



STATE OPERA
SOUTH AUSTRALIA



KING ARTHUR

Gabrieli Consort & Players

MONDAY 18 FEBRUARY

TUESDAY 19 FEBRUARY

Elder Hall

BIOGRAPHIES



PAUL Mc CREESH

Paul McCreesh is renowned for the energy and passion of his musicianship, and the interpretive insight he brings to repertoire of the widest stylistic and historical breadth. His authoritative performances are founded on uncompromising drive and vision, alongside a hunger for new challenges. First established as the founder and artistic director of the Gabrieli Consort & Players, he now conducts such orchestras as the Leipzig Gewandhaus, Bergen Philharmonic, Hong Kong Philharmonic, Sydney Symphony, The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and Verbier Festival Orchestra. He is a former Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor at the Gulbenkian Orchestra, Lisbon and served for six seasons as Artistic Director of the International Festival Wratistavia Cantans in Wrocław, Poland. At the heart of McCreesh's music-making is a determination to broaden

and democratise access to the arts. He is actively involved in developing new performing opportunities and educational initiatives across Europe, and carefully curated collaborations with youth choirs and orchestras are central to his work. McCreesh's ever-questioning spirit makes him a difficult artist to categorise: he is as likely to be found conducting Purcell's theatre works as Elgar's symphonies or an a cappella part song. He is increasingly known for his performances of major choral works, such as Britten's *War Requiem*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Verdi's *Requiem*, Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* and Haydn's *The Creation* and *The Seasons*. He brings to all this repertoire the same rigorous scholarship and interpretive flair that defined his early career, confirming his reputation for innovation, and making him one of today's most highly regarded recording artists.



ANNA DENNIS

Described by *The Times* as a 'delectable soprano and a serene, ever-sentient presence', Anna Dennis is especially noted for her work in modern and Baroque repertoire. Notable concert performances have included Britten's *War Requiem* at the Berlin Philharmonie, a programme of Russian operatic arias with Philharmonia Baroque in San Francisco, Thomas Adès' *Life Story* accompanied by the composer at the Lincoln Centre's White Light Festival in New York, Orff's *Carmina Burana* with the Orquestra Gulbenkian in Lisbon, Bach's *Christmas*

Oratorio with the Australian Chamber Orchestra in the Sydney Opera House and with Concerto Copenhagen in Amsterdam, and Haydn's *Schöpfung* with Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa in Japan. Her recordings include Rameau's *Anacréon of 1754* with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Handel's *Siroe* and *Joshua* with Laurence Cummings and Festspiel Orchester Göttingen, and a CD of Russian composer Elena Langer's chamber works, *Landscape with Three People*, on the Harmonia Mundi label.



MHAIRI LAWSON

As a soloist Mhairi Lawson has performed in opera houses and concert halls worldwide including English National Opera, Les Arts Florissants, The Gabrieli Consort and The Scottish Chamber Orchestra, and with leading conductors such as William Christie, Sir Charles Mackerras, Paul McCreesh, John Butt, Richard Egarr and Sir John Eliot Gardiner. Recent and future highlights include performances of Handel's *Messiah* with the Hallé Orchestra and with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, the title role in *Semele* with the City of

Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, *Acis & Galatea* and Bach's *B minor Mass* with the Gabrieli Consort, *Venus & Adonis* with the Dunedin Consort, Mozart's *Mass in C Minor* with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Haydn's *Creation* with the Arctic Philharmonic, a residency at the Carmel Bach Festival in the U.S.A., a recital with lutenist Elizabeth Kenny as part of the St Magnus International Festival, and Mhairi continues her recital collaboration with Eugene Asti.



HUGO HYMAS

British tenor Hugo Hymas was born and grew up in Cambridge. He graduated with an honours degree in Music from the University of Durham in 2014 and then moved to London to sing. Hugo has performed on the concert platform as a soloist in several of Europe's great concert halls: Philharmonie Paris, Concertgebouw, KKL Luzern, Philharmonie Berlin and Royal Albert Hall. He is increasing demand on the international stage and is building a reputation as an Evangelist for Bach's *Passions*. Other regular concert repertoire includes

Monteverdi's *Vespers 1610*, Mozart's *Requiem* and *Missa Solemnis* and Britten's *Saint Nicholas*. Hugo has also performed works from the French Baroque period (Charpentier) recently in London at King's Place and Wigmore Hall. On the opera stage Hugo has played the lead roles in Monteverdi's *Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*, Purcell's *Dido & Aeneas*, Handel's *Semele*, *Acis & Galatea* and Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, *The Marriage of Figaro*. 'Hugo Hymas, still in his 20s, sang with great delicacy and a stunningly easy sound [...] He's a name to watch.' *The Guardian* (U.K.)



