

HEATHFIELD CHORAL SOCIETY

with Linden Baroque Orchestra
led by Julia Bishop

Conductor | Sebastian Charlesworth

HANDEL'S **MESSIAH**

Lucy Hall - Soprano

Eleanor Minney - Mezzo-soprano

Nick Allen - Tenor

Thomas Coltman - Bass-baritone

**SATURDAY 6TH DECEMBER
2025**

STATE HALL, STATION ROAD, HEATHFIELD

PROGRAMME





Lucy Hall (*soprano*) studied at the National Opera Studio in London and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Lucy began the year singing Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Scottish Opera and has been covering the role of Hermione in *The Winter's Tale*, a world premiere conducted and composed by Ryan Wigglesworth. Last year saw Lucy tour Scotland singing Barbarina in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* with the English Touring Opera. Previously, Lucy made some important debuts including her Royal Opera debut performing Lila in *The Firework Maker's Daughter* at the ROH Linbury Theatre, also with the Scottish Opera performing Euridice in Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*.

Lucy also enjoys a varied career on the concert platform. She sang Marzelline in *Fidelio* with the BBC Philharmonic which was broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and made her Barbican Hall solo debut with the London Symphony Orchestra in a performance of Nielsen's *3rd Symphony* conducted by Sir Colin Davis and Flora in *The Turn of the Screw*. Recently, Lucy performed the solo in the UK premiere of John Gardner's *Stabat Mater* with the City of London Choir conducted by Hilary Davan Whetton at St. John's, Smith Square, toured Israel performing Bach Cantatas and last year sang the soprano solo in the Good Friday *Messiah* at the Royal Albert Hall with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Lucy won the First Prize in the Oxford Lieder Young Artist Platform with pianist Gavin Roberts and they regularly enjoy recitals together as part of Oxford Lieder and the Countess of Munster Recital Schemes.

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Eleanor Minney (*mezzo*) began her journey into the musical profession at Trinity Laban Conservatoire, where, as well as a first class honours degree, she gained invaluable insight into solo and ensemble singing. Eleanor left TL in 2010 and quickly established herself as a busy freelance singer and teacher on the London circuit.

Eleanor has performed regularly with the Monteverdi Choir, The Sixteen, Tenebrae, I Fagiolini, The OAE, Polyphony, and Collegium Vocale Ghent, to name a few. She is also a permanent member of the BBC Singers. As a soloist she has covered the Baroque and early oratorio repertoire extensively, with many concert performances and recordings of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, *St. John Passion*, *B Minor Mass* and *Magnificat*, Handel's *Messiah* and Monteverdi's *Vespers* in the UK, Europe and the USA. She has also worked closely with baroque violinist Davina Clarke in their successful recital series *Bach: Contemporaries and Inspirations* and *The Art of Obligato*.

Other highlights include the World Premiere of Sir John Tavener's *The Beautiful Names* at the Hagia Sofia in Istanbul, Copland's *In the Beginning* with The Sixteen, Cherubino in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Fanny Price in Dove's *Mansfield Park* (both Hampstead Garden Opera), Mercedes in Bizet's *Carmen* (Riverside Opera) and Ruggiero in Handel's *Alcina* (Musica Poetica). Eleanor lives in Northamptonshire with her husband, two children, cat and tortoise.

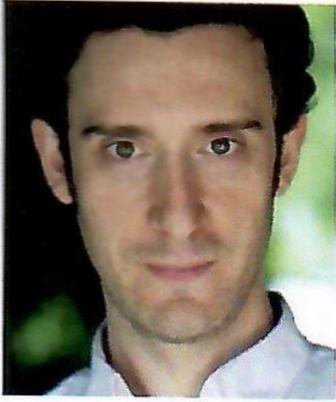


Nick Allen (*tenor*) graduated from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in 2011. He grew up in Lowestoft where he performed Britten's *Serenade for Tenor, Horn & Strings* as part of Britten's centenary celebrations in 2013 - believed to be the first public performance of this work in Britten's home town.

