



Cumberland Lodge
exchanging views, inspiring minds

**CANTATA
DRAMATICA**

presents

CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS

A newly commissioned cantata by

DANYAL DHONDY

JAMES MORLEY POTTER

Conductor

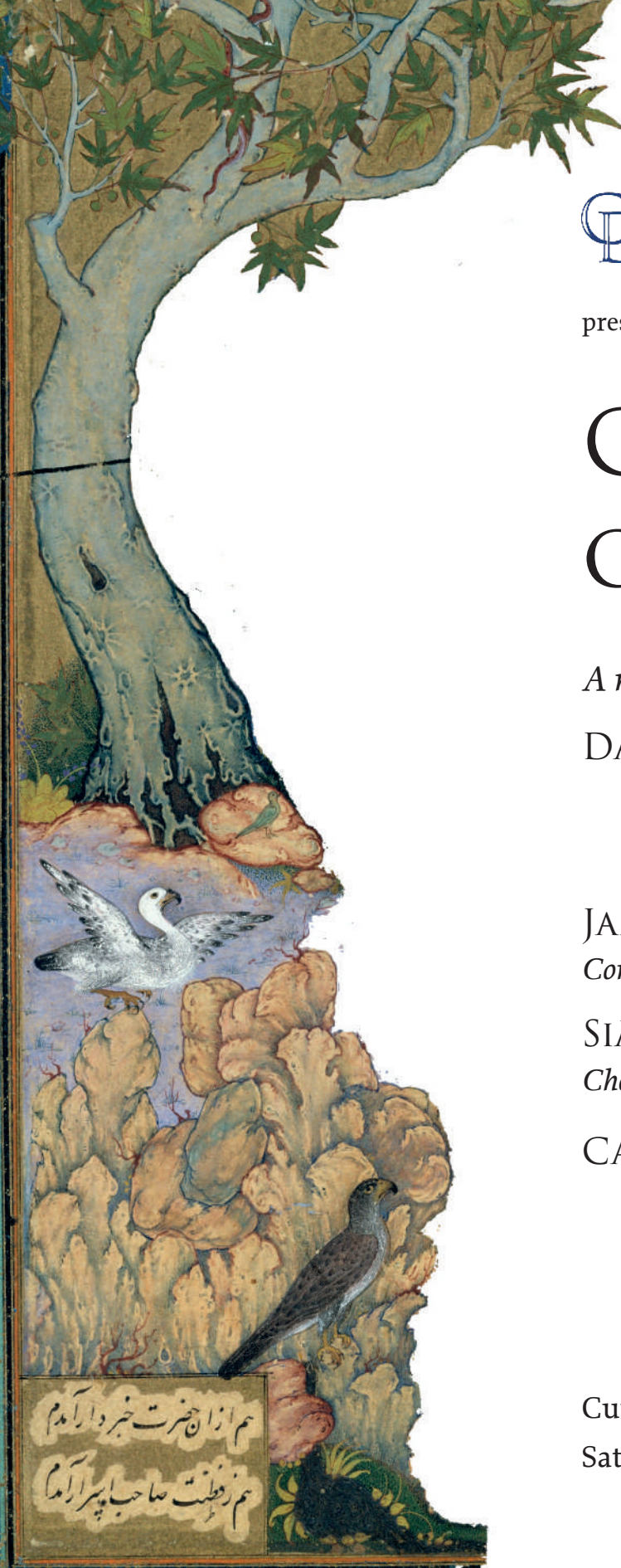
SIÂN HOPKINS

Choreographer

CANTATA DRAMATICA SOLOISTS

Cumberland Lodge

Saturday 12 September 2020, 5.30pm



م از ان حضرت خبر دار آدم
م ز طقت صاحب پسر آدم

ABOUT CUMBERLAND LODGE



Cumberland Lodge is a registered charity, based in a 17th-century former royal residence in the heart of Windsor Great Park. Its intergenerational, multi-sector conferences, panel discussions and webinars empower people, through dialogue and debate, to tackle the causes and effects of social division.

