

Antonín Dvořák (1841 - 1904): Mass in D major, Op. 86 (1887, rev 1892)

Less well known than his association with the USA, celebrated in his ninth symphony (*From the New World*), is Dvorak's association with England, to which he paid the first of nine visits in 1884, to conduct his *Stabat Mater* (composed in 1876-77). He was immediately successful, returning several times to conduct works commissioned specifically for British audiences: his symphonies in D minor and G major (Nos 7 and 8) for the Philharmonic Society in 1885 and 1888, his cantata *The Spectre's Bride* at Birmingham, also in 1885, the oratorio *St Ludmila* at Leeds in 1886, and his *Requiem*, again at Birmingham, in 1891, when Cambridge made him an Honorary Doctor of Music. The choral works were the key to his success here, appealing strongly to the numerous late Victorian choral societies and their audiences. The *Mass in D major* was composed during this period, at the request of the founder of the Czech Academy of Sciences and Art, Josef Hlavka, to mark the consecration of a private chapel he had built beside his castle in Luzany, where Dvorak directed the first performance, scored simply for four soloists, choir and organ, on 11 September, 1887. He had written to thank Hlavka "for having given me the impulse to write a work in this form, otherwise I should scarcely have thought of it, for so far I have written works of this kind only on a big scale. This time I have written with modest resources, and yet I venture to say that I have done a good piece of work". Notwithstanding this, and the successful first public performance at Pizen in April, 1888, his regular publisher, Simcock, decided against publishing the original setting. His success in England led Dvorak to offer it to Novello in London, who agreed on condition that it was scored for orchestral accompaniment. This was completed in 1893 and premiered at Crystal Palace on 11 March. It is Michael Pilkington's 1999 revision of this edition that will be sung this evening.

Dvorak's music is a remarkable synthesis of classical tradition and romantic style. His major influences were Smetana, under whom he played viola in the orchestra of the Prague National Theatre between 1866 and 1873, Brahms, who was on the jury that awarded him an Austrian National Prize for his third symphony in 1874 and the Moravian duets for soprano and contralto in 1876, and Wagner, whose central importance was an unavoidable element affecting the compositional practices of all his contemporaries. Smetana, who had effectively created a nationalist Czech musical style, also encouraged him to treat the folk music of Bohemia and Moravia as resources – advice which Dvorak subsequently extended to English folk music in association with Cecil Sharp and Native- and African-American music with Harry Burleigh. These elements of romantic style are especially apparent in his lyrical orchestration, but they combine in his work with more formal classical skills of harmony and counterpoint that he had initially studied as a teenager in Zlonice and developed at the Organ School in Prague, and are, in turn, complemented by a sense of melody influenced by Schubert. These qualities are abundant in the *Mass in D major*, which one of the editors of the complete critical edition of Dvorak's works (Jarmil Burghauser) describes as creating "the specific atmosphere of the Czech countryside...the spirit of a smiling, pleasant region of hills and woods and little baroque churches with folk-art decoration, the expression of the wisdom and security of his native land". The consecration of Hlavka's family oratory was an appropriate context for Dvorak to present a setting of the mass employing modest resources and with such a vernacular character, yet he warns against treating it as anything less than devout, describing it to his patron as a work of "faith, hope and love to Almighty God...Do not wonder that I am so religious, but an artist who is not could not accomplish anything like this".

Sopranos open the Kyrie softly to a romantic, lilting rhythm, swelling confidently to a crescendo with the entry of the basses and continuing these undulations of time and dynamic until the soloists, again softly, introduce the *Christe eleison*. The chorus joins them to move forcefully towards a crescendo, before a brief instrumental interlude precedes a return to the gentle rhythms of the Kyrie and a final, ecstatic cry of

