

# *Altrincham Choral Society*

## *Manchester Philharmonia*

*Leader: David Routledge*

*Steven Roberts*

*Conductor*

*Emma Morwood*  
*Rosalinda*

*Mark Duff*  
*Gabriel von Eisenstein*

*Fleur de Bray*  
*Adele*

*Thomas Eaglen*  
*Dr Falke*

*John Pierce*  
*Alfred*

*Matthew Duncan*  
*Herr Frank*

*Helen Sherman*  
*Prince Orlovsky*

*Rosie Middleton*  
*Ida*

*Terence Ayebare*  
*Dr Blint*

*Kristian Parsons*  
*Butler/wine waiter*



*Royal Northern College of Music*

*Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2012*

# *Altrincham Choral Society*

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They receive advance publicity, complimentary tickets, reserved seating for performances and are acknowledged on the choir web-site and in all programmes.

If you are interested in becoming a Patron or Sponsor of the society, please contact E Lawrence 01925 861862.

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# *Altrincham Choral Society*

Altrincham Choral Society prides itself in offering a diverse, innovative and challenging programme of concerts, including many choral favourites.

A forward thinking and progressive nature at ACS is complemented by a commitment to choral training and standards which provides its members with the knowledge and confidence to thoroughly enjoy their music-making.

Rehearsals are on Monday evenings at  
Altrincham Methodist Church, Springfield Road,  
Altrincham WA14 1HF.  
(opposite the Cresta Court Hotel).

We are only 5 minutes walk from the train/metro station.

Rehearsals are from 7.45 to 10.00 pm

For more information you can contact us in a variety of ways:

E-mail: [info@altrincham-choral.co.uk](mailto:info@altrincham-choral.co.uk)

Telephone: [P Arnold \(Secretary\) 01270 764335](tel:P%20Arnold%20(Secretary)%2001270%20764335)

Or log onto our web-site

[www.altrincham-choral.co.uk](http://www.altrincham-choral.co.uk)

where you can find more information about the choir, future plans, and photographs from previous concerts including Verona and Florence. You can also add your name to our mailing list to keep up to date with forthcoming concerts and events.

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# *Altrincham Choral Society*

Brenda Adams	Pauline Griffiths	Neville Oates
Joy Anderson	Jane Hardman	Terence Oddy
Sara Apps	Caroline Harris	Claire Parsons
Pat Arnold *	Dudley Harrop	Jenny Peachey
Ann Ashby	Liz Harwood	Ian Provost
Joyce Astill *	Gill Hayes	Frances Provost
Kate Barlow	John Hayes	Eleanor Reeves
Janet Bedell	Bill Hetherington	Linley Roach *
Laura Booth	Jane Hollinshead	Doris Robinson #
Frances Broad #	Catherine Horrocks *	Kate Robinson
Anne Bullock	Valerie Hotter	Christine Ross
Helen Cash	Gail Hunt	Jenny Ruff
Stephen Campbell	Rosemary Hurley	Stephen Secretan
Anthony Champion	Karen Jarman	Fiona Simpson
John Charlton #	Elizabeth Jones #	Susan Sinagola
Barbara Clift *	Melanie-Anne Jose	Colin Skelton *
Susan Clough	John King-Hele *	Audrey Smallridge #
Barbara Coombs #	George Kistruck	Audrey Taylor #
Michael Cummings	Elisabeth Lawrence	Brian Taylor *
Adrienne Davies	Jan Lees	Elizabeth Taylor
Jacqueline Davies	John Lees	Malcolm Thomson
Marie Dixon	Keith Lewis	Pamela Thomson
Jean Drape *	Annie Lloyd-Walker	Jean Tragen
Kathy Duffy	Rosie Lucas *	Gill Turner
Richard Dyson	Sarah Lucas	Elaine Van Der Zeil
Liz Foy	Gavin McBride	Joyce Venables ++
Joyce Fuller	Helen McBride	Catherine Verdin
Rima Gasperas	Hazel Meakin	Christine Weekes
Trevor Gilmore	Cathy Merrell	Brian Whitehouse
Estelle Goodwin	Catherine Mottram	Helen Whitehouse
Bryan Goude *	Pamela Moulton	Kath Whyte *
Ann Grainger	John Mulholland	Yvette Willey #
John Grainger	Jessica Murrills #	Julia Williamson
Margaret Greaves *	Julian Mustoe	Brenda Wood
John Greenan #	Maureen Netting *	Andrew Wragg *
Helen Greig	Norma Nock	John Yates
	Christine O'Kell	

\* Denotes 20 years or more

# Denotes 30 years or more

++ Denotes 40 years or more



## **Die Fledermaus**

The light-hearted story of Die Fledermaus (The Bat) is the younger Strauss's most celebrated and popular operetta. It was premièred on 5 April 1874 in Vienna, and first performed at the Alhambra Theatre, London on 18 December 1876.

