



**DURHAM**  
CHORAL SOCIETY  
AND ORCHESTRA

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF GLORIOUS CHORAL MUSIC

Haydn

# The Creation

**Durham Cathedral**

28th January 2023

19:30

DIAMOND JUBILEE SEASON

2022 - 2023

[www.durhamchoralsociety.org.uk](http://www.durhamchoralsociety.org.uk)

Registered Charity No. 514557. Durham Choral Society and Making Music are registered charities



Audience members are asked not to take photographs or videos during the concert as this is distracting for the performers.

There will be an official photographer for the event.

There will be a 20 minute interval at approximately 8.25pm.

Please reserve your applause for the ends of Parts 1, 2 and 3.

Information correct at time of printing.



With



20 May 2023

Durham Cathedral 7.30

Mozart Requiem

Haydn Mass for Troubled Times (Nelson Mass)

Tickets on sale early March 2023

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**2023-24 Season**

**Save the dates**



16 December 2023 (provisional)

21 January 2024

18 May 2024

Programme to be announced

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**Sing with us**

Durham Choral Society warmly welcomes new members. If you have an interest in singing with us, why not come along to one of our rehearsals and try us out for an evening? Although we strive to deliver a professional sound, we do not audition new members. If you like what you find you can join us for a four week trial period. After your four week trial period, you can formally become a member of the society and an annual subscription will be requested. We rehearse on Wednesday evenings at Durham Johnston School and the best times to join are September and February.

<https://www.durhamchoralsociety.org.uk/sing-with-us>





**DURHAM**  
CHORAL SOCIETY

Franz Joseph Haydn

# The Creation

Durham Cathedral

28 January 2023

Soloists

Gabriel and Eve: Elizabeth Roberts (Soprano)

Uriel: Ben Thapa (Tenor)

Raphael and Adam: Christopher Foster (Bass-baritone)

For the Final Chorus: Lara van Hunen (Mezzo-soprano)

Conductor: Michael Summers

Guest conductor: Richard Brice

Leader: Julia Bolton-Moult

Concert held in Durham Cathedral  
by kind permission of the  
Dean and Chapter of Durham

Durham Choral Society is a registered charity (RC 514557) and Affiliated to Making Music (RC 249219)



## Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)



Haydn was an Austrian composer, one of the most prolific and prominent composers of the Classical period. Haydn wrote 104 symphonies in total, as well as 83 string quartets, 45 piano trios, 62 piano sonatas, 14 masses and 26 operas, amongst countless other scores.

Franz Joseph was born in Rohrau, a small village which, at the time, stood on the Austria-Hungary border. The son of a wheelwright and a local landowner's cook, Haydn had such a fine voice that at the age of five he entered the Choir School of St Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna.

Haydn's parents had noticed that their son was musically gifted and knew that in Rohrau he would have no chance to obtain serious musical training. It was for this reason that, around the time Haydn turned six, they accepted a proposal from their relative Johann Matthias Frankh, the schoolmaster and choirmaster in Hainburg, that Haydn be apprenticed to Frankh in his home to train as a musician. Haydn therefore went off with Frankh to Hainburg and he never again lived with his parents.

His ethereal treble tones lasted until he was 16, a fact noticed by the Habsburg Empress, Maria Theresa, who uttered her famous criticism: "That boy doesn't sing, he crows!". Haydn left the choir in memorable fashion - snipping off the pigtail of one of his fellow choirboys - and was publicly caned.

By the 1770s, Haydn's music had become more distinctive and boldly individual, inspired by a form of heightened emotionalism known as 'Sturm und Drang' (storm and stress). The composer's reputation spread rapidly throughout Austria, and commissions began arriving from abroad.

1790 saw the death of Prince Nicholas Esterházy, Haydn's employer since 1762, and the musically indifferent Anton became the new Crown Prince. Haydn moved to Vienna and accepted an invitation from the great German-born violinist and impresario, Johann Peter Salomon, to visit England (1791-1792), where he found himself adored.

Prince Anton Esterházy died in 1795, and his successor, Nicholas II, requested Haydn's return to Esterháza. A lover of church music, Nicholas set Haydn the task of composing a new setting of the mass every year.

In 1804, Haydn retired from Esterháza, and illness effectively prevented him from any further composition. During May 1809, Napoleon reached Vienna, but Haydn stayed there, guarded respectfully by two of the invader's sentries.

On 31 May 1809 Haydn died peacefully in his sleep.

# The Creation - Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Haydn witnessed many radical changes in music during the course of his long life. He was eighteen when Bach died in 1750, not long before the close of the Baroque era, and seventy-two when Beethoven's 'Eroica' Symphony was first performed in 1804, ushering in the Romantic period. Old forms of music were superseded by the symphony, sonata and string quartet, patronage moved from the church to the royal court, and public concerts were rapidly becoming immensely popular. Throughout all these changes, Haydn remained a pioneering figure. Other composers had written symphonies, sonatas and string quartets before him, but it was Haydn who first exploited the untapped potential of these forms, expanding and developing them to a hitherto unimagined degree.