JAMES GILCHRIST

James Gilchrist's extensive concert repertoire has seen him perform in major concert halls throughout the world with conductors including Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Sir Roger Norrington, Bernard Labadie, Harry Christophers, Harry Bicket, Masaaki Suzuki and the late Richard Hickox. A master of English music, he has performed Britten's *Church Parables* in St Petersburg, London and at the Aldeburgh Festival, *Nocturne* with the NHK Symphony Orchestra in Tokyo and *War Requiem* with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra and the

National Youth Orchestra of Germany. Equally at home in Baroque repertoire, appearances include Handel's *L'Allegro il Penseroso ed il Moderato* with Stuttgart Bachakademie and at Teatro Real, Madrid, *Solomon* with Les Violons du Roy, *Semele* with Concerto Köln, *Elijah* with the Orquesta y Coro Nacionales de España, Madrid and Bach *Collegium Japan*, *Hercules* with the English Concert, *Ode to St Cecilia* with Basel Chamber Orchestra and *Messiah* with Boston Handel & Haydn Society.



MARCUS FARNSWORTH

Marcus Farnsworth was awarded first prize in the 2009 Wigmore Hall International Song Competition and the Song Prize at the 2011 Kathleen Ferrier Competition. He has appeared in recital at the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, La Monnaie, Brussels with Julius Drake; on a U.K. tour of Schubert *Winterreise* with James Baillieu; for Leeds *Lieder* with Graham Johnson and at Opéra de Lille with Simon Lepper. He has appeared many times at the Wigmore Hall with Malcolm Martineau, Julius Drake and Graham JoMarchiushnson, the Myrthen Ensemble

and Joseph Middleton and with the Carducci Quartet. Recent highlights have included a performance and recording of Vaughan Williams's *Sea Symphony* conducted by Martyn Brabbins, and a performance of John Adams's *The Wound Dresser*, both with the BBC Symphony Orchestra. A strong supporter of contemporary composers, he has sung works by John Tavener, Sally Beamish, Thomas Larcher, Peter Maxwell Davies and David Sawer. Marcus is the founder and artistic director of the Southwell Music Festival.



ASHLEY RICHES

British bass-baritone Ashley Riches read English at the University of Cambridge where he was a member of the prestigious King's College Choir. He went on to study at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and subsequently joined the Jette Parker Young Artist Programme at the Royal Opera House. He has appeared with the Royal Opera, English National Opera, Opéra National de Lorraine, Berlin Philharmonic, Gabrieli Consort and Philharmonia Orchestra with conductors including Esa-Pekka Salonen, Robin Ticciati, Sir John

Eliot Gardiner, Sir Simon Rattle, Christian Curnyn and Sir Roger Norrington. Future engagements include *Dido & Aeneas* with the Academy of Ancient Music, *Lélio* with the Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra on tour in the US under Sir John Eliot Gardiner, *The Silver Tassie* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Ryan Wigglesworth, *Le Nozze de Figaro* in Tokyo, concerts with MDR Rundfunk, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, English Concert and his debut at Glyndebourne Festival Opera.

KING ARTHUR

FIRST MUSIC – SECOND MUSIC – OVERTURE

ACT I:

A Saxon sacrifice scene

Chorus and solos: 'Woden, first to thee'

Song and chorus: 'I call you all to Woden's hall'

A British Triumphant song

Song and chorus: 'Come if you dare'

FIRST ACT TUNE

ACT II:

Philidel and Grimbald – rival spirits

Song and chorus: 'Hither this way'

Song: 'Let not a moonborn elf deceive thee'

Chorus and solos: 'Come follow me'

Kentish lads and lasses

Song and chorus: 'How blest are shepherds'

Duet: 'Shepherd, shepherd, leave decoying'

Chorus and dance: 'Come, shepherds, lead up a lively measure'

SECOND ACT TUNE

ACT III:

A prospect of winter in frozen countries – Cupid and the Cold Genius

Prelude and song: 'What ho! thou genius of this isle'

Prelude and song: 'What power art thou'

Song: 'Thou dotting fool'

Song: 'Great love I know thee now'

Song: 'No part of my dominion'