Cumberland Lodge also runs a series of renowned programmes that support and equip students and young people to become future leaders and change-makers. These include: scholarships and personal development opportunities for PhD students, an Emerging International Leaders programme and Christmas conference for international students, Knowledge Cafes in schools, and study retreats for thousands of students from universities across the UK, each year.

The charity also offers a range of cultural and educational events for the local community, with support from a group of dedicated volunteers. These include guided tours, literary retreats and seminars, recitals, art exhibitions and public lectures.

The educational foundation at Cumberland Lodge was established in 1947, with the support of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth (The Queen Mother), and today its Patron is Her Majesty The Queen. The charitable work of Cumberland Lodge is supported by the individuals and organisations who book its stunning rooms and facilities for their own conferences, meetings, courses and special events.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, due to restrictions on events and gatherings, Cumberland Lodge has lost its main source of income. As yet, the charity has been unable to reopen to larger visiting groups for conferences and residential retreats. It has continued to tackle pressing issues facing society through the publication of two timely reports and an enlightening series of online discussions, through its Dialogue & Debate webinars. The charity has also been working closely with the Crown Estate and the Royal Chapel of All Saints to support its neighbours in and around the Great Park.

All proceeds from tonight's performance will help to support the work of Cumberland Lodge in promoting progress towards more peaceful, open and inclusive societies.

You can find out more at: cumberlandlodge.ac.uk

CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS

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There is no interval. Please turn your mobile phone off during the performance.

THE PERFORMERS

JAMES MORLEY POTTER CONDUCTOR

PETER CHAMPNESS NARRATOR *

ESTHER MALLET SWAN, MOTH/CANDLE

Soprano

LUCY COX HOOPOE, ROSE

Soprano

AMY LYDDON NIGHTINGALE

Mezzo Soprano

FREYA JACKLIN-EDWARD CROW

Mezzo Soprano

WILLIAM BLAKE PEACOCK, ROSE

Tenor

BENJAMIIN DURRANT OWL, MOTH/CANDLE

Tenor

DANIEL TATE MASTER

Baritone

SAMUEL (P) MITCHELL FALCON

Baritone

SIÂN HOPKINS CHOREOGRAPHER AND DANCER

SARAH SULEMANJI DANCER

BETH CLARKE DANCER

SAMUEL (M) MITCHELL KEYBOARD

WILLIAM BALL OBOE/COR ANGLAIS

RIHAB AZAR OUD

JOLEY CRAGG TABLA

SARAH WALSH VIOLIN

* *speaking part*

INTRODUCTION

Cantata Dramatica has adapted this famous poem by Farid ud din Attar of Nishapur for open air performance as a dramatic cantata. The script by Nick Pitts-Tucker draws on some great translations of the poem, and of the '1001 Nights', in which many of the 'bird songs' are found. To enhance the meditative nature of the performance, we have introduced dancers, who use improvisation to convey the emotional and spiritual message of this great Sufi poem.

THE STORY

A Sufi Master puts about a Question. "Why was Adam driven from the Garden?" Birds of all types assemble for a conference to try to discover the answer. To begin with they simply jostle for position, preening and displaying, each trapped in its own personality and unable to see the bigger picture. Finally the little Hoopoe comes forward. Under her guidance, and that of the Master, the birds start to respond individually and eventually to listen. Three Parables guide the birds to a more thoughtful way to see the world. They begin to get it, and finally come together in an ensemble that celebrates the finding of Wisdom.

THE MUSIC

Danyal Dhondy writes:

When first reading the texts, I was struck by their vivid characterisations, which remain startlingly relevant even in this very different time and cultural context. Rather than a set of ornithological clichés, the 'bird songs' seem really to be cyphers for something more profound: a meditation on the human condition, told as a set of intimate character studies. Setting them to music was made easier through consideration of the metaphorical person that the bird refers to – and indeed, through portraying some real people of my acquaintance who could be said to embody similar characteristics.

The Master's three songs (nos. 4, 9 and 11) are something different: their texts contain the piece's key philosophical ideas, and pose questions which invite engagement from the other singers and from the audience. So they inherently have a more dramatic musical function than the other songs.