The almost childlike cheerfulness of Haydn's music, its inexhaustible inventiveness and its perfection of design conceal a considerable inner strength. This fusion of exuberance, originality, classical elegance and intellectual power explains to a large extent the compelling appeal of his music. These are the qualities that placed Haydn far and away above the level of all except Mozart amongst his contemporaries, and kept him at the forefront of music during most of the eighteenth century. No wonder he was hailed as a genius throughout Europe, admired and revered by the public and by his peers. Mozart said, '*Haydn alone has the secret both of making me smile and of touching my innermost soul*'. Even Napoleon, on capturing Vienna, immediately ordered a guard of honour to be placed round Haydn's house.

For much of his life Haydn's energies were devoted primarily to composing orchestral and instrumental music. The supreme choral masterpieces of his old age – *The Creation*, *The Seasons* and the six last great masses, including the well-known *Nelson Mass* – were all composed after 1795, the year in which he completed the last of his 104 symphonies.

The oratorio as a musical form appeared briefly in seventeenth century Italy, but was soon eclipsed by the much more popular operas. It was Handel who resurrected the oratorio from obscurity, transforming it from little more than an extended cantata into a powerful choral music-drama that was soon to dominate public music-making in eighteenth and nineteenth century England. The succession of masterpieces that Handel wrote inspired many later composers, notably Haydn and Mendelssohn. During his first visit to London, Haydn attended one of the great Handel festivals held in Westminster Abbey and was completely overwhelmed by the experience, as a result of which he resolved to write an oratorio himself that would be worthy of Handel's supreme examples.

In 1796, inspired by what he had heard whilst in London, Haydn set to work on the score, which was not completed until 1798, by which time he was sixty-six. 'I was never so devout as during that time when I was working on *The Creation*,' he observed. The work received its first public performance in 1799 and was immediately recognised as a supreme masterpiece, receiving many performances all over Europe.

In common with opera, and like most oratorios – though not *Messiah*—*The Creation* has named characters and is divided into acts and scenes. These consist of sequences of choruses, recitatives and arias. The work begins with an extended orchestral introduction, 'Representation of Chaos.' Parts One and Two then describe the six days of Creation, each of which follows a threefold pattern comprising biblical narrative, descriptive central section and hymn of praise.

The three soloists represent the archangels Gabriel (soprano), Uriel (tenor) and Raphael (bass), with the chorus fulfilling an important role portraying angels glorifying their maker. Part Three is devoted entirely to the appearance of Adam and Eve (bass and soprano) who sing of the wonder and perfection of God's newly created world and of their happiness together. Soloists and choir combine for the final uplifting chorus of praise.

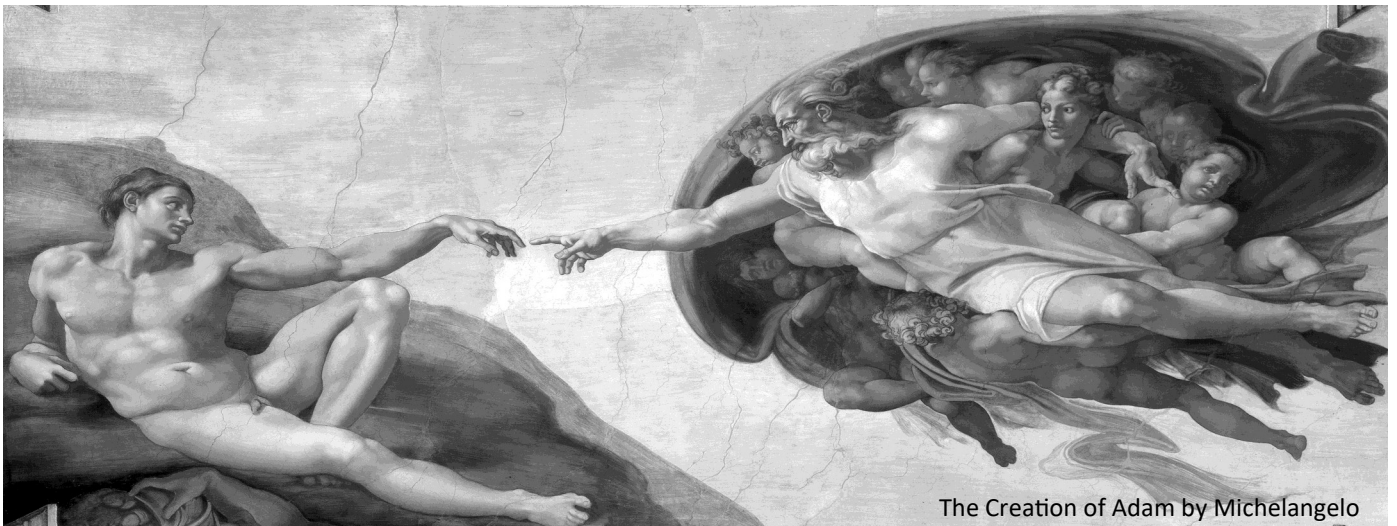
*The Creation* represents a considerable dramatic development over its Handelian predecessors. Haydn's bold use of orchestral colour, his adventurous harmony, exceptional rhythmic and melodic inventiveness, and the work's strong overall unity bring the subject to life with an almost operatic vividness and power. The opening is a good illustration of Haydn's innovative approach. The extended orchestral introduction, itself a departure from the conventional overture, is entitled 'Representation of Chaos' and immediately arrests the listener's attention with its shifting, ambiguous harmonies on muted strings, brass and timpani. In the ensuing recitative Raphael tells us that 'the earth was without form, and void' and this is reflected in



the sparse emptiness of the orchestral accompaniment. The choir continues in a mood of hushed stillness, until 'and there was light', at which point there is a sudden, massive *fortissimo* chord of C major from the now unmuted full orchestra. Even after two hundred years the effect is still immensely powerful. It was evidently totally overwhelming at the time, judging by the following account from one of Haydn's friends. ' . . . and at that moment when light broke out for the first time, one would have said that rays darted from the composer's burning eyes. The enchantment of the electrified Viennese was so general that the orchestra could not proceed for some minutes,' he wrote.