Christe eleison. This opening to the work sets a tone of confident faith and devotion: the call for mercy is sung in a way that leaves no doubt that it will be answered. It gives a vernacular, folkish tone to the mass, a sense reinforced by the exultant cries of Gloria, which begin the second movement. In a similar pattern, just as the gathering crescendo of the Kyrie gave way to the quiet plea of Christe eleison, so here, the bouncing brassiness of Gloria in excelsis is interrupted by the basses' gentle invocation of Et in terra pax, before an enthusiastic return to Laudamus te. Semichorus and soloists then embark on a gentle narrative passage which rises and falls through a range of dynamic emphases from Gratias agimus to the allegro vivo of Quoniam tu solus sanctus, leading into successive cries of Jesu Christe, until basses open a rollicking fugue on Cum sancto spiritu before a sequence of declaratory Amens brings the movement to a majestic conclusion.

A comparable sense of narrative is also a feature of the Credo. Here Dvorak repeatedly uses the solo alto line to state the constitutive beliefs of the Nicene creed, which are then repeated by the full chorus as both an incantation of belief and a narration of the myth at the core of Christian faith. This pattern holds until the chorus's cry of Crucifixus begins a recounting of the tragic events of sacrifice and death, followed by the glories of resurrection and ascension. The movement concludes, in a return to its opening structure, with choral iterations of the fundamental tenets of the creed, from Credo in spiritum unum to its final, assertive repetitions of Amen. A sequence of majestic, chiming calls of Sanctus open the next movement, before the chorus develop the full paean of Sanctus Dominus Deus in an alternating dynamic reminiscent of that of the Kyrie, before cries of Pleni sunt caeli lead into joyful Hosannas, resolving with a stately celebration of in excelsis.

Wagner's influence on Dvorak is evident in the Benedictus, as a soft organ prelude builds slowly over twenty bars towards the quiet dignity of the basses' gentle opening invocation of Benedictus qui venit. The choral parts interweave with compelling complexity and swelling dynamics, through the full text of the blessing, until returning to the Hosannas that concluded the Sanctus. The movement ends with a flourish, in a dramatic change of tempo, from allegro vivace to maestoso, for the final Hosanna in excelsis. The work concludes with the tenor leading his fellow soloists into a quietly devout Agnus Dei which the chorus gathers into a gentle rhythm, slower but somehow faintly evocative of the opening Kyrie in exploring the plea for mercy, before closing softly on Dona nobis pacem.

Whilst he remains best known for his symphonies and, more recently, his late chamber music, this exquisitely worked setting of the Mass surely suggests that Dvorak's choral works, which featured throughout his career as a composer and enjoyed such popularity among British audiences in the late nineteenth century, are overdue for rehabilitation to the repertoire.

Paul Filmer 2012

Josef Rheinberger (1839-1901): Organ Concerto No 1 in F Major, Op 137 (1884)

A musical prodigy, Rheinberger was appointed Church Organist in his hometown of Vaduz, Liechtenstein when just seven years old. He taught at Munich Conservatoire throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, where Engelbert Humperdinck and Wilhelm Furtwangler were among his pupils. From 1860 to 1866 he was organist at St Michael's in Munich, where he worked also as choral conductor and coach at the court opera, numbering Hans von Bulow and Johannes Brahms among his close friends. A prolific composer of operas, symphonies, choral works and chamber music, he is remembered mainly for

his elaborate and challenging organ compositions, which included numerous sonatas, trios, *Meditations*, fuguettes and solo pieces, as well as two concertos, which display a masterful use of deceptively simple motifs combined with effective climaxes. The first of these, to be performed this evening, is modestly orchestrated for strings and horns and is a good example of his essentially conservative Romantic style. It uses interesting thematic variations and an ambitious range of tone colours to develop a work of robust integrity. The first of its three movements, the Maestoso, is characterised by a quick and engaging melodiousness. The passionately romantic Andante that follows provides a distinct contrast with its floating sense of the ethereal, before the concluding Con Moto returns to the industrious, melodic inventiveness of the opening movement.

