

OPERA AT CHILMARK

in collaboration with



CANTATA
DRAMATICA

presents

BEOWULF

A NEW OPERA
BY LOUIS MANDER

Librettist

NICK PITTS-TUCKER



Cleeves Farm, Chilmark, Salisbury, SP3 5AY

by kind permission of Henry and Elizabeth Pelham

Sunday 28th & Monday 29th August, 5pm

ACT ONE

BEOWULF AND GRENDEL

ACT TWO

GRENDEL'S MOTHER

ACT THREE

BEOWULF'S LAST FIGHT

There will be an 80-minute interval after Act One; a bell will be rung 10 minutes before the performance restarts. There will be a brief pause between Acts Two and Three.

Please turn your mobile phone off during the performance.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

THE MINSTREL *Baritone*

BEOWULF *Baritone*

KING HROTHGAR *Bass Baritone*

QUEEN WEALTHOW *Soprano*

UNSERTH *Bass*

PRINCESS FREAWARA *Soprano*

QUEEN HYGD *Soprano*

WIGLAF *Bass*

CHORUS *of seafarers & followers of Beowulf*

CASPAR LLOYD JAMES
The Minstrel

STEVEN EAST
King Hrothgar

HANNAH HAUPT
Princess Freawara

FELIX HAUSER
Unserth / Wiglaf

THOMAS COLWELL
Beowulf

JILLIAN BAIN CHRISTIE
Queen Wealthow

FAE EVELYN
Queen Hygd

CHORUS

JILL CAUDLE
EILUNED CROZIER-COLE
LINDSAY DEVINE
CHARLES DILLON
MERIAL EATON
ANDY HALES
RICHARD HAUPT

ROWENA INGRAM
HADYN INGRAM
SUE MORGAN
FELICITY PATTENDEN
DAVID RHODES
SELAINÉ SAXBY
JANE WADDINGTON

DANCERS

DEBBIE LEE ANTHONY
ROSALIND CONLON

MICHELLE ROBINSON
REBECCA SEYMOUR

ORCHESTRA

ALISON TOWNLEY
Violin

BILL BENHAM
Viola

DAVID COPUS
Cello

JAMES MONCKTON
Double Bass

JO HIND
Saxophone

DOUGLAS STEVENS
Piano

CATHERINE GROOM
Harp

PAUL WILLIAMS
Percussion

JOE KEMP
Percussion

JAN KOENE
Director

LOUIS MANDER & DAVID DAVIES
Musical Direction

DOUGLAS STEVENS
Repetiteur

REBECCA SEYMOUR
Co-director & Choreographer

HAYLEY SPICER
Costumes

GRAHAM DENNIS
Lighting

LAURA DAVIES
Stage Management

SIMON NATHAN
Orchestrations

INTRODUCTION

Cantata Dramatica's latest commission for 2015–16 is Beowulf, composed by Louis Mander, with libretto by Nick Pitts-Tucker. Nick Pitts-Tucker writes:

The story of Beowulf is the Anglo Saxon version of the heroic deeds of a Swedish warrior who made his name in Denmark, fighting awesome trolls, and then, in old and distinguished age, rolling out for one last fight with a fire breathing dragon.

Louis Mander first suggested the poem to me as a suitable subject for a dramatic cantata. My wife did Anglo Saxon at Cambridge and jumped at the chance to have “Beowulf” set to music so I set to, reading several translations simultaneously, and then making a verse précis of the story. I also introduced some female parts to balance the rather muscular content of the original.

This production would not be taking place without our joint venture with Opera at Chilmark, whose resources and many talents bring this old story and new music to vibrant life.

COMPOSER LOUIS MANDER WRITES:

My inspiration for the composition of the score came immediately and was catalysed by Nick Pitts-Tucker's evocative and highly expressive libretto. I wanted to expose a number of key character motifs that I could vary and recall through the whole three act arc to provide a subconscious narrative coherence. Once I had composed and honed these leitmotifs, it was my intention to source a couple of traditional Danish folk melodies that I might weave into the score. There is one Danish folk melody used in the Act One Intermezzo, then two further Scandinavian folk songs are enjoyed in the Scene Five 'Mead' chorus. The other melodic material is my own, with Scandinavian inflected contours.

The drama is played out with through-composed aria, duet, ensemble and accompanied recitative, but also spoken word, sometimes with instrumental underscoring, and oftentimes purely spoken, without accompaniment. There are also a number of purely instrumental episodes which convey the presence of the supernatural characters in the story. The scoring is richly textured, and the percussion includes a full battery of tuned and un-tuned instruments.

In spite of there being a number of characters set as baritone roles, the contrast between them is noticeable. The Minstrel displays a lighter voice with agility and mercurial nimbleness, King Hrothgar a darker bass-baritone, and Beowulf himself a strong, lyric baritone. With the female roles, I wanted to reveal their feminine strength and emotional support to Beowulf and Hrothgar in their arduous adventures. The Minstrel is deployed by Nick to advance the exposure of the narrative to the audience and also to be an active part of the drama itself.