This is perhaps the most startling dramatic gesture of the whole work, but there are plenty of other equally effective instances of musical word-painting, such as the storm scenes, the wonderful sunrise music and the colourful depiction of various animals and birds. It is also worth drawing attention to Haydn's musical characterisation. For the angels he adopts a somewhat florid, lofty style, whilst for Adam and Eve the writing is simpler and more folk-like. In fact the whole work sparkles with the vitality and unflinching inspiration so characteristic of this remarkable composer, who was still experimenting and still surprising his delighted audiences right up to the end of his life.

John Bawden



The Creation of Adam by Michelangelo

## ORCHESTRA NORTH EAST

**Saturday March 4<sup>th</sup> - 7pm in Newcastle Cathedral**

Nielsen ..... Helios Overture  
Sibelius ..... Violin Concerto  
Brahms ..... Second Symphony

Conductor ..... Michael Bawtree  
Soloist ..... Fenella Humphreys

*Michael Bawtree is a distinguished conductor based in Scotland and he is making a welcome return to work with us. Fenella Humphreys was the winner of the 2018 BBC Music Magazine Instrumental Award, and has won much critical acclaim for her playing.*

Tickets – Adults: £16 Concessions: £14, Students: £8. Accompanied under-16s £1  
Available at the door or from [www.ticketsource.co.uk](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk) Booking charges may be applied

**Saturday June 24<sup>th</sup> - 7pm in Newcastle Cathedral**

The full programme is still evolving but we are very pleased to announce that our soloist will be the stunning young Ukrainian pianist, *Khrystyna Mykhailichenko*



## Part Three

### Day 7

Recitative	In rosy mantle appears
Duet and Chorus	By thee with bliss
Recitative	Our first duty we have now performed
Duet	Graceful consort
Recitative	O happy pair, and ever happy henceforth
Chorus with soloists	Sing the Lord, ye voices all

## Part I

**Introduction** The Representation of Chaos

### DAY ONE

#### Recitative

**Raphael** In the beginning, God created Heaven and Earth; and the Earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.

**Chorus** And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters; and God said: Let there be light. And there was light.

**Recitative: Uriel** And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness.

#### Aria with Chorus

**Uriel** Now vanish before the holy beams the gloomy dismal shades of dark; the First of Days appears. Disorder yields to order fair. Afrighted fled hell's spirits back in throngs; down they sink in the deep abyss to endless night.

**Chorus** Despairing cursing rage attends their rapid fall. A new created world springs forth at God's command.

### DAY TWO

#### Recitative

**Raphael** And God made the firmament and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. Outrageous storms now dreadful arose; as chaff by the winds are impelled the clouds. By Heaven's fire the sky is enflamed, and awful rolled the thunders high. Now from the floods in steams ascend reviving showers of rain, the dreary wasteful hail, and the light flaky snow.

## Solo and Chorus

**Gabriel** The marvellous work beholds amazed the glorious hierarchy of heaven to the ethereal vaults resound the praise of God, and of the second day.

**Chorus** And to the ethereal vaults resound the praise of God, and of the second day.

### DAY THREE

#### Recitative

**Raphael** And God said: Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together to one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering of the waters called he seas; and God saw that it was good.

#### Aria

**Raphael** Rolling in foaming billows, uplifted roars the boisterous sea. Mountains and rocks now emerge, their tops into the clouds ascend. Through open plans outstretching wide in serpent error rivers flow. Softly purling glides on through silent vales the limpid brook.

#### Recitative

**Gabriel** And God said: Let all the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth: And it was so.

#### Aria

**Gabriel** with verdure clad the fields appear delightful to the ravished sense; by flowers sweet and gay, enhanced is the charming sight. Here vent their fumes the fragrant herbs, here shoots the healing plant. By load of fruits the expanded boughs are pressed, to shady vaults are bent the tufty groves; the mountain's brow is crowned with closed wood.



### Recitative

**Uriel** And the heavenly host proclaimed the Third Day, praising God and saying:

### Chorus

Awake the harp, the lyre awake! In shout and joy your voices raise! In triumph sing the mighty lord. For he the heavens and earth has clothed in stately dress.

## DAY FOUR

### Recitative

**Uriel** And God said: Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to divide the day from the night, and to give their light upon the earth; and let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and for years. He made the stars also.

### Recitative

**Uriel** In splendour bright, is rising now the sun and darts his rays; an amorous joyful happy spouse, a giant proud and glad, to run his measured course. With softer beams and milder steps on the silver moon through silent night. The space immense of the azure sky in numerous host of radiant orbs adorns, and the sons of god announced the fourth day in song divine, proclaiming thus his power.

