

Friday, November 14, 2014, 8pm  
Saturday, November 15, 2014, 2pm  
Zellerbach Hall

## *Curlew River: A Parable for Church Performance*

*Music by Benjamin Britten*  
*Libretto by William Plomer, after Jūrō Motomasa*



### **Britten Sinfonia & Britten Sinfonia Voices**

Soloists from the Pacific Boychoir Academy

*Curlew River is a co-production of the Barbican Centre, London; Cal Performances; Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, New York; and Carolina Performing Arts.*

*These performances are made possible, in part, by Patron Sponsors  
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*Cal Performances' 2014–2015 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.*

CURLEW RIVER: A PARABLE FOR CHURCH PERFORMANCE (1964)

<i>Music</i>	Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)
<i>Libretto</i>	William Plomer (1903–1973), after Jūrō Motomasa (1395–1431)
<i>Direction, Design, Costume, Video</i>	Netia Jones
<i>Lighting Design</i>	Ian Scott

CAST

<i>Madwoman</i>	Ian Bostridge, <i>tenor</i>
<i>Abbot</i>	Jeremy White, <i>baritone</i>
<i>Traveller</i>	Neal Davies, <i>bass</i>
<i>Ferryman</i>	Mark Stone, <i>bass-baritone</i>
<i>Spirit of the Boy</i>	David Schneidinger
<i>Altar Servants</i>	Jeroen Breneman, Sivan Faruqui, Louis Pecceu
<i>Music Director</i>	Martin Fitzpatrick

PRODUCTION TEAM

<i>Video and Production</i>	Lightmap
<i>Production Manager</i>	Rachel Shipp
<i>Tour Manager</i>	Eoin Quirke
<i>Video Technician</i>	Dori Deng
<i>Costume Supervisor</i>	Jemima Penny
<i>Hair and Makeup Designer</i>	Susanna Peretz
<i>Production Manager</i>	Steve Wald
<i>Stage Manager</i>	Beth Hoare-Barnes
<i>Deputy Stage Manager</i>	Jane Andrews
<i>Britten Sinfonia Management</i>	Nikola White
<i>Curlew River U.S Tour Management</i>	Askonas Holt

*Please note that there is no interval in this performance.*

BRITTEN SINFONIA (ORCHESTRA)

Martin Fitzpatrick, *Director*

*Flute* Karen Jones

*Viola* Clare Finnimore

*Harp* Hugh Webb

*Horn* Richard Wainwright

*Double Bass* Ben Russell

*Percussion* Scott Bywater

BRITTEN SINFONIA VOICES (CHORUS)

Eamonn Dougan, *Director*

*Tenor* Andrew Dickinson

Thomas Herford

Daniel Joy

*Baritone* Gabriel Gottlieb

Thomas Kennedy

Douglas Nairne

*Bass* Oliver Hunt

Louis Hurst

## A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

*Clear as a sky without a cloud  
 May be a mother's mind,  
 But darker than a starless night  
 With not one gleam, not one,  
 No gleam to show the way.*

—William Plomer, *Curlew River*  
 (after Jūrō Motomasa)

**I**DEAS OF DARKNESS AND LIGHT, obscurity and illumination are at the heart of Benjamin Britten and William Plomer's extraordinary "parable for church performance," *Curlew River*. The drawing together of Japanese *noh* theater and the English medieval mystery play creates an entirely unique and luminous work, quite unlike any other. Here, the concept of light takes separate forms: natural light—the physical manifestation of light or absence of it—metaphysical radiance or divine light, and spiritual revelation or enlightenment. The interplay between darkness and light is both literal and metaphorical, at once narrative and abstract—daylight and night, seeing and not seeing, clarity and confusion.

Aspects of both ancient Oriental and English medieval theater are reflected in every part of the piece: stillness, ritual, visual richness, and gestural economy. Here human suffering is represented not literally, but with a degree of abstraction that reveals a deeper truth. Suffering is pared down to its most extreme expression—a mother made mad with grief for her lost son. In the traditions of *noh* theater, as described by Zeami Motokiyo, the 14th-century *noh* master, madness is "a highly spiritual state accompanied by a separation

from the self." Zeami elucidates: "When they are bereaved mothers, the heroines are represented as abnormally sensitive and particularly susceptible to their surroundings and fall into fits of poetic exaltation which expresses itself by frenzied gestures. When their lost ones are found, their temporary madness leaves them." In *Curlew River*, the lucidity that follows the resolution of the drama is translated into the medieval idea of spiritual enlightenment—the darkness of madness and confusion recedes into the clarity of understanding, and, perhaps, redemption.