My desire was to illuminate the camaraderie and tender friendship between Beowulf and his brethren which is so touchingly inlaid through the original poem. A unifying and unaffected male unity displayed in adversity.

The first act is impetuous and full of vitality. The second act is intrepid and athletic. The third and concluding act is bittersweet, elegiac and otherworldly. In itself it was an Olympian compositional undertaking to capture this epic and well loved tale in under two hours! My thanks to Julia Stutfield and Nick Pitts-Tucker for their belief in my vision for the opera.

OPERA AT CHILMARK

Opera at Chilmark began when David Davies and his son, Ben, visited the harpsichord workshop of Peter Smalley in Broad Chalke. He had a large barn which they made into a little opera house to perform Dido and Aeneas. There was one performance, a sell-out, and we were encouraged to think of an annual show. For various reasons it was necessary to find a new home after a couple of years, and with great generosity Henry and Elizabeth Pelham invited us to move to Chilmark; it would be difficult to find a more attractive and suitable location anywhere.

Ben directed three of our operas, and Jan Koene has been in charge of the remainder. Jan and David first produced opera together as Blackheath Opera Workshop in 1977 – starting with *Dido* of course. The real heart of the company is the chorus who come back year by year. They started by sitting at the back, off-stage with scores in hand, but have grown and grown in confidence and are now a completely integrated part of each production. And it has been a great pleasure to work with young professional singers and a high-quality orchestra.

As to repertoire, as the production is put together in less than a week, we inevitably emphasise small scale operas; two have been first performances, and several others have been rarities. Fortunately our audiences have been loyal and willing to come to the things they have never heard of!

We have tried very hard to keep ticket prices modest, and this year we have been helped in this with a very happy collaboration with Cantata Dramatica. Even so, the collection boxes will again be outside as we need all the help we can get to balance the books. If you can contribute, thank you very much!

Opera at Chilmark previous productions have included:

2004	Dido and Aeneas (Purcell) at Ebblesway Courtyard, Broad Chalke
2005	Acis and Galatea (Handel)
2006	The Night Bell (Donizetti) at Chilmark
2007	Orpheus and Euridice (Gluck)
2008	The Fairy Queen (Purcell)
2009	The Dragon of Wantley (Lampe) and on tour in Yorkshire
2010	L'Orfeo (Monteverdi)
2011	King Arthur (Purcell)
2012	The Judgement of Paris (Eccles)
2013	Wild Edric (Mander) - first performance
2014	Acis and Galatea (Handel)
2015	La Clemenza di Tito (Mozart)

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE: BEOWULF'S THEME (INSTRUMENTAL)

SCENE TWO: THE MINSTREL SETS THE SCENE

THE MINSTREL In the land of the Danes there lives a great king
Hrothgar by name, in his time first in fame,
But old now, though wise, and attended by sorrow.
For his hall is besieged by a fiend of great horror.
The fiend is named Grendel, ugly and fierce,
A troll that rips arms off and eats them – what's worse?
Foul of breath and foul of nature
Grendel's got Hrothgar's hall under torture.
Thralls flee, thanes die, and Queen Wealthumb,
(Noble of birth and noble of bearing),
Weeps at the fall of the old king's standing.
A hero we need, a hero indeed
To challenge the brute and tear out the root
Of evil in this green-golden land.

INTERMEZZO:

THE MINSTREL Look there! Far out at the ocean's rim –
A ship! Did I see it? The horizon's dim!
A ship for sure! A ship for this shore!
Speeding landwards on the ocean's bore.

SCENE THREE: THE SEAFARERS' SONG

CHORUS: Strong our sinews, hard our hands,
Swift our ship: Beowulf's band!
Taut our sail, high our prow,
Breasting the waves – Beowulf's crew!
Carving the ocean, slicing the sea,
Called to his mission – Beowulf he!
Beowulf our hero, Beowulf our chief!
Strike hard, oars, bite the ocean's waves,
Shore is in sight, strand just ahead!
Smack through the breakers, strike the prow in the sand,
Swiftest of men: Beowulf's Band!

SCENE FOUR: BEOWULF'S ARRIVAL

MINSTREL Hail, warriors bold! Come ashore and tell your purpose untold.

BEOWULF Beowulf's band we, and a purpose in hand.

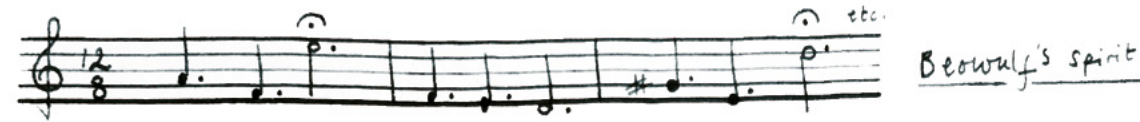
MINSTREL A purpose of peace or a purpose of war?

BEOWULF Our purpose? To drive Grendel the troll from your hall!

MINSTREL Then welcome brave warriors, step forth and step firm,
Your hands on your sword hilts, your hearts strong and true,
Grendel's our terror, Grendel's our foe,
Come see King Hrothgar and his good Queen Wealthumb.