Mistaken identities, flirtations at a masked ball, elegant frivolities and confusions of all kinds provide a hilarious setting for some of the most melodious and exuberant music ever written.

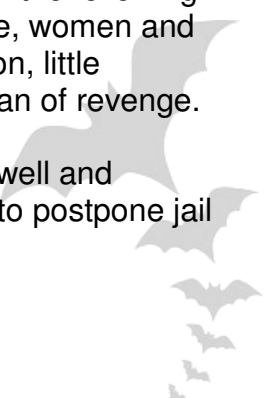
### **Part I**

The scene opens in the house of Gabriel von Eisenstein, a wealthy man of independent means, who is married to the attractive Rosalinda. He has been sentenced to eight days in prison for insulting an official. Despite all the efforts of his advocate, Dr. Blint, to get him off, von Eisenstein is due to start his sentence by midnight.

Adele, Rosalinda's maid, receives a letter from her sister Ida inviting her to a masked ball held by Prince Orlofsky that night. She pretends the letter says that her aunt is very sick, and asks for leave of absence, planning to borrow one of her mistress's evening dresses for the occasion.

Dr Falke, a notary and von Eisenstein's closest friend, arrives, bearing an invitation for von Eisenstein to the same masked ball to be given by Prince Orlovsky. 'All the ladies from the ballet will be there ', he tells his friend and suggests that he should postpone his surrender to the prison authorities till the following day and enjoy a last night of glorious revelry, wine, women and song. Von Eisenstein eagerly accepts the invitation, little suspecting that it is the first move in Dr Falke's plan of revenge.

Von Eisenstein then bids Rosalinda a tearful farewell and departs, ostensibly to prison, but really intending to postpone jail for one day and have fun at the ball.



No sooner are Rosalinda's husband and maid out of the house than Rosalinda is visited by her lover, the singing teacher Alfred. They are enjoying a cosy supper with champagne when Herr Frank, the governor of the prison arrives to take von Eisenstein to jail. In order not to compromise Rosalinda, Alfred agrees to pretend to be von Eisenstein and to accompany Frank to the prison.

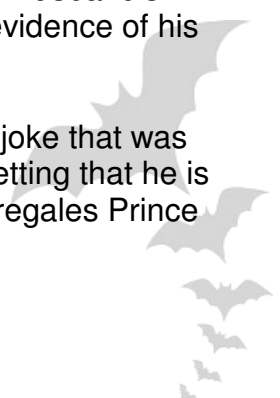
At Prince Orlovsky's ball the fun is fast and furious. It turns out that Falke, with Prince Orlovsky's permission, is orchestrating the ball as a way of getting revenge on von Eisenstein. The previous winter, the two men had been to a fancy dress party and von Eisenstein had abandoned a drunken Falke dressed as a bat (and thus explaining the opera's title) in the centre of town, exposing him to ridicule the next day.

As part of his scheme, Falke has invited Frank, Adele and Rosalinda to the ball as well. Going by the name of the 'Marquis Renard' von Eisenstein is presented by Dr Falke to a young woman in whom he detects a strong likeness to someone he knows. Adele, dressed in one of his wife's most elegant gowns, laughs off his suggestion that she resembles his wife's chambermaid.

## **Part II**

Later in the evening Falke introduces Rosalinda, disguised as a Hungarian Countess to von Eisenstein. He flirts outrageously with the Countess and during an amorous tête-à-tête, she succeeds in extracting a valuable watch from her husband's pocket, something she can use in the future as evidence of his impropriety.

At supper the conversation turns to the practical joke that was played on Dr Falke by von Eisenstein, who, forgetting that he is temporarily masquerading as 'Marquis Renard', regales Prince Orlovsky and his guests with the story.



This story is greatly enjoyed by a 'M. le Chevalier Chagrin', whose adopted name conceals the identity of Herr Frank, Governor of the prison. Without either of them having any idea of their respective identities, he and von Eisenstein strike up a warm friendship.

