



Presents
Cambridge University Orchestra
Season Launch Concert

Saturday 23 October, 7.30pm
WEST ROAD CONCERT HALL

Errollyn Wallen Mighty River
Stravinsky Pulcinella – Suite
Brief Intermission - 10 minutes
Mozart Symphony 40 in G minor, K.550

Cambridge University Orchestra
Jonathan Bloxham conductor

Violin I

Jacqueline Seki
Jeremy Weinstein
Wendi Wang
Sameer Aiyar-Majeed
Sophie Rogan
Alex Dawkins

Violin II

Emily Trubshaw
Alistair Burton
Charlotte Howdle
Lottie Swainston
Siân Ellis

Viola

Tilly Mattich
Julius Kiln
Zoe Turoff
Louisa Clogston

Cello

Doraly Gill
Sarah Henderson
Mika Curson
Isabella Chan

Double Bass

James Kiln
Ella Collier

Flute

Lottie Anstee
Katie Shaw
Louise Wells

Oboe

Alice Rivers
Jennifer Ryan

Clarinet

Iona Salter
Camellia Johnson

Bassoon

Emma Williams
Tim Tian

Horn

Michael Kohn
Marina Mitchell
Jonathan Davies
Georgia Burr

Trumpet

Rachel Armitage
Neve Mayes

Trombone

Lawrence Schofield
Charlie Curtis
Maximilian Wiesmann

Timpani

Tom Else

Percussion

George Wise

Harp

Eleanor Medcalf

The Cambridge University Orchestra (CUO), the university's flagship orchestra, returns to West Road Concert Hall for its first performance since February 2020. The orchestra is joined by British conductor, Jonathan Bloxham, who makes his second appearance with CUO, having last performed with the orchestra in October 2019.

Mighty River, written by Belize-born British composer Errollyn Wallen, explores the history of the British slave trade, with spirituals and gospel music forming the core of this composition. Errollyn has recently been appointed Wort Lecturer at the Faculty of Music, Cambridge, and we are delighted to be working with her on this piece. For more information on Errollyn Wallen and *Mighty River*, please [click here](#).

Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* was originally a one-act ballet based upon an 18th century Italian play. Stravinsky based the music upon what he believed were sketches from Giovanni Pergolesi, though this attribution has since proven to be spurious. In this performance, the orchestra will perform the suite from the original ballet score in its revised version from 1949.

The concert concluded with Mozart's 'Great' G minor Symphony No.40. This symphony, one that epitomises Mozart's later style, contains the full spectrum of drama and emotion that one might expect from an entire opera, condensed into a four movement masterpiece.

Please join Richard Causton, Professor of Composition at the Faculty of Music, and Jonathan Bloxham, conductor, as they interview composer Errollyn Wallen via live stream from 6:45-7:15pm in West Road Concert Hall.

Jonathan Bloxham

His conducting career was launched when he took up the Assistant Conductor position at the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra from 2016-2018 under Mirga Grazynte-Tyla, where he conducted a wide range of repertoire, closing their 16/17 season at Symphony Hall, and reinvited in April 2021. A Summer concert with the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie led to a recording project and then to subscription concerts in Bremen and at the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg. After taking over Rusalka rehearsals at the DSO Berlin for Robin Ticciati (whom he had assisted at Glyndebourne), he was invited back to conduct Holst's The Planets in a multi-media project in 2021.

Other highlights of 20/21 have included his debuts with the Salzburg Mozarteumorchester (Mozart video), Residentie Orkest (with immediate reinvitation for a subscription week in 2022) and Hallé Orchestra (also reinvited), and education projects with the London Philharmonic and London Symphony orchestras, as well as a return to the London Mozart Players. 2021 also saw the release of his first CD – Strauss and Cesar Franck with the Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie ("irresistible" - Musicweb International). In 21/22 he is due to debut with the Munich Symphony, Luzern Symphony, Kammerakademie Potsdam, National Symphony (RTE), Britten Sinfonia and Estonian National.

