



City of Birmingham  
Symphony Orchestra

# MIRGA CONDUCTS THE CUNNING LITTLE VIXEN



Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Tuesday 16 November 2021, 7pm

Principal Funders

CONCERT PROGRAMME: £4



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# MIRGA CONDUCTS THE CUNNING LITTLE VIXEN

**Symphony Hall, Birmingham**

Tuesday 16 November 2021, 7pm

**Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla** – Conductor

**Elena Tsallagova** – Vixen Sharp Ears

**Roland Wood** – The Forester

**Angela Brower** – The Fox

**Robert Murray** – Schoolmaster / Mosquito / Pásek

**Kitty Whately** – Dog / Forester's Wife / Woodpecker / Owl

**Elizabeth Cragg** – Chief Hen / Jay

**William Thomas** – Badger / Priest / Harašta

**Ella Taylor** – Mrs Pesak / Cock

**CBSO Chorus**

**Children from Trinity Boys Choir and Old Palace School**

**Thomas Henderson** – Stage Director

**Laura Pearce** – Designer

**Jonathan Burton** – Surtitles Operator

**Paula Kennedy** – Surtitles

**Sarah Playfair** – Casting

**Janáček** The Cunning Little Vixen (Sung in Czech with English surtitles)

96'

There will be no interval during this performance, which will end at approximately 8.45pm

With thanks to Jerry Sykes for his support towards key note concert programming.

Join us in the Jennifer Blackwell performance space at 6pm for a free pre-performance talk from Gavin Plumley.

The Cunning Little Vixen | Opera in 3 Acts | By Leoš Janáček | Revised version by Jiri Zahradka | By arrangement with Universal Edition A.G. Wien

To ensure that everyone enjoys this performance, please make sure your mobile phone is switched off or set to silent. Any noise (such as whispering or coughing) can be very distracting – the acoustics of the Hall will highlight any such sound. If you use a hearing aid in conjunction with our infra-red hearing enhancement system, please make sure you have collected a receiver unit and that your hearing aid is switched to the 'T' position, with the volume level appropriately adjusted.

Audiences are welcome to take photographs before and after the concert, and during breaks in the music for applause. If you would like to take photos at these points please ensure you do not use a flash, and avoid disturbing other members of the audience around you. Please note that taking photographs or filming the concert while the orchestra is playing is not permitted as it is distracting both for other audience members and for the musicians on stage.

**If you have any queries about the CBSO please visit our Information Desk situated in the centre of the ICC Mall. CBSO staff are available from 30 minutes before the concert and again at the interval, and will be happy to help.**

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# MIRGA CONDUCTS THE CUNNING LITTLE VIXEN

**Leoš Janáček** (1854-1928)

## **The Cunning Little Vixen**

In summer 1921, Leoš Janáček wrote an ecstatic article for Brno's popular liberal daily paper, *Lidové noviny*, about his recent trip to the High Tatras. "I would like to sing the majesty of these mountains... the bright peaks touching the sky and the ghostly darkness of the forests at night, the love call of the songbirds and the shrieks of the birds of prey. The dreamy silence of noon and the humming tremolo of a thousand insects..."

There was no mistaking the composer's overwhelming affection for the landscape, the woodland and its buzzing, warbling, mysterious inhabitants.

*"There was no mistaking the composer's overwhelming affection for the landscape, the woodland and its buzzing, warbling, mysterious inhabitants."*

Janáček's native village, Hukvaldy, was in the Beskydy foothills of north-eastern Moravia, surrounded by forest. Here, the son of a schoolmaster, he began his professional life as a struggling, multi-tasking musician. After studies in Brno and Vienna, his daily existence involved teaching, choral conducting and playing the organ. Composing seemed almost a side activity. His reputation developed in earnest only after his opera *Jenůfa* was performed in Prague's National Theatre in 1916, an eye-watering 12 years after its 1904 world premiere in Brno.

The composer, at 62, had long awaited such a breakthrough. Part of the delay was that the National Theatre's director appears to have harboured a grudge after Janáček had been critical of a composition of his. Janáček's home life meanwhile had been blighted by the deaths of first his son, Vladimír, and later his daughter, Olga. In the aftermath of this devastating loss, the composer began a love affair with a singer and, as a result, his wife Zdenka attempted suicide.