BEOWULF Our thanks to your office, good minstrel, we owe.
So tell the good King of our purpose and so
Peace in his hall and calm in his lands
Will come soon to Daneland from Beowulf's Band.

MINSTREL Brave warriors indeed, your courage is needed.



The troll's foul strength and fierce force be heeded.
Many's the hero been felled by his arm
Many a stout heart quelled by alarm.
So go for him, Beowulf. Let Grendel be ended!

SCENE FIVE: HROTHGAR'S WELCOME

HROTHGAR Welcome, Geats. Welcome, friends overdue long!
Beowulf, your band of brave warriors strong!
Champions we need to kill our foul foe
And rid us from evil, then home you can go.

WEAL. & FREA. Welcome brave Geats! And Beowulf the Famous!
Word of your deeds and your battles has reached us.
All of your strength and courage is needed
The vice of the grip of that monster be heeded.
Bring peace to our hall and gold will be yours.
Drink from my cup from which sweet mead pours!

DRINKING SONG Mead! Mead! Mead! Mead!
Strong of spirit, sweet of savour!
Mead! Mead! Mead! Mead!
Drink of heroes, draught of swordsmen!
Mead! Mead! Mead! Mead!
Stirs the sinews, flames the heart!
Mead! Mead! Mead! Mead!
Drink! Drink! Drink! Drink!
Heroes! Champions! Foes, take heed!

SCENE SIX: UNSERTH'S CHALLENGE

UNSERTH Beowulf, Beowulf, tell me your tale, your bet with Breaca.
Your swim round the world!

BEOWULF Nay, Unserth, not so – my swim 'cross the sea.
But my bet with Breaca was won by me.

UNSERTH Not so, Beowulf! As I heard tell,
Your swim fell well short whilst Breaca's did not.
Are we to trust such a champion or what?

BEOWULF Unserth, be civil. The tale you were told
Was but half truth. Let me unfold
The whole of the story, what happened. After five days long
Breaca struck shore but I carried on
Through strong winds and waves till my strength had all gone.
Held up in the sea by whales of the deep
Some helped me, some pawed me, some pulled me down
Down, down to the depths of the ice black sea
But my sword saved me, a fierce blow struck,
Lungs bursting for air, I swam right back up.
No more sea monsters lurk now in the waves
The lives of many seafarers I've saved.
Enough, Unserth. Your questions were fair.
But the truth of my answers has left you bare!

SCENE SEVEN: FREAWARA'S DANCE

WEALTHOW Look, Beowulf, on all that is fair.
A golden girl with raven hair!
A golden cup in her golden hands
A golden bride for a golden man!
Ingeld, her husband, of the Heathobard clan,

Enemies once; now fast friends to a man!

BEOWULF. Such beauty, such grace brings renown to your hall.
For such a bride I would give my all!
Come, Freawara, fill my cup full,
With mead, with joy, with life, with love!

MINSTREL Golden she is, golden she was
When she went with Ingeld of the Heathobards.
But old wounds were opened and old blood spilled.
By sour old blood the gold was spoiled.
Kinsmen were slain and clansmen killed.
Ingeld's bright love was tarnished with rust,
Freawara's bright dreams were turned into dust.

BEOWULF Hush, Minstrel. Let us live in the present! The future's afar.
Come, Freawara, beautiful child,
Come, Freawara, sit by my side.

FREAWARA Lord Beowulf, the honour is mine indeed
So let me fill your cup with mead.
By your side I will sit, but your time's not come!
I'll take Ingeld the Heathobard to my hearth and my home.

BEOWULF Hail Grace! Hail Beauty! Hail Fair Freawara!

SCENE EIGHT: AND SO TO BED

WEALTHOW My lord, let us sleep now.

HROTHGAR Thanes, new friends, thralls and all.
Rest now. Rest your heads in my hall!

SCENE NINE: GRENDEL'S ATTACK (INSTRUMENTAL)

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE: AFTER THE ATTACK

CHORUS Beowulf won! Grendel's claw,
Ripped from his body, hangs in the hall!

WEALTHOW Calm now thanes, calm now thralls,
Our sorrows are ended, our mead hall defended
By Beowulf who came from the Geats' shore.
Grendel the monster has lost his claw
His arm, his shoulder and now slinks away
To die in his lair, his very last day.
So flagons be filled! Let the mead flow!
Here is my cup filled full for the hero.
Take it, Beowulf, drink deep and be glad
The terror is over. All before was sad
But now we can live and our mead hall will ring
To the sound of the harp and our warriors song!

SCENE TWO: GRENDEL'S MOTHER ATTACKS

MINSTREL Heorot was in uproar. Grendel's dam
Seized her man. Aeschere it was,
Hrothgar's oldest companion.
Off the wall she snatched dead Grendel's hand,
And scuttled off over moorland and fen
To the dark dark pool that was her den.

HROTHGAR No peace. Just grief. Aeschere is dead.
Wise in council. My oldest comrade.
A noble man, all a warrior should be.
Now taken by that second troll
Who lives on moorland, wolf slopes, windswept
Cliffs and misty bogs, somewhere out there
In her dark, dark pool. Beowulf... will you go?