### Chorus with Trio

**Chorus** The heavens are telling the glory of God; with wonder of his work displays the firmament.

**Gabriel, Uriel, Raphael** Today that is coming speaks it the day; The night that is gone, to following night.

**Chorus** The heavens are telling the glory of God; with wonders of his work displays the firmament.

**Gabriel, Uriel, Raphael** In all the lands resounds the word, never unperceived, ever understood

**Chorus** The heavens are telling the glory of God; with wonders of his work displays the firmament.

## Part II

### DAY FIVE

### Recitative

**Gabriel** And God said: Let the waters bring forth abundantly every moving creature that hath life, and

fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.

### Aria

**Gabriel** On mighty pens uplifted soars the eagle aloft, and cleaves the sky in swiftest flight to the blazing sun. His welcome bids to morn the merry lark, and cooing calls the tender dove his mate. From every bush and grove resound the nightingale's delightful notes. No grief affected yet her breast, nor a mournful tale were tuned her soft, enchanting lays.

### Recitative

**Raphael** And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth; and God blessed them, saying: Be fruitful all and multiply, ye winged tribes, be multiplied and sing on every tree. Multiply, ye finny tribes, and fill each watery deep. Be fruitful, grow, and multiply. And in your God and Lord rejoice.

### Recitative

**Raphael** And the angels struck their immortal harps and the wonders of the fifth day sung.

### Trio

**Gabriel** Most beautiful appear with verdure young, adorned the gently sloping hills. Their narrow, sinuous veins distilled in crystal drops, the fountain fresh and bright.

**Uriel** In lofty circles plays, and hovers through the sky, the cheerful host of birds. And in the flying whirl the glittering plumes are dyed, as rainbows by the sun.

**Raphael** See flashing through the wet in thronged swarms the fry on thousand ways around. Upheaved from the deep the immense Leviathan sports on the foaming wave.

**Gabriel, Uriel, Raphael** How many are Thy works, O God! Who may their numbers tell? Who? O God? Who may their numbers tell?

### Chorus with Trio

The Lord is great, and great His might, his glory lasts for ever and for evermore.

## DAY SIX

### Recitative

**Raphael** And God said: Let earth bring forth every living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind.

### Recitative

**Raphael** Straight opening her fertile womb, the earth obeyed the word and teemed creatures numberless, in perfect forms and fully grown. Cheerful roaring stands the tawny lion. In sudden leaps, the flexible tiger appears. The nimble stag bears up his branching head. With flying mane and fiery look, impatient neighs the sprightly steed. The cattle in herds already seeks his food on the fields and meadows green. And o'er the ground, as plants are spread the fleecy, meek and bleating flock. Un-numbered as the sands in whirl arose the host of insects. In long dimension creeps, with sinuous trace, the worm.

### Aria

**Raphael** Now heaven in fullest glory shone; earth smiles in all her rich attire. The room of air with fowl is filled, the water swelled by shoals of fish; by heavy beasts the ground is trod. But all the work was not complete; there wanted yet that wondrous being, that grateful should God's power admire, with heart and voice his goodness praise.

### Recitative

**Uriel** So God created Man in his own image; in the image of God created he him; male and female, created he them. He breathed into their nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

### Aria

**Uriel** In native worth and honour clad, with beauty, courage strength adorned, to heaven erect and tall he stands a man, the lord and king of nature all. The large and arched front sublime of wisdom deep declares the seat, and in his eyes with brightness shines the soul, the breath and image of his God. With fondness leans upon his breast the partner for him formed, a woman fair and graceful spouse. Her softly smiling virgin looks, of flowery spring the mirror, bespeak him love and joy and bliss.

## Recitative

**Raphael** And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good; and the heavenly choir in song divine thus closed the sixth day.

### Chorus

Achieved is the glorious work, the Lord beholds it and is pleased. In lofty strains let us rejoice. Our song let be the praise of God.

### Trio

**Gabriel, Uriel** On thee each living soul awaits; from thee O Lord, they beg their meat. Thou openest thy hand and sated all they are.

**Raphael** But as to them, thy face is hid, with sudden terror they are struck. They takest their breath away, they vanishing into dust.

**Gabriel, Uriel, Raphael** Thou lettest thy breath go forth again, and life with vigour fresh returns. Revived earth unfolds new force and new delights.

### Chorus

Achieved is the glorious work, the Lord beholds it and is pleased. Our song let be the praise of God. Glory to his name forever, he sole on high exalted reigns. Alleluia.

## Part III

### Recitative

**Uriel** In rosy mantle appears, by tunes sweet awaked, the morning young and fair. From the celestial vaults, pure harmony descends on ravished earth. Behold the blissful pair where hand in hand they go, their flaming looks express what feels the grateful heart. A louder praise of God their lips shall utter soon. Then let our voices ring united with their song!

### Hymn

**Eve, Adam** By Thee with bliss, O bounteous Lord, the heaven and earth are stored. This world, so great, so wonderful, Thy mighty hand has framed.

**Chorus** Forever blessed be his power. His name be ever magnified.

**Eve** And thou, that rulest the silent night, and all ye starry host, spread wide and everywhere his praise in choral songs about.

