



## Wagner: *Parsifal* Act 3

2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2024. Inverness Cathedral and Strathpeffer Pavilion

Welcome to today's concert.

### **Richard Wagner (1813 – 1883)**

#### ***Parsifal***

Prelude to Act 1

Act 3 (complete)

Cast (in order of appearance)

*Gurnemanz* Sir John Tomlinson

*Kundry* Barbara Scott

*Parsifal* Julian Hubbard

*Amfortas* Paul Carey Jones

The Mahler Players

Conducted by Tomas Leakey (2<sup>nd</sup> November) and Anthony Negus (3<sup>rd</sup> November)

Sung in German with English surtitles

Translation by Simon Rees

Version for chamber orchestra re-orchestrated by Matthew King.

Running time c.85 minutes. *Please note, there will be no interval in this concert.*

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Wagner is best known today as a composer of operas, yet the word ‘composer’ does not fully do justice to the scope of his work and vision, nor ‘operas’ to the grandeur of his artistic achievements. He was indeed a composer so revolutionary that almost everything composed afterwards seemed either to be influenced by him or reacting against him. Yet he was also a writer of epic poetry; of theoretical texts on aesthetics, philosophy, music and politics; an important figure in German nationalism; a conductor; and an impresario. He delved into Teutonic and Norse mythologies to create subject matter for his art, and also the founding myths for the fledgling state of unified Germany. In doing so he became a writer and political figure of such renown that, before most music lovers had heard a note of his music, he was an intellectual celebrity across Europe – it is often claimed that he is the most written-about figure after Jesus Christ and Napoleon Bonaparte.

Much of Wagner's theorising took place in manifesto-style publications, notably *Art and Revolution* and *The Artwork of the Future*, both published in 1849, and his book *Opera and Drama* of 1851. He advocated for the unification of arts into a *Gesamtkunstwerk* (a 'total artwork'), which should be rooted in folklore – a pertinent notion in the nationalistic context of the nineteenth century, when disparate kingdoms of Italy and Germany unified into new nation states that needed folk histories and mythology to create shared cultural ancestry.

Amidst the broad sweep of his thought were also practical, technical innovations, such as the idea of a darkened auditorium for performances, and the invention of the modern 'orchestra pit' to allow the singers to be heard and seen more clearly; his vision for a new way of experiencing theatre was so extensive that in order to fully execute it, he had his own theatre built at Bayreuth.

Wagner's music dramas were often composed on a vast scale, with large orchestras, hugely demanding vocal parts and sometimes enormous durations. He drove the drama along with harmony that was strikingly radical not just in its embracing of added 'colour' and dissonance, but in the way he built up moments of tension on top of one another. He would then delay the resolution of this tension to create a sense of yearning, finally released in moments of ecstasy that are almost unmatched within music.

He used musical symbolism to enrich the drama within his operas, thanks to his invention of the *leitmotif*. These short fragments of melody corresponded to a particular character, place, object or emotion. Spun together in musical counterpoint, they create a complex web of extra-musical meaning, operating on an almost subconscious level – a network of musical and dramatic memories that live in his audience's minds.

*Parsifal* was Wagner's final music drama, premiered in 1882 at the recently-completed Bayreuth opera house. However it was conceived much earlier, in 1857, during the twelve year break between Acts 2 and 3 of *Siegfried*, the penultimate part of the *Ring Cycle*, when he also created *Tristan und Isolde* and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

As in the other major works Wagner drafted at this time, *Parsifal* has its roots in northern European myth and legend, which he considered the source of authentic German culture. *Parsifal* concerns the quest for the Holy Grail by the Arthurian knight known as Percival, Perceval or Parzival (in Old English, French and German respectively). It is a Christian epic with ancient origins, but also a story of heroism inspired by true love, and a metaphor for the Buddhist search for enlightenment – a new interest for Wagner at the time.

