

Saturday 16 March 2019
West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge

HAYDN

*The
Seasons*



CAMBRIDGE
PHILHARMONIC

Saturday 18 May 2019 at 7.30pm
West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge



SHOSTAKOVICH

Piano Concerto No 2

SCHREKER

Prelude to a Drama

STRAUSS

Ein Heldenleben

Conductor Timothy Redmond
Piano Martin James Bartlett
BBC Young Musician of the Year 2014
Solo Violin Paula Muldoon
Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra

**“Martin James
Bartlett’s playing
was thrilling.”**

The Times

Pre-Concert Talk

6.45pm, free
With Timothy Redmond

Tickets: reserved £12, £16, £20, £25 (Students and under-18s £10 on the door)
Box Office: 01223 357851 (Cambridge Live) **Online:** www.cambridgephilharmonic.com

Cambridge Philharmonic presents

Haydn
The Seasons

English translation by Paul McCreesh

Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra & Chorus

Conductor: Timothy Redmond

Leader: Paula Muldoon

Soprano: Rebecca Bottone

Tenor: James Way

Bass: Milan Siljanov

The Seasons

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Background



As all our lives are spent within the natural cycle of the year, it is understandable that composers should be inspired by the seasons as a theme. Glazunov and Tchaikovsky wrote works entitled *The Seasons* whilst Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* has become one of his best known works.

These works all convey the different moods experienced throughout the year. Glazunov produced an allegorical ballet with characters such as Frost; Tchaikovsky wrote 12 piano pieces, one for each month of the year (later arranged for orchestra); and Vivaldi came up with four *concerti grossi*.

Although a narrative aspect is present in all these compositions, Haydn goes much further, as he uses both words and music in his charming and graphic portrayal of the four seasons. Haydn wrote *The Seasons* towards the end of his life, together with the oratorio *The Creation*. *The Creation* has enjoyed much greater success, however, and much more frequent performances, appearing regularly in the repertoire of choral societies.

Haydn spent most of his career in the service of the princes of the Esterházy family, where he was valued for the outstanding originality and beauty of his works. He was incredibly hard-working and, at the whim of his employers, spent some time in Vienna, but mostly at their country estates at Eisenstadt and Esterháza. He was responsible for a band of musicians and was expected to produce a constant stream of new works. Though his talents were valued he was never more than a servant to his employers. He seems to have been somewhat isolated there, physically because of the self-contained community of the estate, and socially as he ranked below his masters. He had to maintain decorum as a princely employee, while being expected to keep enough

formality in his relations with the other employed musicians to preserve discipline. In addition to this he was unhappily married to a woman with whom he had nothing in common and with whom he had no children.

It was only in later years that he had the opportunity to travel to London, for two extensive periods. Here he was fêted and appreciated, writing some of his best and most original symphonies, and performing in concerts arranged by the impresario violinist Salomon to great acclaim. He was awarded an Oxford doctorate and was entertained and sought after by music enthusiasts amongst the well-off and the nobility. Haydn suddenly found himself no longer treated as a servant but as a valued musician, and during this period he developed many friendships and became rather rich. He later declared that this had been the happiest period of his life.

Back in Vienna, in his twilight years, he was comfortably off, although the Napoleonic wars made a worrying backcloth to life at the time. He set about writing *The Creation* and *The Seasons*, both of which originated from English texts. Although at different times in his life he had set words to music, Haydn had concentrated on operas, settings of folksongs and masses. This was the first time he had composed something so entirely different. It is known that he had been extremely moved in London by hearing performances of Handel's *Messiah* and *Israel in Egypt*. It is believed that it was there that he was given a libretto originally intended for Handel. This became the text put together for him by Gottfried van Swieten, director of the court library in Vienna, which went on to form the basis for *The Creation*. First performed in Vienna in 1798, it was a resounding success, and afterwards Haydn set to work on *The Seasons*. He found this did not go smoothly and it taxed him severely, but it was finally performed in 1801. Whereas the story of *The Creation* was a well-known subject to audiences, and the storyline is a unified whole, *The Seasons* is really four separate scenes of rural life. Instead of the three archangels telling the story of creation, there are country folk experiencing the rhythms of rural life.

