcini's *Astarto*, the appeal of which even overcame the partisan sensibilities of Handel's supporters. The Modenese diplomat Giuseppe Riva wrote to librettist Agostino Steffani that *Astarto* 'goes directly to the heart Certain people, enchanted with Handel, would like to say something against it, but they find it hard to swim against the stream.' *Muzio Scevola* was the result of a collaborative challenge, with Bononcini, Handel and the cellist Filippo Amadei each composing an act, and Paolo Rolli as the librettist. Handel's task was Act III, and he put all his ingenuity and aesthetic power into the work. '**Volate più dei venti**' is Porsena's aria, in which the King of Etruria

expresses his fervent desire that his troubles should disperse faster than the wind. The first performance of *Muzio Scevola* on 15 April 1721 was interrupted by the news that the Princess of Wales had given birth to a son, provoking great cheers for the Hanoverians. Handel's Act III 'triumphed over the others', and from Dresden, the Count Flemming's response was 'I am very glad that the German has been victorious'.

More than twenty years later, Handel was even more victorious as an oratorio composer than he had been as an opera composer. In 1744 he was working on *Belshazzar*, and a number of letters from Handel to his librettist, Charles Jennens illustrate their collaboration. Handel composed faster than Jennens supplied words, and when Handel received the text for Act III of *Belshazzar* he was alarmed by its length: 'I received the 3^d Act with a great deal of pleasure, as you can imagine, and you may believe that I think it a very fine and sublime Oratorio, only it is really [sic] too long, if I should extend the Musick, it would last 4 Hours and more. I retrench'd already a great deal of the Musick, that I might preserve the Poetry as much as I could, yet still it may be shortened.'

Unfortunately, *Belshazzar* was not a great success at its three performances in the 1745 season, despite its 'histrionic' drama. **'To pow'r immortal my first thanks are due'** is from the 'too long' third Act, sung by the Assyrian nobleman Gobrias after Belshazzar has been slain in battle. The baritone Giuseppe Maria Boschi was Pallante for the first season of *Agrippina* at the Teatro San Giovanni Grisostomo in Venice in 1709; between 1720 and 1728 he travelled to London where he sang in all thirteen of Handel's operas written for the Royal Academy, including Porsena in *Muzio and Leone* in *Tamerlano*. **'La mia sorte fortunata'** (Agrippina) and **'Principessa infelice ... Nel mondo e nell'abisso'** (*Tamerlano*) are two magnificent arias which are often overlooked in the general preoccupation with Handel's music for high voices.

One of Handel's best high-voiced male singers was Giovanni Carestini, whom Charles Burney described as 'tall, beautiful and majestic he rendered everything he sung interesting by good taste, energy and judicious embellishment. He manifested great agility in the execution of difficult divisions ... in a most articulate and

admirable manner.' This superb singer from Ancona was ideal for the roles of Ruggiero in *Alcina* and Teseo in *Arianna in Creta*, the latter role requiring true heroism for its great battle with the Minotaur. **'Qui ti sfido'** immediately precedes Teseo's fight with the beast of the labyrinth and the vocal and dramatic capacities of Carestini - 'a new Eunuch' as the press described him - enhanced the popularity of the opera after it opened in January 1734. In 1735, *Ruggiero* required a different sort of heroism from Carestini in the more psychologically complex *Alcina*. **'Mi lusinga il dolce affetto'** comes from Act II, scene 1, after Ruggiero has been freed from Alcina's spell and is reunited with his beloved Bradamante. A decade earlier, in *Giulio Cesare*, the role of young Sesto (the son of Pompey) was sung by Margharita Durastanti, whose long association with Handel had begun in Rome. The variety of roles Handel wrote for her demonstrate the singer's versatility; **'Svegliatevi nel core'** ingeniously combines the sorrow of a young man whose father has been betrayed and murdered by the Egyptians Achilias, Septimius and Salvius, with an angry vow to avenge their crime.