UNSERTH Here, Beowulf! Take Hrunting with you!
My sword, my famous sword. Iron bladed
Patterned, pitted, spattered with battle blood.

BEOWULF Hrothgar, I am ready. But if I die
Look after my band. Send them and my treasure
To the Geat's Lord Hygelac, on my behalf.
Then he will know me for what I really am.
Unserth, be thanked for your good sword Hrunting
With this in my hand there'll be good hunting!

SCENE THREE: THE HUNT

CHORUS Run, run, run! The trail is hot! Fresh blood I see.
Stop, stop! Look! Listen! There, through the trees!
Run, run, run! Faster now, the path is clear. We'll catch her yet!
Quick, quick, quick! Run, run, run now!

MINSTREL Run fast as they can, they cannot catch
The troll. She reaches first the darkm dark pool
And plunges in. Aeschere's head she throws aside.
Grendel's arm she takes with her. Down, down,
The dark water churns. The black waves heave.
Boiling with blood. Red on black. Straightway
Beowulf mailed in steel plunges after, Hrunting

In his hand. Down, down all the day. Serpents
Hiss and strike in vain at his coat of mail.
Down, down to their underwater hall.

SCENE FOUR: BEOWULF FIGHTS GRENDEL'S MOTHER

FOLLOWERS He's gone for good!
He surely drowned!
Nay nay, forget not... he is a fearless swimmer. He'll survive.
He swam the sea for seven days, slew serpents then.
Then let us pray for his return triumphant.
O Freia, steer our champion's course
Strengthen his arm, keep him from harm
Grant him invincible force!
O Woden! Mighty Thor! Lord Jesus!

MINSTREL Still, silent, black, the waters stood.
No sound. No movement. Nothing could
Be told about the struggles down below.
Then bubbles burst upon the surface first.
The waters heaved. The serpents hissed and
Hurried to the side. A mighty shout –
And Beowulf the hero leapt right out!

BEOWULF It's done! It's done! The troll is dead!
The fight is won. Here is Grendel's head!

BAND What happened? Are you hurt? Where's Hrunting?

BEOWULF A fearful fight it was that fiend did fight.
My life she nearly took. Hrunting my sword
Bounced off her. Broke in thousand pieces!
All looked lost. But then my rage took flight,
My battle fury gave me berserker's might.
Round round I threw her, twisting, twisting down.
Seized from her wall an old, old sword
And stabbed her. Boiling blood burst
From her body. Burnt up the sword!
I lived. I swam with Grendel's head
Up through the waters. All is said!

BAND So gods be praised! Freia! Woden! Lord Jesus! Mighty Thor!
Beowulf lives, he's back! The world will be in awe!

SCENE FIVE: MARCHING SONG OF THE BAND

CHORUS To Hrothgar's hall we come, our hero's duty done.
The monster's ruddy gore is spattered on the floor.
The trolls have been defeated, their evil's been deleted.
March! March! March! March!
March, warriors, to the mead hall,
Where women sing your praises
And Queens give gold to all!
March! March! March! March!

SCENE SIX: CELEBRATION OF THE HERO AND SAD FAREWELLS

MINSTREL Beowulf swung Grendel's head by the hair.
All those in the mead hall stopped and stared.

BEOWULF See Grendel's head. His mother is dead.
How we fought in the lake for Heorot's sake!
Hrunting was broken, shivered in shards,
This old sword's my token, to be sung by bards,

ACT THREE

SCENE ONE: HYGD, QUEEN OF THE GEATS

HYGD The years pass. Time passes. Time passed.
Time was when my lord was Hygelac, Hrethel's son.
Time was when he ruled the Geats till
In blood battle with the Frisians he fell.
Struck down by swords, one by one,
Beowulf alone escaped by swimming,
By strength, by stamina, knowledge of the sea
Home he came. I offered him the throne.
My sons were strong but not as strong as he.
For thirty years he's been my lord,
Defending our people, my hall, with sword.
Now old, the years dim his strength
Yet he still stretches his hero life's length.

MINSTREL My lady, a serf comes here with a sorry tale!
Grovels, casts about him and flails!
Trying to hide his act of gross folly!
He has stirred the old enemy. All he
Did was to steal a cup, a golden cup
From a lair, but he woke the dragon up!

HYGD What dragon ? Some snake perhaps! Some serpent maybe!
But no threat to our kingdom surely? Say he
Is not dangerous ! Not a dragon to me!

MINSTREL Lady, it rages, spews fire too
Flies round the fields burning a few
Here and there. Flame-throwing jaws
And smoking snout should give us cause
To curse this snivelling serf
Who stole a cup from its hoard and, worse,
Woke it up from a sleep of ages.
Furious, frenzied, fire-spewing it rages.
Our hall is in cinders, the people's hall,
Our land laid waste. Our kingdom falls!

BEOWULF Minstrel, your tale fills my heart with foreboding.
Some law has been broken. Our God is avoiding
His people. We've erred. Strong cause for reflection...
But this dragon is on us. Time now for action!
Smith! Here, come, make me a shield
Forged out of iron to ward off the fire!
Hygd! Bring me my sword, sharp to the touch!
Wiglaf! Stand with me, though you haven't fought much!
Warriors twelve, from old fight, with me!
This dragon we'll slay and come home safely!