Although *The Creation* has maintained its popularity *The Seasons* has, by comparison, been somewhat undeservedly neglected. Describing it as 'a bit of an unloved child', musician and conductor Paul McCreesh decided to rectify this and has produced the edition that is being used tonight. First of all he turned to the problem of the text. The original source is actually an English text, *The Seasons* by Scottish writer James Thomson (1700-48). Gottfried van Swieten translated this into German and then back into somewhat clumsy English. McCreesh decided to produce a new English translation that would

reflect 18th century English. He submitted this to historian Ruth Smith, an expert in this field, who has written extensively about Jennens, Handel's librettist. She was very encouraging, showing that his feel for 18th century English libretti was well-founded thanks to his familiarity with Handel.

McCreesh also wanted to recreate the sort of body of musicians that Haydn would have used. For public performances in Vienna Haydn used a large band of players, asking for instruments to be doubled or at least increased, and suggesting that there should be three wind sections. This would be particularly effective in, for example, the hunting chorus in Part 3. It is, however, possible to perform *The Seasons* with a normal sized orchestra.

The creation story from Genesis provides an ambitious and impressive theme for Haydn's oratorio *The Creation*. *The Seasons*, however, is in essence a rural idyll describing country folk going about their different activities, following the natural calendar, while recognising God's part in the seasonal cycle. The music is delightful and offers a wealth of treasures for both soloists, chorus and instrumentalists. At no time is the orchestra there as a mere accompaniment to the singers. The orchestral writing is as full of tuneful themes, dramatic effect and instrumental colour as any of Haydn's symphonies. There are three soloists (Hannah, Simon and Lucas), country people who move the story forward with recitatives and arias. The chorus represents the country folk in general.



PART 1: SPRING

After a dramatic and often stern orchestral introduction alternating with gentler themes, the soloists remark that the rigours of winter are being replaced by the messengers of spring. In the orchestra we hear the melting snow turning to torrents. The chorus follows with *Come, gentle Spring*, a cheerful and lilting 6/8 tune. Simon sings of the jolly farmer, whistling happily as he strides across the furrows and scatters the seed. The simple rustic tune featuring the bassoon is followed by a short quotation from Haydn's *Surprise Symphony*. A prayer is offered for the gifts of rain and sunshine, 'Heaven be gracious', a dignified plea from soloists and chorus.

As the tempo increases the chorus lines become more complex and are backed by an ornate and bubbling orchestration. The prayer is answered and the country folk delight in the 'charming sights, flowery vales, meadows green' and again offer praises to God. The exclamation of 'Wonderful..... bountiful.....infinite God', seems to echo Handel's *Messiah*, which Haydn had heard in London. Spring ends with the interweaving lines of the chorus proclaiming 'Hymns of Praise we sing to Thee' with the vigorous backing of the full orchestra.

PART 2: SUMMER

A quiet *adagio*, full of mystery, portrays the transition from fearful night to daybreak. The countryman salutes the dawn and his daily toils. In a passage reminiscent of *The Creation* Haydn depicts the sunrise: the vocal and orchestral lines creep ever upward and increase in volume, leading to the hymn of praise 'Hail, O glorious sun'. The theme expands to include a general glorification of 'Nature fair'. The soloists tell of the reapers cutting and binding the golden corn as the heat increases. The orchestra seems almost hesitant and limping as the muted strings lead into Lucas's aria. Nature, man and beast are exhausted and parched, blossoms wilted. However, Hannah has cheer to offer, singing of 'shady groves, refreshing shade, a bubbling brooklet', each image accompanied by Haydn's instrumental word-painting. After the mention of a 'shepherd's reed', the oboe duets with Hannah as she sings that 'life through every vein is flowing'.