Several matters came together to transform Janáček's fortunes. First, *Jenůfa* in Prague proved the success he had longed for. Soon afterwards, in 1917, he fell in love once more, this time with a married woman 37 years his

junior, Kamila Stösslová. Although their relationship almost certainly remained platonic, she effectively became the muse who inspired a flowering of late music that included many of his finest works. Among these was his enchanting opera, *Příhody lišky bystroušky*, literally *The Adventures of the Vixen Sharp-Ears*. A German translation by Max Brod turned it into *Das schlaue Füchslein*, and from this derives the opera's standard English heading, *The Cunning Little Vixen*.

With such a turbulent emotional hinterland, it is not surprising to find Janáček's reputation dominated by operas that involve illicit love, repressive social structures and desperate tragedy. Yet *The Cunning Little Vixen* could scarcely be more different. The circle of life is never far away: the composer, using his own libretto, presents an unsentimental celebration of nature in which the rustle of forest leaves and the personalities of myriad creatures spring to musical life – though he is not above including the occasional piece of satire on human behaviour.

Its origin was a series of illustrated stories in *Lidové noviny*. One day in spring 1920 Janáček found his housekeeper, Marie Stejskalová, chortling over its comic strip about a mischievous young fox. According to her later account, she suggested that since he so loved the sounds of birds and animals, perhaps the series would make a good opera for him. Sure enough, it was not long before Bystrouška, Vixen Sharp-Ears, became perhaps the least likely operatic heroine of the early 20th century.

Janáček approached the author, Rudolf Těsnohlídek, who had penned the stories in



response to the drawings by Stanislav Lolek. Granted permission to base a libretto on the texts, the composer began work in January 1922, a few weeks after finishing his tragic masterpiece *Kat'a Kabanova*. The final notes reached the page on 10 October 1923.

At the end of 1921, Janáček had bought a cottage in Hukvaldy, formerly owned by his late brother František; here he installed himself in a sunny studio, perfect for composing. A flock of chickens in the front yard made themselves more than useful to the task in hand. Marie Stejskalová remembered: "Janáček talked to the hens as to children, they looked at him, answered something and he understood. In the evening, when he sat down in the garden in his armchair to read the paper, he rapped on the table, like a schoolmaster at school. The hens came running at once, jumped up [onto the table] and kept him company."

## PROGRAMME NOTES

Early morning walks also proved a vivid source of inspiration. The local gamekeeper remembered one special forest ramble with Janáček and a group of friends in search of real-life foxes:

"We reached Babí hora [Old Woman Mountain], and indeed, as if to order, the vixen's family emerged from the den and began to show off and frisk about. Janáček

started twitching with excitement until in the end he frightened the foxes away.

"Why couldn't you keep still, Dr Janáček? You could have gone on looking?"

"Janáček, completely exhilarated and happy, just brushed this aside. 'I saw her! I saw her!'"

His own advancing years, meanwhile, were heightening his nostalgia for the world of his

"Each of my operas," Janáček once said, "has grown for a year or two without my hindering its growth by a single note. Each one gave me a long headache. But I just played about with Bystrouška as if she had been tame."

The Vixen is a wonderfully symbolic character, irrepressible and quick-thinking, every bit as clever and devious as the (chiefly male) foxes of fairy tales and fables of the past. The woodland setting moreover slotted the work perfectly into a special tradition in Czech opera: witness Dvořák's magical atmospheres in *Rusalka* (1900), where water nymphs, wood sprites and more sinister presences play havoc with human lives; earlier, in Smetana's *The Kiss* (1876), smugglers conceal themselves deep in the forests.

Janáček nevertheless took the operatic woodland into musical territory all his own. In *Jenůfa*, he had broken new ground with a libretto based on a play in prose rather than poetry, inventing in response a style of 'speech melody': the notes and rhythms are modelled closely on the natural patterns of the spoken word. This method dominated

his style thereafter. In the story of the Vixen, the sounds of animals and birds join the plaints of the human characters as he translates them apparently effortlessly into his unique musical language.

Verismo Italian operas were a crucial part of the repertoire at the theatre in Brno, but Janáček could absorb their supposed realism without aping their musical approach. Similarly, he could use leitmotifs without sounding remotely Wagnerian. *The Cunning Little Vixen* is woven out of leitmotifs almost as much as Wagner's *Die Walküre*, but it wears its technical fabric much more lightly.

We might never notice that the Vixen's own motif – four falling notes, a little like four light paws – is related to the theme representing the Schoolmaster's passion for the elusive Terynka. Perhaps we don't even need to know it, but this is how Janáček subtly conveys the story's unities, capturing in the process the relation of human to nature, of love to loss, the natural cycle from life to death and the everlasting elusiveness of a free-spirited beloved, whether two legged or four.