Paul Filmer 2012

Herbert Howells (1892-1983): An English Mass (1955)

As a composer, teacher and organist, Howells was at the core of English music for much of the twentieth century. Beginning his career as suborganist at Salisbury cathedral in 1917, he joined the staff of the Royal College of Music in 1920, where he had won a scholarship to study in 1912, alongside Arthur Benjamin, Arthur Bliss, and Ivor Gurney. He taught composition there almost continuously until the late 1970's, as well as being Professor of Music at the University of London from 1954 to 1964. He succeeded Gustav Holst as director of music at St Paul's Girls' School in 1936, holding the post until 1962, and was organist at St John's College, Cambridge during the Second World War, from 1941-45. Several of his early works were performed at the Three Choirs Festivals in the 1920's where, in 1910, he first heard Delius's *Sea Drift* and attended the premiere of Vaughan Williams's *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*. Both composers became lasting influences on his work, as did Elgar, the dominant figure at the Festivals over this period. Just as influential, too, were his teachers at the RCM: he studied composition with Charles Villiers Stanford, who called Howells 'my son in music', choral technique with Walford Davies, and orchestration with Hubert Parry and Charles Wood. His debt to Delius can be heard in what is probably his best known work, the *Hymnus Paradisi* of 1938, and he came to number Vaughan Williams among his close musical friends, along with Thomas Goff, Gerald Finzi and his fellow organist and composer, Harold Darke, to whom, together with the St Michael's Singers, *An English Mass* is dedicated. Darke (1888-1976) was organist of St Michael's, Cornhill for fifty years from 1916 and was in wartime exile at King's College, Cambridge for the same period that Howells was at St John's College, as well as being Organ Professor at the RCM during Howells's time there (1919-69). Darke formed the St Michael's Singers specifically to give both liturgical and concert performances of choral music, focussing on Bach cantatas and seventeenth century polyphony, an enthusiasm shared with Howells, who felt that he 'somehow belonged to the Tudor period'.

For all this wide range of traditional and contemporary influences, however, Howells developed a compositional style that was quite distinctive. This was evident in his first choral work, the *Mass in the Dorian Mode* of 1912, written for mixed chorus a capella shortly after he had entered the RCM and first performed by Westminster Cathedral choir. The Dorian mode was the first of the authentic church or ecclesiastical modes, now known as diatonic scales, used widely in western music until the seventeenth century and revived by some composers at the beginning of the twentieth century. Howells may initially have encountered it in passages of Vaughan Williams's Tallis fantasia, stimulating his interest in both

modal composition and seventeenth century polyphony. While still a student, he wrote *Three Dances for Violin and Orchestra* (1915) in which what has come to be known as Howell's scale first appears. This is a quasi-modal sequence of pitches, providing a variety of harmonic colour to give what Howells clearly found to be an aesthetically pleasing sound. He once said "I have composed out of sheer love of trying to make nice sounds. I have written really, to put it simply, the music I would like to write and for no other reason". The most distinguishable components of the scale are its augmented fourth and flattened seventh degrees, transforming a traditional major scale into a modal relative. This structural modification is also characteristic of blues music and can be heard to great effect on Miles Davis's *Kind of Blue* (1959), the album in which he makes the transition from the 'thick' chordal chains of bebop to the simple modal changes that give his later work such rhythmic clarity and melodic freedom. In a comparable manner, Howells's scale can be used to incorporate smooth melodic lines with surprising harmonic dissonances that can be used both to stimulate and disturb. He employed it infrequently until the *Hymnus Paradisi* but much more often thereafter, to convey intensity of feeling and to give emphasis to moments of especial significance, for example in the sacred texts of liturgical works. It can be found in several of his twenty settings of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis and appears in *An English Mass* twice during the closing passages of the Credo, to indicate the importance of acknowledging 'one baptism for the remission of sins' and to intensify the significance of 'the Resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come'.