**Adam** Ye strong and cumbrous elements who ceaseless changes make, ye dusky mists and dewy steams who raise and fall through the air.

**Adam** Of stars the fairest, O how sweet thy smile at dawning morn. How brightens though, O sun the day, thou eye and soul of all.

**Chorus** Proclaim, in your extended course, the glorious **Eve, Adam, Chorus** Resound the praise of God our Lord! Great is His name, and great His might.

**Eve** Soft purling fountains, tune his praise, and wave your tops, ye pines. Ye plants exhale, ye flowers breathe at him your balmy scent.

**Adam** Ye that on mountains stately tread, and, and ye that lowly creep, ye bird that sing at heaven's gate,, and ye that swim the stream,

**Eve, Adam, Chorus** Ye, living souls extol the Lord. Him celebrate, Him magnify.

**Eve, Adam** Ye valleys, hills and shady woods, our raptured notes we heard; from morn to eve you shall repeat our grateful hymns of praise

**Chorus** Hail, bounteous Lord, almighty hail! Thy word called forth, this wondrous frame. Thy power adore the heaven and earth. We praise thee now and evermore.

### Recitative

**Adam** Our duty we performed now, in offering God our thanks. Now follow me, dear partner of my life! Thy guide I'll be, and ever pours new delight into our breast, shows wonders everywhere. Then mayest thou feel and know the high degree of bliss the Lord allotted us and with devoted heart his bounty celebrate. the Lord hath given us. Come, follow me! Thy guide I'll be.

**Eve** O thou for whom I am! My help, my shield, my all! Thy will is law to me. So God, our Lord ordains; and from obedience grows my pride and happiness.

### Duet

**Adam** Graceful consort! At thy side softly fly the golden hours. Every moment brings new rapture, every care is put to rest.

**Eve** Spouse adored! At thy side purest joys o'erflow the heart. Life and all I am is thine, my reward thy love shall be.

**Adam** The dew-dropping morn, O how she quickens all.

**Eve** The coolness of evening, o how she all restores.

**Adam** How grateful is of fruits the savour sweet. How pleasing is of fragrant bloom the smell

**Eve** How pleasing is of fragrant flowers the smell.

**Eve, Adam** But without thee, what is to me: the morning dew? the breath if evening? the savoury fruit? the fragrant bloom? with thee, everything is enhanced; delight is ever new; is life incessant bliss; with thee is rapture everlasting. Thine it whole shall be.

### Recitative

**Uriel** O happy pair! and always happy yet, if not misled by false conceit, ye strive at more as granted us, and more to know as know ye should!

### Chorus with Soloists

Sing the Lord ye voices all! Utter thanks, all ye his works. Celebrate his power and glory. Let his name resound on high! The Lord is great, His praise shall last for aye. Amen.





**Christopher Foster (Bass-baritone)** was educated at Newcastle University and the Britten-Pears School, and was a winner of the N.F.M.S. Young Concert Artists' Award, a finalist in the Richard Tauber Competition and one of the inaugural Samling Scholars, studying with Thomas Allen.

An experienced concert performer throughout the UK and Europe with orchestras such as the RPO and BBCSO and conductors such as Pierre Boulez and Sir Andrew Davis, highlights have included: Paweł Łukaszewski's *Requiem* (world premiere, Presteigne Festival), Mozart's *Requiem* (Royal Festival Hall), Mendelssohn's *Elijah* at Durham Cathedral, a world premiere Nicholas Smith's *Love, Friendship and Longing* (in Mandarin) at Cadogan Hall and Handel's *Messiah* (Concert Hall, Forbidden City, Beijing).

As a recitalist, he has been a particular champion of English song, appearing in diverse venues and festivals such as The Purcell Room, Banqueting House,

Gregynog, Presteigne, *Brittania in Bamberg in Germany* and three appearances for the *English Music Festival*.

*Operatic appearances have included: Mozart's Sarastro*, (Pavilion Opera and London Festival Opera) and Leporello, (Ahmadi Music Group, Kuwait) whilst other roles have included Kawabata, Philip Glass's *Hotel of Dreams* (UK premiere); Arkel in *Impressions de Pelléas* (Opera on the Move), Traveller, Britten's *Curlew River* (Nova Music Opera); Arthur, Maxwell Davies' *The Lighthouse*; Friar Laurence, Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet* (Riverside Opera), Raimondo, Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Winslow Hall Opera); roles in two operas by Edward Lambert at the Tête à Tête Festival and performances in *La Bohème* as Benoit and Alcindoro and Colline but not at the same time or for the same company.

Christopher studies with Gary Coward and Anna Sims but when not singing, he enjoys photography, fine wine, the cinema and cycling, though not necessarily in that order.

**Elizabeth Roberts (Soprano)** appears on two recordings with the BBCSO: Chausson *Le roi Arthus* (Leon Botstein); and Marx *Herbstchor an Pan* (Jiří Bělohlávek). She has broadcast on BBC Radio 3 with BBCSO and Martyn Brabbins from the Royal Festival Hall in Birtwistle's *The Second Mrs Kong* (Terror/First Woman). Her operatic roles include Massenet's *Salome* (Hérodiade) in Valladolid; Lauletta (Gianni Schicchi) under Nicoletta Conti, Italy; Cio-Cio San (*Madame Butterfly*) at Les Heures Musicales d'Aujols under Harry Ogg, for Opera Southeast and for Regents Opera; Mimì (*La bohème*), Headfirst Productions and Opus One Opera; Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*), Headfirst Productions; Countess of Dunmow (*A Dinner Engagement*), Minotaur Music Theatre; *Tosca* (*Tosca*); *Contessa Almaviva* (*Figaro*), *Fiordiligi* (*Così*), *Musetta* (*La bohème*).



