



CANTATA  
DRAMATICA

presents

# CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS

*A song cycle by*

DANYAL DHONDY

JAMES MORLEY POTTER  
*Conductor*

CANTATA DRAMATICA  
SOLOISTS

Wednesday 25 May 2022, 6.30pm

West Pavilion, Stoke Park Pavilions,  
Northants, NN12 7RZ

# CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS

The texts of the Choruses and Songs will be found on pages 4 - 10.



## PART ONE

- 1 OVERTURE
- 2 INVOCATION \*
- 3 TEEN-TAL
- 4 PROLOGUE (SPOKEN)
- 5 CHORUS \*
- 6 INSTRUMENTAL RAGA
- 7 MELODRAMA

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

## PART TWO

### INTRODUCTION

- 1 THE SONG OF THE HOOPOE \*
- 2 THE SONG OF THE CROW \*
- 3 THE SONG OF THE SWAN \*
- 4 WHY, O WHY WAS ADAM
- 5 THE SONG OF THE OWL \*
- 6 PARABLE (SPOKEN)
- 7 INSTRUMENTAL RAGA
- 8 THE SONG OF THE FALCON \*
- 9 DON'T BOAST OF POWER
- 10 THE SONG OF THE PEACOCK \*
- 11 YOUR THOUSAND EYES
- 12 PARABLE (SPOKEN)
- 13 THE SONG OF THE NIGHTINGALE \*
- 14 THE SONG OF THE ROSE \*
- 15 INSTRUMENTAL RAGA
- 16 PARABLE (SPOKEN)
- 17 THE SONG OF THE MOTH AND THE CANDLE \*
- 18 INSTRUMENTAL RAGA
- 19 THE SONG OF THE HOOPOE (REPRISE)

# THE PERFORMERS

JAMES MORLEY POTTER CONDUCTOR

PETER CHAMPNESS NARRATOR \*

ESTHER MALLET SWAN, MOTH/CANDLE  
*Soprano*

LUCY COX HOOPOE, ROSE  
*Soprano*

STEPHANIE FRANKLIN NIGHTINGALE  
*Mezzo Soprano*

FREYA JACKLIN-EDWARD CROW  
*Mezzo Soprano*

GRAHAM NEAL PEACOCK, ROSE  
*Tenor*

JACK HARBERD OWL, MOTH/CANDLE  
*Tenor*

DANIEL TATE MASTER  
*Baritone*

THOMAS LOWEN FALCON  
*Bass*

BENEDICT LEWIS-SMITH KEYBOARD

WILLIAM BALL OBOE/COR ANGLAIS

KULJIT BHAMRA TABLA

MAY ROBERTSON VIOLIN

OLIVER WEEKS GUITAR

# INTRODUCTION

Cantata Dramatica has adapted this famous poem by Farid ud din Attar of Nishapur for 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 some instrumental improvisations to convey the emotional and spiritual message of this great Sufi poem.

## THE STORY

After a chorus in praise of the Creator, Attar introduces himself and tells us of the Birds' desire for a Path towards Knowledge. 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. So 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 in Part Two) 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. There are just a few key dramatic moments where the whole ensemble is featured.

The songs and choruses are interspersed with 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.

# PART ONE

## INVOCATION

All praise to you creator Who gave a soul to dust,  
so that it moves and lives and animates.

For forty days you fashioned us from dust

And placed the soul within us, as a trust.

The soul gave life to lifeless dust.

First, you gave us reason so that we could view what reason saw.

Next you gave us intelligence to bring us understanding,

and we, once granted knowledge, did confess to Wonder and Weakness.

We bow before Your throne as if it were the end,

All bow to You, enemy or friend.



## CHORUS

Birds full of Longing!

On fire.

Each with a tongue,

Short on thought.

Birds full of burning with desire!

Birds on the wing,

They are not hooded with Philosophy.

The mystery of longing

has more power than history.

## PART TWO

### THE SONG OF THE HOOPOE

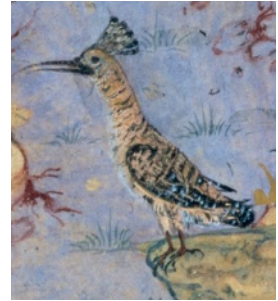
When I came out of Saba with a love note for the  
golden king

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.