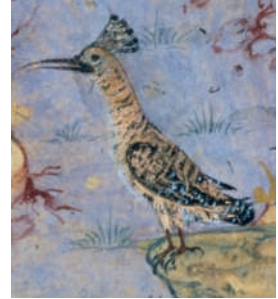
The ensemble of five instruments is used sparingly – typically with one featured prominently in each song, and an accompanimental role (if any) for the others. The Master's songs have a prominent role for the oud, and there are just a few key dramatic moments where the whole ensemble is featured.

The songs are interspersed with three instrumental ragas which are not composed but rather improvised by the musicians, within a loose framework drawn from South Asian musical traditions. They are designed as moments for spiritual contemplation and reflection, as one would find in a typical Sufi performance.

THE SONGS

THE SONG OF THE HOOPOE

When I came out of Saba with a love note for the golden king
A love note from the queen of long blue eyes,
Suleiman said to me, 'O Hoopoe, you have brought
News which has set my heart to dancing!'
So he blessed me and set a crown on my head. I wear it still.
Suleiman taught me wisdom. Even now, after ages past,
I go apart and say over the lessons of Suleiman.
O Hoopoe, if conscience had good understanding,
She would hear glad tidings.



THE SONG OF THE CROW

Dressed all in black, with harsh untuneful cries
I trouble Joy and make Delight to writhe.
When I see Love, I croak, foretell it's Doom,
Cast shadows. Blight Brightness. With my Gloom.
If you try to blame me for such things
Just stop! Consider who, if any, contentment brings.



Wear a Black Cloak? No, Pleasure's your Goal.
Fool! Blinded by Pleasure, you cannot see the Whole.
This Caravan sets out high hearted, you see,
With Hope. In Expectation. All is Vanity!
My shadow blights. Its colour's Black. Treasures rust
When my shadow falls on men and sours their trust.

All men are deaf. However loud I caw,
They all flounder. They never reach the shore!

THE SONG OF THE SWAN

Mistress of my Desires, I cruise the skies,
The waters and meadows equally.
Calm, confident, my lily bended neck I show.



Mistress of mysteries, of waters and green
Dim glinting drifts of treasures submarine.
I sail myself. With adventure riches grow.
The timorous shore waders stay-at-home
Desiring Pearls, just net the bitter foam.!

THE SONG OF THE OWL

They call me Wisdom's fowl, I hear
But is there Wisdom anywhere?
Wisdom, Peace, Calm and Happiness
All these can be found in Loneliness.

I have no Friend. I thank my God.
In the old walls of my abode
I live. My soul? I tend my soul
In Trees. On Walls. In lonely Holes.

Nought's to be feared and nought enjoyed
In a Void that spins on a Void.
Dark question! Answer darkly then.
Such things are too dark to explain.

They call me Wisdom's Fowl, I hear.
But is there Wisdom anywhere?



THE SONG OF THE FALCON



That I am sombre and spare of words
is very well known among the birds.
The rule of silence is my profession.
My sole virtue is discretion.

When I am snared, I remain discreet.
I give no sign of defeat.
You will not see my head downcast,
or my hooded eyes weep for what's past.

Bit by bit my master yearns for me.
Fears lest my reserve shall be
loss of love. He blinds me with this hood.
Koran says, 'To veil the eyes is good'.

He ties my tongue down to my underbeak,
Koran says 'Tis wisdom not to speak'.
Stops my freedom with a silken thread,
'Walk not in pride', says Koran again.



So wisdom ripens in my hooded night.
Kings become servants.
Royal hands cast up my wings to beat.
I spurn their hands beneath my soaring feet.



THE SONG OF THE PEACOCK

The Creator of the World made me.
This glory, beauty, that you see
Should not inspire jealousy.
I too dwelt once in Paradise.
I too was conned, took the Snake's advice,
Became his friend and strutted round the place.
I was banished in disgrace.
Now all I want is for that blessed day
When I will show you the way,
Back to Paradise. The Master is too hard!
He loves to riddle us at every yard.
My thousand eyes are fixed upon this land.
All else is hard to understand!