Legend has it that two relics from Christ's final days – the chalice used at the Last Supper, known as the Holy Grail, and a fragment of the Spear that wounded Christ on the cross – were guarded by a brotherhood of knights, and in *Parsifal* the Grail's sanctuary is in a mythical location in Spain, called Monsalvat. In the **Prelude to Act 1**, the scene is set with a through-composed piece of orchestral music. Unlike a conventional opera overture, there is no sense of a synopsis; instead, Wagner sets out the central *leitmotifs* that will recur throughout the opera. The long opening melody contains within it the seeds of the Redemption motif, a motif representing the Wound and Suffering; and finally a motif pertaining to the Spear; Faith follows in a serene wind chorale; and a motif known as the 'Dresden Amen', representing the Grail. The breadth of the music, shimmering textures and frequent silences help to create a reverential, mystical atmosphere.

Act 1 begins in a forest glade. An old knight, Gurnemanz, wakes two sentries; they pray before preparing a bath for Amfortas, ruler of the Kingdom of the Grail and successor to his father, Titurel. Amfortas was wounded by the Spear when the fallen knight Klingsor stole it; Klingsor then castrated himself with it in an attempt to purge himself of sin, and has since become a magician. Gurnemanz is seeking 'a pure fool made wise through compassion', who, it is prophesied, will be able to heal Amfortas. Kundry, a woman suspected of witchcraft, arrives with healing balsam from Arabia, before Parsifal wanders into the scene bearing a swan he has killed. Kundry quizzes him, and it seems that Parsifal knows almost nothing about himself – could he be the 'pure fool'? The knights bear Amfortas back to the Grail castle, bringing Parsifal with them.

At the Grail castle, Amfortas reluctantly uncovers the Grail, singing of his sin-induced torment and consecrating bread and wine for Communion; the 'pure fool' prophecy is quoted, as are Christ's offers of his body and blood. Amfortas is borne off again in a procession, wound gaping, and Parsifal clutches his heart in sympathetic pain.

Act 2 takes place in the domain of the ex-knight, now magician, Klingsor. He compels Kundry to seduce Parsifal, who has fought his way to Klingsor's enchanted garden and is being caressed by flower maidens. Transformed into a great beauty, Kundry says she saw Parsifal suckling at his mother's breast, and that his mother died because he left her and never returned. She elicits a kiss from him, asking for the love he owes his mother. He resists Kundry's further entreatments and realises this is the very kind of corruption that caused Amfortas's undoing. Kundry and Klingsor attempt to stop him leaving; Klingsor hurls the Spear, which Parsifal takes and uses to make the sign of the cross; the castle and magic garden collapse and disappear.

**Act 3** takes place years later, at the Kingdom of the Grail, in springtime. Gurnemanz, now old and hermetic, finds the groaning Kundry almost lifeless in the undergrowth, and revives her. An armoured man bearing a spear appears; Parsifal's *leitmotif* now appears in the minor, indicating that it is him, and he has changed. Gurnemanz recognises Parsifal

(and the Spear), asking him to disarm as it is Good Friday. Parsifal learns that Amfortas now refuses to reveal the Grail for Communion, longing instead for death; the order of knights has fallen apart and Titurel has died. Kundry and Gurnemanz bathe, bless and anoint Parsifal; Parsifal then baptises Kundry. Good Friday and Christ's self-sacrifice is reflected in the rejuvenation of springtime. The Grail, Amfortas's litter and Titurel's coffin are carried to the Hall of the Grail. Amfortas refuses to uncover the Grail, daring the knights to kill him. Parsifal appears, touching his Spear to Amfortas' wound and healing him. Kundry, redeemed, dies. Parsifal becomes the new lord of the Grail, taking the gleaming chalice and blessing the knights with it, whilst a white dove floats above him.