An English Mass sets the ordinary of the Mass in English translation (though the Kyrie remains in its original Greek), after the form given in the Anglican Prayerbook Communion Service, which places the Gloria at the conclusion. It was, nevertheless, always intended for concert performance, scored originally for organ and strings, with later optional instrumental additions for flute, oboe, timpani and harp. Howells described it as his "personal and creative reaction to a text of immense, immemorial significance" and, in this sense, is comparable to Dvorak's mass in its confident assertion of faith, despite the unorthodoxy of Howells's own sense of Christian belief. It is characteristic of Howells's church music, with long strands of expressive melody supported by rich, densely textured harmonies that lead to ecstatic climaxes. These make it demanding to sing, since it is suffused with frequent changes of meter that require both very rhythmic singing and careful counting of time. After the first performance, Howells wrote that the St Michael's Singers "were grand; quick to learn the bulk of my strange notes, and inspired in finding better ones when mine didn't fit" – a further sense, perhaps, of the bluesy, improvisational qualities of Howells's modal scale!

The work explores a variety of moods, opening and closing quietly, in effective contrast to the intensity of the movements between. The Kyrie begins softly, unfolding rhapsodically from Kyrie eleison to the elaborated crescendo of Christe eleison until an awkward instrumental dissonance intervenes dramatically before Kyrie eleison returns sonorously to conclude the movement. A bass solo sounds the opening declaration of the Credo with deceptive simplicity, to which chorus and orchestra respond in tumultuous exultation, calming briefly to begin the narration of the trinity. The core statements of belief are sustained throughout with dramatic changes in tempo and dynamic, from blazing fortissimos to the particular, bittersweet intensity of 'And was crucified also for us...', and each section is preceded by short instrumental intervals, setting the mood of the episode to follow. This is, appropriately, the longest movement of the work, and concludes with the soprano soloist anticipating the resurrection, echoed by the chorus, led by basses, building to a final, declaratory Amen.

The Sursum Corda which follows provides a passage of quiet respite and consolidation as the chorus responds to the bass soloist's devout invocations, blending melodically into the Sanctus through the oboe's quiet introduction, before the chorus builds climactic sequences of 'Holy Lord God of hosts' to a huge crescendo on 'Glory be to thee, O Lord most High', with the orchestra dramatically silent on 'Glory', before a concluding repetition of the same phrase, sotto voce. A solo flute opens and closes the Benedictus, echoed at first by soprano, alto and tenor soloists interweaving the text of the blessing. The chorus develop a series of Hosannas, quietly at first, rising to a crescendo before a restatement of the blessing precedes quiet, concluding repetitions of Hosanna in the highest. A brief, tranquil orchestral passage links to the Agnus Dei, which opens with a solo quartet making the plea for mercy in lilting counterpoint, followed after a brief, aching orchestral interlude by the full chorus repeating the same plea in comparable apposition, before concluding softly on Grant us thy peace. The Gloria begins with a rhythmic instrumental fanfare, in a noisy allegro vivo, before the chorus embark on a series of ecstatic paeans until another orchestral outburst precedes a change of mood and tempo to quiet reflection on 'O Lord, the only begotten Son...'. The tempo and dynamics quicken again, expanding into a blazing climax on 'God, the Father', before a slow diminuendo of Amens underpin the soprano and tenor soloists in a final restatement of the opening paean.

Paul Filmer 2012

Claire Pendleton

Soprano

Claire Pendleton studied at UCL/Birkbeck College, where she received distinction in Opera Performance and was awarded an Ottokar Kraus Memorial Scholarship. She then gained a Postgraduate Diploma at Trinity College of Music, winning several scholarships including the Ricordi Opera Prize and Beatrice Taylor Memorial Scholarship.