By now, everyone is feeling mellow. Champagne flows and all toast the joys of wine, good fellowship and love. The guests dance wildly until dawn, and when the clock strikes six von Eisenstein and Herr Frank both hurry off on their independent ways to the prison, where the confusion increases. Falke arrives with all the guests from the ball and declares the whole thing is an act of vengeance for the 'Fledermaus'. The misunderstandings are cleared up and Rosalinda and von Eisenstein reconciled.

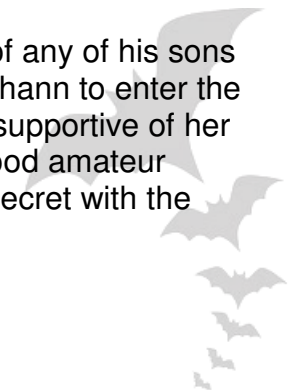
Despite being compelled to serve his full term in jail, von Eisenstein philosophically declares it best to blame it all on 'His Majesty King Champagne'.

## **Johann Strauss II**

Johann Strauss II, also known as Johann Baptist Strauss or Johann Strauss the Younger, was an Austrian composer of light music, particularly dance music and operettas.

Born on October 25 1825, he was the eldest son of the celebrated composer and violinist Johann Strauss I. He displayed musical skills at an early age and began composing when he was just six years old.

His father was adamantly opposed to the idea of any of his sons pursuing a career in music. He had plans for Johann to enter the banking profession. His mother, however, was supportive of her son's interest and talent in music. She was a good amateur violinist and arranged for him to study violin in secret with the leader of his father's dance orchestra.



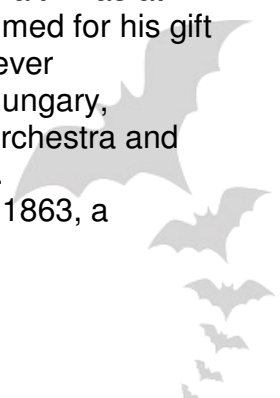
Only when the elder Strauss abandoned the family for a mistress was Johann able to pursue additional formal music training and concentrate fully on a career as a composer.

After his studies, he formed a small orchestra, and made his professional début as concertmaster and conductor in 1844 thereby competing directly with his father. The early years were not easy for him. The elder Strauss's influence over the local entertainment establishments was such that many of them were wary of offering the younger Strauss a contract for fear of angering the father. He began to win over audiences only when he accepted commissions to perform away from home. He performed both his own works and those of Johann Strauss I.

His real success began in 1849. The elder Strauss died from scarlet fever, so Johann merged the two orchestras and took up his father's contracts. His career moved along smoothly for the next few years, but in 1853 he suffered a breakdown and his younger brothers, Joseph and Eduard, who were also composers, were engaged to help as conductors and violinists. After his recovery, he resumed fully both his conducting and composing activities, gaining the respect of such composers as Brahms, Wagner and Verdi.

Strauss Jr. eventually surpassed his father's fame, inheriting the title of 'The Waltz King', and becoming one of the most popular waltz composers of the era.

During the 1860's and early 1870's the Viennese waltz was at the height of its popularity, and Strauss was acclaimed for his gift for melody, interesting harmonic structures and clever orchestrations. He toured extensively in Austria, Hungary, Poland, Germany and the United States with his orchestra and accepted repeated commissions to play in Russia. He was named 'Hofballmusikdirektor' in Vienna in 1863, a position he held until 1871.





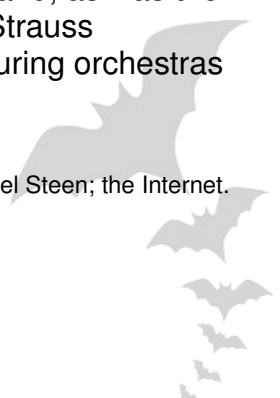
Strauss married the singer Henriette (Jetty) Treffz in 1862, and they settled in Heitzing. She became his business manager and a great inspiration, drawing him towards operetta, just as Viennese theatre operators were becoming tired of the works of Offenbach. But he was not as comfortable with music for the stage as he was with polkas and waltzes. His first operetta, *Indigo und die vierzig Räuber*, came in 1871 and *Die Fledermaus*, was staged three years later. *Eine Nacht in Venedig* (1883) and *Der Zigeunerbaron* (1885) were his only other international hits. *Die Fledermaus* (1874) is regarded as his masterpiece and the finest example of Viennese operetta.