Anthony Friend

### ***A note on the reorchestration, by Matthew King***

“Has Wagner ever written anything better? The supreme psychological perception and precision as regards what can be communicated here, the extreme of concision and directness of form, every nuance of feeling conveyed epigrammatically; a clarity of musical description that reminds us of a shield of consummate workmanship; and finally an extraordinary sublimity of feeling, something experienced in the very depths of music... and a penetration of vision that cuts through the soul as with a knife, of sympathy with what is seen and shown forth. We get something comparable to it in Dante, but nowhere else. Has any painter ever depicted so sorrowful a look of love as Wagner does in the final accents of his Prelude?”

So wrote Nietzsche, about Parsifal, in a letter in 1887. Although he publicly criticised the work, in private he was overwhelmed by its beauty. Many of us have had a similar experience encountering Parsifal. I remember being amazed by its extraordinary musical power when I first heard the opera as a teenager, and I was delighted to discover, in a conversation with a young composer only today, that they had a “life changing experience” when they first heard Parsifal.

Debussy (another critic of Wagner's) wrote ‘In Parsifal there are orchestral sonorities that are unique and hitherto unknown, of great nobility and power. It is one of the greatest monuments ever raised to the imperishable glory of music.’ Many admirers of the work have found the unique orchestral sound of Wagner's last work especially alluring. It seems that, after completing the Ring Cycle, Wagner was aiming for a less dense, more refined orchestral sound in which he was fascinated by the contrast between pure instrumental timbre and complex mixtures of instrumental sound, or what Pierre Boulez once described as “the constant oscillation between knowledge and illusion.”

It has been a great privilege to work on this reorchestration of Act 3 of Parsifal, Wagner's last compositional statement, which contains some of his finest inventions: the wonderful Good Friday Music, which marks a high point in his most refined lyrical style, the dark and tortuous depths of the funeral music for Titurel, and the magnificent final scene, in which deathless torment encounters redemption and healing.

As with my other reductions of Wagner, my intention has been to reduce the scoring from that of a large orchestra to a chamber orchestra whilst maintaining its essential sound so that it remains almost indistinguishable from Wagner's original score. Today's performance will no doubt reveal the success or otherwise of this undertaking!

Matthew King, October 2024

### **Sir John Tomlinson *Gurnemanz***

John Tomlinson was born in Lancashire. He gained a B.Sc. in Civil Engineering at Manchester University before winning a scholarship to the Royal Manchester College of Music. He was awarded a C.B.E. in 1997 and knighted in the Queen's Birthday Honours of 2005. He was awarded the Royal Philharmonic Society Music Award for Singer in 1991, 1998 and 2007 and in 2014 their Gold Medal.

John Tomlinson's engagements include performances at La Scala, Milan, Rome, Barcelona, Geneva, Lisbon, Metropolitan Opera, New York, Chicago, San Francisco, San Diego, Tokyo, Opera Australia, Paris, Amsterdam, Berlin (Deutsche Oper and Deutsche Staatsoper), Dresden, Hamburg, Frankfurt, Munich, Vienna, Antwerp, and Bilbao and the Festivals of Bayreuth (where he sang for eighteen consecutive seasons), Orange, Aix-en-Provence, Salzburg, Edinburgh and the Maggio Musicale, Florence. He has sung regularly with English National Opera since 1974 and with the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, since 1977 and has also appeared with all the other leading British opera companies. His repertoire includes Wotan DAS RHEINGOLD and DIE WALKÜRE, Wanderer SIEGFRIED, Hagen GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG, Titurel and Gurnemanz PARSIFAL, King Marke TRISTAN UND ISOLDE, Heinrich LOHENGRIN, Hans Sachs DIE MEISTERSINGER VON NÜRNBERG, Landgraf TANNHÄUSER, title role and Daland FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER, Swallow PETER GRIMES, Baron Ochs DER ROSENKAVALIER, Boromeo PALESTRINA, Orestes ELEKTRA, Moses MOSES UND ARON, Green Knight in the world premiere of Harrison Birtwistle's GAWAIN, Claggart BILLY BUDD, Doctor WOZZECK, Rocco FIDELIO, King Philip and Grand Inquisitor DON CARLOS, Sarastro DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE, Leporello and Commendatore DON GIOVANNI, Lindorf, Coppelius, Dr Miracle and Dapertutto LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN, Golaud and Arkel PELLÉAS ET MÉLISANDE, Boris Timofeyevich Ismailov LADY MACBETH OF MTSENSK, title role, Pimen and Varlaam BORIS GODUNOV, Ivan Susanin A LIFE FOR A TSAR, Fiesco SIMON BOCCANEGRA, Tiresias OEDIPUS, Dosifey KHOVANSCHINA, The General