THE SONG OF THE NIGHTINGALE

Love. Love. The secrets of love are no secrets to me
When Love speaks in my Soul my Voice replies
In riffs and trills and mellifluous sighs.
What is my Love? Whatever shall it be?
My Love is for the red red rose.
If she should disappear,
This Nightingale would never stir,
Nor sing, nor pour such silken notes.
I am so drowned in Love! I cannot find
One thought of Being in my mind.
My love is here. The questions of the Master
Do nothing for me, nor do they help me move on past her.



THE SONG OF THE ROSE

My time is shorter than the nightingale's, between winter and summer.
Hasten to play with me. Time is a sword.
My breath is balm. I am the colour of love.
I quiver in the hand of the girl that plucks me.
Don't hold me long. The nightingale calls.
Thorns burst out of my stems like steel arrows .
Men hurry me along, burn my heart, collect my tears.
I feel fire. My spirit melts. Sweet sweat returns my pain.



My body goes but my soul remains.
The wise do not regret my little time in the garden
But lovers, silly pretty lovers would have me there
for ever.

THE SONG OF THE MOTH AND THE CANDLE

I am the lover whose love burns up his heart
Love's law for me is to perish of desire, to be consumed by fire.
The Candle's kisses tear the tissue of my wings
But listen to the song the Candle sings
I suffer too. The flame loves me ,as I love you.
As I love you.
The flame sighs and burns me up. The flame drinks and melts the cup.
By fire it was I came away from where I and honey loitered yesterday
To shed my life, to waste away, to weep hot tears,
To jet my little hour to light the years.
Then Fire burst out to Candle and Me

You drank your death. Eternity was in it.
But have we not lived all living in a minute?



THE SONG OF THE HOOPOE

When I came up out of Saba with a love note for the
golden king

A love note from the queen of long blue eyes,
Suleiman said to me, 'O Hoopoe ,you have brought
News which has set my heart to dancing.'

So he blessed me and set a crown on my head. I wear it still.

Suleiman taught me wisdom. Even now, after ages past,
I go apart and say over the lessons of Suleiman.

O Hoopoe, if conscience had good understanding she would hear glad
tidings.

If the soul was sleepless, she would take light from the stars.

If the body was pure, the eyes would see love.

If a man put off the cloak of pride and walked naked with God
He would have no evil thoughts.

If a man put off that cloak, he would see the health of the soul
Poised in the balance.

He would cool himself with the fan of God

He would possess the cherry tree of refuge, the plum tree of righteousness.

His soul would be a mortar of patience, a sieve of humility.

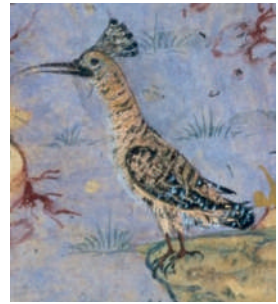
And after a night awake, he would walk with the friend alone at dawn.

O Hoopoe, who sees no portent in the creaking of a door,

In the buzz of flies, in the murmur of insects in the dust,

That man will not see the mist walking the light of mirage, the colours of
the sea fog;

For there is no wisdom in that man.



BIOGRAPHIES



DANYAL DHONDY

Composer

Danyal Dhondy composes and arranges music for live performance, film, and theatre.

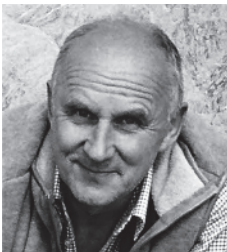
With recent commissions from Making Music, Orchestras for All, London Schools Symphony Orchestra, Theater Bielefeld, Kensington Chamber Orchestra, Galaksen Theatre and Leeds International Piano Competition, Danyal's music is frequently performed across the UK and further afield.

His critically-acclaimed opera reductions (reduced orchestrations suitable for small-scale or touring productions) have been performed in several languages and countries,

and his string arrangements feature on recordings of bands and songwriters, including Sam Lee's Mercury-nominated album 'Ground of its Own'. He is composer-in-residence at Orchestras for All, and an associate artist at Tara Arts.

He was nominated for a British Composer award in 2015 and an Arts Foundation Award in Opera Composition in 2010.

Danyal's opera *Shahrazad*, his first commission from Cantata Dramatica, with libretto by Nick Pitts-Tucker drawn from the '1001 Nights', was premiered in the appropriately oriental setting of Leighton House Museum, Kensington in 2017.