"There is nothing specifically Japanese left in the parable that William Plomer and I have written," asserted Britten. But the features that so attracted him to the *noh* performances that he witnessed—"the touching story, the economy of style, the intense slowness of the action, the marvelous skill and control of the performers, the beautiful costumes, the mixture of chanting, speech and singing which, with the instruments, made up the strange music"—are fundamental to *Curlew River*. Contrast and opposition, opacity and transparency are woven through the libretto, and create a slow, subtle, but intense accumulation of tension. The blend of ritual and spontaneity of *noh* theater, combined with the communal nature of enactment of the medieval mystery makes for a work which is both removed and extremely intimate. Here medieval concepts of illumination and spiritual enlightenment are presented in humane terms, both universal and heartbreakingly individual, in music of profound beauty and the deepest expressiveness.

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## CURLREW RIVER BACKGROUND

A VIRTUOUS WIFE raped by the vicious son of a Roman tyrant; a Japanese mother, maddened by grief perhaps, in search of her abducted son. How much can *The Rape of Lucretia* and *Curlew River* have in common? For a start, there's a span of 18 years between the first performances of each work, during which time Benjamin Britten's interests moved in different directions. Then *The Rape of Lucretia* is described as an opera, while *Curlew River* was subtitled "A Parable for Church Performance." It's true that both works tell their tales within a specifically Christian framework, with the man and woman of the chorus in *Lucretia* struggling to relate her rape and eventual suicide to Christian ideas about suffering and redemption, and the history of the Madwoman in *Curlew River* performed by a cast of medieval monks in a work that begins and ends with plainchant.

But look and listen again. *The Rape of Lucretia* was composed hot on the heels of the triumph of *Peter Grimes* in 1945, while *Curlew River* was first performed in 1964, four years after *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. And both would seem to anticipate that late masterpiece *Death in Venice*. What all three works share is a desire to rethink both the form and, perhaps, the function of music drama after the composer had demonstrated (in *Peter Grimes*, *Albert Herring*, *Billy Budd*, and *The Turn of the Screw*) his mastery of larger-scale works which sit relatively comfortably within the tradition of European opera.

More significantly, both *The Rape of Lucretia* and *Curlew River* look to cultures that are either at the edge of the Western tradition or outside it: to Rome when it was ruled by kings and to medieval Japan. Yet both set their stories within the dominant Western tradition of Christianity. If Britten intends to revise our notion of what constitutes music drama in both of these works, he is also, perhaps, a child of his time; an artist who, for all his deep curiosity about other cultures, was grounded in the tradition set in train by the Enlightenment, that West was probably best.

However, neither *The Rape of Lucretia* nor *Curlew River* attempts to synthesize the European past and present or East and West; both are simultaneously and separately present in each work and are somehow brought together within the performance itself. Indeed, "performance" may be said to act as a bridge between these two worlds. So the principal action of the church parable has the Madwoman and the Traveller being ferried across the *Curlew River*, while in the chamber opera Tarquinius must ride from his army camp outside Rome into the heart of the city to ravish Lucretia.

Britten was always alert to creative worlds beyond his native shores. As a young man excited by the music of Mahler he had hoped to study with Alban Berg in Vienna. His journey to America in 1939 may have been largely for personal and political reasons, but he evidently relished the possibility of becoming a part of a different musical culture. Indeed, it was in the United States that he first encountered the music of the gamelan, which would become such a distinct accent in his own music after a holiday to Bali in 1956.

In February of that year Britten, together with his partner Peter Pears, had been invited to perform in Tokyo by the Japanese broadcaster NHK and the British Council. Up to this point the composer's relationship with Japan had not been a happy one. In 1940, at the age of 26, he and five other European composers (including Richard Strauss and Jacques Ibert) had been invited to write a piece celebrating the 2,600th anniversary of the founding of the Japanese empire. Britten's resulting work—*Sinfonia da Requiem*—composed in memory of his parents, was unacceptable to the Japanese. It was, a court official told him, unsuitably Christian and too "gloomy" to celebrate the birthday of a dynasty.

Matters were much improved in 1956. Britten and Pears gave a recital that included the *Seven Sonnets of Michelangelo* together with the composer's arrangements of British folk songs. Nine days later Britten conducted the NHK Symphony Orchestra in a performance of *Les illuminations*, with Pears as the

soloist, and, for the first time in Japan, the *Sinfonia da Requiem*.