SCENE TWO: THE DRAGON AWAKES (INSTRUMENTAL)

SCENE THREE: BEOWULF DEPARTS FOR THE FIGHT

HYGD Beowulf, my lord. Farewell. Take heed!
Your strength's not what it was. You need
The help of Wiglaf here and your warriors twelve
To get close to the cave and then delve
Deep into that cavernous barrow

HROTHGAR Of a story of valour and swordplay fast.
Here, Hrothgar. Please, take it! Peace now at last!

Old I may be and grizzled with age
But hark when I speak. My words are sage.
This man is our hero, befriended by fate,
Came here to save us and by the weight
Of his sword arm, the might of his brain.
Welcome, great hero! And when your time comes
Take your place 'mongst the Geats, be shield of their homes.
Give gifts. Gain glory. Grant God the power.
No pride. No prancing! Your prime too will pass.
Death takes us all in his own time at last,
In bed or in battle. By fire or sword.

WEALTHOW Beowulf, we thank you from our bottom-most hearts.
My sons will remember you down the long years.
Hrothgar my lord is now moved to tears.
And I, the Queen of this mead hall, start
To weep for your going, our brave visitor.
So take these gold armlets, gold collars, gold rings,
And load your ship up with these golden things.
Mountains of treasure. Wealth. Glory. But is it all?
No. Honour is brighter than gold can be.
Wisdom far truer than riches. Let me
Wish you all happiness, love and a bride
To await you when home you ride!

FREAWARA Brave warrior, Beowulf, bold as brass,
Strong as iron, but gentle as grass.
Your image I'll hold in my heart when I wed
My own Lord Ingeld and take him instead.
A heart that's true and a mind that's firm.
An arm that's strong as iron!

BEOWULF My Lord, my Queen, my Princess fair,
Thanes, thralls, and good folk here!
The time has come for me to take home
My band of warriors, our task is done!
Farewell my Lord, farewell my Queen,
This high mead hall no more be seen.
Bend to the shore! To our swift keeled ship!

MINSTREL Loaded with gold and the praises of all
The warriors marched to their ship on the shore.
The watchman watched as he did before.
But Beowulf stopped and from his store
Of gold and armour picked out a sword.

BEOWULF Here, watchman, take it as good memory
Of Beowulf's band from across the sea!

MINSTREL Ship's keel was heaved through the foaming brine.
Her mast was stepped. The sail stretched fine.
Prow surged forward, cutting the waves.
Seafarers rested their oars on the staves.
Home from adventures, home from the sea
Heroes at last for all to see.

With its twisting tunnels and fire blackened walls.
Take heed! Get close! Avoid the harrow
Of its flesh tearing teeth! Oh, I'm so afraid!

BEOWULF Hygd, calm your fears. My sword is long.
My shield made of iron. My arm is still strong!
Maybe I'll kill it with the edge of my blade
Sharp as a razor, cunningly inlaid –
Or shatter his bones? This dragon's end'll
Be crushed in my battle grip just like Grendel!
Warriors, just watch me! My spirit is bold.
I'll either die or fetch out its gold!

SCENE FOUR: BEOWULF FIGHTS THE DRAGON

MINSTREL So Beowulf came to the dragon's barrow
Our hero snorted and let forth a bellow.
The dragon soon heard and stirred in wrath
Stoked up his fires and cleared his path.
Sprang out upon Beowulf standing alone
Spewed fire, spouted flames, sweeping its tail,
Swatting the shield, spurning the sword.

BEOWULF Wiglaf! Warriors! Come help me now!
The flames of this brute are burning me how!

WARRIORS Watch out! Run, run! I'm burnt, on fire! O gods! Save us!

MINSTREL So his warriors fled, running away
In fear to the forest. But Wiglaf did stay.
Young, fearless, strong, a true warrior's son.

WIGLAF Cowards! Conies! Your duty's not done!
God knows a man from a man.
This is the time for a true man to stand
By his lord. Face the flames. Kill the foe.
Beowulf, my Lord, you are not alone!

SCENE FIVE: BEOWULF'S SWORD BREAKS

MINSTREL Naegling snapped! The old sword failed him.
Beowulf's great strength betrayed him.

SCENE SIX: BEOWULF'S DEATH

MINSTREL A third time charged the furious dragon!
Beowulf, swordless, shield-burned, huddled.
Wiglaf, scorched but standing by him, struggled.
Lunged the monster, teeth like harrows –
Beowulf's neck crunched right to the marrow.
Poison flowed in. The pain was intense.
Beowulf had no more defence.
But Wiglaf plunged his sword in its belly
Up to the hilt in that foe most hated.
Stricken now, the dragon sank slowly
While the flames from his throat abated.
Beowulf, still living, drew out his small knife
And took from the brute his fire-breathing life.
Two kinsmen, two heroes, in death's dark vale
Stood firm together and so prevailed.
But the poison still dripped from the dragon's jaws,
Dripped into his veins. Beowulf's cause
Was lost from then. The harshest of laws

Spell doom for the victim of poisoned blood.
Beowulf tottered forward, slumped back. The Lord
Of the Geats had reached the end of his road.
As Wiglaf washed the blood-caked hands,
Drew off the helm and sponged the wounds,
Beowulf slid his body down to the ground.