Throughout his career Strauss was very much in the public eye, both in Vienna and in his international travels. After the death of his first wife in 1878, he married the much younger actress Angela Dittrich. The marriage did not last, and owing to the Church's unwillingness to recognise his divorce, Strauss left the Roman Catholic Church. In order to marry his third wife, Adele Deutsch, in 1887, he also had to give up his Austrian citizenship, becoming a citizen of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. Adele, like his first wife, supported and encouraged his creative talent, resulting in many famous compositions in his later years. Johann II became the most prominent of the Strauss family members and died a wealthy and famous man in 1899.

Strauss's music is now regularly performed at the annual Neujahrskonzert of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. The distinguished Strauss interpreter Willi Boskovsky carried on the 'Vorgeiger' tradition of conducting with violin in hand, as was the Strauss family custom, and the Wiener Johann Strauss Orchester, formed in 1966, pays tribute to the touring orchestras which once made the Strauss family so famous.

Programme notes: E Jones.

Sources: *The Lives and Times of The Great Composers* – Michael Steen; the Internet.





*Part I*

*No 1 Life is a song*

*No 2 Never go to law*

*No 3 What a night*

*No 4 How sad we are*

*No 5 Here's to love*

*No 6 A married couple*

*No 7 Goodbye*

*No 8 What a feast*

*No 9 Chacun à son goût*

*No 10 Laughing song*





*Part II*

*No 11 Homeland*

*No 12 The tick-tock polka*

*No 13 Champagne*

*No 13a Merci, Merci, Merci*

*No 14 Brother mine*

*No 15 Ballet music*

*No 16 A wondrous night*

*No 17 Won't you sip this glass*

*No 18 After the ball*

*No 19 How can you be so ungallant*

*No 20 The legal profession*

*No 21 Finale*



## **FUTURE CONCERTS**

**17<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

Royal Northern College of Music

**Rutter – Gloria**

**Gregson – Make a Joyful Noise**

**Patterson – Magnificat**

**Bruckner – 3 Motets**

Jonathan Scott - Organ

Brass Ensemble

**11<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> December 2012**

Altrincham United Reformed Church

**Carols with the Choral**

**13<sup>th</sup> April 2013**

Royal Northern College of Music

**Fauré – Requiem**

**Britten – Saint Nicolas**

Lancashire Chamber Orchestra

**13<sup>th</sup> July 2013**

Royal Northern College of Music

**Schubert – Deutsche Messe D872**

Lydia Bryan – Piano

Jonathan Scott – Organ

**November 16<sup>th</sup> 2013**

Royal Northern College of Music

**Brahms - Requiem**

**Brahms - Motets**

Tom Scott – Piano

Jonathan Scott – Piano

**10<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> December 2013**

**Carols with the Choral**

**April 12<sup>th</sup> 2014**

Royal Northern College of Music

**Elgar - The Kingdom**

Manchester Philharmonia

Jeffrey Makinson – Organ



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## **Steven Roberts**

Steven Roberts has combined a career in education with his work as a conductor, musical director and adjudicator, working both in this country and in Europe and as far afield as Peru and Bahrain.

Despite a very busy educational career Steven has conducted numerous groups, including the Liverpool Welsh Choral Union, The Huddersfield Choral Society, Dodworth and Skelmanthorpe Male Voice Choirs and a variety of orchestras, brass bands and wind ensembles, as well as being Chorus Master for concerts with Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and José Carreras.

He is currently Music Director and Conductor with the Altrincham Choral Society, and holds the same position with the Chesterfield Philharmonic Choir. Steven has also worked as musical director for a number of theatrical productions and this diversity reflects his music and drama training.

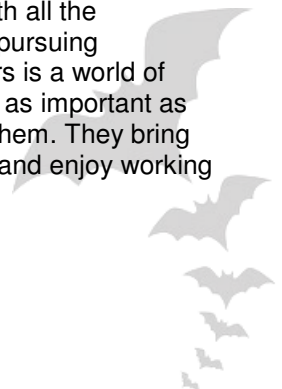
Steven is Musical Director of Sing Live UK which has seen him conduct in some of the country's most prestigious concert halls, including the Royal Albert Hall, London, the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester, Symphony Hall, Birmingham, the Waterfront Hall and Ulster Hall, Belfast, Birmingham, Leeds and Huddersfield Town Halls, the Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham, the Liverpool Philharmonic Hall and Sheffield City Hall, The College Gardens of Westminster Abbey, St Mark's Basilica, Venice and at Mass in St Peter's Basilica, Vatican City, Rome.

