

Fairest
Isle
Jewels
of
British
Song

A weekend of majestic British music

www.cameratina.org
Osborne, April 29-30, 2023

Programme

Fairest Isle—Jewels of British Song

Saturday 29 April

5.00pm

A Dinner Engagement

A one-act comic opera by Lennox Berkeley
Libretto: Paul Dehn

Sunday 30 April

2.00pm

Recital Workshop

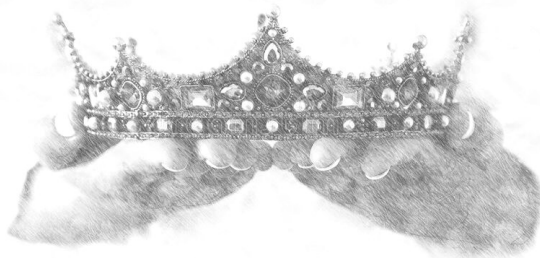
Roddy and Susanna work with our next-generation stars to bring out the beauty of the British song repertoire

5.00pm

Recital

A recital of the finest British songs with a focus on those composed during the reign of the late Queen Elizabeth

Venue for all: St Cuthbert's Church





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Welcome

Welcome to Opera Cameratina 2023 and 'Fairest Isle - Jewels of British Song' – a weekend of dazzling performances in beautiful Osborne. What better time to celebrate the best of British composers, poets and artists than this Coronation year. The jewels in our Cameratina crown this year include a diamond team of artists and a true national treasure, the baritone Roderick Williams, as they join me on stage to explore British repertoire from across the isles and the ages.

Sir Lennox Berkeley's one-act opera *A Dinner Engagement* will open our programme - directed by Roddy, it stars six of the very brightest talents in British opera and an appearance from an exciting young local talent. An open workshop with Roddy working closely with our artists to take their repertoire from page to stage will lead into the final song recital featuring works from Purcell to Judith Weir, the current Master of the King's Music, bringing the weekend to a sparkling close.

Thank you to the marvellous Opera Cameratina team, and to everyone who continues to support us. You can be guaranteed that, in the words of John Dryden, England's first Poet Laureate:

'Music for a while,
Shall all your cares beguile.'

Susanna Stranders, Artistic Director



Welcome

'It is a total delight to join Susanna and these bright young singers for this festival in a most gorgeous part of the country. I cannot think of a better place to centre myself before things get a little crazy next week. I look forward to making new friends in Osborne and renewing old friendships with some of my favourite music.

Roderick Williams OBE



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A Dinner Place Set

Engagement

Synopsis

The Earl of Dunmow has fallen on hard times since he was envoy to Montebianco twenty-five years previously. He and his wife, and daughter Susan, now live in a small flat in Chelsea with no servants, only a weekly help. But the Grand Duchess of Montebianco and her son Prince Philippe are in town for a royal occasion and Lord Dunmow has plans to improve their fiscal situation through a liaison between Susan and Philippe. The Earl and Countess of Dunmow have invited the Duchess and her son for a dinner party and have hired the services of a cook, Mrs Kneebone, for the evening. But nothing seems to be going to plan; the grocer wants paying, a cooking disaster threatens to ruin the evening, and incredible embarrassment ensues when the Duchess and her son arrive via the rather grander back door, straight into the kitchen!

Having never been in a kitchen in her life, the Duchess admires the unconventional décor of the “drawing room”. She is rather shocked to find the house running on a reduced staff, in fact, no staff at all except the weekly help who comes on a Friday, but she agrees to a tour of the small garden, to leave her son and Susan to meet. Susan has refused to wear the expensive evening-gown her parents have bought her, particularly while she is helping in the kitchen. Prince Philippe mistakes her for the hired help at first but is captivated when he realises that her culinary skills are a great match for his appetite. They bond over a jar of pickled walnuts, and he declares his love in the form of a French song. Their betrothal is secured by a generous offer from the Duchess to forgo a dowry and she even pays the grocery bill!

A Dinner Engagement

Cast

Susanna Stranders

Roderick Williams

Ed Ballard

Katy Thomson

Lara Marie Müller

Sarah Richmond

Siân Griffiths

Robert Forrest

Lily Barrett

Music Director

Director

The Earl of Dunmow

The Countess of Dunmow

Susan

Mrs. Kneebone

The Grand Duchess

Prince Philippe

Errand Boy

Sir Lennox Berkeley's (1903-1989) musical influences were largely French, and he took a degree in the language from Oxford before following music as a career. From 1927 to 1933, on the recommendation of Ravel, he studied with Nadia Boulanger. He remained a close friend of Britten and Pears, collaborating on compositions with Britten and composing songs for Pears. He completed four operas, three short and one full-length. That was *Nelson*, premiered by Sadler's Wells in 1954. *A Dinner Engagement* was a light piece composed immediately afterwards, though it was in fact staged first, at that summer's Aldeburgh Festival. It was followed by *Ruth* (1956), based on the biblical story, and *Castaway* (1967), which uses the Ulysses legend. *A Dinner Engagement* is a witty and popular little one-act comedy 'meant only to divert' as the composer put it, which was composed for seven performers and a small chamber orchestra, though here in Osborne we perform it with piano.