Operatic roles have included Tetka cover *Jenufa* and Giulia cover *The Gondoliers*, Lakme soprano *On The Town*, Vendor & Young Woman *Kismet* (ENO), Mimi & Musetta (ENO Baylis) and Mabel & Gianetta (Friends of ENO), Anna Bolena (Swansea City Opera), Rusalka ('I Maestri' and Opera Box), First Lady, (Opera Project and Opera à la Carte), Helmwig cover *Die Walküre* (Northern Wagner Orchestra), Aminta *Die schweigsame Frau* (Garsington Opera Educational Project), Anna *Nabucco*, Mimi, Countess Almaviva, Michaela, Queen of The Night, Madame Silberklang and High Priestess *Aida*. Recently with ENO Claire has sung the roles of Solo Woman *Turandot* and Old Woman in Alexander Raskatov's *A Dog's Heart*. She also covered the role of Mrs Naidoo in Phillip Glass's *Satyagraha* and Flower Maiden Parsifal and Suburban Mum in Nico Muhly's *Two Boys*. She has recorded the role of Blush of Morning in Arthur Sullivan's *Rose of Persia* (Hanover Band) released on the CPO label. She has also recorded for Chandos, BBC television and BBC Music Magazine. Claire's concert experience includes *Messiah*, most notably in the presence of HRH Princess Royal, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, (Bardi Orchestra and Oxford Philomusica), Mahler's *Eighth Symphony*, (Wolsey Orchestra), Bach *Cantata 124* at Guildford Cathedral, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* (West Sussex Philharmonic), Mozart's *Requiem* (Oxford Philomusica) at Christ Church Cathedral Oxford, Haydn's *Creation*, Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*, Haydn's *Nelson Mass*, Faure's

Requiem, Haydn's *Stabat Mater*, Mozart's *Mass in C Minor*, Bach *Mass in B Minor* with the Brooke Street Band, under Joseph Cullen, in Verdi's *Requiem* and Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise*. Claire studies with Marie McLaughlin and is a member of English National Opera. In May/June Claire sang off-stage solos in Detlev Glanert's *Caligula* with ENO.

Nick Pritchard

Tenor

Nick Pritchard studied music at New College, Oxford, where he also sang with the internationally renowned New College Choir. Work with the choir included six recordings and tours to the USA, Germany, Italy, Hungary, Luxembourg, France, Latvia and Spain.

As a soloist, Nick has featured in performances of Handel's *Acis and Galatea* and *Messiah*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Haydn's *Nelson Mass*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Beethoven's *Mass in C*, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*, Britten's *War Requiem*, Bach's *St. John Passion* (Arias), *St. Matthew Passion* (Evangelist) and *Christmas Oratorio* (Evangelist and Arias).

Credits on the stage include: Peachum in *The Threepenny Opera*, Tamino in *The Magic Flute*, Alfred in *Die Fledermaus*, Quint/Prologue in *The Turn of the Screw*, Count Almaviva in *The Barber of Seville*, Ford in Salieri's *Falstaff* and Prince Hilarion in *Princess Ida*, for which he received the award for best supporting actor at the Buxton International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival in 2010.

Nick also sings with many of Britain's leading choirs and vocal consorts including The Sixteen, The Gabrieli Consort, Ex Cathedra, Magnificat, Polyphony and The Monteverdi Choir.

Future plans include Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* for Hampstead Garden Opera, Agenore in *Il re Pastore* for New Chamber Opera, and recordings with Sir John Eliot Gardiner.

This September, Nick will take up a postgraduate place at The Royal College of Music.

Nicholas Chalmers

Organ

Nicholas began his musical training as a chorister at Tewkesbury Abbey. He held the organ scholarship at Chichester Cathedral before becoming organ scholar at Lincoln College, Oxford, where he read for a degree in music and studied the organ with David Sanger. In 2000-2001 he was organ scholar of St Paul's Cathedral, London. Nicholas then moved to Lodi, Northern Italy, where he spent a year working with the choir of the cathedral and studying with the harpsichordist, Laura Bertani, at the Piacenza Conservatoire. From 2003 to 2008 Nicholas worked at Westminster Abbey as Assistant Organist and Director of Music of the Choir School. From 2008 until 2011 Nicholas was Assistant Chorus Master of English National Opera where he prepared 24 operas for conductors including, Edward Gardner, Mark Wigglesworth, Sir Charles Mackerras, Baldur Bronnimann and Sir Richard Armstrong. He regularly conducts opera productions for Northern Ireland Opera, is the Artistic Director of the Nevill Holt Opera Festival and of Second Movement Opera Company. He is the Guest Chorus Master of the Philharmonia Chorus and Guest Conductor of the Orchestra of the City. For Second Movement he has conducted *Mozart and Salieri*, *Trouble in Tahiti*, *The*