## SYNOPSIS

### ACT ONE

*How the Vixen was caught. Summer, the forest in the afternoon.*

In a haze of sunshine, insects buzz and all animal life is playing and dancing. The Forester appears in the glade and lies down for a nap. Trying to catch a mosquito, a small frog lands on the Forester's nose. Awaking, he spots a vixen cub investigating the frog. He captures her and takes her home to amuse his children.

*The Forester's farmyard; The Vixen as politician; The Vixen runs away. Autumn, the farmyard.*

The Vixen is growing up fast. Having attracted the lascivious attentions of the family dog, Lapák, she defends herself vigorously against his advances and the Forester's bullying children. When she bites his son, Pepík, the Forester ties her up for the night. In a dream, he sees the Vixen in the guise of a young human girl. The Vixen, though, is hell-bent on revenge and escape. She casts herself as political leader of the chickens in an uprising against the male dominance of the cockerel and, pretending to bury herself alive in disappointment at their apathy, attracts them to come closer to her... Then, having done what foxes usually do to chickens, she bites through the rope and, leaving devastation all around, escapes back into the forest.

### ACT TWO

*The Vixen drives the Badger out of his home. Autumn, the forest in the late afternoon.*

The Vixen is house-hunting. Having scouted out the best locations, she fixes upon a Badger's sett as the perfect home, turfs him out and takes over.

*Winter, the inn.*

The Forester and Schoolmaster, drinking over a card game, josh one another: the Schoolmaster is mooning over his unrequited love for Terynka, while the Forester is perturbed at having lost the Vixen.

*Winter, the forest in the moonlight.*

The drunken Schoolmaster, trying to find his way home, spots the Vixen behind a sunflower, but mistakes her for the elusive Terynka. The Parson is also heading homeward, stewing over an accusation that he has seduced a young woman. Both are jolted back to reality by gunshots: the Forester is trying to shoot the Vixen and failing.

*The Vixen's courtship, love and marriage. Summer, the forest in the moonlight.*

The Vixen meets a young male Fox and the pair quickly fall in vulpine love. It does not take long for them to seduce one another and, having found herself in the family way, the Vixen persuades him to marry her. The forest animals assemble to celebrate their wedding.



## ACT THREE

*The Vixen outwits the poacher Haraschta; The death of the Vixen. Autumn, the forest at midday.*

After the Forester accuses Haraschta of poaching in the woods, Haraschta announces that he is going to marry Terynka. The Forester sets a trap for the Vixen, but when he and Haraschta leave, the young fox family, now with a brood of excitable cubs, laugh exuberantly upon spotting it. The Fox is eager to increase their number of offspring, but the Vixen wants to wait until the following spring. Haraschta is soon back, carrying a bag of chickens, and the Vixen, feigning lameness, lures him away, giving the Fox and their cubs free rein to feast on the chickens. Furious at the deception, Haraschta shoots the Vixen.

*The inn.*

The Forester and Schoolmaster are drinking together again. They sorrow over both Terynka's marriage and the absence of their friend the Parson, who has left the village. At her wedding, Terynka had been wearing a new muff made of fox fur.

*The young Vixen, the image of her mother. Summer, the forest in the afternoon.*

The Forester wanders through the woods, dreaming about the long-ago happiness of young love with his wife, and relishing the beauty of nature all around him. He falls asleep in the glade, waking to discover a vixen cub nearby, the spitting image of her mother. This cub, however, evades capture. A young frog tells the Forester that he remembers hearing about him from his grandfather. The Forester's gun slips from his grasp.

# MORE MUSIC WITH THE CBSO 2021

**Thursday 9 December 2021, 7.30pm**  
Symphony Hall, Birmingham



## New Worlds

**Gergely Madaras** – Conductor  
**Sir Simon Keenlyside** – Baritone  
**Raphael Wallfisch** – Cello

**Sibelius** Finlandia 8'  
**Dove** In Exile (CBSO Centenary Commission; UK Premiere) 30'  
**Dvořák** Symphony No.9 (New World) 40'

Grand passions, glorious tunes: Sibelius's *Finlandia* and Dvořák's *New World* are two classics that just never get old (even if the Hovis advert was nearly 50 years ago now!). But tonight, we're creating new memories too, with the UK premiere of *In Exile* by Jonathan Dove: a heartfelt musical journey for two great British soloists, written specially for us by one of our most communicative – and brilliant – living composers.