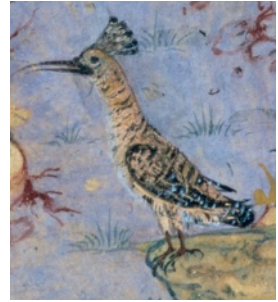
And after a night awake, he would walk with the friend alone at dawn.

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.

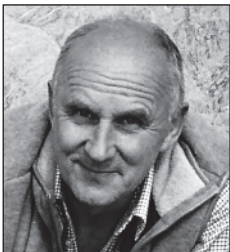
With recent commissions from Making Music, Orchestras for All, London Schools Symphony Orchestra, Theater Bielefeld, Kensington Chamber Orchestra, Galaksen Theatre and Leeds International Piano Competition, Danyal's music is frequently performed across the UK and further afield.

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 Bicât, Solfa Carlile, Sarah Rimkus, Grayston Ives, Alison Willis, and others. 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 work as a professional singer, before studying 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, and was recently invited to participate in conducting competitions in Denmark and Romania. He is also active as a writer on music, contributing programme notes and essays for groups including The Tallis Scholars.



## PETER CHAMPNESS

### *Narrator*

Peter has been working with Cantata Dramatica since its foundation. He was Director and Designer of the first performance of Nick Bicât'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 Bicât'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 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. Operatic roles include Georgette *La Rondine* (West Green House Opera) and Arline *The Bohemian Girl* (Kensington Opera).

[www.esthermallett.com](http://www.esthermallett.com).



## STEPHANIE FRANKLIN

### *Mezzo Soprano*

Mezzo-soprano Stephanie Franklin enjoys a varied career of solo and consort singing. She read Music at the University of Oxford, where she now pursues doctoral research into early twentieth-century Vienna.

across the country. She has recent and forthcoming engagements with groups including The Sixteen, Stile Antico and Oxford Bach Soloists. She is delighted to return to perform with Cantata Dramatica.

Her operatic roles include the title character in Handel's *Xerxes* and *The Artist* in Joanna Ward's *Hunger*, and she regularly performs as a soloist



## 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.



## GRAHAM NEAL

### *Tenor*

Graham Neal is a graduate of the University of Surrey, the *Knack* opera course at the English National Opera, and Trinity College of Music. He continues his studies with Pamela Kuhn.

On the operatic stage, Graham has performed at The Royal Opera House, The English National Opera, Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, l'Opera Comique, Iford International Arts

Festival, and Grange Park Opera. Graham is an accomplished ensemble singer, appearing frequently in concert, on television, and on recordings. He performs with the Monteverdi Choir, The English Concert, The King's Consort, Philharmonia Voices, the Armonico Consort, Barbershop-o-gram and Cappella Nova. He is also a member of the choir of the London Oratory Church.



## JACK HARBERD

### *Tenor*

Jack was raised in Norwich and Oxford and read a music degree at the University of York, during which time he was the tenor choral scholar at York Minster. He is an alumnus of Genesis Sixteen and the National Youth Choirs of Great Britain Fellowship, and is currently a VOCES8 Scholar.

Jack performs with Tenebrae, Apollo5, and Corvus Consort, among

others, and often records film and video game soundtracks with London Voices. He leads music workshops for VOCES8 Foundation and is an assistant leader with London Youth Choirs. After a period of work in music television production, including coverage of the BBC Proms 2021, he is now focusing on a career in singing, and is taking lessons with Gary Coward.





## 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.



## THOMAS LOWEN

### *Bass*

Thomas started singing at the age of 8 as a Canterbury Cathedral chorister. After dropping several octaves, he went on to become a bass in the Choir of New College, Oxford, graduating with a first-class degree in Music. Subsequently he completed a master's degree in Solo-Voice Ensemble Singing at the University of York, coupled with a choral scholarship at York Minster.