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 was *Cantata Eliensis*, the story of Ely Cathedral in three acts, each put to music by a different young composer.

Since then Nick has also written librettos for two chamber operas (*Beowulf* and *Shahrazad*) and collaborated with Tony Bicat on another (*Red Dragon, White Dragon*).

A further collaboration with Tony Bicat in 2016 resulted in *Akathistos*, premiered in London in Jan 2019 and a chance approach from Charlie Rozier resulted in their collaboration on the *Life of Cuthbert*, premiered in Durham Cathedral in the same year.



JAMES MORLEY POTTER

Conductor

James is a conductor and writer based in London. Currently, he holds positions including Music Director of Wokingham Choral Society, Director of Jubilate Chamber Choir, and Director of Cathedral Singers at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford. He is also Chapel Music Advisor to Hertford College, Oxford, where he mentors the undergraduate organ scholars.

A keen proponent of new and under-explored music, he has premiered works by Nick Bicat, Solfa Carlile, Sarah MacDonald, and others, run composition competitions, and is

currently embarked on a major new commissioning project for Christ Church. A recording, of music by the Restoration-era polymath Henry Aldrich, was released by Convivium Records in 2019.

James studied at The Queen's College, University of Oxford, and went on to study conducting with Paul Brough. He holds diplomas in organ and choral direction from the Royal College of Organists, the latter as winner of the John Brook (IAO) Memorial Prize.



SIÂN HOPKINS

Choreographer

Siân holds a First-Class Honours degree in Dance Performance and an MA with Distinction in Dance Performance with Specialisation in Ritual from Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance. Since graduating, she has had the pleasure of working with a variety of companies, independent artists and projects both near and far. The most inspirational time she spent dancing was in cathedrals and sacred sites with Moving Visions Dance Theatre, seeking the numinous and exploring meaning in the arts. This work led to pursuing a career in dance education and becoming Research Assistant to Dr Ross McKim as well as Principal Artist and Rehearsal Director for the company. Siân has taught at dance institutions around the UK as well as

guest teaching in Japan, Singapore, Vietnam and Canada. Currently a Lecturer at Middlesex University, she has restaged iconic works and choreographed for graduation showcases. Choreographic commissions include various site-specific and cathedral based projects, Cantata Dramatica's choral dramatisations and collaborative screendance productions. Siân co-founded Kamavera Dance Theatre with musician and composer Tom Kirkpatrick in 2019, to engage in collaborative creativity and expression through screendance and live performance. The themes explored through the company's work aim to inspire curiosity and reflection, going hand in hand with the belief that dance enables us to become more empathetic, open and generous human beings.



PETER CHAMPNESS

Narrator

Peter has been working with Cantata Dramatica since its foundation. He was Director and Designer of the first performance of Nick Bicat's *Perpetua* in 2012 and continues to be involved in a wide range of creative capacities. He has been part of the broadcast and entertainment world for over thirty years. After twelve years on the BBC staff, working as Director and Producer across a variety of television

programmes, ranging from social documentary to historical drama, he went freelance in order to avoid becoming an Executive Producer, which would have meant wearing a suit and going to meetings. He now divides his time between the commercial world, making films for companies which some would regard as household names, and developing projects which stretch the creative elastic.



LUCY COX

Soprano

Lucy read Music at Oxford, and completed a masters at the Schola Cantorum in Basel, Switzerland. She is a 2019-20 Brighton Early Music Festival Young Artist, and a finalist in the 2020 John Kerr Award for English Song. Solo performances this year included singing live on BBC Radio 3 with lutenist David Miller, playing the role of Felicitas in Cantata Dramatica's production

of Nick Bicat's *Perpetua*, appearing with the Monteverdi String Band at LSO St Luke's in London, and giving a recital at St George's Bristol with the Villiers Quartet. Forthcoming work includes a tour to Switzerland with the Marian Consort, and performances of a Beethoven celebration with the Rundfunkchor in Berlin. Lucy studies in London with Gary Coward.