In the meantime, the two men were steeping themselves in traditional Japanese culture, with recitals of traditional *geisha* singing, visits to *kabuki* and *noh* theater and a performance of *gagaku*, Japanese court music. On February 11, the composer seems to have experienced something of an epiphany at a performance of the *noh* play *Sumidagawa*. So moved was he by the story of the madwoman who has traveled the land in search of a son who had been abducted a year before that he asked to see the play again on the day that he was to leave Japan.

Two years later Britten reflected on what he had seen that day in a talk for NHK. “I count [the performance of *Sumidagawa*] among the greatest theatrical experiences of my life. Of course it was strange to start with, the language and especially the curious kind of chanting used. But we were fortunate in having an excellent literal translation of the poem and we soon became accustomed to the haunting sounds. The deep solemnity and selflessness of the acting, the perfect shaping of the drama like a great Greek tragedy coupled with the...universality of the story is something which every Western artist can learn from.”

Here was a story that stretched out from its roots in a traditional form of Japanese theater to appeal to an English composer in search of creative bridges between his own cultural patrimony and its “other.” And it doesn’t require much effort to see this fascination between the self and the other as the central motif of Britten’s own personal life as well as that of his art: the homosexual in a society where it was a criminal offence for almost all of his adult life and a man overwhelmingly attracted to boys who was thus imprisoned in his own chastity.

*Noh* is not the most yielding of theatrical forms for a Western audience; indeed, many Japanese have difficulties with this form of drama, which can trace its roots back to the 14th century. And although music and dance play a central role in *noh* and its starting point is a text—albeit in a Japanese that is not easily

understood without study—it would be wrong to equate *noh* with Western opera. It makes demands on actors and audiences that are a great deal more challenging than an evening spent in the company of Mozart, Verdi, Wagner, or Berg. An actor sitting still and silent on stage for 90 minutes is a challenge for both the performer and those who are watching. *Noh* is a kind of ritual. As Donald Keene, a historian of Japanese theatre has written, “the purpose of *noh* is not to divert on the surface but to move profoundly and ultimately to transcend the particular and touch the very springs of human emotion.” Character and action are scarcely present on the *noh* stage, which, as another commentator reminds us, is “a sacred space where the meeting of our world with the other dimension is represented.”

The ritual element in *noh* undoubtedly would have appealed to Britten. The chanting chorus, the actors wearing their all-important masks and the onstage musicians—just four of them—a flautist and three drummers. He was also lucky in the particular play that he saw performed by the Kanze school of *noh*. It belongs to a group of plays called *kyō-jomono* (“drama of madwomen”). Generally these stories have a happy ending, with the lost child or the vanished husband or lover eventually restored to the woman, who then recovers her sanity. *Sumidagawa* is different in that the son is already dead. At the end the madwoman can only hear his voice and see his spirit. Britten must have been as much moved by the death of innocence—an abiding theme in his work—as he was by the sorrowing mother in what is sometimes called a drama of madness—*monoguruinoh*.

It seems likely that on his return to Europe Britten shared his excitement about what he had seen with the poet William Plomer, who would write the libretto for what became *Curlew River*. But two years later in 1958 it was still an “idea” rather than a definite project as a letter from the composer to Plomer makes clear. “The *Sumidagawa* doesn’t come into any immediate plans. I’d rather put it to the back of my mind. But any time that you feel that you’d like to talk about it can be

brought forth again. It is something that I am deeply interested in and that I am determined to do sometime. Isn't it a curiously moving and disturbing story?"

Plomer *did* want to talk about it and, more importantly, to start writing. So by the end of the summer of 1958 there was a draft libretto. Daisaku Mukai, who has studied this first draft, points out that the work is a long way from its final form at this stage, being an English-language version of the original play. And it is still very Japanese, with Japanese place names retained and the story beginning with the Ferryman rather than the entry of the monks and their formal robing prior to the beginning of the drama proper. As for the end, the spirit of the dead child actually appears and when the mother and the chorus pray for him they use the words of a Buddhist prayer. At this stage the work was called *Sumida River*.

It seems likely that Britten and Pears, who was to create the tenor role of the Madwoman, were anxious that they might be creating a Western pastiche of a Japanese *noh* play. So they dropped the Japanese names, and *miyakodori*—the Japanese word for gulls—became curlews, giving the work its final title. It's at this point that the specifically Christian framework is created, with the play becoming a parable to be performed in a medieval church in East Anglia by an abbot and his monks in order to instruct their congregation. So the piece begins with the plainsong hymn *Te lucis ante terminum*, and "from it the whole piece may be said to have grown," as Britten indicated in the preface to the published score.