Oratorio performances regularly take her throughout the UK and overseas, including Darmstadt (*A Sea Symphony*, Philharmonie Südwestfalen, Wolfgang Seeliger), and Beijing (*Carmina Burana*, Peking Sinfonietta, Nicholas Smith OBE). Recent

highlights include Verdi's *Requiem* in Dorchester Abbey, Mahler *Rückert Lieder* (Colchester SO), Mahler *Knabenwunderhorn* songs and *Symphony No. 4* (Scottish Sinfonia, Edinburgh), *Canteloube Chants d'Auvergne* (CRSO), and *Strauss Vier letzte Lieder* (Camden SO and The Rehearsal Orchestra). Elizabeth studied song repertoire with Malcolm Martineau at Crear and is a keen recitalist. In 2012 she premiered Keith Burstein's *Songs of Love & Solitude* with Julian Gallant at Pushkin House, and gave a recital of *Strauss, Debussy and Weill* with Kelvin Lim in the Crush Room, Royal Opera House.

She was honoured to be chosen as soprano soloist at the entry of the Olympic Flame and lighting of the cauldron in the Opening Ceremony of the London 2012 Olympic Games.



**Ben Thapa (Tenor)** started his career as one quarter of the classical opera group G4, runners-up on ITV's *The X Factor* in 2004. Ben left the group in 2018, and has forged a varied and substantial career on the stage across a range of repertory.

Operatic credits include *Tito* (*La Clemenza di Tito*, Teatru Manoel), *Kudrjash* (*Katya Kabanova*, Scottish Opera on Tour), *The President* (*Mittwoch aus Licht*, Birmingham Opera/BBC Proms), *Arbace* (*Idomeneo*, Buxton Festival), *Melot* (*Tristan und Isolde*, Longborough Festival Opera, and London Opera Company @ St. John's, Smith

Square) and *Siegfried* (*The Quest for the Ring*, Royal Festival Hall in association with Opera North).

Ben was a featured artist with the Really Big Chorus in 2010-11, and at the Royal Albert Hall, was their soloist for Handel *Messiah*, Haydn *Creation* and Mozart *Requiem*. Further concert highlights include a Monteverdi *Vespers* tour with the Monteverdi Choir, Matthew *Passion* (arias) for Ex Cathedra, Handel *Messiah* with the CBSO, *Beethoven 9* at St John's Smith Square, performances with the Manchester Camerata including *Messiah*, Britten *St. Nicholas*, and Beethoven *Missa Solemnis*, and three invites to give recitals at Leeds Town Hall. Other repertory performed varies from the Bach passions, the title roles in Handel's *Jephtha* and *Samson*, Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, Verdi *Requiem*, Rossini *Petite Messe Solennelle*, and Tippett *A Child of Our Time*. In 2013, Ben was the tenor soloist for the first concert in Saffron Hall - Verdi Requiem.

In 2020, Ben made his main stage debut at English National Opera as part of their *Carmen* education project, and created the roles of Dr Anton, and Salieri (*The Paradis Files*) for Graeae Theatre Company, which he then toured with the company in 2022. Ben also stepped in at late notice at the Snape Maltings for the Britten-Pears 50th anniversary concert, replacing the indisposed Ian Bostridge.

Current and future plans include *St. Matthew Passion* (Evangelist) for the Armonico Consort, a new contemporary opera for Keynote Opera conducted by Alex Ingram, and further concerts at the Snape Maltings. In addition, Ben is an affiliated artist with England Rugby League, and often performs the national anthem at their fixtures.

In his spare time, Ben combines a love of gin and perfume, with regularly being the largest competitor on marathon start lines across Europe.



**Michael Summers (Conductor)** is a leading-light in choral music and music education in the North. He has been Musical Director of Durham Choral Society since 2012 and is Manager of Durham Music Service.

Previous posts include Assistant Conductor of the National Youth Choirs of Great Britain and Musical Director for Felling Male Voice Choir, Prudhoe Gleemen and Guisborough Choral Society.

Conducting performances include *Five Hebrew Love Songs* by Eric Whitacre with the St. Thomas More Chamber Choir at the Royal Albert Hall, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, Lauridsen's *Lux Aeterna*, and Bach's *B Minor Mass* with Durham Choral Society at Durham Cathedral.

Michael is a Specialist Music Inspector working with schools to improve their music departments across the North of England. He is Director of Durham Vocal Festival that he established in 2017, working with artists such as The King Singers, VOCES8 and The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

Michael is in demand as a workshop leader for both choirs and schools and is thrilled to be conducting this 60th Anniversary concert.





Durham Choral Society is a mixed voice choir with around 120 members. Although we are an amateur, and un-auditioned choir, we are encouraged by our dynamic musical director to achieve high standards. We sing two major concerts a year in the glorious setting of Durham Cathedral. Our concerts have full orchestral accompaniment and professional soloists are brought in as required.