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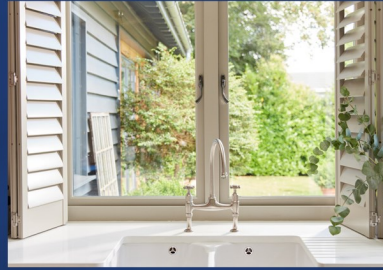
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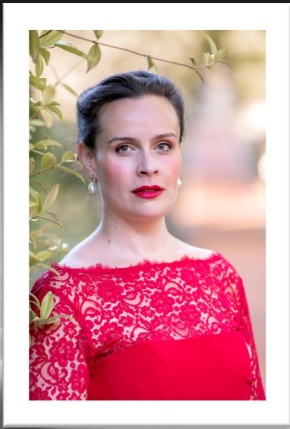
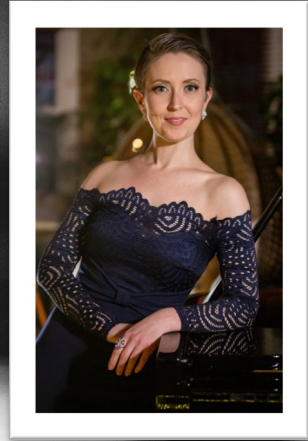
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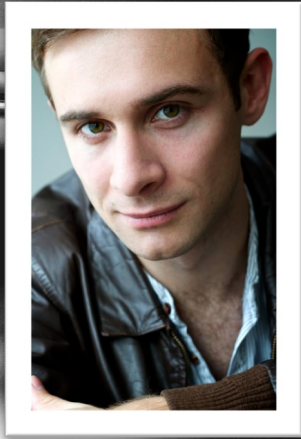
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A central aim of Cameratina is to promote the skills and experience of the next generation of British opera talent. This workshop is a wonderful opportunity for these emerging artists to work with two of Britain's premier teachers, Roddy and Susanna, to explore the subtle beauty of the British art song.

Recital Workshop



RODERICK WILLIAMS



Fairest Isle

English Song Recital

Roderick Williams – baritone

Susanna Stranders – piano

With special guests...

Fairest Isle comprises a contrasting and eclectic programme of British songs from Purcell, from whom the title is taken, to pieces by four contemporary female composers. Roderick's own repertoire will be central to the programme, with many of his favourite songs, pieces taken from his recent recitals at Wigmore Hall, and his own charming arrangement of a Scottish folk song. These songs will be complemented by works performed by our emerging stars as they take to the stage with Roddy in solos and duets. A strong British flavour to enjoy with something for everyone in this delightful programme.



Part One

George Butterworth

Six songs from A Shropshire Lad
Loveliest of Trees
When I was one-and-twenty
Look not in my eyes
Think no more, lad
The lads in their hundreds (Sung by EB)
Is my team ploughing? (EB)

A E Housman

Henry Purcell

If Music be the food of love
Ah! How sweet it is to love
Fairest Isle (LMM)
What can we poor females do? (LMM)
Music for a while
Evening hymn (arr. Britten & Williams) (RF)

Henry Heveningham
John Dryden
John Dryden
Anon
John Dryden
William Fuller

Rebecca Clarke

Down by the Salley Gardens

W B Yeats

Rebecca Clarke

The Seal Man (KT)

John Masefield

Arr. Roderick Williams

My luvie is like a red, red rose (KT)

Robert Burns

Benjamin Britten

The Plough Boy (SG)

anon

Arr. George Butterworth

Roving in the Dew (SG)

anon

Ivor Gurney

Captain Stratton's Fancy

John Masefield

Interval

Part Two

Hubert Parry

Under the Greenwood Tree

William Shakespeare

Madeleine Dring

It was a lover and his lass (SR)

William Shakespeare

Ralph Vaughan Williams

Dirge for Fidele (SR)

William Shakespeare

Gerald Finzi

Who is Silvia?

William Shakespeare

Caroline Shaw (1982-)

How do I find you

Caroline Shaw

Sally Beamish (1956 -)

Nightingale (from 4 Hafez Songs)

tr. Jila Peacock

Judith Weir

Lady Isobel and the Elf Knight (RF)

anon

Cheryl Frances Hoad (1980-)

The Pros and Cons

Sophie Hannah

Ralph Vaughan Williams

From Songs of Travel

Robert Louis Stevenson

The Vagabond

The Roadside Fire

Youth and Love

Whither must I wander?