As drama *Curlew River* would seem to have distanced itself now from its *noh* origins. In *noh* only the protagonist wears a mask, but in *Curlew River* the Ferryman and the Traveller are also masked; in this church parable the characters "act" their emotions and are rarely static as in *noh*; and while the chorus still treat us to the kind of monophonic singing that is an essential part of *noh* drama, they are accompanied by seven musicians rather than four, and who produce a more highly colored sound than the Japanese *hayashi* ensemble.

However, when you listen to *Curlew River*, you hear unmistakable echoes of the music that Britten heard in Japan in 1956, though always wonderfully bent to his own creative purposes. The very particular use of the chamber organ and the gradually accelerating *tremolando* of the drums seem to come from *gagaku*, the Japanese court music which he had heard in Tokyo. And it was in the Japanese capital that Britten acquired his own *sho*, a kind of mouth organ used in *gagaku*. The *sho* has 17 bamboo pipes, and in court music it plays complex chords. Britten seems to have adapted what he heard on the *sho* to be played on the chamber organ in *Curlew River*.

As Daisaku Mukai has suggested, "heterophony characterizes the musical language of *Curlew River* [and] is also common to Japanese traditional music—we hear this in the entrance of the Abbot after the prelude. In this entry music the opening plainchant theme is played in unison by all the instruments but each line is slightly delayed to create a kind of echo-like effect suitable for the visionary nature of the piece."

Whereas other composers might have written these things into their score as so many exotic calling cards, they are intrinsic to Britten's work and its meanings. Through the heart of this Parable for Church Performance runs a river that must be crossed, *Curlew River*, a frontier between "two kingdoms," as the Ferryman tells us. "On this side the Land of the West, on the other, the Eastern Fens." East Anglia certainly, but also it is the Japanese other, life and death too, darkness and light, despair and hope...all these things are written into the monks drama. And when we are almost at the end, as the chorus chant *Custodes hominum psallimus Angelos*, the hymn for Vespers for the feast of the guardian angels, the stately progressing chords sound strikingly Japanese, while the solo flute, representing the soaring curlew, belongs to the English Fens. East and West, other and self, are held in balance in the moment of performance.



**T**HE PARABLE is told by a quartet of characters who in the tradition of *noh* theater are all men: the Abbot, who is the narrator, the Ferryman, the Traveller, and the Madwoman. Eight pilgrims form the chorus. The action takes place in a church by a river in the Fenlands in the early medieval period.

*Curlew River* opens with the Abbot and his monks processing into the center of the church singing the hymn *Te lucis ante terminum*. The abbot, his monks and the musicians take their places and at a cue from the organ the abbot tells his congregation of a time not long ago, when “a sign was given of God’s grace...in our reedy Fens...[where] the Curlew River runs.” The monks who are to play the Ferryman, the Traveller, and the Madwoman are ceremonially dressed in their robes, the pilgrims take their places and the story begins.

The Traveller and the Madwoman have come to cross the river that “flows between two realms, on this side the land of the West, on the other the Eastern Fens.” The Madwoman, who is clearly nobly born, has journeyed from the Black Mountains in search of her child, who was abducted twelve months previously. The Ferryman seems unwilling to

take her across the water and they argue. However, the Traveller and the pilgrims persuade him to give her passage.

As they begin their crossing, the Ferryman stops poling his boat. “Today,” he tells his passengers, “is an important day, the people are assembling in memory of a sad event.” He continues poling. One year ago, a young boy arrived in the area with a vicious master who had kidnapped him from his home near the Black Mountains. The boy was badly beaten by this master and then abandoned by the river. Local people cared for the sick child, who, clearly dying, made a last request. “Please bury me here, by the path to this chapel. Then, if Travellers from my dear country pass this way, their shadows will fall on my grave, and plant a yew tree in memory of me.” For the people who live along the river the boy’s grave is sacred, “some special grace is there, to heal the sick in body and in soul.”

All now understand the boy who died is the son for whom the Madwoman is searching. “O Curlew River, cruel Curlew, where all my hope is swept away.” During the crossing, the Ferryman tries to console her. “Your sad search is ended.” And he and the Pilgrims lead the grief-stricken mother to her son’s tomb.