The repertoire of the society is varied including traditional choral works such as Mozart's *Requiem* and Bach's *B Minor Mass*. We also embrace more recent compositions and have performed works by living composers including Will Todd, Howard Goodall and Paul Mealor. We have also commissioned works, notably Will Todd's *Gala and Gloria* based on the Durham Miners' Gala and Will Lang's *Canny at Neet, Bonny at Morn* featuring North East folk songs.

### Our history

In 1946 Conrad Eden, the Cathedral organist, formed a choral society which had 112 members at its peak. By the mid 50s this had dropped to such a low number that the group decided to disband. From 1958-1962, the only society of its sort was the Durham Colleges Choral Society which was more gown than town.

In 1962, Maurice Armsby, a Cathedral lay clerk, found there was a strong desire to re-form a choral society and after a public meeting in June, the society reformed. Rehearsals began in September and the first concert - Haydn's *The Creation*- was given in Durham Cathedral on 20 November 1962.

The new choir did not have an untroubled beginning. Initial enthusiasm produced a membership of 70 but again numbers began to drop slightly. After three years the conductor moved to Winchester Cathedral. His successor only directed three performances before he too left Durham. In 1966, Raymond Hall, Principal of the Bernard Gilpin Society and a local organist took over as musical director. In 1970 the performing venue moved from Elvet Methodist Church to Wearside School. Numbers dropped to about 40 and audience figures decreased, possibly due to the uncompromising hardness of school chairs! This trend was reversed when the concert venue was transferred to the Town Hall in 1974.

Raymond Hall decided to retire in 1987 and Richard Brice, who had been assistant conductor for a few years, took over. Under his direction membership began to increase and numbers grew until the only suitable venue was the Cathedral. On several occasions the choir has joined with other local choirs to give performances of works that neither group would have had sufficient numbers to tackle alone, including Verdi's *Requiem* and Britten's *War Requiem*. The Society has been well served by its orchestra of mostly local musicians, ably led over the years by (among others) Florence Wilson, Derek Downes, Jean Provine, and Sue Innes.

In 2012, The Society marked its Golden Jubilee and Richard Brice conducted his final concert in May. The search for a new Musical Director resulted in Michael Summers joining us in September. Julia Boulton became leader of the orchestra. At this point the choir was large enough to tackle Verdi's *Requiem* alone. 2012 also saw the retirement of David Crookes as Honorary Secretary after 50 years in the role. What an achievement!

The fates were with us in the period leading up to the January 2017 concert and Durham Choral Society is proud to have performed in the UK premiere of 'Defiant Requiem: Verdi at Terezin' in conjunction with The Defiant Requiem Foundation, and others.

Covid-19 came along in 2020 and resulted in a long hiatus in live music making. Online rehearsals and recorded concerts became the norm for a while, but we resumed normal-ish service for the 2021-22 season and returned to perform Mendelssohn's *Elijah* in Durham Cathedral in May.

The 2022-23 season marks our Diamond Jubilee and we sing Haydn's *The Creation* once again.

## Choir Members 2022-23\*

### Soprano

Maureen Aspinall  
Penny Bissell  
Irene Blakemore  
Sophie Bolton  
Eunice Booth  
Alice Brown  
Jane Calvert  
Helen Cannam  
Annabel Carty  
Kirstine Chamberlayne  
Alison Curry  
Angela Douglas  
Cathy Earley  
Angela Eddy  
Christine Everatt  
Fiona Gameson  
Nancy Gemski  
Helen Gillingham  
Lesley Hamill  
Marjan Hartley  
Hilary Lee  
Eleanor Lucas  
Marian Manning  
Laura Marsiliani  
Susan Massey  
Clare Mathewson  
Rosemary Monument  
Elizabeth Morgan  
Hannah Murray-Leslie  
Victoria Nower  
Laura Sadler  
Brigitte Schneeloch  
Helen Schofield  
Barbara Stainsby  
Cathy Tarn  
Alyson Thomas  
Jean Townson  
Joan Vincenti  
Naomi Walker  
Philippa Wood  
Elizabeth Woods

### Alto

Jane Abel  
Gill Aubrey  
Barbara Blakemore  
Cathy Bothwell  
Anna Bottoms  
Jeannette Brinkman  
Angela Bromiley  
Stephanie Brown  
Eileen Calvert  
Jane Cameron  
Nichola Chater  
Emma Clements  
Kate Deeming  
Trina Duke  
Nicola Field  
Jill Francis  
Barbara Gow  
Helen Grabham  
Rebecca Hodge  
Elizabeth Holden  
Carolyn Hopper  
Claire Horwell  
Mary James  
HarkiranKaur  
Vyvyenne Mack  
Karen Mountain  
Nicole Quayle  
Mary Robinson  
Joan Robson  
Juliette Seibold  
Jessica Sequera  
Kate Sharpe  
Carol Smale  
Julia Snaith  
Vicki Southgate  
Kirsty Steed  
Lucie Sutherland  
Carol Tritton  
Roswitha Wagenknecht  
Sally Wagstaffe  
Josey Wardle  
Pauline Watson  
Jane Young