The baritone Boschi sang Isacio - his penultimate role in London - in *Riccardo Primo* in November 1727, when there seemed to be no future for Italian opera in London. Mrs Mary Pendarves, whose letters are a valuable resource for details of Handel's opera performances, wrote 'I doubt operas will survive longer than this winter, they are now at their last gasp ... the subscription is expired and nobody will renew it. The directors are always squabbling, and they have so many divisions among themselves that I wonder they have not broken up before'. She was quite correct, and the Royal Academy was wound up by its directors in January 1729. The musical quality of *Riccardo Primo*, is exemplified by **'Nel mondo e nel abisso'**, Isacio's great aria in Act III. Handel wrote *Orlando* (1733) for his 'Second Academy' and *Ariodante* (1735) for John Rich's new theatre at Covent Garden. His bass for the role of Zoroastro in *Orlando* was the Venetian Antonio Montagnana, who started singing for Handel in 1731. One report of his performance in *Orlando* records that he 'sang with a voice like a Canon', and **'Sorge infausta'** - in which Zoroastro optimistically compares Orlando's insanity with a passing tempest at sea - requires both stentorian declamation and

lightning-quick virtuosity. After Montagnana jumped ship and joined Handel's rivals ('The Opera of the Nobility') in 1733, he was replaced with the divertingly-named Gustavus Waltz, who also sang the role of 'Il Re di Scozia' in *Ariodante*. Charles Burney disliked Waltz, saying he 'had but little voice, and his manner was coarse and unpleasant' and claiming that Waltz was actually Handel's cook. '**Invida sorte avara**' counters Burney's former assertion, as it is a magnificent yet austere aria which requires an expressive interpretation and is testament to the powers of Mr Waltz.

Programme note © Corrina Connor, 2014

BIOGRAPHIES

Soprano **SUSANNA FAIRBAIRN** is currently studying with Dennis O'Neill and Nuccia Focile at the Wales International Academy of Voice in Cardiff. At TCM she won the Paul Simm Opera Prize, Wilfred Greenhouse Allt Prize, and the 2009 English Song Competition.

Handelian highlights so far include *Armida/Rinaldo* under Nicholas Kraemer, and appearing as a soloist in *Israel in Egypt* for John Eliot Gardiner.

Other significant solos include St John Passion in Birmingham, Mozart C Minor Mass at the Trinity College of Music, Sir Charles Mackerras Memorial Concert conducted by Sian Edwards, Tavener *Veil of the Temple* in Canterbury Cathedral in the composer's presence, Finzi *Dies Natalis*, Poulenc Gloria. A keen explorer of contemporary music, Susanna is a Park Lane Group Young Artist 2013. She will return to perform Judith Weir's *King Harald's Saga* in June. This summer Susanna will return to Harwich with pianist Matthew Schellhorn for a recital, including the world premiere of a new commission by Toby Young.

Operatic roles include Donna Elvira/ *Don Giovanni*, Lady Billows/ *Albert Herring*, and Agrippina/ *Fragments of Sun*. She will premiere Litha's new work, *Parting*, at Kings Place in March, and appear as Juno in *La Calisto* with Hampstead Garden Opera in April.

British baritone **EDWARD GRINT** is a recent graduate of the International Opera School at the RCM and a former choral scholar of King's College, Cambridge. Edward was awarded Second Prize at the 3rd International Singing Competition for Baroque Opera Pietro Antonio Cesti in Innsbruck. He currently studies with Peter Savidge and Jonathan Peter Kenny.

At the RCM Edward performed Count Almaviva / *Le nozze di Figaro*, Isacio *Riccardo Primo* (London Handel Festival), Splendiano Djamileh, Garibaldo / *Rodelinda* (LHF), John Styx / *Orpheus in the Underworld*, Tirenio / *Il pastor fido*, and in many other roles.

Already in demand as a soloist, Edward has worked with many leading ensembles. Highlights include performing a programme of Bach and Kuhnau cantatas with the King's Consort at the Wigmore Hall, Bach's Magnificat for the OAE at the Valletta Festival in Malta, Weill's *Mahagonny Songspiel* with the LPO at the Royal Festival Hall, Bach's Coffee Cantata with the Adderbury Ensemble, the *Dream of Gerontius* in Ely Cathedral, Bach's St John Passion (London Mozart Players) and *Messiah* in St. Paul's Cathedral. Edward would like to thank Jonathan Peter Kenny for his help in preparing for the Final.