Medium and The Impresario, Les Deux Aveugles, Rothschild's Violin and The Knife's Tears all to wide critical acclaim. Conducting engagements with Northern Ireland Opera include *The Medium* and *Tosca* (Best Opera - Irish Theatre Awards - April 2011) and *Turn of the Screw*. Future engagements include *Noye's Fludde* (Belfast Zoo, August 2012 and Beijing, October 2012), *Messiah* (Lyon Opera - December 2013) *The Flying Dutchman* (February 2013) and *The Magic Flute* (June 2013).

Wyn Pencarreg

Baritone

Winner of the Erich Vietheer Memorial Award from Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Wyn Pencarreg was born in West Wales. He studied at the Royal Northern College of Music, gaining many prizes and scholarships, including awards from the Countess of Munster Trust, the Peter Moores Foundation and the Wolfson Foundation. He continues his studies with David Pollard.

His operatic engagements have included Don Belfiore *Le Toréador* at the Batignano Festival, Papin *Babette's Feast* for the Royal Opera, Moralès *Carmen* and Schaunard *La bohème* for Raymond Gubbay Ltd, Belcore *L'elisir d'amore* for Lyric Opera, Dublin, Father *Hansel and Gretel*, de Brétigny *Manon*, both Leporello and Masetto *Don Giovanni* and Figaro *Le nozze di Figaro* for Opera North, Lescaut *Manon* for English Touring Opera, Kuligin *Katya Kabanova* for Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Badger/Parson *The Cunning Little Vixen* for Longborough Festival Opera, The King *Cendrillon* for Chelsea Opera Group, Leporello *Don Giovanni* for Diva Opera, Masetto *Don Giovanni* for Glyndebourne Touring Opera, Count Almaviva *Le nozze di Figaro* for Mid Wales Opera, Figaro *Le nozze di Figaro* for English Touring Opera and OTC, Dublin, Co Limerick, Ensemble *L'Orfeo* for English National Opera, Leandro *The Love For Three Oranges* for English Pocket Opera Company, Don Inigo Gomez *L'heure espagnole* for Opera Project, Alidoro *La cenerentola* for Grange Park Opera, Balthasar *Genoveva*, King *Die liebe der Danaë* and Morbio *Die schweigsame Frau* for Garsington Opera and Luka *The Bear* at the Opéra de Monte-Carlo.

Concert engagements have included *Messiah* with the Ulster Orchestra and at Glyndebourne, the première of David Perkins' *Re:Creation* at St John's, Smith Square, Voice of Neptune *Idomeneo* for the Hallé Orchestra, *Truly Madly Mozart* at the Royal Festival Hall and Ortel *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* for the BBC Philharmonic. His broadcasts include Friday Night is Music Night for BBC Radio 2.

Recent engagements include Valens *Theodora* and Achilla *Giulio Cesare* for Opéra de Baugé, Dog/Poacher *The Cunning Little Vixen* at the Oundle International Festival, The Lion *The Pyramus and Thisbe* for Opera Project, Lindorf/Coppélius/Dappertutto/Dr Miracle *The Tales of Hoffmann*, Count Almaviva *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Ford *Falstaff* for Mid Wales Opera, Marcello *La bohème* and Sharpless *Madama Butterfly* for Lyric Opera, Dublin, Captain Corcoran *HMS Pinafore* with Carl Rosa Opera and Count Almaviva *Le nozze di Figaro* for Opera Theatre Company, Dublin.

Current and future plans include *Sharpless* for Lyric Opera, Dublin, Leporello *Don Giovanni* for Mid Wales Opera and Lalchand *The Firework Maker's Daughter* for The Royal Opera /Opera North/The Opera Group.