### Tenor

Richard Clements  
Peter Curry  
Robert Cutty  
Luke Davis  
Jim Good  
John Hanks  
Geoff McIntyre  
Penny Middleton  
Adam Nichols  
Simon Priestley  
Geoff Rigden  
Chris Walker  
Val Wooff  
Kevin Yuill

### Bass

Tony Blenkinsop  
Peter Bradshaw  
Roddy Cowie  
Gerhardt Crossman  
Peter English  
John Goodwill  
Stephen Herbert  
Ben Hoare  
Chris Massey  
Mark Monument  
Harry Morgan  
Alan Rose  
Brian Russell  
Richard Snell  
Hugh Townson  
John Wakeley  
Anthony Yeates

\* Some members have opted  
not to have their names  
published

## Works performed since the 50th Anniversary concert in May 2012

(at Durham Cathedral unless stated otherwise)

December 2012	<i>Elvet</i> Festive Brass and Voices
January 2013	Lauridsen Lux Eterana, Rutter Requiem
May 2013	Mendelssohn Elijah
December 2013	<i>Elvet</i> Festive Brass and Voices
January 2014	Beethoven Missa Solemnis
May 2014	“Glorious Heritage”; Todd Gala and Gloria, Lang Canny at Neet, Bonny at Morn, Vivaldi Gloria
December 2014	<i>Elvet</i> An Evening of Festive Music
January 2015	Handel Messiah
May 2015	Dvorak Stabat Mater
December 2015	<i>Elvet</i> An Evening of Festive Music
January 2016	Walton Belshazzar’s Feast and Faure Requiem
May 2016	Mealor Stabat Mater and Goodall Eternal Light: A Requiem with Pergolesi Stabat Mater
December 2016	<i>Elvet</i> An Evening of Festive Music (Britten Ceremony of Carols)
January 2017	Defiant Requiem - Verdi at Terezin (UK premiere)
May 2017	Mozart Requiem and Mozart Solemn Vespers
July 2017	<i>Ushaw College</i> Vivaldi Gloria and more with Leeds Philharmonic Chorus Walton Belshazzar’s Feast—part of Durham Brass Festival Chorus
December 2017	<i>Elvet</i> An Evening of Festive Music
January 2018	Will Todd Mass in Blue and Jazz Missa Brevis
July 2018	<i>Wharton Park</i> Orff Carmina Burana—part of Durham Brass Festival Chorus
May 2018	J S Bach Mass in B Minor
December 2018	<i>Elvet</i> An Evening of Festive Music
January 2019	Handel Messiah (with Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment)
May 2019	Rossini Petite Messe Solennelle
December 2019	<i>Elvet</i> An Evening of Festive Music
July 2019	Verdi Requiem —part of Durham Brass Festival Chorus
January 2020	Alan Wood This Joyous Night and Faure Requiem (with the John Lewis Orchestra)
May 2020 – January 2022 – no live concerts due to Covid pandemic	
June 2020	<i>Virtual</i> Todd Gala and Gloria and Like a Rainbow Shining
December 2020	<i>Virtual</i> Nine Lessons and Carols with Durham Singers and Northern Spirit Singers
December 2021	Carols in Durham Market Place
May 2022	Mendelssohn Elijah
December 2022	<i>Elvet</i> An Evening of Festive Music
2012-2019	Carols were sung around the wards at University Hospital of North Durham

## **Friends of Durham Choral Society 2022-23**

Durham Choral Society appreciates the support we receive from our Friends.

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Friends receive benefits including discounted tickets and free programmes for each concert for an annual donation.

For further information please email [committeedcs@gmail.com](mailto:committeedcs@gmail.com)  
and our Friends Secretary will contact you.

### **Sponsorship**

Durham Choral Society would like to thank Dr Fiona Gameson and VW Consulting (Durham) Ltd for their sponsorship of this programme, our new website and marketing materials.

Thanks are also due to other members of the choir for their generous donations during the past year.

## **Durham Choral Society 2022-23**

President Will Todd

Vice Presidents Richard Brice, David Crookes, John Goodwill, Esq, Tom Rennie

### **Committee and Helpers**

Chair Val Wooff

Hon. Secretary Claire Horwell

Hon. Treasurer Sue Massey

Committee Irene Blakemore, Nicky Chater, Angela Douglas, Jill Francis, Fiona Gameson, Lesley Hamill,

Victoria Timms, Michael Summers (Ex Officio)

Section Reps Helen Schofield, Jane Abel, Peter Curry, John Goodwill

Helpers Gill Aubrey, Alison Curry, Robert Cutty, Nancy Gemski, Marian Manning,  
Jessica Sequera, Barbara Stainsby

Musical Team Michael Summers, Musical Director  
Elizabeth Woods, Assistant Conductor  
Alison Gill, Accompanist  
Isaac Conroy, Assistant Accompanist

Thanks are due to all of the above, and other contributors, without whom the choir could not function.

Email [committeedcs@gmail.com](mailto:committeedcs@gmail.com)



Some DCS highlights in Durham Cathedral  
2013—2022







And Christmases past  
50th singing of carols in hospitals  
(above) in 2017 and Festive Music at  
Elvet Methodist Church (right)



Our President, Will Todd, drops in on a rehearsal in November 2022

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[www.durhamchoralsociety.org.uk](http://www.durhamchoralsociety.org.uk)