As all pray the voice of the dead boy suddenly echoes their chant, *Custodes hominum psallimus Angelos*. Alone now, the mother suddenly sees the spirit of her son. “Go your way in peace, mother. The dead shall rise again and in that blessed day we shall meet in heaven.” Freed from her grief and with her wits restored, the Mother kneels in a prayer that ends with a joyous emblematic “Amen,” the final note of which resolves into a long-delayed unison with the full cast—a signal of her return and acceptance.

The actors in the drama are disrobed and as monks now hail “a sign of God’s grace.” “In hope, in peace, ends our mystery,” intones the Abbot. And the company process away from the centre of the church once again singing the hymn *Te lucis ante terminum*.

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**Ian Bostridge** (*tenor, Madwoman*)’s international recital career has taken him to the Salzburg, Edinburgh, Munich, Vienna, Aldeburgh, and Schwarzenberg Schubertiade festivals and to the main stages of Carnegie Hall and La Scala, Milan. He has held artistic residencies at the Vienna Konzerthaus and Schwarzenberg Schubertiade (2003–2004), a Carte-Blanche series with Thomas Quasthoff at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw (2004–2005), a Perspectives series at Carnegie Hall (2005–2006), the Barbican (2008), the Luxembourg Philharmonie (2010–2011), and Wigmore Hall (2011–2012).

His operatic appearances have included Lysander (*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*) for Opera Australia at the Edinburgh Festival; Tamino and Jupiter (*Semele*) for English National Opera; and Quint (*The Turn of the Screw*), Don Ottavio, and Caliban (Thomas Adès’s *The Tempest*) for the Royal Opera. For the Bavarian State Opera he has sung Nerone (*L’incoronazione di Poppea*), Tom Rakewell (*The Rake’s Progress*), and Male Chorus (*The Rape of Lucretia*); and Don Ottavio for the Vienna State Opera. He has sung Aschenbach (*Death in Venice*) for English National Opera and in Brussels and Luxembourg.

Mr. Bostridge’s recordings, encompassing repertoire from Handel to Henze and Schubert to Adès, have won all the major international record prizes and been nominated for 13 Grammy Awards.

He has worked with the Berlin, London, Los Angeles, New York, Rotterdam, and Vienna philharmonic orchestras, the BBC, Boston, Chicago, and London symphony orchestras, and the Royal Concertgebouw

Orchestra under conductors including Daniel Barenboim, Sir Andrew Davis, Colin Davis, Daniel Harding, Riccardo Muti, Seiji Ozawa, Sir Antonio Pappano, Sir Simon Rattle, and Donald Runnicles. In 2010, he gave the world première of Henze’s *Opfergang* with the Accademia Santa Cecilia in Rome under Mr. Pappano, and in March of this year sang Stravinsky’s *Oedipus rex* with Angelika Kirchschrager and HK Gruber in Manchester and Vienna.

During the 2013 Britten centenary celebrations, Mr. Bostridge has been a major presence worldwide, with appearances at the Aix-en-Provence, Brighton, Aldeburgh, and Salzburg festivals; and Britten residencies at the Laeishalle Hamburg, the Philharmonie Cologne, New York’s Carnegie Hall, the Barbican, Birmingham Symphony Hall, and the Moscow Conservatory (including the Moscow première of *Death in Venice* under Gennady Rozhdestvensky). He performed in the Berlin Philharmonie on Britten’s birth date and also appears with the Warsaw Philharmonic under Roberto Abbado, the Santa Cecilia Orchestra under Sir Antonio Pappano, the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Vladimir Jurowski, and the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra under Andris Nelsons.

Mr. Bostridge was appointed a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire in the 2004 New Year’s Honors. He is Humanitas professor of classical music at the University of Oxford. His book, *Schubert’s Winter Journey: Anatomy of an Obsession*, will be published by Faber and Faber in the United Kingdom and Knopf in the United States in early 2015.