There is a forewarning of an approaching storm with a rumble of timpani. The chorus sings 'Ah! The storm approaches near!' accompanied by bursts of horns, timpani and crashing chords. The country folk are fearful and, as they comment on the violence of the storm, they cry 'Save us!' and 'Heaven protect us!' The storm passes and eventide approaches. Little phrases in the orchestra depict quails, crickets, frogs and the toll of the evening curfew. The country folk return to 'sweet repose' and all is still.

Interval

Part 3: AUTUMN

A charming and cheerful melody opens Part 3, as the country folk celebrate the bountiful harvest, the outcome of nature's blessings and mankind's toil. Some of the loveliest orchestral writing accompanies the soloists, who sing in praise of 'noble toil'. The chorus joins in the praise, saying that cottage, garments, produce, indeed every good comes from toil.

After a brief mention of the flirting of the village lads and lasses, Lucas sings in praise of the charms of Hannah, a simple country lass. Hannah responds in similar vein, both rejecting 'fine ladies, mincing dandies, airs and graces'. Love and constancy will stand the test of time: 'only death this bond can break'.

The next episode is introduced by saying that certain animals take a toll of the crops, so the hunt is necessary as well as good sport. Simon describes the hound in pursuit of game, and how the bird is shot, followed by a brief reference to the hunting of the hare. A blare of hunting horns awakens the chorus: 'Hark, hear the sounds of the chase'. This time it is the pursuit of the stag and the orchestra's ranks of horn players have a field day, leading the chase thrillingly as the galloping rhythms take off. Whatever present-day audiences feel about the hunt, one is carried along by the excitement and noise of the chase.

After this comes the grape harvest and more revelry: 'Drink up, the wine is here!' After the drinking, comes the dancing. A lively 6/8 country dance with pipers, drummers, fiddlers and bagpipes strikes up, these instruments being clearly heard in the orchestration, and dancers of all ages join in. It is a Brueghel picture brought to life. It gets more boisterous and the rhythms more angular, with a reminder that the drinking and singing have been going on all the time.

Part 4: WINTER

The sombre mood of winter opens with an orchestral *adagio* in C minor. The soloists sing of 'freezing fogs, barren plains and dusky gloom'. The pictorial details of both words and music continue in this vein, and it seems as though the whole of nature has slowed down. The tempo speeds up as Lucas tells of a wanderer lost in drifting snow as dusk approaches, in despair until he catches sight of a light. When he reaches the house he finds inside a 'merry gathering' with people chatting while working at indoor tasks, making baskets

or spinning. There follows a song as the spinning wheel whirrs, a young lass's hope for a sweetheart and marriage.

Hannah entertains the young folk with a little ballad: 'A noble squire of great renown desired a lovely maid'. The company joins in the refrain, enjoying the tale. The maid in question seems to play along but in the end the squire gets his come-uppance.

Simon returns to the wintry theme, and muses that life is like the passing of the seasons and, as winter approaches, it is time to reflect on vain ambitions for fame or luxury. His verdict is: 'Only virtue lasts'. This leads into the *finale*. Simon proclaims: 'Then dawns that morn so glorious when God the Almighty gathers us.' A double chorus with soloists gives a vision of heaven as the final destination. One chorus asks questions about who is worthy to enter, and the other chorus gives a series of answers: 'The man whose life was incorrupt. The man whose lips spoke only truth. The man who helped the poor and weak.' The final plea from all singers is: 'Direct us in Thy ways and make us strong and brave, then we shall ascend into the glorious heavenly realm.'

Jennifer Day



Rebecca Bottone (soprano)



Rebecca Bottone was born in Bedfordshire and studied at the RAM.

Recent engagements include a WNO tour to Hong Kong with *Pelléas et Mélisande* Welsh National Opera, concerts with the Karlsruhe Festival, Clorinda *La Cenerentola* and Mabel *The Pirates of Penzance* (Scottish Opera), recording Amor in Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* with La Nuova Musica, Guinia in Mozart's *Lucio Silla* and Ilia in Mozart's *Idomeneo* at Buxton Opera, and a reprisal of the Olivier award-winning production of *Akhmaten* at ENO in the role of Queen Tye.