Steven is an adjudicator member of the British and International Federation of Festivals, regularly adjudicating in this country. He also acts as a Music Mentor for Music for Youth and is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Federation.

## **Manchester Philharmonia**

A feature of the orchestral scene in England is the pool of freelance musicians of high standard, available to form ensembles for any occasion. Tonight's orchestra is made up of such players, and includes musicians from around the region, from York to Birmingham and beyond.

Their experience is vast, with members working regularly with all the symphony orchestras in the North and Midlands, as well as pursuing freelance careers as chamber musicians and soloists. There is a world of camaraderie and friendship, where performing excellence is as important as the ability to turn to the different styles of music required of them. They bring their quick wits and professionalism to this night of operetta and enjoy working with local choirs who share their love of music.



## **Emma Morwood** Rosalinda, Eisenstein's wife

Born in Belfast, Emma trained at the University of Edinburgh and the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM). Emma was a major award winner at the RNCM, including the Dame Eva Turner Award and the Claire Croiza Prize for French Song.

Opera roles include an Irish tour as Pamina in *The Magic Flute* (Opera Theatre Company); Diana (cover) in *Offenbach's Orpheus in The Underworld* (Scottish Opera/NI Opera); Morgana in *Handel's Alcina* (Buxton Festival); Micaela in *Carmen* (New Devon Opera); Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro* (Opera Theatre Company); Spirit in *Alfred* by Thomas Arne (Classical Opera Company); Elsie in *Yeomen of the Guard* (Gilbert and Sullivan Society); the title role in *Ravel's L'enfant et les Sortilèges* (RNCM); and Fiordiligi in *Mozart's Così fan tutte* (Lyric Opera Studio, Weimar).

Emma has performed with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra (RLPO), Northern Sinfonia, Manchester Camerata, Camerata Ireland and the Ulster Orchestra, and has worked with conductors including Vladimir Ashkenazy, Vasily Petrenko, Simon Halsey and Clark Rundell. Recent performance highlights include her Royal Festival Hall début with The Philharmonia; Brahms' *Requiem* with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra; a solo lunchtime recital at the Liverpool Philharmonic Hall; Mozart's *Exsultate Jubilate* with the Ulster Orchestra; opera gala with RLPO (Petrenko); *Handel's Messiah* with Northern Sinfonia (Halsey); and *Vivaldi's Gloria* with Manchester Camerata.


Described as 'enchanting' (The Times), 'superlative' (Opera Magazine) and 'brilliant' (The Telegraph), and now working with many leading orchestras and conductors, she is fast establishing a reputation as one of our finest young sopranos both on the opera stage and the concert platform.

## **Mark Duff** Gabriel von Eisenstein, Rosalinda's husband

Mark read music at D.I.T, Conservatory of Music in Dublin, where he was awarded a Bachelor of Music Performance degree. Mark pursued post-graduate studies at the Royal Northern College of Music, graduating in 2009.

Mark has been successful in many competitions; notable awards are the William T. Watt cup for Tenor solo and the Count John McCormack honorary award.

Mark has performed regularly in operatic excerpts annually presented at the National Concert Hall, Dublin. At RNCM Mark has sung *Monsieur Triquet* (Eugene Onegin), *Torquemada* (L'Heure Espagnole), *Le petit Vieillard* (L'Enfant et les sortilège) and *Eisenstein* (Die Fledermaus).



Mark has sung as a member of the chorus for Opera Ireland. Following five consecutive seasons with the company he sang the role of Don Basilio in a 'Bite-size' production of 'The Marriage of Figaro' under the direction of Dieter Kagei at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin.

Professional opera roles include Don Curzio, Le Nozze di Figaro (Lyric opera), Spiridione, Il Campanello (Anna Livia opera), Dancaïro, Carmen (Mananan International opera Festival), Oronte (Alcina), and Don Ottavio, Don Giovanni (Longborough Opera festival). Contemporary interests have seen Mark sing in newly commissioned operas, in particular 'Quicksilver' by Connor Linehan and 'The Withered Arm' by Jenny Gould. Recent engagements saw Mark making his European debut singing Monsieur Triquet (Eugene Onegin) with Kammeroper Rheinsburg, Berlin and Buxton Opera festival debuts.

Mark sings regularly on the concert and oratorio platform. His recordings include Faith of our Fathers, BBC radio broadcasts and commissioned works Amore by the composer Rosemarie Taylor. 2011 saw Mark joining forces with German pianist Jan Loeffler as they launched their recital series 'Must the winter come so soon', performing Schubert's Winterreise in Dublin, Europe and the USA.