**Friday 16 & 17 December, 7.30pm | 19 December, 3pm**  
Symphony Hall, Birmingham



## A Choral Christmas with the CBSO Chorus, Youth Chorus & Children's Chorus

**Simon Halsey** – Conductor  
**Karthi Gnanasegaram** – Presenter  
**CBSO Chorus**  
**CBSO Youth Chorus**  
**CBSO Children's Chorus**

What could be more uplifting than the CBSO's annual Christmas concerts at Symphony Hall? Featuring the full City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and our massed choirs and performers from across the whole city and beyond, these feel-good festive favourites are overflowing with good cheer, magical sounds and seasonal music old and new, all beautifully wrapped and delivered with a smile by our special guest celebrity presenter and our world-famous Chorus Director, Simon Halsey CBE. Be sure to book early!

## MIRGA GRAŽINYTĖ-TYLA

CONDUCTOR



Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla was named Music Director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra in 2016, following in the footsteps of Sir Simon Rattle, Sakari Oramo and Andris Nelsons. Her Music Directorship was extended through the 2020/21 season. Winner of the 2012 Salzburg Festival Young Conductors Award, she subsequently made her debut with the Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra in a symphonic concert at the Salzburger Festspiele.

Recent highlights include European tours with the CBSO, performances with the London Symphony Orchestra, the NDR Elbphilharmonie, the Swedish Radio Orchestra, Filharmonica della Scalla, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the National Symphony Orchestra.

Mirga has electrified audiences as a guest conductor all over the world. In Europe, she has collaborated with the Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra, the Beethoven Orchestra Bonn, the Deutsche Radiophilharmonie, the Choir of the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, the MDR Symphony Orchestra, as well as the Chamber Orchestras of Vienna, the Danish National Symphony Orchestra, the Mozarteum Orchestra and the Camerata Salzburg, and

the Orchestra of the Komische Oper in Berlin. At the Kremerata Baltica, she has enjoyed a dynamic collaboration with Gidon Kremer on numerous European tours. She has led operas in Heidelberg, Salzburg, Komische Oper Berlin, and Bern, where she served as Kapellmeister. In North America, she has worked with the orchestras of Philadelphia, Seattle and San Diego and led the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra in her Carnegie Hall debut in 2018.

With the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Gražinytė-Tyla was a Dudamel Fellow in the 2012-13 season, Assistant Conductor (2014-16), and Associate Conductor (2016-17). She was the Music Director of the Salzburg Landestheater from 2015 until 2017.

An exclusive Deutsche Grammophon Artist since 2018, her first album on the yellow label features Symphony No.2 for string orchestra and Symphony No.21 *Kaddish*, by the Polish composer Mieczysław Weinberg, recorded with Gidon Kremer, the CBSO and Kremerata Baltica, and released in May 2019 to coincide with celebrations of the composer's centenary. Mirga was nominated for a GRAMMY and the album received numerous accolades from the press and was awarded with a Gramophone Award at the Gramophone Classic Music Awards as well as an Opus Klassik Award in 2020.

Mirga was discovered by the German Conducting Forum (Deutsches Dirigentenforum) in April 2009. A native of Vilnius, Lithuania, she studied at Music Conservatory Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy in Leipzig, the Music Conservatory in Bologna, Italy, and the Music Conservatory in Zurich. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in choral and orchestral conducting from the University of Music and Fine Arts, Graz, Austria. ■

## ELENA TSALLAGOVA

VIXEN SHARP EARS



Lyric coloratura soprano Elena Tsallagova studied at the St Petersburg Conservatory, the Mariinsky Theatre and won the Rachmaninoff vocal competition.

After the slower pace of the last year and a half, this new season is starting off with a bang for Elena. This past summer, she returned to the Glyndebourne Festival where she sang a delightful Fiorilla (*Il Turco in Italia*).

And now, fresh off a new, staged production of Mozart's *Requiem* at the Palau de les Artes in Valencia, Tsallagova is singing the first of two consecutive productions of *The Cunning Little Vixen* – where she sings the title role – the first here with the CBSO, the second in Munich, with the Bayerische Staatsoper.

She works regularly with opera houses in Paris, Chicago, Munich, Stuttgart, Geneva; and she has performed with the Glyndebourne, Bregenz, Lucerne and Rossini festivals. Tsallagova has a long-lasting relationship with the Deutsche Oper in Berlin where she has debuted many roles including Micaela (*Carmen*), Adina (*L'Elisir d'Amore*), Gilda (*Rigoletto*) and Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*).