THE GAMBLER, Thomas à Becket MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL, Ivan Yaklovlevich, Newspaper Clerk and Doctor THE NOSE, Sergeant of Police THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE and title roles in BLUEBEARD'S CASTLE, OBERTO, MOSE IN EGITTO, Priesterkönig in Jörg Widmann's BABYLON, and the world premieres of Birtwistle's THE MINOTAUR, Brett Dean's LAST DAYS OF SOCRATES and Ghost of Old Hamlet in the world premiere of Brett Dean's HAMLET, Doctor Charles Conde in Thomas Ades' EXTERMINATING ANGEL and the title role in THE MIKADO. He took the title role of KING LEAR at the Grange Festival in 2021.

John Tomlinson has a large concert repertoire and has sung with all the leading British orchestras and in Germany, Italy, Belgium, Holland, France, Spain, Denmark and the U.S.A. He has made many recordings including Wotan, Wanderer, Hagen, Hans Sachs, Titirel, Don Alfonso COSÌ FAN TUTTE, Leporello, and title roles LE NOZZE DI FIGARO and BLUEBEARD'S CASTLE, Beethoven CHORAL SYMPHONY, MESSIAH, ACIS AND GALATEA and the Verdi REQUIEM. Videos include MARIA STUARDA, PETER GRIMES, GIULIO CESARE, RIGOLETTO, DAS RHEINGOLD, DIE WALKÜRE, SIEGFRIED and THE MINOTAUR.

In the 2024/25 season he will sing Grandpa in the world premiere of Mark-Anthony Turnage's FESTEN at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, and Dikoi in KATYA KABANOVA and Titirel in the new production of PARSIFAL at the Glyndebourne Festival.

### **Barbara Scott *Kundry***

Barbara Scott Mezzo-soprano lives in Muir of Ord, and is currently studying with Judith Howarth at the NE Scotland Music School. She is delighted to be performing for the first time with the Mahler Players. She combines her singing activities with an NHS career in Radiotherapy Physics. She has performed a variety of principal roles with companies across Scotland. Highlights include the title role in Bizet's Carmen; Olga in Tchaikovsky's Eugene Onegin; Dritte Dame in Mozart's Die Zauberflöte; and several Verdi roles - Fenena (Nabucco), Maddalena (Rigoletto) and Ulrika (Un ballo in maschera). Her professional concert engagements as alto soloist have included Rossini's Petite Messe Solonelle for Edinburgh Bach Choir; Beethoven's 9th Symphony for the St Andrew Orchestra; the Bach St John Passion for Stonehaven Chorus; Mozart Requiem for Arbroath Choral Society; and Handel's Messiah at Inverness Cathedral. She was particularly honoured to be the invited soloist for the St Andrew Orchestra in 2022, singing a selection of songs and arias including the UK premiere of the cantata Rain in Summer by John Glenesk Mortimer. Barbara also enjoys performing regular recitals with her trio Sopranaria, featuring art song and operatic duets. This summer she was asked to jump in to the Oxenfoord International Summer School to perform comic roles in scenes from Cimarosa's Il matrimonio segreto and Gilbert & Sullivan's The Mikado. She has

performed Wagner's song cycle, the *Wesendonck Lieder*, in the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

