



The Kemsing Singers

Come and sing with us

New members are always welcome.

Rehearsals are on Mondays

7.30-9.30 in the St Edith Hall, Kemsing.

Please contact any of the following:

Margaret Holgate - 01732 454448
secretary@kemsingsingers.com

Sara Kemsley
musicaldirector@kemsingsingers.com

Jonathan Riley - 0741 595 7049
chairman@kemsingsingers.com

For more information visit:
www.kemsingsingers.com

We are also available for weddings and funerals.

A Night at the Opera
with the Kemsing Singers

14th May 2022 7.30 pm
St Edith Hall, Kemsing, TN15 6NA

Directed by Sara Kemsley
with Peter Young - piano

Soprano soloist : Naomi Kilby
Baritone soloist: Alistair Sutherland

A Night at the Opera

Programme

Giuseppe Verdi *Speed your journey* from Nabucco
Georges Bizet *Carmen* (concert version arr. Maurice Besly)

Interval

Andrew Lloyd-Webber *Phantom of the Opera* (medley arr. Ed Lojeski)
Stephen Sondheim *Send in the Clowns* from A Little Night Music

Gaetano Donizetti *Bella siccome un angelo* from Don Pasquale
W A Mozart *Cinque, dieci, venti..* from Marriage of Figaro

Gilbert & Sullivan *Try we lifelong* from The Gondoliers
Brightly shines our wedding day from The Mikado

Giacomo Puccini *Chi il bel sogno di Doretta* from La Rondine
W A Mozart *Pa-pa-pa-Papageno* from The Magic Flute

Gilbert & Sullivan *Chorus of Sailors and Girls* from HMS Pinafore
When I was a Lad from HMS Pinafore
When the foeman bares his steel from
Pirates of Penzance

Queen *Bohemian Rhapsody* arr. Mark Brymer

Thank you to other choir soloists tonight: Gillian Shilling, Dianne Blockley and Paul Edmunds and to Betty Bishop and Maureen Reynolds for their narrations.



The Kemsing Singers was founded in 1964 in the village of Kemsing but draws its membership from the broader Sevenoaks district. The choir gives at least four performances each year frequently supporting local charities and charitable groups. The choir's large repertoire includes the major choral classics, but rather than rely on extended choral works concerts include shorter items, many on the lighter side of classical music, and contemporary arrangements of songs and carols with opera and musicals also represented. Singers and audiences alike enjoy the variety.

For your diary:

May 16th 2022 "Society Cabaret"

Our end of season party for Friends and members
St Edith Hall, Kemsing

May 28th 2022 Otford Fete

We are performing at 1pm as part of a programme of fun events and performances

September 12th & 19th 2022– Open rehearsals

Why not come along and see if you like singing with us?
7.30pm St Edith Hall, Kemsing

For more news and information, please visit our amazing website
www.kemsingsingers.com

Sara Kemsley was born in Kent. She trained as a flute player and pianist at



the elite Junior Music School and became principal flute of the Kent County Youth Orchestra. A graduate of York University, she majored in performance and composition under Bernard Rands, David Blake and John Paynter. She went into school music teaching in West London but continued to perform in professional and semi-professional orchestras and chamber groups, including several tours with Pimlico Opera.

She returned to Kent in 1994 to further her career and stepped down from Headship in 2012. She, until recently, sang in the well-regarded Cantate Choir, which won Top Kent Choir in March 2014. She has since returned to more playing, composing and arranging with three new pieces in performance in 2018.

Peter Young studied music at Edinburgh University, where his teachers



included William Mathias and Kenneth Leighton. In 1972 he was appointed jointly to the Music Department of Sevenoaks School and to the post of organist and choir director at St. Nicholas, Sevenoaks. For most of his 36 years at Sevenoaks School he served as Assistant Director of Music. Retiring from the school in 2008 he has continued in post at St. Nicholas, as well as continuing to teach

privately. Other musical activities include composing, arranging, conducting, and on-going research into the life and work of the music educator and composer John Longmire. Apart from his musical pursuits he is currently chairman of Friends of Rheinbach (Sevenoaks' German twinning association) and enjoys cooking, reading, old maps, holidays, and being a grandfather.

Our thanks to Carole Ellmore, Barbara Reade and Jonathan for assistance in sponsoring our amazing soloists.

Naomi Kilby trained at Birmingham Conservatoire and Franz Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest. Opera credits include regular chorus for Opera Holland Park, including the role of First Bridesmaid in the 2021 season's production of *Le Nozze Di Figaro*, Woodland Sprite in the UK premiere of Picker's *Fantastic Mr Fox*, L'acquaiola *I Gioielli Della Madonna* and Una Novizia *Suor Angelica*, Buxton Gilbert & Sullivan Festival Chorus (cover Yum-Yum 2012), Solo Soprano *Too Hot To Handel* for Armonico Consort, Adele *Die Fledermaus* Opera South East, Clorinda *Cinderella* and Bertha *Barber of Seville (or Salisbury)* OperaUpClose, Belinda and Second Woman *Dido & Aeneas* Ad Parnassum and Despina *Così fan tutte* for St Alban's Chamber Opera. In 2012, Naomi formed the company Opera Alegria, acting as Co-Producer and singer. Roles include Monica *The Medium*, Aurielle Gold (Madame Herz) *The Impresario*, Giulia *La Scala Di Seta*, the title role in Donizetti's *Rita*, and Countess Adele in their acclaimed production of Rossini's *Count Ory*. A keen recitalist, Naomi has performed all over the UK and Europe, and works regularly both with the charity Lost Chord, and with Opera Holland Park's Inspire team providing entertainment and workshops in local communities, and for those living with Dementia. Naomi can next be seen in Opera Holland Park's upcoming production of Tchaikovsky's Eugene Onegin, and in the role of Pamina in Mozart's The Magic Flute for Opera Alegria as part of the 2022 Grimeborn Festival at Dalston's Arcola Theatre. www.naomikilby.com