ESTHER MALLET

Soprano

Soprano Esther Mallett recently graduated from The Guildhall School of Music and Drama where her studies were supported by a scholarship and the VEC Acorn Trust. Prior to this she trained with English National Opera on their Opera Works programme. She also holds an undergraduate degree in Music from Oxford University. Whilst at the GSMD, Esther was selected by Graham

Johnson for his *Song Guild*, and made her professional debuts with West Green House Opera and the Tête-à-Tête festival. She also coached contemporary repertoire extensively with Jane Manning, Lana Bode and Judith Weir. Upcoming operatic roles include Georgette *La Rondine* (West Green House Opera) and Arline *The Bohemian Girl* (Kensington Opera). For more, please see www.esthermallett.com.



FREYA JACKLIN-EDWARD

Mezzo Soprano

Freya studied at Guildhall School of Music and Drama, graduating with MA and MMus in Vocal Performance (distinction). She regularly performs with the BBC Singers, London Voices, Ex Cathedra, RSVP Voices, Philharmonia Voices, Hanover Band and Chamber Choir of London. Career highlights so far include Stockhausen's *Mittwoch aus Licht* directed by Graham Vick, singing on

film soundtracks (including Marvel films, Disney, Fantastic Beasts, The Hobbit and the Hunger Games series) and she has performed solo at the Wigmore Hall twice. Recently she has been performing the roles of Hansel (*Hansel and Gretel*), Principessa (*Suor Angelica*), and 2nd Lady (*Magic Flute*), as well as *Sea Pictures* (Elgar) and the Mezzo Soprano solos in Verdi's *Requiem* at Ely Cathedral.



AMY LYDDON

Mezzo Soprano

A 'warmly expressive' mezzo-soprano (The Guardian), Amy graduated with first-class honours in Linguistics with French and Spanish from Trinity College, Cambridge before studying at the Royal College of Music as an Award Holder and H R Taylor Trust Scholar. Solo oratorio engagements include concerts with the Academy of Ancient Music, Dunedin Consort and London Mozart Players in venues such as

Wigmore Hall, Cadogan Hall and Palau de la Música València. An Opera Prelude Young Artist and semi-finalist of the National Mozart Singing Competition 2019, opera engagements include Pastuchyna/*Jenufa* for Grange Park Opera, Nicklausse (cover)/*The Tales of Hoffmann* for English Touring Opera, Meg Page (cover)/*Falstaff* for The Grange Festival, and Dorabella/*Così fan tutte* for Devon Opera at Dartington Hall.



WILLIAM BLAKE

Tenor

William was born in London and works in both Opera and Oratorio. Last season he sang 'Pedrillo' in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Brussels, and 'Hermosa' in Offenbach's *L'île de Tulipatan* for Northern Ireland Opera. Before that he worked at Glyndebourne, highlights including being a 'Servant' in Massenet's *Cendrillon*, the semi-chorus for Brett Dean's *Hamlet* and covering 'Goro' in *Madama Butterfly*. Previously, he studied at the Royal

Academy of Music where he sang 'Aristée/Pluton' in Offenbach's *Orphée aux Enfers*, and 'Oronte' in Handel's *Alcina*. Oratorio engagements have included Handel's *Messiah*, Haydn's *Creation*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and Rossini's *Petite Messe Solenne* as well as the evangelist in Bach's *Johannes-Passion* and *Matthäus-Passion*. William has performed at the Royal Albert Hall, The Queen's Hall, Edinburgh and the Châtelet Theatre.



BENJAMIN DURRANT

Tenor

Benjamin studied at the Royal College of Music with Tim Evans-Jones, graduating with a Masters of Performance degree with Distinction. Formally an Academical Clerk at Magdalen College, Oxford, he is an alumnus of the Britten Pears Young Artist Programme and Garsington Opera's Alvarez Young Artist Programme. Recent operatic engagements include Faust (*Faust*) with Brent Opera, Dandini (*Cendrillon*) with

Bampton Classical Opera, and Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*) with Waterperry Opera Festival. Recent solo concert performances include Bach's *St. John Passion* (Evangelist) at Christ Church Cathedral, Handel's *Messiah* at Stockholm Concert Hall, and Mozart's *Requiem* with Jersey Festival Choir. Benjamin also regularly sings with groups such as The Tallis Scholars, The Cardinal's Musick, and Collegium Vocale Gent.