Engagements just prior to the pandemic included the Orchestre Philharmonique de Luxembourg, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Tapiola Sinfonietta and Manchester Camerata, and he had been due to debut with the Tokyo Symphony, Shanghai Symphony, Guangzhou Symphony and China National Philharmonic (in Beijing) – all being redated. In recent seasons he has also conducted the Lausanne Chamber Orchestra, Aurora Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, Basque National Orchestra and RTE Chamber.

In 2019 Jonathan conducted two performances and assisted on Rigoletto for Glyndebourne Touring Opera, and as a result was invited back in 2021 to conduct his own production of Don Pasquale and for his Glyndebourne main Summer season debut, assisting Mazzola and conducting 4 sold-out performances of Luisa Miller.

For the past 11 years Jonathan has been Artistic Director of the Northern Chords Festival based in his home-town of Newcastle upon Tyne but also performing further afield, notably during lock-down in January 2021 in a live studio concert broadcast on BBC Radio 3 from the Maida Vale studios. Passionate about unearthing little-known composers and championing new work, Jonathan has commissioned several premieres by young composers such as Vlad Maistorovici, Jack Sheen and Freya Waley Cohen.

Prior to taking up conducting he was a founder member and the cellist of the Busch Trio, performing regularly at the Wigmore Hall, Southbank and on BBC Radio 3; even now he still plays chamber music on occasion. He won several prestigious awards whilst studying at the Royal College of Music and made his concerto debut at the Berlin Philharmonie in 2012. He started his musical training at the age of 8 with a local cello teacher from the Gateshead Schools Music Service. He then studied at the Yehudi Menuhin School & Royal College of Music with Thomas Carroll before completing a Master's degree at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama with Louise Hopkins. Jonathan has taken further conducting studies with Sian Edwards, Michael Seal, Nicolas Pasquet and Paavo Järvi.

Errollyn Wallen

Errollyn Wallen CBE is a multi-award-winning Belize-born British composer, pianist and singer-songwriter whose output includes twenty-two operas and a large catalogue of works which are performed internationally. Her latest opera, the acclaimed **Dido's Ghost**, premiered in June 2021 at the Barbican Centre and toured to Buxton before going to Edinburgh International Festival. Her most recent orchestral work, a re-imagining of Parry's Jerusalem - **JERUSALEM - our clouded hills** for soprano and orchestra was performed at the BBC'S Last Night of the Proms and was broadcast around the world from the Royal Albert Hall.

Errollyn Wallen's albums include **ERROLLYN, The Girl in My Alphabet** and **Meet Me at Harold Moores**. These have travelled 7.84 million kilometres in space, completing 186 orbits around the Earth on NASA's STS115 mission.

Errollyn is a co-curator of Spitalfields Festival 2020 and 2021 and is currently composing a new opera, **Quamino's Map**, for Chicago Opera Theatre as well as writing a book (to be published by Faber) on Composition. She is the latest recipient of the ISM Distinguished Musician Award, one of the highest honours within the music industry, for services to music.

August 2021

www.errollynwallen.com

Mighty River

Composing for the orchestra is my favourite challenge. This work is an especially important one for me. It was commissioned by the Rector and PCC of Holy Trinity, Clapham Common, and John Wates to mark the bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act. It is an innate human instinct to be free, just as it is a law of nature that the river should rush headlong to the sea. That is the concept behind **Mighty River** which is in a single movement.

In it I make reference to the hymn *Amazing Grace* and the spirituals *Deep River* and *Go Down Moses*. It is as if the perpetual motion of the music, like water, like time, through its sheer momentum, carries with it the cries and echoes of human hearts and voices, that are singing out of suffering, repentance, humility and hope.

Each new piece I write is like an adventure and, in composing **Mighty River**, I reaffirmed my belief that history is a living thing of which we are all part.

It has been a joy to have got to know John and Carol Wates (Carol is a distant relative of William Wilberforce) and to have discussed with them the creation and meaning of this work. I feel honoured to have been chosen to commemorate this very special day.

Slavery claimed the lives of countless people, but somehow my ancestors found the grit and determination to persist in spite of the conditions in which they found themselves. I dedicate **Mighty River** to my great-great-great-great-great-great grandmother. Though I never knew her, I am driven on by her courage in the face of dreadful odds and am inspired by her example not merely to survive, but to thrive.

Errollyn Wallen, London, February 2007