EWA GUBAŃSKA began her musical education at the age of six playing the violin and the piano. In 2012 she graduated from the Academy of Music in Poznań – specialising in the violin. In 2013 she finished her vocal studies with Agnieszka Rehlis at the Karol Lipiński Academy of Music in Wrocław. In May 2012 Ewa Gubańska played Neron in *L'incoronazione di Poppea* by at the Early Music Festival in Wrocław. In 2012 Ewa became a member of the European Network of Opera Academies, which gave her an opportunity to study with great singers. She collaborated with the Wrocław Philharmonic Choir, Paul McCreesh and Gabrieli Consort & Players as a part of a choir. She participated in masterclasses with: Izabella Kłosińska, Nelly Miricioiu, Axel Everaert, Olga Pasiecznik, Paola Larini, Mauro Trombetta, Włodzimierz Zalewski. Now she is studying baroque singing with Gloria Banditelli in the Bologna Conservatory of Music.

Born in London, **TIMOTHY NELSON** gained a degree in Physiology from Cardiff University. He currently studies with Peter Savidge at the RCM's International Opera School. His studies are generously supported by The Countess of Munster Musical Trust, The Josephine Baker Trust and the William Gibbs Educational Trust.

Operatic experience includes the title Role in *Le nozze di Figaro* (RCM International Opera School), Berardo in Handel's *Riccardo Primo* and Argenio in *Imeneo* (London Handel Festival), and the title role in Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* (Welsh National Youth Opera).

Recent solo performances include Mahler Symphony No 8 at the Colston Hall, Bristol; Fauré *Requiem* and Bach St John Passion at St David's Hall, Cardiff; Bach *St Matthew Passion* and Mendelssohn *Elijah* at Llandaff Cathedral; Bernstein Mass at the 2012 BBC Proms; Bach Mass in B minor in Torquay; Bach Christmas Oratorio in Abergavenny, Puccini *Messa di Gloria* and Saint-Saëns *Oratorio de Noël* at St Giles' Cripplegate and Vaughan Williams' *Five Mystical Songs* at Cardiff Metropolitan Cathedral.

Away from singing, Timothy is an avid rugby and cricket fan and a keen golfer. He can often be found on the golf course trying to lower his handicap.

Estonian soprano **MARIA VALDMAA** has obtained an MA in Early Music Singing at the Royal Conservatoire of The Hague, where she studied with Lenie van den Heuvel, Jill Feldman, Michael Chance and Peter Kooij.

As a soloist she has performed in Bach's St John Passion and *Weihnachtsoratorium*, *Messiah*, Haydn's 'Nelson' Mass, Mozart's Requiem and *Vesperae solennes de confessore*, Vivaldi's Gloria, and in various Bach cantatas. Her operatic experience includes the title role in Jacopo Peri's *Euridice*, Gasparina in Haydn's *La Canterina*, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, and Angelica in Handel's *Orlando*.

As an ensemble singer Maria works regularly with Het Nederlands Kamerkoor, De Nederlandse Bachvereniging, Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir, and Ensemble Vox Luminis.

ADJUDICATORS

JOHN MARK AINSLEY has appeared with the world's greatest orchestras and conductors, including the London, Chicago, Boston and San Francisco Symphony orchestras and the London, Berlin, Vienna and New York Philharmonic orchestras, with Sir Colin Davis, Bernard Haitink, Sir Charles Mackerras, Charles Dutoit, Kurt Masur, Sir Roger Norrington, Sir Simon Rattle and Claudio Abbado.

His discography covers the baroque and classical repertoire, the German Lied and English song and the American musical. His Britten recordings include the three tenor cycles *Serenade for tenor, horn and strings*, *Les illuminations* and *Nocturne*.

2010 saw his first Captain Vere in the UK in Michael Grandage's production of *Billy Budd* for the Glyndebourne Festival. He sang Skuratov in Janacek's *From the House of the Dead* directed by Chereau and conducted by Boulez at the Amsterdam, Vienna and Aix-en-Provence Festivals and subsequently in his house debut at La Scala, Milan under Salonen. His operatic engagements also include *From the House of the Dead* at the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin under Sir Simon Rattle and Orfeo at the Theater an der Wien under Ivor Bolton.

Future engagements include the Creation with the OAE under Sir Simon Rattle and Britten's *War Requiem* at the Gulbenkian.

He is a Visiting Professor at the Royal Academy of Music.