BEOWULF It's over, Wiglaf! Life's glittering treasures
Are fading. For now I must measure
My life in my deeds, not just my pleasures.
No son to succeed me, but my kingdom unsullied
By wars or defeats. Yet, Wiglaf, go hurry!
Bring me some gold, shimmering stones.
Bright, priceless... cheer my burned bones.
Ease my leaving this land that was mine.
Ease my dying . For now it's time.

MINSTREL Wiglaf ran to the cave, heart bursting
With sadness, still hot and still cursing
The coils of the dragon whose hoard
He now plundered, turned with his sword
Old helmets, gold cups, a wonderful banner,
The playthings of giants. He loaded his pannier
And hurried back to his dying Lord.

SCENE SEVEN: BEOWULF'S LAST WORDS

BEOWULF Thank God for these treasures you've brought me just now.
Wiglaf, I've given my life to bring gold to the Geats. See how
You too must serve my people instead,
Protect them all and my good Queen Hygd!
I'm not long for this life. When I'm done, take command.
Lead the Queen and the thanes... set the thralls in hand.
Build tall the pyre for my funeral fires
Let smoke o'er the sea tower higher and higher,
Bright flames scorch up these old bones of mine
And burn in men's minds the end of my line!
A barrow set up o'er looking the sea
On that headland. Let that my memorial be!
Here take this gold collar, gold helm, gold ring.
They are all that is left of your dying king.
Warriors, seafarers, thanes and thralls
When their time comes... I must follow them all.

CHORUS Beowulf! Beowulf! O shame, shame on us! Cowards that we are!

WIGLAF Wasted! Wasted the gold that he gave you!
Your Lord lies dead and you ran away!
So ease your disgrace by lifting the burden
Of your dead king's body to the funeral pyre.

CHORUS Raise him ! Raise him! Raise him high!
Carry our Lord to the funeral pyre!

SCENE EIGHT: BEOWULF'S PASSING

MINSTREL High on the headland his pyre was piled
High on the pyre the hero was laid.
High round the hero helmets and shields.
High round the body his shining mail.

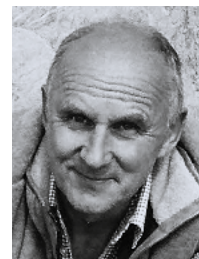
HYGD I weep for my Lord, now turning to ashes.
I mourn for my hall, soon turning to ashes.

CHORUS

I keen for renown and his daring deeds.
Fame, gold, honour, now turning to ashes.

Farewell, great hero!
Swimmer of the salty seas,
Slayer of the great troll Grendel,
Killer of the Geats' dragon!
Gold getter, gold giver,
Hall builder, mead drinker,
The kindest,
The most just,
The most generous,
The most famous hero of our time!
Farewell, great hero. Farewell!

BIOGRAPHIES



NICK PITTS-TUCKER

Librettist

During a long and successful career in banking, Nick found the time to develop an interest in powerful stories from each century of our era. The first was the story of William Carey, self taught educator of early Raj India, which emerged as a community play. The second was put to music and became the dramatic cantata *Perpetua*.

The third is *Cantata Eliensis*, the story of Ely Cathedral in three acts, each put to music by a different young composer. The fourth, *Memoirs of a Snub Nosed Cat*, is being written for radio. Cantata Dramatica has emerged from this series of accidents as a musical force in its own right.



LOUIS MANDER

Composer

Louis Mander, described by Stephen Fry as a 'preposterously talented composer', trained at The Royal College of Music and Birmingham University. He actively works as a composer of opera, for film and ballet. Future performances include his large scale opera *The Life to Come*, with libretto by Stephen Fry, which will be performed in 2017 at the Oslo Opera House. He recently provided the soundtrack for Dutch director, Jan Hendrik Verstraten's film *I am Henry* (Flying Dutchman Films) which will be released later this year.

His chamber opera *Oh, Whistle!* (Tête à Tête 2015) with libretto by Jack Cherry was premiered in August 2015 to great acclaim at RADA Studios.

Recent performances include *Cantata Eliensis*, which was performed in Ely Cathedral in June 2016 in collaboration with Cantata Dramatica who commissioned it. His London-based opera company Belsize Opera will premiere his latest opera, *The Dowager's Oyster*, a Wodehousian French farce at the Arcola Theatre as part of the Grimeborn Festival 2016.



THOMAS COLWELL

Beowulf

Thomas Colwell began singing as a chorister at St. Paul's Cathedral. He then trained with Ann Lampard, head of voice at the Jnr Royal Academy of Music, before completing his training under Robert Alderson at the Royal Northern College of Music.