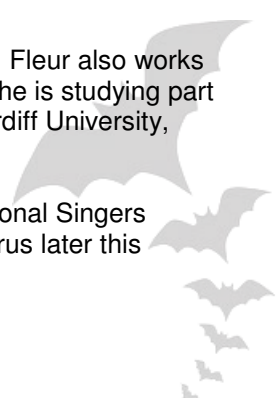
Mark recently held a position on the Opera Works Singing Programme at English National Opera, and studies with Philip Doghan and Barbara Robotham and future engagements include a recital tour of Die Schöne Mullerin, alongside producing Opera at the Castle, Ireland.

### **Fleur de Bray** Adele, Rosalinda's maid

Fleur de Bray graduated with distinction from the Royal Northern College of Music in 2009. Having completed a three-year Postgraduate Diploma in Performance, studying under Sandra Dugdale, Fleur was a recipient of the Baroness De Turkheim Vocal Scholarship and the Eva Turner Award for sopranos. Prior to the RNCM, Fleur completed a BMus at Cardiff University, where she was awarded the David Lloyd Vocal Scholarship and the Sir Geraint Evans Prize. She then completed a Masters in Opera Composition and was awarded a distinction for her contemporary opera.

As a keen performer of new music and contemporary opera, Fleur also works with a number of modern composers on new vocal works. She is studying part time for a PhD in Opera Composition in association with Cardiff University, with supervision from visiting tutor Dame Judith Weir.

Fleur is also a member of the Philharmonia Chorus Professional Singers Scheme and will be touring Hamburg and Lyon with the chorus later this summer.





Among opera roles, Fleur has performed Barbarina in *Le Nozze di Figaro*; *Le Feu* in Ravel's *L'Enfant et Les Sortilèges*; Adele in Strauss' *Die Fledermaus*; Cunegonde in Bernstein's *Candide* (all RNCM); Swan in Jonathan Dove's *Swanhunter* (Opera North); Sandman and Dew Fairy in *Hansel and Gretel* (Mananan Opera Festival); Queen Nitocris in Handel's *Belshazzar* and Belinda in *Dido and Aeneas* (Manchester Camerata); cover Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* (Longborough Festival Opera); Gianetta in *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Mananan Opera Festival); Queen of the Night in *Die Zauberflöte* (Mantissa Opera); Madame Herz in Mozart's *Impresario* (Opera Minima); Rosalinda in *Die Fledermaus*; Mimi in Puccini's *La Bohème* and Josephine in Gilbert and Sullivan's *HMS Pinafore* (Opera South East); and Donna Anna in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and Frasquita in Bizet's *Carmen* with OperaUpClose.

**John Pierce** Alfred, Rosalinda's 'good friend'

John Pierce trained at the Royal Northern College of Music with Jeffrey Lawton. Currently a student at the National Opera Studio in London he was awarded an Independent Opera Scholarship to continue his studies with Ryland Davies.

Operatic roles at the RNCM included Rodolfo, *La Bohème*, Alfred, *Die Fledermaus* and Boris, *Katya Kabanova*. He was a winner of the Joyce and Michael Kennedy Strauss Prize, Elizabeth Harwood Memorial Prize, first prize in the MOCSA Young Welsh Singer of the Year and 2010 Welsh Singers Competition.

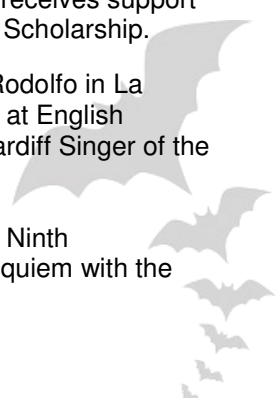
As a recipient of the Prince of Wales Advanced Study Award he performed for Prince Charles at an event celebrating his 50th year as Prince of Wales. John joined Glyndebourne Festival Opera chorus and took part in their productions of *Falstaff*, *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *Rusalka* and *Tristan und Isolde*.

His concert and oratorio appearances include Handel's *Messiah*, Beethoven's 9th Symphony, Mozart's *Requiem*, Karl Jenkins' *The Armed Man*, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* and *Stabat Mater*, Puccini's *Messa di Gloria* and Mendelssohn's *Elijah*.

Sponsored by Welsh National Opera at the NOS, John also receives support from the Lionel Anthony Scholarship and the Susan Chilcott Scholarship.