EDWARD BLAKEMAN is a commissioning and programme Editor at BBC Radio 3, where his responsibilities include the planning and administration of the BBC Proms. He previously co-ordinated the prize-winning *Sounding the Century* project for Radio 3 and produced a wide range of music features, documentaries, live relays and recordings of orchestral concerts and operas.

Before joining the BBC, he was a freelance flute player, writer and presenter. He studied at Lancaster and Birmingham Universities and in Paris on scholarships from the British Council and the CNRS. He held a research fellowship at the Royal Northern College of Music and was Head of the Wind Depart-

ment at the London College of Music. He is a trustee of the Royal Philharmonic Society and the Britten-Pears Foundation, editor of various music editions, and author of two recent books: Taffanel - Genius of the Flute (OUP) and The Faber *Pocket Guide to Handel*.

CATHERINE DENLEY studied at Trinity College of Music from the age of seventeen, winning prizes there for Lieder and French Song but also developing a lasting passion for the Early Music repertoire and an aptitude for contemporary works. After a brief time in the BBC Singers she embarked on a very successful solo career which has taken her all over the world and has now spanned almost 40 years. At home she has worked with all the major British orchestras as well as most of the principal Early Music ensembles - her repertoire is varied and extensive.

She has made many appearances on the operatic stage, mostly in England and Germany, in Handel and Monteverdi roles - though she did also sing Olga in *Eugene Onegin* under the baton of Rostropovich - but most of her career has been in the oratorio field. As a soloist, Catherine has over sixty recordings to her credit: she is particularly renowned for her Bach, Handel, Monteverdi and Vivaldi performances, some of which have won international awards. Now as a teacher, Catherine enjoys working with a huge range of ages and abilities, from complete beginners to professional singers and actors. She is in demand as an external assessor in the singing departments of the British conservatoires. Still having itchy feet, she now travels the world as an examiner for Trinity College London which brings her almost back to where she started! Recent trips have included Hong Kong, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, India, South Africa, Egypt and Indonesia.

Bass baritone **MICHAEL GEORGE** began his musical life as a chorister at King's College Cambridge. Later he studied at the Royal College of Music where he was a major prize winner. His career has included performances with all the leading orchestras in Britain and in many international festivals. Conductors he has worked with include Marriner, Eliot Gardiner, Norrington, Mackerras, Christophers, Pinnock, Handley, Sanderling, Zinman, Muti, Elder and Nagano.

His recordings include most of Handel's oratorios, *The Dream of Gerontius*, *Creation*, Bach's Passions, Cantatas, Missa solemnis, Ninth Symphony, the complete songs, odes and church anthems of Purcell, contributions to six volumes of Graham Johnson's Schubert Series, Gurney's songs, Finzi's Let Us Garlands Bring and Zelenka's *Lamentations*.

He has worked at ENO, Scottish Opera and Buxton Opera and toured various baroque opera projects with Philip Pickett and Jonathan Miller in Europe, Mexico and China. In 2014 he will be involved in productions of Purcell's *Faerie Queen* in Mexico.

PATRIZIA KWELLA studied three subjects at the RCM, winning the McKenna scholarship for singing, and a separate bursary for the cello and piano. While still a student she was the soprano soloist in a televised performance of Messiah from the Royal Albert Hall, subsequently appearing throughout Europe and the United States in concerts and festivals in repertoire ranging from the 16th to the 20th century. She was best known in the great baroque and classical masterpieces and worked regularly with Sir Charles Mackerras, Sir John Eliot Gardiner and Sir Roger Norrington. She also broadcast regularly for BBC radio and made many recordings, including Handel's *La Resurrezione* and *Esther* with Christopher Hogwood, *L'Allegro* with Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Bach's *St John Passion* with Harry Christophers, Holst's *The Dream City* with Richard Hickox, and a Mozart series for EMI.

Having now retired from the concert platform, some of her final performances included *Dido and Aeneas*, *A Sea Symphony* at the Royal Festival Hall, *St John Passion* in Cadogan Hall and Sir John Tavener's *Lament of the Mother of God* in Winchester Cathedral in the composer's presence.

IAN PARTRIDGE has an international reputation as a concert singer and recitalist. His wide repertoire encompassed the music of Monteverdi, Bach and Handel, Elizabethan lute songs, German, French and English songs and first performances of new works.