Prelude and chorus: 'See, see we assemble'

Prelude, song and chorus: 'Tis I that have warm'd ye'

Duet: 'Sound a parley'

Chorus: 'Tis love that has warm'd us'

INTERVAL

THIRD ACT TUNE

ACT IV:

The pleasures of love

Duet: 'Two Daughters of this Aged Stream'

Passacaglia, solos and chorus: 'How happy the lover'

Duet: 'You say 'tis love' (moved from Act V)

FOURTH ACT TUNE

ACT V:

Let Britannia Rise

Song: 'Ye Blust'ring Brethren'

Symphony

Song and chorus: 'Round thy Coasts, Fair Nymph of Britain'

Trio: 'For Folded Flocks'

Song: 'Your hay it is Mow'd'

Song: 'Fairest Isle'

Trumpet tune

A New Song and Chorus for Britannia and St George

COMPOSER

Henry Purcell

POET

John Dryden

CONDUCTOR

Paul McCreesh

ENSEMBLE

Emily Dickens — soprano

Christopher Fitzgerald-Lombard — tenor

Thomas Castle — tenor

Catherine Martin — violin I/concertmaster

Persephone Gibbs — violin I

Ruth Slater — violin I

Oliver Webber — violin II

Ellen O'Dell — violin II

Sarah Bealby Wright — violin II

Rachel Byrt — viola

Stefanie Heichelheim — viola

Christopher Suckling — bass violin

Gavin Kibble — bass violin

Christopher Palameta — oboe/recorder

Sarah Humphrys — oboe/recorder

Zoe Shevlin — bassoon

Jean-Francois Madeuf — trumpet

Paula Chateaufneuf — theorbo

Eligio Quinteiro — theorbo

Jan Waterfield — harpsichord

John McMunn — General Manager

Peter Reynolds — Concerts/Tour Manager



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ON THE EDITION

Christopher Suckling c.2018

Restoration dramattick opera is notoriously difficult to present on the concert platform; Purcell's astonishing music was an integral part of an art-form that also fused drama, dance, and lavish theatrical effects. Tonight's performing edition encapsulates Gabrieli's desire to create a version which offers a convincing musical experience, albeit one that is stripped of much of its surrounding narrative.

The musical sources for King Arthur are among the most challenging of the seventeenth century; scattered across numerous manuscripts, none are in Purcell's hand, and all are at least a few productions removed from the first performances at Dorset Gardens in 1691. Even this production diverged from Dryden's published wordbooks, probably an expression of the political realities and practical theatrical concerns Purcell experienced in the first half of 1691. The transmission of the music for King Arthur is further complicated by its immediate popularity. The opera continued to be produced throughout the 1690s and was revived several times in

the eighteenth century, culminating in substantial adaptations of both music and libretto by Arne and Garrick in 1770.

The final climactic sequence honouring St George, for example, seems to be especially corrupt; it may have been cut, or altered, as a result of religious tensions following the ascent of William and Mary. There remains preserved only a suspiciously poor chorus, far below Purcell's usual standards, and a song in a somewhat later musical style, suggesting an early eighteenth-century attempt to reconstruct the scene. This performance adapts what is probably Purcell's finest trumpet song and chorus, the climax to Act IV of Diocelsian; with relatively few changes of text it has been possible to create in spirit the paean to St George, Britannia, and the Order of the Garter, envisaged by Dryden, albeit not in precisely his own words. Similarly, the sources seem to lack all the instrumental music one might expect to find; as such, a few additional pieces have been included from that rich Purcellian treasure trove of incidental music to other plays.

It is, however, through King Arthur's popularity that the corrupted musical sources have survived, passed from copyist to copyist in a notational game of 'Chinese whispers', leaving riddles of form, structure, and instrumentation. Sustained enthusiasm for King Arthur today has likewise mutated Gabrieli's own parts for the opera. The collected markings of more than twenty years of performances, together with scorings-out, inserts, and excisions, have left a similarly confused set of material. This newly prepared edition is an opportunity for us to revisit our own performing traditions and examine them alongside our continuing work on instrument construction and technique. These physical expressions of our musicianship, for which Gabrieli are renowned, inform our reading of the sources of King Arthur and our collation of the material into a form idealised for concert performance.

Dramattick opera is more than the sum of its parts; this edition, likewise, is an amalgam of scholarly research, performance experience and musical instinct that facilitates our interpretation of Purcell's glorious music to King Arthur.

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