### **Julian Hubbard *Parsifal***

Upcoming and current engagements of English tenor Julian Hubbard include LARS in the world premiere of Turnage's *Festen* Royal Opera House Covent Garden, GALLO in the world premiere of Miroslav Srnka's *Voice Killer* Theater an der Wien, VAUDÈMONT *Jolanthe und der Nussknacker* and SIEGMUND *Die Walküre* in concert Volksoper Wien, FROH *Das Rheingold* and PETER QUINT *The Turn of the Screw* La Monnaie and *Die erste Walpurgisnacht* Orquesta Nacionales de España. He recently sang PANAIT *The Greek Passion* Salzburger Festspiele, FROH English National Opera, BALTASAR MATEUS in Azio Corghi's *Blimunda* Teatro Nacional de Sao Carlos Lisbon, SKURATOV *From the House of the Dead*, TICHON *Katya Kabanova* and CASSIUS in the world premiere of Battistelli's *Julius Caesar* Opera di Roma.

Other past engagements include *Parsifal* (title) Teatro Massimo Palermo, Danish National Symphony Orchestra and La Monnaie, and SIEGMUND Stadttheater Klagenfurt, HOFFMANN *Tales of Hoffmann* Irish National Opera and Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe, VICTORIN/GASTON *Die tote Stadt* RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, and PRIEST *Il Prigioniero* Théâtre de la Monnaie and Oper Stuttgart. He sang JIMMY MAHONEY *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* Opera Theatre Company, HUNTSMAN *Rusalka* and MALCOLM *Macbeth* La Monnaie, GAMEKEEPER *Rusalka* Scottish Opera, TAMINO *Die Zauberflöte* Longborough Festival Opera, DON JOSÉ *Carmen* Lyric Opera Dublin, PINKERTON *Madama Butterfly* Irish National Opera.

Julian has performed at the Edinburgh and Aldeburgh Festivals, the Wigmore Hall and BBC Radio 3. He also appears on the La Monnaie DVD of *Rusalka* as the HUNTSMAN. Julian has worked with conductors Fabio Luisi, Richard Bonyngne, Adam Fischer, Carlo Rizzi, Alain Altinoglu, Paolo Carignani, Stuart Stratford and Anthony Negus and directors Graham Vick, Stefan Herheim, Andrea Breth, Anthony Macdonald, Stewart Laing, and Alfred Kirchner. He trained at the Royal College of Music and The National Opera Studio London. He currently studies with Janice Chapman and Julian Gavin.

### **Paul Carey Jones *Amfortas***

Welsh-Irish bass-baritone Paul Carey Jones has appeared as a principal guest artist for opera companies across the UK and Europe. He was winner of the 2013 Wagner Society Singing Competition, and was recently elected an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music in recognition of his contribution to the classical music industry.

His operatic work includes appearances for the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera, Northern Ireland Opera, Teatro Comunale Bolzano, Teatro Comunale di Bologna, Gothenburg Opera, Opera Holland Park, and the

Icelandic Opera. He has appeared extensively as Wotan in Wagner's Ring cycle, most notably for Longborough Festival Opera, where Gramophone magazine recently described him as being "well along the path to being one of the towering Wotans of our time".

His extensive discography includes three solo song albums, *Enaid - Songs of the Soul* with Llyr Williams, *Songs Now* with Ian Ryan, and *Song Lied Cân* with Katharine Dain and Jocelyn Freeman, the title role in Arwel Hughes' *Dewi Sant*, as well as the original cast recordings of *Hedd Wyn 2117* (Stephen McNeff / Gruff Rhys) and *Under Milk Wood* (John Metcalf / Dylan Thomas).

A committed advocate of contemporary music, he has given premiere performances of operas, symphonies, songs and cycles by composers such as Stuart MacRae, John Metcalf, Jonathan Dove, Stephen McNeff, Sadie Harrison, Brian Irvine, Gavin Higgins, Gareth Glyn and Emily Hall.

His critically acclaimed first book *Giving It Away - Classical Music in Lockdown and other fairytales* was published in October 2020 and is on sale from online booksellers worldwide.