SAMUEL MITCHELL

Baritone

Samuel is a London-based Baritone, currently completing his postgraduate studies at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music & Dance as the Kathleen Roberts scholar. He was educated at Oundle School where he held a Music scholarship, and Manchester University where he read Music and performed regularly as a pianist and singer. He held lay clerkships at Truro, Ely and Christ Church Cathedrals,

performs regularly at the Tower of London and St Paul's Cathedral, and has joined many leading ensembles such as The Gesualdo Six, The Sixteen, Siglo de Oro, The Erebus Ensemble and Britten Sinfonia Voices. Sam's solo repertoire includes Brahms, Fauré, Mozart and Durufle *Requiem*, Handel *Messiah* and *Saul*, Bach *St Matthew Passion*, *St John Passion* and *Christmas Oratorio*, and Schubert *Winterreise*.



DANIEL TATE

Baritone

It is a pleasure for Daniel to be returning to Cantata Dramatica, having portrayed the titular Northern saint in Solfa Carlile's emotive staged cantata *The Life of Cuthbert* in Durham Cathedral in 2018. Daniel can be heard performing regularly in oratorio, concert and recital across the country. His recital programme of English Song from the time of the First World War was performed in New York, London, and on three separate occasions in

Oxford - with excerpts viewed by more than 25,000 people on Classic FM. Opera roles include the Pope in Philip Glass' *Galileo Galilei*, Smirnov in Walton's *The Bear* and, later this year, the title role in Handel's 'magic' opera *Amadigi*. Daniel enjoys an active career in Oxford and London as a professional choral singer and director. He also teaches singing and music theory at leading schools in Oxford, and established a virtual teaching studio during lockdown.



RIHAB AZAR

Oud

Syrian oud player and music educator, graduate of the Conservatoire of Damascus. Rihab was the first woman oudist to perform accompanied by the Syrian National Orchestra for Arabic Music (2014).

In 2015, she was a recipient of a Chevening scholarship which enabled her to study Music Education

at Master's level at UCL. Arts Council England Recognised her as a musician of "exceptional promise" (2016). Since 2015, Rihab has been performing around the UK, collaborating on several interdisciplinary and cross-genre projects as well as her involvement in social advocacy. Rihab has been featured on multiple occasions on BBC platforms.



WILLIAM BALL

Oboe, Cor Anglais

Since graduating with distinction from the Royal Academy of Music's MA course, where he studied oboe with Celia Nicklin and cor anglais with Sue Bohling, in 2017, William has played regularly with many orchestras in London, including Orpheus Sinfonia and Outcry Ensemble. He is currently on the London Philharmonic Orchestra's Future Firsts Programme and was a member of EUYO 2018, with whom he

performed across Europe on two tours, as well as at Wigmore Hall and the Arc de Triomphe, where the orchestra performed at a ceremony to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War. Together with four contemporary graduates of RAM, he founded the Coriolis Quintet. William previously read Natural Sciences at Clare College, Cambridge, obtaining an MSci in Physics.



JOLEY CRAGG

Tabla

Joley trained at the Royal College of Music, and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Orchestral work includes: Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, London Mozart Players, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, London Contemporary Orchestra, Workers Union Ensemble, London Concert Orchestra, and the Philharmonia (MOT.) In January 2019, Joley premiered Benjamin Oliver's concerto *Changing Up+*

for soloist and ensemble. Joley also has a special interest in Indian music, and recently collaborated on a series of tabla tuition books. Theatre work includes: Shakespeare's *Globe Women Beware Women* (MD), *Love's Labours Lost*, *Swive* and *Romeo and Juliet* (deputy); The National Theatre *Antony and Cleopatra* (deputy MD and percussion), *Mr Gum and the Dancing Bear* : The RSC *Queen Anne* and *Cymbeline* (deputy). Joley also deputised on *Motown the Musical* (Shaftesbury Theatre.)