**Netia Jones** (*direction, design, costume, video*) is a director and video designer in opera and staged concerts. She is director of Lightmap, a mixed media partnership with which she has created performance, installation, and film projects in the United Kingdom, Europe, and the United States. Work as director and designer includes *Kafka Fragments* (Kurtág) for the Royal Opera House, Linbury Theatre; *Where*

*the Wild Things Are* and *Higglety Pigglety Pop!* (Knussen) for the Barbican, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Aldeburgh Festival, and Tanglewood Contemporary Music Festival; *Everlasting Light*, *The Way to the Sea*, and *Before Life and After*—all site-specific performances for the Aldeburgh Festival; *Alfred* (Arne) and *Partenope* (Handel) for the Royal Opera House, Linbury Theatre; *Susanna* and *Flavio* for the Queen Elizabeth Hall with the Early Opera Company; Handel's *Acis, Galatea e Polifemo* for the Batignano Festival, Italy; Poulenc's *La voix humaine* for Opera North; and Blow's *Venus and Adonis* and Handel's *Acis and Galatea* and *Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* with Transition/Lightmap.

Other Transition/Lightmap projects include works by Schoenberg, Berg, Purcell, Stravinsky, Bartók, Britten, Dowland, Berio, and Couperin, and other recent work includes *The Seafarer*, an installation around *Louange à l'Éternité de Jésus* from Messiaen's *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* (Southbank Centre); *O Let Me Weep*, a performance installation for Opera North; *A Living Thing*, a performance with film created for the tenth anniversary of the Los Angeles Philharmonic's Walt Disney Concert Hall; and Castiglioni's *Inverno In-ver* for the New World Symphony in Miami and Chicago.

Born in Liverpool and educated at Oxford, **Jeremy White** (*bass, Abbot*) enjoys an international career in opera, concert, and recording, with repertoire ranging from early music to contemporary compositions. He has worked with numerous esteemed conductors, including Trevor Pinnock, Andrew Parrott, Iván Fischer, Harry Christophers, Pierre Boulez, and Hans Graf, and has appeared with Luciano Berio, Arvo Pärt, and John Adams in their own works. Concert tours have taken him to most of the major European venues as well as to the United States, Brazil, and Israel. Mr. White performs frequently on the opera stage, including at the Aix-en-Provence Festival, Metropolitan Opera, and Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, where he has appeared each season since his début in 1991.

Recent seasons have included Béthune in *Les vèpres siciliennes* at Dutch National Opera; Dansker in *Billy Budd* for Glyndebourne Festival Opera and in New York; Parsons in 1984 at La Scala and in Valencia; Kecal in *The Bartered Bride*, Sourin in *The Queen of Spades*, Snug in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Lignière in *Cyrano de Bergerac* for Royal Opera House; the title role in *Il turco in Italia*, and Pluto in *Orfeo* for English National Opera; *Where the Wild Things Are* with the Berlin Philharmonic; *L'enfance du Christ* at the BBC Proms under John Eliot Gardiner; Achilla in *Giulio Cesare* for the Grand-Théâtre de Bordeaux; and Rocco in *Fidelio*, Superintendent Budd in *Albert Herring*, Il Re in *Aida*, Dikoy in *Káťa Kabanová*, and Talbot in *Giovanna d'Arco* for Opera North.

Upcoming performances at the Royal Opera House include Daddy Hogan in *Anna Nicole*, Schmidt in *Andrea Chénier*, Bonze in *Madama Butterfly*, Benoît in *La bohème*, and Marquis d'Obigny in *La traviata*. Mr. White appears by kind permission of the Royal Opera House.

**Neal Davies** (*bass-baritone, Traveller*) studied at King's College, London, and the Royal Academy of Music and won the Lieder Prize at the 1991 Cardiff Singer of the World Competition. He has appeared with the Oslo Philharmonic under Mariss Jansons, the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Pierre Boulez, the Cleveland and Philharmonia orchestras under Christoph von Dohnányi, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe under Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment under Frans Brüggen, Gabrieli Consort under Paul McCreesh, the Hallé Orchestra under Sir Mark Elder, Concerto Köln under Ivor Bolton, Scottish Chamber Orchestra under Ádám Fischer, Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra under Edward Gardner, and the London Symphony and Vienna Philharmonic orchestras under Daniel Harding. He has been a regular guest of the Edinburgh Festival and the BBC Proms.

His wide-ranging discography includes *Messiah*, *Theodora*, *Saul*, and *The Creation*

(which won a Gramophone Award in 2008) under McCreesh, *Jenůfa*, and *The Makropulos Case* under Mackerras, Barber's *Vanessa* under Leonard Slatkin, *Messiah* under René Jacobs, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony under Osmo Vänskä, Schubert Lieder with Graham Johnson, and Britten's *Billy Budd* under Mr. Harding, which won a Grammy Award in 2010.