He is currently appearing as Monterone *Rigoletto* for Welsh National Opera, and his future plans include his title role debut in *Der Fliegende Holländer* for Opera Holland Park, and the world premiere recording of Grace Williams' *Missa Cambrensis* with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales.

**The Mahler Players** were founded by Tomas Leakey in 2013.

As part of our *Mahler in Miniature* project we performed chamber orchestra versions of Mahler's First, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Ninth and Tenth Symphonies, *Das Lied von der Erde*, and most of Mahler's other song cycles. We have commissioned many new works, including *Birth-Rebirth* by leading Scottish composer Stuart MacRae. Since 2017 we have had a particular focus on the music of Wagner, which has included the complete Act 1 from *Die Walküre*, Act 2 from *Tristan und Isolde*, Act 3 from *Siegfried* and substantial sections of music from *Götterdämmerung*, *Parsifal* and *Tannhäuser*. We have worked with some of the greatest singers of our era, including Sir John Tomlinson, Magdalena Anna Hofmann, Peter Wedd and Lee Bisset and in 2023 were joined by the noted Wagnerian Anthony Negus as guest conductor. We are delighted to welcome Anthony back to the orchestra to conduct our second performance of Act 3 from *Parsifal* this weekend.

In 2021 we released our first album, which features the world premiere recording of Matthew King's *Richard Wagner in Venice: A Symphony*. This Symphony brings to life for the first time many of Wagner's late sketches, left unfinished at the time of his death in



1883, and until now largely unknown and unheard outside specialist circles. Also featuring is Wagner's own beautiful masterpiece for chamber orchestra, *Siegfried Idyll*. The CD is available at today's performance.

### **Tomas Leahey (conductor, 2<sup>nd</sup> November)**

Tomas is the Founder and Music Director of The Mahler Players. In this role he has collaborated with world-renowned artists, recorded a well-received album and conducted most of Mahler's music, as well as a wide range of repertoire ranging in period from Bach to Boulez and contemporary composers.

Tomas is particularly passionate about Wagner's music and his performances have included complete acts from *Die Walküre*, *Tristan und Isolde* and *Siegfried* as well as music from *Tannhäuser*, *Lohengrin*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Götterdämmerung* and *Parsifal*. Tomas' work on the music of Wagner led to him being awarded the Bayreuth Stipendium by the Wagner Society Scotland in 2022.

In the youth music and educational realm, Tomas is the conductor of the Highland Regional Youth Orchestra and he has also led projects in which works such as Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale*, Walton's *Façade* and the BBC Ten Pieces were performed in schools across the north of Scotland to hundreds of children.

Tomas began his musical life as a trombonist, playing in the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland. He is also a pianist and began conducting during his time at the University of Cambridge. He studied with and was encouraged in his conducting by the formidable late George Hurst and undertook additional study with Denise Ham at the London Conducting Academy and at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. He further developed his craft through attending masterclasses, including with Johannes Schlaefli, Alexander Vedernikov and Toby Purser. Another important influence has been the conductor Anthony Negus.

As well as his work with the Mahler Players and Highland Regional Youth Orchestra, Tomas made his debut with the Aberdeen City Orchestra in spring 2024 and returned to the orchestra for a second collaboration in September.

### **Anthony Negus (conductor, 3<sup>rd</sup> November)**

Anthony Negus is one of the leading Wagnerian conductors of our day. 2023 saw him give two highly acclaimed cycles of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* for Melbourne Opera (MO). This was preceded by a concert performance of *Siegfried*, and productions of *Die Walküre* (in 2022) and *Das Rheingold* (in 2021). For MO he has also conducted *Fidelio* (2020), *Der fliegende Holländer* (2019) and *Tristan und Isolde* (2018), for which he won a coveted Green Room Award for best conductor.