Ian's phenomenal list of recordings includes Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin*

(first choice in BBC Radio 3's Building a Library) Schumann's *Dichterliebe* and Liederkreis Opus 39, and Britten's *Serenade*, Vaughan Williams's *On Wenlock Edge* and Warlock's *The Cuckoo*.

He sang the Evangelist in Bach's *St John Passion* and was the tenor soloist in the complete set of Handel's *Chandos Anthems* recorded with The Sixteen, conducted by Harry Christophers.

Ian has also enjoyed taking masterclasses on Lieder, English Song and Early Music. He retired from public performance in 2008 but remains a professor at the Royal Academy of Music. He was awarded the CBE in 1992 for services to music.

LAURENCE CUMMINGS is one of Britain's most exciting and versatile exponents of historical performance both as conductor and harpsichord player. Music Director of the London Handel Festival since 1999, he took up the same role at the Internationale Händel-Festspiele Göttingen in 2012, as well as acting as Music Director for Orquestra Barocca Casa da Musica Porto and as a trustee of Handel House London.

He has conducted productions for English National Opera, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Gothenburg Opera, Opernhaus Zurich, Opera de Lyon, Garsington Opera and at the Linbury Theatre Covent Garden. He regularly conducts the English Concert and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and has worked with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Ulster Orchestra, Handel and Haydn Society (Boston), St Paul Chamber Orchestra (Minnesota), Wiener Akademie, Zurich Chamber Orchestra, Musikkollegium Winterthur, Hallé, Britten Sinfonia, Northern Sinfonia, Jerusalem Symphony, Wroclaw Baroque and Basel Chamber Orchestra.

He has made numerous recordings including the first recording of Handel's newly discovered Gloria with Emma Kirkby, and recital discs with Angelika Kirschlager, Lawrence Zazzo and Maurice Steger.

Current plans include new productions for Opera North, English National Opera and Opernhaus Zurich, concerts with Royal Northern Sinfonia, Bournemouth Symphony and RSNO, as well as his regular

commitments in Porto and at the London and Göttingen Handel Festivals.

ADRIAN BUTTERFIELD is a violinist, director and conductor who specialises in performing music from 1600-1900 on period instruments. He is Musical Director of the Tilford Bach Society and Associate Director of the London Handel Festival and regularly directs the London Handel Orchestra and Players as well as working as a guest soloist and director in Europe and North America. The London Handel Players perform regularly at the Wigmore Hall and throughout Europe and North America and their Handel recordings have received glowing reviews. The Revolutionary Drawing Room specializes in classical and romantic music on period instruments and has also performed in North America and Europe. He works annually with the Southbank Sinfonia, is Professor of Baroque Violin at the Royal College of Music, gives master classes in Europe and North America and teaches on the Aestas Musica Baroque Course in Croatia.

Plans for the 13/14 season include an LHP Canadian tour, appearances at the Göttingen Handel Festival, in Montreal, and at McGill University in orchestral and chamber music concerts including a recording. In November 2014 the LHP will be making their debut at Carnegie Hall.

Following a period in the Arts Council Art Department, **CATHERINE HODGSON** trained as a bookbinder, specialising in repair and modern design binding. Once her three children were at school she joined the staff of the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, from where she moved to the administrative staff of the Royal College of Music. In 1999, Denys Darlow invited her to take on the organisation of the London Handel Festival which he founded in 1978. She runs the administration from her office in Ilminster, Somerset where she also set up *Concerts in the West* in 2006, an annual series of concerts for young professional musicians and spanning three counties.

PETER JONES was born in Pontlloft, South Wales. After leaving university he studied singing privately with Ivor Evans. His singing repertoire concentrated on Handel, Bach, Haydn and Mozart. He was encouraged to develop his interest in score editing and engraving by Denys Darlow. He

has prepared editions of Handel's operas and other works for the London Handel Festival, the Göttingen Handel Festival, English Touring Opera, the Buxton Festival, The Sixteen, The Early Opera Company, Garsington Opera, Bampton Classical Opera and the London Mozart Players, among others. He collaborated with the late Anthony Hicks on several editions, notably Saul. This year's LHF will use his editions of *Deborah*, *Israel in Egypt* and *Arianna in Creta*. Peter is looking forward to preparing the performing material for the Handel Singing Competition Final, for which he has five days to complete and print the music! He has entered into an agreement with ChesterNovello to market his Handel editions.