Operatic appearances have included *Giulio Cesare* and the title role in *The Marriage of Figaro* for the Royal Opera, Covent Garden; *L'Allegro*, Zebul (*Jephtha*), Publio (*La clemenza di Tito*), Ariodates (*Xerxes*), and Kolenaty (*The Makropoulos Case*) for English National Opera; *Radamisto* for Opéra de Marseille; *Orlando* with the Gabrieli Consort; Leporello (*Don Giovanni*) for Scottish Opera and Montreal Opera; *Curlew River* at the Edinburgh Festival; Guglielmo and Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*), Papageno (*The Magic Flute*), Leporello, Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*), Zebul, and Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*) for Welsh National Opera; and *Agrippina* for the Deutsche Staatsoper, Berlin.

He made his début with Lyric Opera of Chicago as Major General Stanley (*The Pirates of Penzance*) and returned as Ko-Ko (*The Mikado*) with Sir Andrew Davis. With William Christie and Les Arts Florissants, Mr. Davies has sung in *Theodora* (Paris and Salzburg) and in the Aix-en-Provence Festival production of Charpentier's *David et Jonathas* (Aix, Edinburgh, and New York), which is available on DVD.

**Mark Stone** (*baritone, Ferryman*) was born in London and studied mathematics at King's College, Cambridge, and singing at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. In 1998, he was awarded the Decca Prize at the Kathleen Ferrier Awards.

His operatic engagements this season include Ned Keene (*Peter Grimes*) with the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Vladimir Jurowski and at the Beijing International Festival; the Count (*The Marriage of Figaro*) for Tampere Opera; Faninal (*Der Rosenkavalier*) with the City of Birmingham Symphony

Orchestra under Andris Nelsons; and Kurwenal (*Tristan und Isolde*) with the London Symphony Orchestra under Daniel Harding.

On the opera stage, his engagements this year have included the title role in *Don Giovanni* for both Hamburg State Opera and New Zealand Opera; Mountjoy (*Gloriana*) at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; the Count (*The Marriage of Figaro*) for his début at Cologne Opera; and Don Giovanni for the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Hamburg State Opera, and New Zealand Opera.

His many appearances at English National Opera have included the title role in *Don Giovanni*, the Count (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Guglielmo, Marcello (*La bohème*), Figaro (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Enrico (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Silvio (*Pagliacci*), Chou-en-Lai (*Nixon in China*), and Prince Yamadori in Anthony Minghella's production of *Madama Butterfly*.

In the United States he is a regular guest at the Philadelphia Opera, where his roles include Ford (*Falstaff*), Germont père (*La traviata*), the title role in *Gianni Schicchi*, and, most recently, Papageno (*The Magic Flute*). He has also sung Guglielmo in Santa Fe.

In concert, he has appeared with Lorin Maazel, Vladimir Jurowski, Xian Zhang, Michael Schönwandt, Donald Runnicles, Paul Goodwin, and James Judd. A keen recitalist, he has sung in New York at Carnegie's Weill Hall; in London at the Wigmore Hall and St. John's, Smith Square, as well as at the Oxford Lieder, Canterbury, and Buxton festivals.

His recordings include *Eugene Onegin* (extracts) under Sir Antonio Pappano, *Les Troyens* under Colin Davis, *Billy Budd* under Mr. Harding, Bellini's *La Straniera* under David Parry, and Mozart arias with the Classical Opera Company. His solo recital discs of Quilter, Butterworth, and Delius have received widespread acclaim.

**Britten Sinfonia** is one of the world's most celebrated and pioneering ensembles. The orchestra is acclaimed for its virtuoso musicianship, an inspired approach to concert programming, which makes bold, intelligent

connections across 400 years of repertoire, and a versatility that is second to none. Britten Sinfonia breaks the mould by not having a principal conductor or director, instead choosing to collaborate with a range of the finest international guest artists from across the musical spectrum, resulting in performances of insight and energy.

Britten Sinfonia is an Associate Ensemble at the Barbican and has residencies across the east of England in Norwich, Brighton, and Cambridge, where it is the University's orchestra-in-association. The orchestra also performs a chamber music series at the Wigmore Hall and appears regularly at major U.K. festivals, including Aldeburgh and the BBC Proms. The orchestra's growing international profile includes regular tours to Mexico, South America, and Europe. In 2012, Britten Sinfonia made its North American début at New York's Lincoln Center.

Founded in 1992, the orchestra is inspired by the ethos of Benjamin Britten through world-class performances, illuminating and distinctive programs where old meets new, and a deep commitment to bringing outstanding music to both the world's finest concert halls and the local community. Britten Sinfonia is a BBC Radio 3 broadcast partner and regularly records for Harmonia Mundi and Hyperion.