He is the longstanding Music Director of Longborough Festival Opera (LFO), where in summer 2024 he conducted four enthusiastically received full *Ring* cycles. During his many years with LFO, he has established himself as one of the most perceptive and original conductors of the Wagner repertoire, giving acclaimed performances of the *Ring* cycle (2008–12 individual operas, 2013 full cycle, all directed by Alan Privett), *Tannhäuser* (also directed by Privett), *Tristan und Isolde* (directed by Carmen Jakobi) and *Der fliegende Holländer* (directed by Thomas Guthrie). The 2017 revival of *Tristan und Isolde* met with especial critical and audience acclaim. In the same year, the London Wagner Society awarded Anthony Negus the Goodall Award for ‘his devotion to the works of Richard Wagner’. For LFO, Negus has also conducted highly praised productions of *Die Zauberflöte* and *Ariadne auf Naxos*.

Elsewhere, recent appearances have included *Un ballo in maschera* (concert performance) for Chelsea Opera Group in 2023, *Der fliegende Holländer* (two concert performances) for Grange Park Opera with Sir Bryn Terfel and Rachel Nicholls in 2022, and a guest performance of *Die Walküre* for English National Opera in 2021. Other guest appearances have included *Lulu* for the Fondazione Haydn di Bolzano e Trento, Italy (directed by David Pountney), two Beethoven concerts with the George Enescu Orchestra in the Athenaeum in Bucharest, and *Parsifal*, *Der fliegende Holländer* and a concert of American music in Lübeck. He has also conducted a performance of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* for Glyndebourne Festival, and *Parsifal* with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra at the Wellington Festival.

For Welsh National Opera he has conducted more than 150 performances in a wide repertoire, including works by Beethoven, Berg, Gluck, Janáček, James MacMillan (*The Sacrifice*, broadcast by the BBC and released as a recording by Chandos), Martinů, Mussorgsky, Richard Strauss, Wagner, Weber and, especially, Mozart. Particular highlights of his work with WNO have included *Parsifal* and several of Richard Strauss’s operas. As an assistant conductor, he worked with Pierre Boulez on *Pelléas et Mélisande*, with Reginald Goodall on *Tristan und Isolde*, *Parsifal* and *The Valkyrie*, and with Sir Richard Armstrong, Sir Charles Mackerras, Carlo Rizzi, Mark Wigglesworth and Vladimir Jurowski.

Future engagements include Wagner’s *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* with Melbourne Opera in February 2025 as well as further Ring Cycles in 2026. For Longborough Festival Opera he will conduct Debussy’s *Pelléas and Mélisande* in summer 2025, followed by *Tristan und Isolde* in 2026 and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* in 2027. In 2028 and 2029 he will conduct *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung* for Grange Park Opera.

Anthony was born near Buckingham, attended Stowe School and studied clarinet and piano at the Royal College of Music. He went on to read Music at Christ Church Oxford, and gained opera conducting and répétiteur experience at the Else Mayer-Lismann Opera Workshop and the London Opera Centre. He studied conducting with Franco Ferrara in

Sienna and with George Hurst in the UK. He made his conducting debut in Wuppertal with d'Albert's *Tiefland*, and worked as an assistant conductor at Bayreuth Festival and in Hamburg.

### **Emma Donald (leader)**

Originally from the Highlands, Emma Donald has been playing the violin since the age of 8. Growing up, she enjoyed learning both classical and traditional Scottish music, and has strived to keep both passions running simultaneously. She has a first class honours degree in music from the University of Edinburgh, and she works full time as a freelance musician based in Glasgow.

Emma is very passionate about chamber music, she is a founding member of the Fyrish String Quartet and the Cairdeas Trio. She is also an accomplished composer, with Fyrish String Quartet premiering her piece "The Sound of Sleepless Kings" earlier this year. Emma is one half of a contemporary folk duo with harpist Isbel Pendlebury. Their original music is being featured as part of "The Farewell Glacier", a programme being broadcast on BBC Radio 3 in January 2024.