Rebecca stockland

Alto

Rebecca Stockland began her singing career while still at school in Oxford, belonging to many of the city's choirs and vocal groups. A graduate in Music from the University of Exeter, Rebecca continued her training at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama with Rudolph Piernay and is currently studying with Jennie Caron. Recently performed roles include Pitti-Sing *The Mikado*, Meg Page in Niccolai's *Merry Wives of Windsor* and Suzuki *Madama Butterfly*. Rebecca was a member of the company for Grange Park Opera's 2008 and 2009 seasons, performing in Offenbach *Blue Beard*, Dvorak *Rusalka*, Purcell *Dido & Aeneas*, Bellini *Norma*, Verdi *Rigoletto* and Janacek *The Cunning Little Vixen*. Rebecca also participated in the 2007 Buxton International Opera Festival. Other roles studied and/or performed include Third Lady, Diana *La Calisto*, Mistress Quickly, Zita, Fidalma *Il Matrimonio Segreto*, Dryad *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Dido, Sorceress, Olga, Dorabella, Cherubino, Tisbe, Dulcinée *Don Quixote*, Romeo, Rosina, Isabella *L'italiana in Algeri*, Carmen, Josí in von Suppé *Ten Belles without a Ring* and Clarina *La Cambiale di Matrimonio*. Companies worked for include English Touring Opera, Surrey Opera, New Chamber Opera, Abbey Opera, Birkbeck Opera, Morely College Opera and ROH Education Department. Having combined singing with a busy teaching schedule, Rebecca left St Benedict's School, Ealing at the end of the 2009/10 academic year to pursue her singing career as a full-time company mezzo with English National Opera. Roles covered/performed there include: a Voice *Parsifal*, Hippolyta *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Brian's Mother *Two Boys*, Noble Widow *Der Rosenkavalier*, and The Aunt *Madam Butterfly*.

Murray Hipkin

Musical Director

Murray Hipkin studied at York University, the Guildhall and the National Opera Studio before joining the Music Staff of English National Opera (1983–8) and then working for Opéra de Lyon, La Monnaie, Opera Factory, Scottish Opera and Opera Brava.

Since returning to ENO in 1995, he has appeared in *Mahagonny*, *The Silver Tassie*, *Leoncavallo*, *La bohème* and *The Rake's Progress*, and worked extensively as Senior Répétiteur (his productions have included Deborah Warner's production of *Death in Venice*, Phyllida Lloyd's *Ring Cycle* and Terry Gilliam's *The Damnation of Faust*) and Assistant Conductor, including, most recently *The Death of Klinghoffer*. He is currently working on *Madam Butterfly* and Damon Albarn's *Dr Dee*.

He has conducted *La bohème* (Surrey Opera, Opera Box), Salieri's *Falstaff*, Haydn *La vera costanza*, (Bampton Classical Opera), Mozart *Apollo and Hyacinth* and Gluck *Le Cinesi* (BCO at the 2009 Cheltenham Festival), and for ENO, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *The Mikado*, *The Gondoliers* and *Kismet* with Michael Ball. In July 2010 he was Associate Conductor of the ENO/Punchdrunk collaboration *The Duchess of Malfi* by Torsten Rasch, which won the 2011 RPS Award for audience development.

His freelance work as vocal coach, accompanist and chorus master includes assisting the composer John Adams and conducting on location for the award-winning Channel 4 film *The Death of Klinghoffer*, *Pierrot Lunaire* with Björk at the Verbier Festival, coaching with British Youth Opera as well as numerous community and education projects with ENO Baylis.

In February 2009 Murray completed an 8-month sabbatical from ENO as Musical Director of *The Sound of Music* at the London Palladium, conducting over 170 performances.

In October 2010 he was appointed Musical Director of The Pink Singers and his next concert is on 14 July at St Johns Smith Square.

Murray Hipkin, Claire Pendleton and Rebecca Stockland are members of English National Opera and appear by permission.