Last year Thomas made his debut with Longborough Festival Opera as Steuermann and chorus in Wagner's *Tristan Und Isolde*. He also sang the roles

of Escamillo with Wedmore Opera and Dancairo in Opera Up Close's *Carmen* in the Soho Theatre, and covered the role of Marcello with ENO in *La bohème*. This year Thomas covered the role of Yamadori in ENO's *Madame Butterfly* and returned to Longborough for their production of *Jenufa*.

Thomas is currently studying with Gary Coward and is represented by John Owen of Owen White Management.



STEVEN EAST
King Hrothgar

After working as a history teacher in Albania, an English teacher in Greece and for 10 years as a sub-editor in the gushing maelstrom of women's glossy magazines in London, Steven East began carousing with the London Bulgarian Choir in 2005. Having thus discovered a taste for singing, in 2010 he downed quill and parchment to study as a Robinson Hearn Scholar at Trinity Laban.

Since then Steven has played numerous roles including Prince Gremin, Dulcamara, Capellio, Zaretski, Tonio, Gregorio, The Pirate King and Doctors

Bartolo and Grenvil. He sang the title role in a new musical, *Dracula*, and has appeared with the English National Opera chorus in seven productions since 2012.

This year he has played Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*, The King's Head Theatre), Banquo (*Macbeth*, Kentish Opera) and Basilio (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, PopUp Opera, to be reprised in the Autumn). Much of July saw him living it up at Christopher Wren's Winslow Hall, playing Leporello in Don Giovanni. Steven studies with Neil Baker.



CASPAR LLOYD JAMES
The Minstrel

Caspar Lloyd James completed his post-graduate studies at Trinity Laban and studies with Alison Wells.

Highlights of his performances at Trinity Laban include the title roles of Handel's *Imeneo*, Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*. In this year's summer opera he took the role of the Surgeon in the première of newly commissioned opera *Banished* by Stephen McNeff. In 2016 he took the role of Starveling in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He has performed the role of the Sergeant in

La bohème for Dulwich Opera Company and for the Celebrate Voice festival in Salisbury. He has also performed the role of Figaro in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* and understudied Guglielmo in Mozart's *Così fan tutte* with Dulwich Opera. For Opera Dinamica he performed the role of Lord Dunmow in Lennox Berkley's *A Dinner Engagement*.

In addition Caspar has over 10 years of eclectic performing experience from European to African folk traditions, including a year studying and performing in the Caribbean.

FELIX HAUSER
Unserth / Wiglaf

Felix Heuser received his education at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg with Mark Tucker. During his studies he regularly worked with the HfMT-Orchestra and in numerous opera productions with the Hamburger Symphoniker, in roles including Presto in Poulenc's *Les Mamelles de Tirésias*. While at college he also sung under the batons of Rolf Beck, Ulrich Windfuhr, Christoph Eschenbach and Eric Whitacre.

After graduation, Felix studied in London with Peter Knapp and Laura

Sarti. He regularly performs in Germany and abroad and highlights include an appearance as soloist in the Vielklang Festival in South Germany, various concerts during Austria's largest medieval festival, and a tour of Bach's *St Matthew Passion* through northern Italy, including Venice. Felix created the role of Sergeant Aubuchon in the one-act opera *The Rue Morgue* (Louis Mander / E A Poe) for a showcase for OperaUpClose in the Flourish Competition finals in November 2015.



HANNAH HAUPT
Freawara

Hannah Haupt is thirteen and a student at South Wiltshire Grammar School in Salisbury. She is a former student of Salisbury Cathedral School, where she was a music and academic scholar. Hannah is working towards Grade 7 Piano and Grade 6 Flute and Voice.

This is Hannah's second year singing with Opera at Chilmark. She also sings

with Hindon and Chilmark Festival Choir, and is a member of SWGS's A Capella and Senior Choir. Recently, she has taken part in a one day Choral Workshop at Trinity College Cambridge, lead by Stephen Cleobury. Hannah has also secured a part in the chorus of the forthcoming Salisbury Celebrate Voice's performance of *Tosca*.



JILLIAN BAIN CHRISTIE
Queen Wealthow

Jillian Bain Christie is a Scottish artist and soprano based in Paris. A graduate of Glasgow School of Art, she has recently started exhibiting work again after a hiatus while pursuing postgraduate studies at Trinity Laban. There her specialist areas of interest concentrated on both Scandinavian song and research into the correlation between visual art and music. Jillian continues to study privately with Joan Rodgers.

Recent highlights include the release of a solo album of songs by Robert Burns *Ae Spark o' Nature's Fire*, representing

Trinity Laban in the 2015 ELIA NOW Festival, Amsterdam, premiering the soprano solo in Paul Mealor's 1st Symphony, with James Jordan and the Orchestra of Scottish Opera and Stockhausen's *Stimmung* at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southbank Centre, with Gregory Rose.

Forthcoming projects include a solo exhibition at the Barbican Library, Morten Lauridsen's *Cuatro Canciones* with Spectrum Ensemble and artists' residencies on the Åland Islands, and as part of JAM on the Marsh Festival 2017.



FAE EVELYN
Queen Hygd

Fae Evelyn was born in Durban, South Africa. She studied at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the Royal Northern College of Music. She has just spent the Summer as a member of the Opera Holland Park Chorus for the 2016 season.