Further appearances include First Innocent in the world premiere of Birtwistle's *Minotaur* and First Niece *Peter Grimes* (Royal Opera House, Covent Garden), Cricket and Parrott in the World and USA premieres of Jonathan Dove's *The Adventures of Pinocchio* (Opera North and Minnesota Opera), Blonde *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (Aix-en-Provence Festival), Marie in the world premiere of Rufus Wainwright's *Prima Donna* (Manchester International Festival), Amanda in Ligeti's *Le Grand Macabre* and Casilda in *The Gondoliers* (English National Opera), Anne Egerman *A Little Night Music*, Johanna *Sweeney Todd* and Carrie *Carousel* (Théâtre du Châtelet, Paris) and the Maid in Adès' *Powder Her Face* and Semira in Arne's *Artaxerxes* at the Linbury Studio.

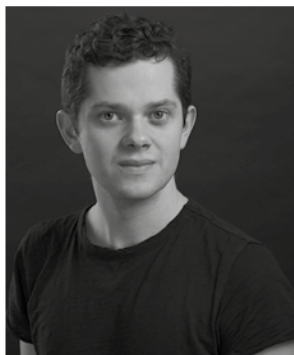
Rebecca has worked with many of the world's leading orchestras including the Gabrieli Consort and Players; she has sung *Charmeuse* in *Thaïs* under Eschenbach with Renee Fleming and also performed with the AAM and the RAI Turin; the CBSO, the Hallé and the Manchester Camerata; *St John Passion* with the Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano Giuseppe Verdi in Milan; the Philharmonia Orchestra under Sir Charles Mackerras; and the Tonhalle Zürich under Sir Mark Elder.

Recordings include Cis *Albert Herring* EMI and two Rossini roles for Opera Rara, Eurice *Adelaide di Borgogna* and Cleone *Ermione*. TV appearances include BBC 2's documentary *The Genius of Beethoven* and David Starkey's *Music and Monarchy*.

Future performances include Bauci *Bauci e Filemone*, Amore Gluck's *Orfeo* and Despina *Così fan Tutte* with the Classical Opera and concerts with the RPO, Capella Cracoviensis and Haydn's *Creation* with Zürich Opera.

James Way (tenor)

Photo: Ben McKee



Born in Sussex, tenor James Way was winner of the 2nd Prize in the 62nd Kathleen Ferrier Awards at Wigmore Hall. James is a former Britten-Pears Young Artist, a laureate of the 'Jardin des Voix' young artists programme of Les Arts Florissants, and holds an Independent Opera Voice Fellowship.

Rapidly gaining recognition in the Baroque repertoire, James was awarded the Rising Stars prize by the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, with whom he has performed Jupiter in Handel's *Semele* under Christophe Roussett and Haydn *The*

Creation under Adam Fischer.

Opera credits include his debuts with Staatsoper Berlin in Purcell's *King Arthur* (Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin and René Jacobs); and with the Philharmonia Orchestra and Jakub Hrůša in the role of the Holy Fool/*Boris Godunov* at the Royal Festival Hall; the Ballad Singer (Owen Wingrave) for Aldeburgh and Edinburgh International Festivals, and several roles at Garsington Opera including Davy in Roxanna Panufnik's *Silver Birch*. This season James debuts the role of Sellem in a worldwide tour of *The Rake's Progress* under the baton of Barbara Hannigan.

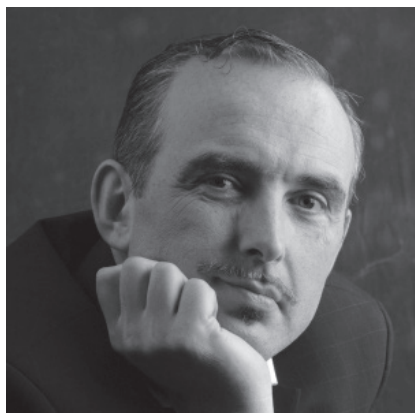
Recent concert highlights include Vaughan Williams' *Serenade to Music* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra (Last Night of the Proms), the title role in Handel's *Samson* with the Dunedin Consort, the title role in *Acis & Galatea* with William Christie and Les Arts Florissants, the world premiere of *Périple d'Hannon* by Arthur Levandier with L'Orchestre de Chambre de Paris, and the European premiere of Ross Harris' *FACE* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, with whom he performs Berlioz *Les nuits d'été* in 2019 conducted by Douglas Boyd. This season and beyond James joins notable ensembles including a *Messiah* tour with Les Arts Florissants, Bach's *St Matthew Passion* (Evangelist) with RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, performances and recordings of Purcell's *King Arthur* and *The Fairy Queen* with the Gabrieli Consort and Players, Vaughan Williams' *Symphony No. 3* with the CBSO under John Wilson and Handel's *Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* (Tempo) with the Freiburger Barockorchester under René Jacobs.