Alistair Sutherland is a baritone living and working in London. He has completed the MA vocal studies course at the Royal Academy of Music. He began with the Opera Holland Park chorus in 2010 where he was selected as a 2012 Christie Collins Young Artist performing in Gianni Schicchi. He continues to work with the company as a chorister and comprimario performing roles such as Pinellino (Gianni Schicchi) or Crébillon (La rondine). With OHPInspire, Alistair performs in hospitals and care homes and works on a variety of different education and outreach projects as a performer and facilitator. He has worked extensively with the company OperaUpClose regularly performing Schaubard in their award winning *La bohème*, the title role in *The Marriage of Figaro*, and *Dulcamara* in their critically acclaimed *L'elisir d'amore*. Other roles include Silvio (Pagliacci) with Kentish Opera, Germano (*La Scala di Seta*) with Opera Alegria, and Dandini (*La Cenerentola*) with HighTime. Alistair spent a number of formative years living abroad and his repertoire is very varied. He is passionate about Russian art song, and indeed the works of many European song composers. He can also be found performing at the Blacktie Ballroom Club in Fitzroy Square working his way through the American songbook with the Art Deco orchestra, and leads a folk music ensemble in South London. www.alistairsutherland.com

Programme Notes

We first planned this programme for May 2020. A great deal has happened in the world since then and we are all grateful that we are now finally able to present this celebration of operatic gems to you tonight.

It is a lively programme spanning two centuries from Mozart's Marriage of Figaro, first performed in 1786, to Lloyd-Webber's Phantom of the Opera, which premiered in 1986. Though very different works, they are both spectacularly successful pieces in the history of staged musical dramas. Fiona McLean for the Royal Opera House says, 'with rave reviews from its first performance, The Marriage of Figaro has been consistently ranked as one of the greatest of all operas both by performers and audiences'. Likewise, Phantom is 'widely considered one of the most beautiful and spectacular productions in history'.

We have arias by Puccini and Donizetti from the period of Italian Grand Opera in the mid- to late-19th century and the ever-popular Chorus of Hebrew Slaves by Verdi written in 1841. Nabucco is the story of King Nebuchadnezzar who assaulted, conquered and finally exiled the Jews from their homeland. It still has huge resonances for people around the world whose homeland or way of life is at risk. This chorus is often used as an anthem for the dispossessed and we dedicate our performance to all those around the world who are fleeing their homes.

Bizet's tragic opera Carmen remains one of the most popular operas in the repertoire. This concert version by Maurice Besly was arranged in 1920 and essentially pulls together all the most memorable musical numbers for chorus. We are presenting it tonight with our two soloists, Naomi and Alistair, and have added some narration to help you follow the story.

Stephen Sondheim died in 2021 and is probably the most significant figure in American musical theatre. He reinvented the genre moving it from the big screen, large canvas shows like Oklahoma, Calamity Jane and The Wizard of Oz to more intimate and darker stories with great musical subtlety and complexity. Send in the Clowns is an extraordinary little afterthought that he composed for actress Glynis Johns, whose character is reflecting on the ironies and disappointments of her life. This choral arrangement is surprisingly effective at capturing the same hesitancy and regret.

In addition to their two solo grand arias, Naomi and Alistair have chosen two duets from the pen of Mozart, which show him at his wittiest. In 'Cinque, dieci, venti' two servants, Figaro and Susanna, are preparing for their wedding. Figaro is measuring up the room ('five..ten..twenty..') while Susanna is admiring herself in the mirror wearing a hat that she has made. From the Magic Flute, they present the wonderfully hair-brained duet where the birdman Papageno finally gets to meet the birdwoman of his dreams, Papagena. At first they are hesitant.... can this really be true? Then they get into their stride imagining all the little Papagenos and Papagenas they will produce!

No 'Night at the Opera' would be worthy of the name without the presence of Gilbert & Sullivan and we have five examples from their extraordinary output. Together they wrote 14 operettas in a partnership spanning 25 years of the Victorian era. W S Gilbert wrote the words and Arthur Sullivan the music and together they produced some of the funniest and most memorable moments in theatrical history. Their satires on modern life and society are enrobed in absurd stories, poignant love triangles, cod philosophy and great tunes.

We conclude our programme with that sensational, ever-popular rock opera piece by Queen, Bohemian Rhapsody. Completely original in its concept and music, it has never been surpassed since it was created in 1975. It is like a one-act song cycle telling a kind of story about a character's fall and struggle for redemption. It fits the notion of opera with recitatives, solos, choruses all squeezed into about four and a half minutes of madness.

Become a Friend of the Kemsing Singers

For a donation of £15 you will receive Friends' newsletters, get advance notice of concerts and the opportunity to buy tickets early.

You can attend KS social functions such as the Society Cabaret and our AGM. Speak to any of the singers or contact our President, Robin Edmunds 9, Cleves Road, Kemsing TN15 6RX 01959 523752, or Hon. Sec. Margaret Holgate, 36, Bayham Road, Sevenoaks TN13 3XE, email - secretary@kemsingsingers.com 01732 454 448

The Kemsing Singers would like to thank the staff and management of St Edith Hall for their invaluable support and assistance.