Recent oratorio experience includes the Evangelist in Bach's *St. John Passion* and *St. Matthew Passion*, Bach's *Mass in B Minor*, Mozart's *Vespers*, *Requiem* and *Coronation Mass*, Handel's *Messiah*, Haydn's *Creation* and *Nelson Mass*, Beethoven's *Mass in C Major*, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* and Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and Ramirez's *Navidad Nuestra*.

Nick made his operatic debut in Canada as Peter Quint in the Britten opera *The Turn of the Screw*. Other roles include 'Frederic' in *The Pirates of Penzance* and 'Nanki-Poo' in *The Mikado* (Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Company), 'Tobias' in Jonathan Dove's *Tobias and the Angel* and 'Rat' in the newly-commissioned opera *Fever Pitch*, based on the novel by Nick Hornby.

As well as regularly performing with 'Impropera' – presenting improvised opera - he has performed in two operas written specifically for babies and toddlers! In addition to classical music, Nick now fully embraces what is most definitely a 'portfolio career' as a performer. He regularly performs as a cabaret artist and has performed with the chorus for Opera North (*Carousel*) and numerous productions for Opera Holland Park. Nick also works regularly as a session singer and has recently been heard on recordings for the West End and for the Commonwealth Games opening ceremony.



Thomas Coltman (*bass-baritone*) has established a multifaceted international career as a baritone, pianist, educator and choral director. His piano studies with Yekaterina Lebedeva at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and as a Britten Pears Young Artist led to performances throughout the UK and Europe. After pursuing vocal studies in London, Thomas sang in UK and European choirs and in opera choruses, including at the Glyndebourne Festival in England.

As a soloist, he performs regularly in oratorios around the UK, in recital and concert at venues such as Westminster's Abbey and Central Hall, as well as appearing on radio and television broadcasts. Principal operatic roles have included Figaro (*Marriage of Figaro*), Father (*Hansel and Gretel*), Count Robinson (*The Secret Marriage*) and Claudius (*Agrippina*). A passionate educator, Thomas has taught singing extensively in all education sectors, on the BA acting course at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, and in collaboration with the British Voice Association. He studied voice intensively with celebrated soprano Nelly Miricioiu, receiving guidance from Sir John Tomlinson and also training in the Estill Method.

As Choral Director he has led performances at venues including Belfast Grand Opera House, Dublin City Hall, St Paul's Cathedral and Southbank Centre in London. Thomas was a founder of the London Stroke Choir and creates bespoke arrangements in numerous vocal contexts. Alongside his accomplished musical career Thomas continues to explore new life possibilities, whilst enjoying many hours running, baking, volunteer gardening and philosophising.

Become a Friend or a Patron

By coming to one of our concerts we already regard you as a friend, but if you would like to be kept in touch with the choir's activities and maybe attend some of the choir's social activities, let us know how we can contact you and send you details of up-coming events.

You might also consider becoming a Silver Patron which will bring added benefits to you and to the choir. For £50 per season you would be entitled to an interval drink – for this concert they are free but rather than increase ticket prices, we will be asking concert goers to pay for drinks as from the May concert. You will have a reserved seat which means you will no longer need to get to the hall early to find a favourable spot. You also get a 10% reduction on tickets.

Or as a Gold Patron, you could sponsor a musician or a soloist for a particular concert. We would ask for a donation of £100 or more and for this you would get all the benefits of a silver patron, plus the knowledge that one of the performers is there because of your generosity. This would be acknowledged in the programme.