An active concert soloist, her repertoire includes Mahler, Bach, Mozart, Ravel and Rachmaninoff. ■

## ROLAND WOOD

THE FORESTER



Roland Wood was born in Berkshire and studied at the Royal Northern College of Music with Patrick McGuigan and Robert Alderson, then at the National Opera Studio. He was the winner of the 1998 Webster Booth Prize and the 1999 Frederick Cox Award, and was also awarded Second Prize in the 2000 Kathleen Ferrier Memorial Awards.

Roland made his debut for Glyndebourne Festival Opera in 2000 singing a performance of Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress* conducted by Mark Elder. The following year he made his Scottish Opera debut and in 2002 sang for the first time at English National Opera. Between 2002 and 2004 he was a Company Principal at Scottish Opera and in 2003 was chosen as the English entrant for BBC Singer of the World in Cardiff, where he was a semi-final winner.

He has now performed with all of the UK's leading opera companies. For ENO his roles include The Count in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Paolo in *Simon Boccanegra*, Kissinger in *Nixon in China*, Alfio in *Cavalleria rusticana*, Marcello in *La bohème*, Zurga in *Pearl Fishers* and Papageno in *The Magic Flute*; in 2012 he sang the title roles of Bunyan and The Pilgrim in an acclaimed new production of Vaughan Williams' *The Pilgrim's Progress*. ■

## ANGELA BROWER

THE FOX



American mezzo-soprano Angela Brower is one of the most sought-after lyric mezzosopranos of her generation. A former member of the Bayerische Staatsoper ensemble, and alumna of their studio, she continues to bring her compelling artistry and musicianship to the world's leading opera houses and concert venues.

The 2021/22 season sees Brower makes a series of very exciting role and company debuts: in Hamburg she inaugurates the season with a new production of *Les Contes d'Hoffman* and the role that made her famous: Nicklausse/The Muse; in Munich she returns to her alma mater Bayerische Staatsoper, this time for a new role: Fox in a much anticipated new Barrie Kosky production of *The Cunning Little Vixen*; and finally she takes on the roles of Susanna, Zerlina and Dorabella in Mozart's *Da Ponte* trilogy under the baton of Mark Minkowski presented at Grand Teatre del Liceu and Opéra National de Bordeaux.

On the concert platform, Brower tours in Europe, and returns to the Mozarteum in Salzburg for Mozart's *Requiem*.

Angela Brower was raised in Arizona and studied at Arizona State University and Indiana University. ■

## ROBERT MURRAY

SCHOOLMASTER/MOSQUITO/PÁSEK



Renowned for his intelligent musicianship and incisive dramatic portrayals of a broad operatic, concert, and recital repertoire, British tenor Robert Murray has firmly established himself as one of the most exciting musicians of his generation. This season, Murray performed as Mark in *The Midsummer Marriage* in concert with the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Edward Gardner. He makes his role and house debut as Florestan in *Fidelio* with the Irish National Opera and performs Haydn's *Creation* with the Handel & Haydn Society, gives recitals at the Wigmore Hall, Lammermuir Festival and Oxford Lieder, and returns to Garsington Opera in the summer of 2022 as Quint and Prologue *The Turn of the Screw*.

Murray has performed principal roles with the Royal Opera House, Hamburg State Opera, the Salzburg Festival, English and Welsh National Operas, Norwegian Opera, Bergen National Opera, Garsington Opera, the Beijing Music Festival, the Venice Biennale, and the Edinburgh International Festival, among others.

A committed exponent of contemporary music, Murray studied Music and History at the University of Newcastle, and went on to study voice at the Royal College of Music, before joining first the National Opera Studio, and finally the Jette Parker Young Artist Programme at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. ■

**KITTY WHATELY** FORESTER'S  
WIFE/WOODPECKER/OWL/DOG



Kitty Whately trained at Chetham's School of Music, the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, and the Royal College of Music International Opera School. She won both the Kathleen Ferrier Award and the 59th Royal Overseas League Award in the same year, and was part of the prestigious Verbier Festival Academy where she appeared as Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and in Beethoven's Choral Fantasy. Kitty was a BBC New Generation Artist from 2013-15, during which time she recorded her debut solo album *This Other Eden*, made recordings with the BBC orchestras, commissioned a new song cycle from Jonathan Dove, and made several appearances at the Proms.