SAMUEL MITCHELL

Keyboard

Samuel is an Australian pianist and singer based in Oxford. As a pianist, he is a founding member of the contemporary music group, Nonsemble. With the acclaimed septet, he has presented at TEDx, featured twice on the “I Care if You Listen” mixtape, has been played on New York’s WNYC’s “New Sounds” multiple times, and has released four EPs. As a contemporary music specialist, performance highlights include John

Adams’ *Phrygian Gates* at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, the Australian Premiere of Nico Muhly’s *Drones* cycle, and opening the 2019 Extended Play Festival at the City Recital Hall, Sydney. Samuel has a BMus(Hons) and an MPhil in chamber music from the University of Queensland, Australia. His thesis on Benjamin Britten was a recipient of a Dean’s Award for making a substantial contribution to the field of research.



SARAH WALSH

Violin

Sarah graduated from the CIT Cork School of Music with a first-class honours degree in violin performance under the tutelage of Katherine Hunka. She moved to London in 2016 to pursue a Masters degree in Historical Performance at the Royal Academy of Music and was awarded a full scholarship (Christopher Hogwood and Enlightenment scholarships) to study baroque violin with Nicolette Moonen. She has participated in masterclasses

and orchestral projects with Rachel Podger, Margaret Faultless, Ton Koopman, Monica Huggett, Phillipe Herrewewege and Laurence Cummings. As a freelance violinist, Sarah has performed with Sestina, St. James Baroque, Amici Voices, The Bach Players, The Feinstein Ensemble, Musica Poetica and Cork Baroque Orchestra. Recent performances include Amici Voices’ Bach cantata series in Harpenden, Hertfordshire and culture night with the Irish Baroque Orchestra in the City Assembly House, Dublin.

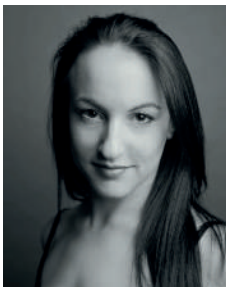


BETH CLARKE

Dancer

Beth was born and grew up in South West London, where she first began her dance training at Whitton Centre Dance Academy. She has recently graduated as Class of 2020 with a first-class honours degree in Dance Performance at Middlesex University. Her interests within contemporary dance have become heavily focused on Graham/Cohan based technique and floorwork/release-based technique.

Through her time at Middlesex she was given the opportunity, under the choreographic direction of Siân Hopkins, to be a part of a number of site-specific projects with Cantata Dramatica including; *Akathistos*, *Andromeda* and *Perpetua*. Beth is due to start her Master’s degree in September as part of Trinity Laban’s Transitions Dance Company, touring internationally with a new trio of works.



SARAH SULEMANJI

Dancer

Sarah is a London-based practitioner and Lecturer at Middlesex University. She completed her professional training at The Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance in New York in 2010, and she continues to explore the embodied lineage and potential of Graham-based training methods as a basis for her teaching practice and research. Holding a First-Class Honours degree in Dance Performance, an MA in Professional Practice Dance Technique Pedagogy, and a Post

Graduate Certificate in Higher Education, Sarah has performed professionally in both the USA and UK. Focusing on inclusive practice and dance as a means of sharing and expressing human experience, Sarah shares her enthusiasm for moving with students of all ages and backgrounds. She has relished opportunities to be involved in dance specific outreach activities, and a range of national and international projects in the wider community.

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, to all of whom we are immensely grateful.

We are especially grateful to Cumberland Lodge for the opportunity to present our first live performance since the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, and for cheerfully taking on the extra administrative load generated by the new and ever-changing regulatory environment for public performances.

Programme Design - Julia Stutfield and Miranda Latham-Jackson

Technical Management - Peter Hart and Ian Williams

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. For all performances of these new works, whether simply sung, staged or semi-staged, we are indebted to our joint venture partners.

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. 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.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Check our website for details and for any changes due to Covid-19

NICK BICÂT 'REQUIEM'

Wed 27 January 2021 at St Stephen Walbrook, London EC4

LOUIS MANDER 'THE DOWAGERS' OYSTER'

Wed 28 April - Sat 1 May 2021 at Cheltenham Playhouse

DANYAL DHONDY 'THE CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS'

Fri 10 September 2021, Leighton House Museum, Kensington