Bright is the ring of words

Ed Ballard

baritone

Robert Forrest

tenor

Siân Griffiths

mezzo soprano

Lara Marie Müller

soprano

Sarah Richmond

mezzo soprano

Katy Thomson

soprano

Mozart's



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www.operainoborne.org



Opera in Osborne

Biographies

Ed Ballard *baritone*

Ed studied with Royal Academy Opera and made his debut creating the title role in Luke Styles Macbeth for Glyndebourne's Jerwood Opera and at the Linbury Theatre, Royal Opera House. Recent engagements include Demetrius in A Midsummer Night's Dream for Opera Zuid in the Netherlands and Algernon Montcrief in The Importance of Being Earnest for Nouvel Opera Fribourg in Switzerland and Paris.

www.edballard.co.uk



Lily Barrett *soprano*

Lily has been involved in music for much of her life. She has played the clarinet and takes singing lessons with Jon Valender. She performed as Young Fiona in the West End tour of Shrek and has taken various leading roles in local youth productions. She also sings with the Thomas Hardy Singers. Lily is currently studying for her A-levels at Thomas Hardy Sixth Form and she hopes to pursue a career in performing arts.

Rob Forrest *tenor*

Rob has studied at many of the United Kingdom's leading institutions, the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, the Royal College of Music, the Royal Academy Opera School and Girton College Cambridge (2021). He was an Alvarez Young Artist at Garsington Opera and was a member of the Glyndebourne Opera Chorus in 2022.

www.owenwhitemanagement.com/artist/robert-forrest/



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Siân Griffiths *mezzo-soprano*

Brighton born mezzo-soprano, Siân is a recent graduate of the National Opera Studio's Young Artists programme, studying with John Evans. Previous to this, Siân studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama on their Opera course.

www.siangriffithsmezzo.co.uk



Lara Marie Müller *Soprano*

British/German Lara is based in London UK. She holds a BA Music with honours, an MMus in Music and spent two years on the Opera course at Guildhall School of Music & Drama.

www.laramariemuller.com

Sarah Richmond *mezzo-soprano*

Sarah trained at ENO, NOS Short Course and the RNCM. Recent highlights include a recital for the Royal Opera House, BBC Radio 3 New Music Show with The Ulster Orchestra, Finalist in the Teatro Real Montserrat Caballé Competition and performing Mezzo Spell Book at Longborough Festival Opera.

www.sarah-richmond.com

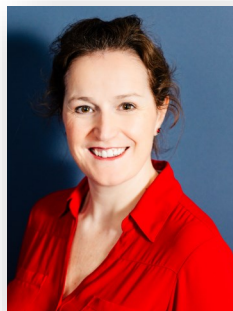


Biographies

Susanna Stranders *artistic director/piano*

British pianist, conductor and répétiteur Susanna has worked with opera companies throughout the world. She was head of music and chorus master for Garsington Opera and is now a member of the music staff at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

www.susannastranders.com



Katy Thomson *soprano*

As a Garsington Opera Young Artist (2021 & 2022), Katy notably stepped in for one performance, and made her debut, as the Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier* (June 2021). Other recent engagements include *Woglinde* (cover) for English National Opera and recitals at St. John's Smith Square and Oxford Lieder.

www.katythomson.co.uk

Roderick Williams

Roderick Williams is one of this country's most sought after baritones and is constantly in demand on the concert platform and in recital, encompassing a repertoire from the baroque to world premieres. In 2016 he won the Royal Philharmonic Society's Singer of the year award.

www.grovesartists.com/artist/roderick-williams/



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Carol Kingsley	Accommodation
Sarah Lacey	Lighting desk
Peter Lacey	Props
Hughe Kingsley	All-round good egg
Siobhan Chapman	Costumes
Jenny Fletcher	Lighting
Jon Fletcher	Images

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About Cameratina

Cameratina originated from a group of classical music enthusiasts who want to share their passion for small-scale opera with the wider public. We believe that chamber operas in smaller venues give an intimacy and immediacy to the music that larger productions cannot rival. Smaller productions also have obvious financial benefits.

Cameratina is also keen to give young opera singers a strong start to their careers and small operas are a great place to hone their skills. Cameratina achieves these twin goals by funding performances to ensure ticket prices are affordable and by underwriting all the costs of productions not covered by ticket revenues.

'Fairest Isle' is Cameratina's fifth venture in Osborne. Previous productions have included John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*, Handel's *Acis and Galatea*, Walton's *The Bear*, and Donizetti's *Rita*. The 2022 project VIARDOT200 was the most ambitious and proved to be the most successful yet. As *Opera* magazine said "Where Osborne leads, others follow". We very much hope that 'Fairest Isle' marks another high point.

As Cameratina matures, it has decided to restructure itself as a not-for-profit corporate entity and is seeking charitable status. There are currently about 25 regular donors that support our projects and we are always looking for more enthusiastic opera lovers to join us. If you feel this might be you, then do please get in touch.

Details of how to become a donor to Cameratina can be found on our website.

For further information, please contact Elaine Fairless or Nigel Masters
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