He now sings in the Choir of the London Oratory, alongside a varied freelance singing career. He regularly appears on the opera stage and as a concert soloist, and has performed with some of the foremost vocal ensembles in the country, including the BBC Singers, Ex Cathedra, I Fagiolini, The Tallis Scholars and Stile Antico. Thomas studies singing with Alexander Ashworth.



## BENEDICT LEWIS-SMITH

### *Keyboard*

Benedict Lewis-Smith was organ scholar at The Queen's College, Oxford (2007-2010), and prior to this was awarded a place as a specialist musician and organ scholar at Wells Cathedral School, Somerset.

He is now Director of Music at St Columba's Church, Knightsbridge and combines this role with a

substantial freelance career in London including vocal coaching, accompanying and conducting.

He hosts a weekly podcast: Knightsbridge Music interviewing rising stars of the music world. More information can be found at [benlewissmith.co.uk](http://benlewissmith.co.uk).



WILLIAM BALL  
*Oboe, Cor Anglais*

William enjoys a varied career as a freelance oboist, playing regularly with many London orchestras. He has also played with the Budapest Festival Orchestra and was a member of the European Union Youth Orchestra in 2018, with whom he performed across Europe on two tours, including at the BBC proms.

As part of the Coriolis Quintet, a Live Music Now ensemble, William regularly works to bring music into schools and care homes. He graduated 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 2019-2020, he was a member of the London Philharmonic Orchestra's Future Firsts Programme.



KULJIT BHAMRA  
*Tabla*

Kuljit Bhamra MBE Hon DMus is a British composer, record producer and musician whose main instrument is the tabla. He is best known as one of the record producers who pioneered the British Bhangra sound and for his many collaborations with musicians from different genres and continents. He has worked on film scores for over ten years and was on-stage

percussionist on Andrew Lloyd Webber's hit musical *Bombay Dreams*. Kuljit was the last Artistic Director of The Society For The Promotion of New Music before its merger and renaming to Sound & Music. He spearheaded innovative projects such as *Bhangra Latina* and a new tabla notation system. His cutting-edge work earned him the prestigious award of MBE in the Queen's birthday honours list 2009.



MAY ROBERTSON  
*Violin*

May Robertson studied at Cambridge University, Trinity Laban, and the Royal Conservatory, The Hague. A natural improviser and collaborator across styles, May has performed with the Odissi Ensemble; created new work with dancers Parbati Chaudhuri and Nandita Shankardass featuring solo Bach; and performed Sufi songs and folk music with Arieb Azhar. May is a longtime member of

improvising medieval ensemble *Joglaresa*. May has performed at the Darbar Festival, Milapfest, London Handel Festival, Spitalfields Festival, National Centre for Early Music, International Medieval Congress, Queen Elizabeth Hall, *Premières Rencontres Internationales de Viole de Gambe* and *Grandezze e Meraviglie*, and has given frequent broadcasts on BBC Radio 3's 'In Tune'.



OLIVER WEEKS  
*Guitar*

Oliver Weeks is a London-based composer, guitarist and pianist. He studied music at Clare College, Cambridge and composition with Robin Holloway, followed by a PhD in composition from the Royal Academy of Music, London. His music has been performed by the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the Philharmonia, the Royal Academy Soloists, the BBC Singers and the Endymion Ensemble. He is a prolific

arranger, working for figures as diverse as Chas & Dave, Elton John, Jonny Greenwood, Keaton Henson and Howard Goodall.

He has scored two full-length feature film soundtracks: *Cat Sticks* (Ronny Sen, India 2019), dealing with drug addicts in Kolkata and which premiered at Slamdance 2019 and *Rising Silence* (Leesa Gazi, UK 2018), which has won 15 international film awards to date.

## 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 Susanna Chancellor for the opportunity to present our first live performance since the apparent retreat of the Covid-19 pandemic.*

*Programme Design - Julia Stutfield and Miranda Latham-Jackson*

# 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 several 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](http://www.cantatadramatica.com) or contact us at [cantatadramatica@gmail.com](mailto:cantatadramatica@gmail.com).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Check our website for details

NICK BICÂT 'SOUTH SEA BUBBLE'

Thursday 25 August 2022 at The Reform Club, London, SW1