Recent engagements have included performing the role of Rodolfo in *La Bohème* for British Youth Opera and covering the same role at English National Opera in the autumn, and representing Wales in Cardiff Singer of the World 2011.

Future plans include Pinkerton (cover) at ENO, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony for the Opéra National de Lorraine, and Verdi *Requiem* with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales in 2013.



### **Thomas Eaglen** Dr Falke, Eisenstein's friend

Thomas Eaglen was born and grew up in the beautiful countryside of North Yorkshire. His musical ambitions evolved from the age of eight as a chorister in Durham Cathedral where he achieved the position of Head Chorister in his final year. Thomas is a first class honours graduate of the RNCM.

Principal operatic roles include most recently Maceath in Gay's The Beggars Opera, Aeneas in Purcell's Dido and Aeneas, and Papageno in Mozart's The Magic Flute for Heritage Opera, and Il Conte in Le Nozze di Figaro for The Armonico Consort which toured England and Ireland.

Preceding this Thomas sang the same role for the RNCM, before which he had taken the title role in Tchaikovsky's Eugene Onegin, also for the RNCM and Heritage Opera.

In the presence of HRH the Prince of Wales, Thomas took the part of Manoah in a period production of Handel's Samson for the Yorke Trust. His work with the Yorke Trust led to Thomas being offered the principle role in Gerard McBurney's new opera The Airman's Tale. Premiered at the Imperial War Museum London in celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the end of World War II, Thomas was first to create the role of the Airman to great reviews.

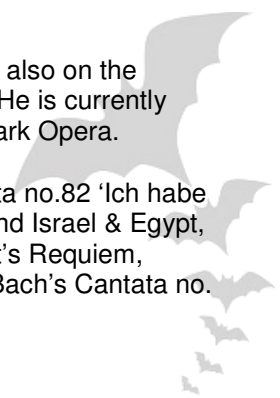
Solo concert performances demonstrate Thomas' popularity on the national concert platform. Recent performances include Haydn's Harmoniemesse in Cadogan Hall with the Parliament Choir, Bach's St John Passion with the Manchester Camerata, Bach's B Minor Mass in Sheffield Cathedral and Handel's Messiah in St Albans Cathedral with the London Gala Orchestra. Having appeared frequently with the Northern Symphonia at the Sage Gateshead, Thomas is becoming a familiar soloist at many of the country's great concert venues.

From a critically acclaimed performance of Rossini's Petite Messe Solennelle in Ripon Cathedral to a performance of Handel's Messiah in St. Alban's Cathedral with the Malcolm Sergeant Festival Choir, Thomas' reputation as an outstanding soloist continues to grow.

### **Matthew Duncan** Herr Frank, prison governor

Matthew trained at the Royal Northern College of Music and also on the Opera Studio programme at Associated Studios in London. He is currently performing in Madame Butterfly and Idomeneo at Grange Park Opera.

As an oratorio soloist Matthew has performed Bach's Cantata no.82 'Ich habe Genug', Nielsen's Springtime in Funen, Handel's Messiah and Israel & Egypt, Bach's St. Matthew Passion and Christmas Oratorio, Mozart's Requiem, Haydn's Nelson and Creation Masses, Durufle's Requiem, Bach's Cantata no. 67 and Schubert's Masses in A flat and G.



Appearances at Grange Park Opera include Tosca, Love for Three Oranges and Tristan und Isolde. Roles have included Schaunard, La Boheme (Opera-Up-Close), Butcher, Merrie England (Opera South), Guglielmo, (Cosi fan tutte) (European Chamber Opera and Jackdaws Opera), Jailor, Rigoletto (Bury Court Opera) Melchior, Amahl and the Night Visitors (Dress Circle), Herr Frank, Die Fledermaus (RNCM), Junius, Rape of Lucretia (Elemental Opera), Count Almaviva, Marriage of Figaro (Dorset Productions), Calchas, La Belle Helene (Merry Opera), as well as Masetto, Don Giovanni (Opera Anywhere).

**Helen Sherman** Prince Orlofsky, host of the masked ball

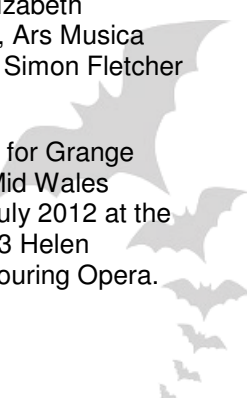
Born in Australia, Helen was selected by Young Classical Artists Trust in 2009. A graduate of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music she studied with Dr. Rowena Cowley and in 2007 was awarded a scholarship to the Royal Northern College of Music to study with Peter Wilson on the International Artists Diploma scheme. Operatic roles while at the RNCM included Hélène (Offenbach's La Belle Hélène), Sesto (La Clemenza di Tito), Cyrus (Belshazzar), Varvava (Katya Kabanova), The Old Lady (Candide) and Prince Orlofsky (Die Fledermaus).