ANN ALLEN studied at Manchester University, Royal Academy of Music and the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis in Switzerland. She has performed as a baroque oboist with many European baroque orchestras including L'Arpa Festante, Capriccio Baroque and La Cetra as well as playing shawms and dulcians with renaissance ensembles such as the prize-winning Les Haulz et Les Bas and I Fedeli. She established the medieval group 'Mediva' while studying at the RAM and they have gone on to reach the finals of the EMN Young Artists Competition at the York Early Music Festival and the Antwerp Young Artists Platform, as well as recording several CDs.

Since being back in London she has performed with Damon Albarn at ENO in his rock opera *Dr Dee* and as one of the musicians on the highly acclaimed Globe Theatre production of *Richard III*. Ann established the crossover Festival 'Nox Illuminata' in 2005 mixing Early Music with Modern Music. It explores various different approaches to the concert setting and audience participation and draws on other art forms to enhance the evening's experience. It was an annual event in Basel before being invited to move to the Festspielhaus in St Pölten, Austria and the Burghof Lörrach, Germany.

CORRINA CONNOR studied music at Victoria University of Wellington before reading for an MPhil in Performance and Musicology at Oxford University. She is a cellist and baroque cellist, and has studied with Katrin Eickhorst-Squire, Jonathan Manson, Alison McGillivray and Angela East.

Corrina has performed with Trinity Laban Baroque Orchestra, and Solomon's Knot, and is frequently principal cellist for Linden Baroque Orchestra and Belsize Baroque. Since 2012 Corrina has also performed as a guest musician with the Milk Monitors in their show *Austentatious* at the Edinburgh Fringe and the Udderbelly Festival on the Southbank, and she is delighted to be joining them for parts of their 2014 UK tour. As a musicologist, Corrina has a long-standing enthusiasm for seventeenth- and eighteenth-century: her MPhil research focussed on the context and rhetorical significance of sacred music by Pelham Humfrey and Henry Purcell. However she is now a PhD student based at OBERTO, the opera research unit at Oxford Brookes University, where she is researching matters of masculinity and national identity in Johann Strauss's *Die Fledermaus*.

The **LONDON HANDEL ORCHESTRA**, which is made up of some of London's finest professional baroque players and is directed by Adrian Butterfield and Laurence Cummings, was formed in 1981 by Denys Darlow to perform at the annual London Handel Festival. It has gained an excellent reputation for historically-informed performance and contributed greatly to the revival of interest in Handel's music over that period. The Orchestra performs throughout the Festival at venues including Handel's church, St George's, Hanover Square, the Royal College of Music and the Wigmore Hall. It also gives concerts at venues throughout the country outside the Festival period and has appeared at the Chelsea, Windsor, Tilford Bach, Three Choirs and Oslo Church Music Festivals and at the Barber Institute as well as for the opening of the Queen's Golden Jubilee in April 2002 in St George's Chapel, Windsor. Recordings include Handel's *Aminta e Fillide* and *The Triumph of Time and Truth* (Hyperion) and the premiere of Handel's opera *Silla* (Somm), conducted by Denys Darlow. The first recording of the 1732 version of the oratorio *Esther*, conducted by Laurence Cummings, appeared in December 2007 and was Editor's Choice in Gramophone Magazine; a live recording of *Joshua* was released in 2009. Recent appearances include performances of Handel's *La Resurrezione* at the Wigmore Hall and Bach's *Magnificat* and concerts in Canterbury and Colchester as well as *Israel in Egypt* for Grayshott Concerts.



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2005	Fflur Wyn <i>soprano</i>
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2007	Derek Welton <i>baritone</i>
2008	Erica Eloff <i>soprano</i>
2009	Ruby Hughes <i>soprano</i>
2010	Sophie Junker <i>soprano</i>
2011	Stefanie True <i>soprano</i>
2012	Anna Starushkevych <i>mezzo-soprano</i>
2013	Rupert Charlesworth <i>tenor</i>

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Claire Hammett *Harpischords*

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Photo: Rupert Charlesworth - Winner in 2013

(Chris Christodoulou)