**Britten Sinfonia Voices** is a professional vocal ensemble that reflects the artistic vision and range of Britten Sinfonia.

Britten Sinfonia Voices is made up of some of the finest professional voices—both emerging talent and experienced singers—a combination in keeping with Britten Sinfonia's ethos. The group is equally adept at performing repertoire from the Baroque to the latest new music and is directed by acclaimed choral conductor and singer Eamonn Dougan, who carefully selects and prepares the Voices for each project. The ensemble has performed a range of works including Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and Berlioz's *L'enfance du Christ*, as well as premièring new works by Nico Muhly and Ēriks Ešenvalds under

conductors including Sir Mark Elder, David Hill, and Andreas Delfs.

Highlights this season include concerts celebrating Sir Harrison Birtwistle's 80th birthday, a tour of Bach's *St. John Passion*, and the group's début at the Wigmore Hall in a new work by Roderick Williams as part of the Britten Sinfonia's award-winning lunchtime series.

**Martin Fitzpatrick** (*music director*) studied at Balliol College Oxford as Organ Scholar, the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and the National Opera Studio in London. He has worked as assistant conductor, chorus, master, or coach for numerous companies, including the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Glyndebourne Festival, Scottish Opera, Spoleto Festival in Italy, and La Monnaie in Brussels. He was head of music at the Royal Danish Opera (1998–2001), where he conducted *Idomeneo*, *Lelisir d'amore*, *Die Zauberflöte*, and *Le nozze di Figaro*. Elsewhere he has conducted *Die Zauberflöte* and *La traviata* for English Touring Opera and *La bohème*, *Così fan tutte*, the world première of Alec Roth's opera for children *All Summer in a Day*, and *The Barber of Seville* for Opera North, for whom he also translated *Luisa Miller*. He was appointed head of music at English National Opera in 2003, and has since conducted *Die Zauberflöte*, *Falstaff*, *La belle Hélène*, *Early Earth Operas*, *La bohème*, *The Mikado*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *Carmen*, *La traviata*, *Madama Butterfly*, and *Don Giovanni* for the company. He has also translated *Così fan tutte*, *The Pearl Fishers*, and *La traviata*, and has completed a new edition of *The Pearl Fishers*.

**Eamonn Dougan** (*Britten Sinfonia Voices director*) read music at New College, Oxford, before continuing his studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He now pursues a busy career as conductor and singer.

He is the first Associate Conductor of The Sixteen and has directed the ensemble to considerable acclaim in concerts across England and Europe. He made his début at the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, in a celebration

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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of James MacMillan's 50th birthday and co-directed *The Earth Resounds*. Other highlights with The Sixteen have included the world première of Gabriel Jackson's *Ave regina cælorum* at the opening of Kings Place, a recording with Icelandic ensemble Sigur Rós and the closing concert of the Henry VIII 500th-anniversary celebrations at the Royal Naval Chapel, Greenwich.

He is Chorus Director of Britten Sinfonia Voices and a regular guest conductor with Wrocław Philharmonic Choir, Madrid's Coro de la Comunidad, and the St. Endellion Festival Orchestra and Chorus.

With the Britten Sinfonia and Britten Sinfonia Voices, he has conducted two recent world premières: Nico Muhly's *Looking Forward* for the ensemble's 20th birthday at the Barbican and Ešenvalds's *Aqua* in Cambridge.

In September 2008, he was appointed a visiting professor to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where he teaches ensemble singing and directs the Guildhall Consort.

As a singer, he has appeared on disc and the concert platform throughout the world with many of Britain's leading ensembles and is a member of the multi-award-winning I Fagiolini.

**Pacific Boychoir Academy (PBA)** is a Grammy Award-winning, independent choir school for boys in grades four through eight, with seven after-school choirs for boys in pre-kindergarten through high school. PBA provides a richly diverse community, focusing on excellence in music education, academics, and performance. Founded in Oakland, California, in 1998 by Artistic Director Kevin Fox, PBA serves over 170 choristers a season, has released seven independent albums, tours internationally each year, and has garnered three Grammy Awards with the San Francisco Symphony. The only U.S. boychoir school outside of the East Coast, PBA offers unique and rigorous choral and academic programs, producing confident, engaged young men and artists. Hear, watch, and learn more at [pacificboychoir.org](http://pacificboychoir.org).