#### FIRST VIOLIN

Emma Donald (leader), Simon Evans,  
Emily Birse, Francis Moore-Colyer,  
Ruth Kalitski

COR ANGLAIS Krys Hawryszczuk

CLARINET Mhairi Callander,  
Mike Weare (doubling BASS  
CLARINET)

#### SECOND VIOLIN

Andrew Birse, David Murray, Ellis Ash,  
Hazel Younger, Aden Mazur

BASSOON Bruce Gordon, Kate Smith

#### VIOLA

Rachel Farmer, Nick Hadwen, Rebecca  
Minio-Paluello

FRENCH HORN Rob Farmer, Wendy  
Ritchie, Willie Aristide-Deighan,  
William Jamieson

TRUMPET Alasdair Grant

#### CELLO

Kate Ellingson, Calle Arngrip, Rachel  
Steele, Katy Bell

TROMBONE Mark Bell, Dave Allan

#### DOUBLE BASS

Tam Darlugdach, Chris Sergeant

TUBA Gavin Woods

TIMPANI Ally Russell

FLUTE Babs Crocker

BELLS Euan Wilson

OBOE Leslie Callander

HARP Erica Sinclair

## SOPRANOS

Caroline Boerner, Phoebe Csenki, Gabrielle Kornberg, Jolanta Kudra

## ALTOS

Luca-Zsuzsana Cervení, Kirsten Makins, Barbara Scott, Jane Thomson

## TENORS

John Black, Eddie Harwood, Kieran Grome, Luke Metcalfe, Colin Thomas, Gordon Tocher, Aidan Vogelzang, Pete Wychrij

## BASSES

Angus Bethune, Graeme Buist, Duncan Forbes, William Griffin, Joseph Kelly, Jim MacPherson, Andrew McIntosh, Tembu Rongong, James Ross, Sebastian Sinfield-Hain, Theo Whalley-Hoggins

LANGUAGE COACH and DIRECTION Carmen Jakobi-Negus

SURTITLES OPERATOR Mike Crocker

ORCHESTRAL MANAGER Rob Farmer

## FRONT OF HOUSE

Ailsa Bell, Hilary Cameron, Kavey Fung, Kim Kelly, Sam Leakey, Bea Wallace

## MAHLER PLAYERS TRUSTEES

Mhairi Callander, Rob Farmer, Rachel Farmer, Tomas Leakey

### **Our next performances**

Saturday 31st May 2025 - 8pm at Inverness Cathedral

Sunday 1st June 2025 - 3pm at Strathpeffer Pavilion

### **Mahler Symphony No. 3**

*Version for chamber orchestra by Rob Farmer*

Laura Margaret Smith *mezzo-soprano*

Tomas Leakey *conductor*

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Membership costs £30 per year for single and £40 for joint membership. Students and under 30s can join FREE. Join online at [wagnersociety.org](http://wagnersociety.org) or email:

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# WAGNER SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND



*Proud sponsors of the Mahler Players, and of the annual Bayreuth Scholarship.*

The Wagner Society of Scotland offers:

- Annual Courses
- Monthly talks
- Priority booking for tickets at the Bayreuth Festival
- Participation in the annual RWVI Congress
- Recitals and talks by scholarship winners

We warmly welcome new members, and guests to our events. For more information, please visit our website:

[www.wagnerscotland.net](http://www.wagnerscotland.net)

### **With warm thanks to**

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### **The Mahler Circle - members**

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We have a supporters' network called **The Mahler Circle**. For an annual contribution you would:

- receive 2 complimentary tickets to each programme we perform, at the venue of your choice and with seats reserved.
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- receive a complimentary copy of our CD, *Richard Wagner in Venice*.
- have the option to be acknowledged in our concert programmes.

We also welcome any other support that may be available.

Additionally, we are keen to develop further relationships with businesses - local, regional and national.

If you would like to know more about any of the above options, please get in touch with us: [contact@mahlerplayers.co.uk](mailto:contact@mahlerplayers.co.uk).

We thank you for your support and generosity!

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