For further information, please contact Sue Carter, johnandsuecarter@hotmail.com

The Choir

Soprano

Julie Bell
Sue Carter
Sarah Christie
Kathryn Dewhurst
Jacqui Downing
Barbara Edwards
Susan Garden
Penny Heath
Francesca Hunt
Carol Kemp
Marina Khilkoff-Boulding
Deborah Mackinnon
Ruth McDermott
Sarah Norris
Georgina Penticost
Heather Pryce
Gill Stevens
Caroline Thompson
Beth Thorold
Mary Wilce
Hillary Wilson
Jeni Woodhouse
Alison Wright Reid

Alto

Rachel Bishop
Jenny Crisford
Viv Dume
Jo Evans
Rosie Evans
Shineen Galloway
Pat Harwood
Anne Lewis
Jenny Mayhew
Kate Peckham
Tania Spooner
Jane Thomas
Susan Tranter

* Guest

Tenor

Phillip Brooks
Nick Dibb
Nick Howard
Rory Khilkoff-Boulding
Peter Lewis
Brian Newman
Robert Price
Nick Rees

Bass

Hugh Bell
Rob Bickley *
Larry Charlesworth *
Martin Clay
Roger Floyd *
Howard Jones
Bernard Maishman
Richard Penticost
Chris Thompson
Steve Tolhurst

The Orchestra

Violin 1

Julia Bishop (*Leader*)
Gillian Taylor
Jocelyn Slocombe
Alex Ait-Mansour
Judy Taylor
Alan Selwyn

Violin 2

Michael Jenner
Anthony-Ben Constantine
Barbara Grant
Ian Cutts
Carolyn Liefkes

Viola

John Sutherland
Roger Mears
Deborah Miles-Johnson

Cello

David Winfield
Christine Land (*continuo*)
Giles Kennedy

Double Bass

John Mears

Oboe

Lysander Tennant
Simon Galton

Bassoon

Mathew Dart

Trumpet

Sam Lewis
Nick Budd

Harpsichord

Ceci Keiffer

Organ

Gavin Stevens

Timpani

Fabian Edwards

Sebastian Charlesworth was appointed Musical Director of Heathfield Choral Society in May 2019. He is a graduate of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where he initially trained as a bassoonist. He has spent the last decade singing and more recently, conducting sessions at world famous recording studios Abbey Road and Air Lyndhurst. He has recorded soundtracks for Disney, Paramount and The National Theatre and is singing on the Oscar-nominated song "I'm just Ken" from Barbie. He has worked with film composers such as Danny Elfman, John Williams, Alan Menken and Lorne Balfe.

In recent years, conducting/musical direction has become a mainstay of his work and, alongside HCS, he is MD for the chamber choir New Sussex Singers. He is a teacher of both singing and bassoon in five different schools. In his 'spare' time, he enjoys fine dining, home improvement and spending as much time as possible with his wife Hannah, and young sons Hugh and Magnus.

Gavin Stevens has been accompanist for Heathfield Choral Society since 1999. He went to the Royal Academy of Music where he studied composition, piano and electronic music; winning the Arthur Hinton prize at the end of his first year for performing his compositions in a recital. Gavin has worked for over 30 years as a teacher of piano, composition and, since 2011, guitar. As a pianist he gives frequent piano recitals and as a composer he has written four piano sonatas and a wide variety of other works for piano, an increasing number of works for guitar including three books of studies and a set of Impromptus. Gavin has also written for choir and Heathfield Choral Society has performed two of these works. Gavin has also been accompanist for Phoenix Choir Eastbourne since 2014 and Music Leader at Emmanuel URC Worthing since 2011. He lives in Angmering, West Sussex with his wife Tracy and daughter Megan.

Linden Baroque Orchestra was formed in late 1984 by a group of early music enthusiasts in the front room of a house in Linden Gardens, Chiswick. Unusually it combines the talents of young professionals, amateurs and students and many members have moved on to have prominent careers in the early music field. The current Musical Director is Ashley Solomon, the well - loved flautist and recorder player who is also Head of Historical Performance at the Royal College of Music, where he has been a Professor since 1994.

The orchestra has played at venues from Norfolk to Berlin to Rome (where it gave the first performances there of Purcell's King Arthur). The instruments are either 18th century originals or modern copies - some made by the players themselves and are played at "baroque pitch" of 415Hz.

Joining the choir.

The Society welcomes new singers, and is very happy for them to try a couple of rehearsals before joining. **There are no auditions!** Our next term starts on January 5th. Please contact Jenny at heathfieldchoral.membership@gmail.com for more information, or speak to a choir member.