On graduating Helen joined Grange Park Opera performing Suzuki (Madame Butterfly) and covering Clairon (Capriccio). In 2011 she represented Australia at the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition and in 2012 won the Australian Musical Association Prize in the Royal Overseas League Music Competition.

Helen's concert appearances have included recitals at Wigmore Hall, Bridgewater Hall and City of London Festival, Handel's Messiah at the Royal Albert Hall, Wagner's Wesendonck Lieder with the Liverpool Mozart Orchestra, Peter Maxwell Davies's Five Acts of Harry Patch with London Mozart Players and a recital with Roger Vignoles in Cambridge. She has been featured on the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's ABC Classic FM, and recorded with the Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Helen is very grateful for the dedicated support of organisations including The Royal Overseas League, The Wingate Trust, The Tait Memorial Trust, Independent Opera, The Australian Music Foundation, The Elizabeth Harwood Memorial Trust, The Dame Joan Sutherland Society, Ars Musica Australis, The Opera and Arts Support Group Sydney and the Simon Fletcher Charitable Trust.

This season she performs The Governess (Queen of Spades) for Grange Park Opera, and the role of Donna Elvira (Don Giovanni) for Mid Wales Opera. Other future engagements include an appearance in July 2012 at the Cheltenham Festival, to be broadcast by BBC Radio 3. In 2013 Helen performs the role of Aurelio (L'assedio di Calais) for English Touring Opera.



**Rosie Middleton** Ida, Adele's sister

Born in Manchester, Rosie began her formal musical training at Chetham's School of Music. She is currently studying under Louise Winter for a Masters in Vocal and Opera Studies at the Royal Northern College of Music. At the RNCM Rosie won the Annie Ridyard Scholarship for Mezzo-Soprano in both 2008 and 2011 and was awarded Harpur Trust Scholarships in 2007 and 2008. Rosie read Music at the University of Birmingham graduating in 2006 with a BMus (hons). For RNCM opera productions, she has played the roles of L'Ecureuil (Ravel, L'enfant et les sortilèges), Old Lady (Bernstein, Candide), and externally, Bianca (Britten, Rape of Lucretia).

Most recent operatic roles include Sorceress (Dido and Aeneas), Mrs Noye (Noye's Fludde) for St Andrew's Concert Series, Page (Rigoletto) and cover Zweite Dame (Die Zauberflöte) for Opera De Bauge.

On the concert platform recent work includes Mendelssohn's Elijah, Handel's Messiah, Bach B Minor Mass and Magnificat, the Rossini Petite Messe Solenne and Vivaldi Gloria. Rosie has given solo recitals in London, Staffordshire and Wales. She has performed in masterclasses with international musicians including Sarah Walker, Rosamund Illing and Patricia McMahon.

Future engagements include Vaughan Williams Serenade to Music at the Bridgewater Hall and performances of Elijah.

Rosie Middleton appears by kind permission of the RNCM.

**Terence Ayebare** Dr Blint, Eisenstein's lawyer

Ugandan baritone Terence Ayebare turned to full-time vocal study after training as an Electrical Engineer in Uganda and taking singing lessons at Kampala Music School under the tuition of Ulrike Wilson, LRSM, and studied singing at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, and the Royal Northern College of Music.

The opera roles in his repertoire include Count Almaviva (Le Nozze di Figaro) Guglielmo (Cosi fan tutte), Dr. Falke (Die Fledermaus), Pangloss (Candide), Belcore (L'Elisir d'Amore) and Silvio (I Pagliacci).

Terence is also a regular oratorio soloist in, among others, Bach's St. John Passion, the requiems of Fauré, Duruflé and Mozart, Mendelssohn's Elijah, Vaughan Williams' Five Mystical Songs and Handel's Messiah. He also performs in song recitals in a continuation of thriving musical collaborations formed with young aspiring pianists Ivan Kiwuwa, Daniel Browell and Matthew Kam during his conservatoire training. He also teaches singing privately from his home in Marple, Stockport.

Terence Ayebare appears by kind permission of the RNCM.