Haydn: *The Seasons*

Saturday 16 March, West Road Concert Hall

Cambridge Philharmonic is delighted to welcome Stephen Gadd who has very kindly stepped in at the last moment to replace Milan Siljanov who is unwell.

Stephen Gadd (baritone)



Born in Berkshire, Stephen Gadd was a Choral Scholar at St John's College, Cambridge, won the Kathleen Ferrier Memorial Scholarship, and was a finalist in the inaugural Plácido Domingo Operalia Competition.

In opera, he has appeared at the Brooklyn Academy of Music and Drama, the Baden Baden, Glyndebourne, Lucerne and Salzburg Festivals, and with the Royal Opera, English National Opera, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Grange

Park Opera, Opera Holland Park, Opera North, Scottish Opera, Welsh National Opera, Dallas Opera, Finnish National Opera, the Netherlands Opera, Den Norske Opera, the Paris Opera, the Opéra de Metz, the Opéra de Montpellier, the Opéra de Nantes, the Opéra national du Rhin and the Opéra de Rouen.

He sings regularly in concert, including performances with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Philharmonia Orchestra, and his recordings include Mahler *Das Lied von der Erde* with the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra. TV appearances include *La Traviata: Love, Death & Divas* for the BBC.

His current engagements include Charles *Anthropocene* and Monterone *Rigoletto* for Scottish Opera, Pietro Fléville *Andrea Chénier* for the Royal Opera, Priest Gregoria *The Greek Passion* for Opera North and *Carmina Burana* with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra.

Timothy Redmond (Conductor)



Timothy Redmond conducts opera and concerts throughout Europe and the US. He is Professor of Conducting at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Music Director of the Cambridge Philharmonic and is a regular guest conductor with the London Symphony and Royal Philharmonic Orchestras.

He has appeared in the UK with the BBC orchestras, the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, Britten Sinfonia, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, English Chamber Orchestra, Hallé, London Philharmonic Orchestra,

the Philharmonia, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Sinfonia Viva and the Ulster Orchestra. He also has a long-standing association with the Manchester Camerata. He has conducted widely throughout Europe and the US with orchestras including the St Louis Symphony, Filarmonica Arturo Toscanini, Concerto Budapest, Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana and the Rotterdam Philharmonic.

Timothy Redmond is well-known as a conductor of contemporary music and has a particular association with the music of Thomas Adès. Since working closely with the composer for the premiere of *The Tempest* at Covent Garden, he has conducted critically-acclaimed productions of *Powder Her Face* for English National Opera, Irish National Opera, the Royal Opera House and St Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre. He recently gave the Hungarian premiere of *Totentanz*, the Irish premiere of *Living Toys* and assisted the composer for the New York premiere of the Grammy-award winning production of *The Tempest* at the Metropolitan Opera.

In the opera house he has conducted over 70 productions for companies including Opera North, English National Opera, English Touring Opera and Almeida Opera. He gave the world premiere of Peter Ash's *The Golden Ticket* for Opera Theatre of St Louis and for Independent Opera at Sadler's Wells he conducted the UK premieres of Vosček's *Biedermann and the Arsonists* and Hartmann's *Simplicius Simplicissimus*. He has conducted productions in Bregenz (Austrian premiere of Richard Ayres' *The Cricket Recovers*), Tenerife