Operatic highlights of the last year include performing Countess in OperaUpClose's critically acclaimed *Marriage of Figaro*, and Ilse in Noah

Mosley's modern opera *July 1944* with Helios Opera. She has also performed with the Grange Park Opera Ensemble.

Fae performs extensively as a soloist in concerts and oratorio; recent credits include the Soundscapes of South Africa concert series, A Viennese Strauss Gala, and Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* with the Bury Bach Choir.

JAN KOENE (director) was until recently Head of Performing Arts at a College of Further Education and works in adult education delivering management training programme to help the unemployed. He studied directing in London and Moscow and has directed over 90 productions. He has worked as an actor, performing in such varied spaces as the Barbican Theatre, Welsh Miners' Galas and the car deck of a Sealink car ferry. He writes or adapts most of the shows he directs and often, as here, designs and builds sets.

DAVID DAVIES (producer and musical direction) plays harpsichord continuo for Salisbury Baroque, is organist at Chilmark and Barford, directs Salisbury U3A Choir and Cross Keys Orchestra and founded (with his son, Ben) Opera at Chilmark. He first produced opera with Jan Koene in London in 1977. For Winterbourne Opera he was musical director for *Semele* and *Acis and Galatea* (Handel), *Figaro* (Mozart), *Elixir of Love* (Donizetti) and *Dido and Aeneas* (Purcell).

ALISON TOWNLEY (leader) began her performing career in London, working for the BBC. Subsequent freelance work (London Sinfonietta, London Mozart Players, Orchestra of St. Johns, Royal Philharmonic, Monteverdi Orchestra) led to an interest in period instrument performance. She was a member of John Eliot Gardiner's English Baroque Soloists for many years, and has been primarily involved in this field ever since. She now lives in the West Country, plays chamber music and teaches privately.

REBECCA SEYMOUR (co-director and choreographer) is a dance specialist with over 30 years experience, working with all ages and abilities. She has a BEd Hons degree in Human Movement Studies from Bedford College and an MA in Dance Studies from Laban. After 7 years as Head of Dance at Colchester VI Form College, Rebecca worked as Education Officer at The Place, in London, including running Outreach programmes for Richard Alston Dance Company and Shobana Jeyasingh Dance Company. She also lectured dance history to undergraduate students at London Contemporary Dance School. She is currently Co ordinator of the Elevate programme at Salisbury District Hospital, leads Mind the Gap, a workshop and performance group for 60+ at Salisbury Playhouse and teaches a weekly dance for Parkinson's class in Salisbury.

HAYLEY SPICER (costumes) studied Theatre Design at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, and Fashion Design at the University of Gloucestershire. She recently designed *Parallel* and *Mrs Warren's Profession* for Salisbury Playhouse, and has designed a number of other shows for the Playhouse including *The Owl and The Pussycat*, *Women Of Troy*, *The Little Mermaid* and *Our Country's Good*. She has also worked as a Touring Wardrobe Manager on *Jamaica Inn* and *Northanger Abbey* for the Playhouse's touring productions. Hayley has designed extensively for the Everyman Theatre, Cheltenham and for Oxford Touring Theatre Company. This is Hayley's sixth year at Chilmark.

ABOUT CANTATA DRAMATICA

Cantata Dramatica is a not-for-profit organisation (charity registration number 1158027) whose objective is to commission and promote new music.

Our first commission, *Perpetua*, with music by Nick Bicât, was premiered at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford in November 2012. Since then we have commissioned at least one work per year from seven different composers and we have organised an initial private workshop/preview with an invited audience followed by one or more public performances for most of these works, with more in the pipeline. Almost all of our commissions tell a story and are designed to be understood by the listener at first hearing. *Beowulfis* our first fully staged opera.

We work with a mix of professional and amateur performers at many different levels and we aim to provide a rewarding creative experience for all.

Chairman	Nick Pitts-Tucker
Treasurer	Julia Stutfield
Secretary	Virginia Goode

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Performances of new and unusual works call for a high degree of creative collaboration between composer, conductor, singers, instrumentalists and our production team. We would not be able to embark on such projects without the generous support (financial and otherwise) of our Sponsors, Friends, and enthusiasts, including our amateur performers, to all of whom we are immensely grateful.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Our goal is not just to commission accessible, performable new music dramas, but to get them performed more widely in front of diverse audiences.

Cantata Dramatica welcomes your support in achieving this, whether by making introductions, building our contacts with venues, performers and Directors of Music, by fundraising, or by enthusiastic attendance at our performances and spreading the word. For more information have a look at the Supporters section of our website, www.cantatadramatica.com, or contact us at cantatadramatica@gmail.com.

1001 NIGHTS

Working title

A new opera by Danyal Dhondy based on the Arabian Nights, commissioned by Cantata Dramatica.

LEIGHTON HOUSE

FRIDAY 10TH & SATURDAY 11TH FEBRUARY 2017

CANTATA CUTHBERTI

A cantata based on the life of St Cuthbert, founder of Durham Cathedral and one of the most important medieval saints of northern England.

DURHAM CATHEDRAL

MARCH 2018

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