Current engagements include Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel* (Scottish Opera), Kate Owen in *Wingrave* (Grange Park Opera), and Annina in *Der Rosenkavalier* (Garsington Opera). Whately is also in high demand as a recitalist and concert artist. She made her debut with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, singing Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, as well as a recital alongside Malcolm Martineau at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. She has performed with most of the UK's major orchestras, and made her BBC Proms debut in Sir Peter Maxwell Davies' Suite from Act II of *Caroline Mathilde*. ■

**ELIZABETH CRAGG**  
CHIEF HEN/JAY



Elizabeth Cragg combines "utterly scintillating ... heavenly singing" with impeccable vocal technique and exceptional musicianship. She studied at Royal Holloway College and at the Royal College of Music where she won a number of prizes.

Recent and future engagements include Naiad *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Scottish Opera and Opera Holland Park), Blonde *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (West Green House), Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Aalto-Musiktheater, Essen, Johanna *Sweeney Todd* (Theatre Royal de la Monnaie), New Year's concerts with the Hallé in Bridgewater Hall and with the Royal Northern Sinfonia at The Sage, Gateshead, and *Messiah* in Tokyo and Osaka, Japan.

Cragg has sung with many of Europe's leading conductors. Notable concert appearances include Mozart's Mass in C Minor with The Sixteen and The Bach Choir, *Messiah* with The Sixteen and the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, and Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with the Royal Northern Sinfonia.

Operatic roles include Flowermaiden Parsifal (Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and with Sir Mark Elder/The Hallé at the BBC Proms) and First Niece Peter Grimes (Sir Simon Rattle/Berlin Philharmonic, Salzburg Easter Festival and in Berlin). ■

**WILLIAM THOMAS**  
BADGER/PRIEST/HARAŠTA



A recent graduate of the Opera Course at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, and recipient of a number of major awards, British bass William Thomas is fast making a name for himself as one of today's most promising young singers.

As a Jerwood Young Artist he sang Nicholas in the British premiere of Samuel Barber's *Vanessa* at the Glyndebourne Festival, he has sung Shepherd in *Pelléas et Mélisande* for Garsington Opera and he made his debut at the Vienna State Opera as Snug in a new production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Upcoming engagements include Parsi Rustomji in *Satyagraha*, Sciarrone in *Tosca* and Colline in *La bohème* for the English National Opera and his debut for the Opéra national de Paris as Gralsritter in *Parsifal*. He will also return to Glyndebourne and make debuts with the Opéra de Rouen Normandie and Teatro alla Scala, Milan.

Concert engagements have included Bach's *Johannes-Passion* with the Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique; Handel's *Messiah* with the Orchestra of the English National Opera; and Bartók's *Cantata Profana* with the London Symphony Orchestra. ■

**ELLA TAYLOR**  
MRS PÁSEK/COCK



Winner of Second Prize at the 2020 Kathleen Ferrier Awards, Ella Taylor is a soprano with a passion for performing contemporary music and works by women and gender non-conforming artists. A former BBC Chorister of the Year, they graduated from the Royal Academy of Music, where they gained Distinction in MA Performance, a DipRAM for an outstanding final recital and the Charles Norman Prize. During 2019/20, they were a member of London's National Opera Studio.

Recent engagements have included *Josquin des Prez: Mille Regretz* for English Touring Opera's Spring 2021 Digital Season, and *Momentum: Our Future, Now* recitals with Roderick Williams.

Current engagements include Paris in *Paride ed Elena* for Bampton Classical Opera, Gerda in Errolyn Wallen's *The Paradis Files* for Graeae, Mozart's Mass in C Minor with Opus 48. Alicia Thomas' *Tell me when you get home* with the London Sinfonietta and *Songs of Travel* for Oxford Lieder.

This is their debut with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. ■



# LIZ FRYER, TUTTI VIOLA

## AN APPRECIATION

**We will be saying a fond farewell to Liz Fryer at the end of November.**

■ Liz began her job at CBSO in January 1983. She previously held a year's post at the Orchestre Regional D'Auvergne based in Clermont-Ferrand in France. She told me recently that she had left Guildhall School of Music & Drama halfway through her Post-Grad year to take the job there in 1982. She returned to audition for the CBSO and was given a trial for about one week and started the job the following week. Playing professionally for 40 years is an amazing achievement for any musician. Liz was at Chetham's School of Music before progressing to music college. She also comes from a musical family with her brother Simon Fryer currently playing Principal Cello in the Regina Symphony Orchestra in Saskatchewan, Canada, and her father, who was Music Adviser for Salford and conductor of the Salford Youth Orchestra and Salford Symphony Orchestras, was an examiner with the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music.

Liz has embraced orchestra life here at the CBSO. For nine years she has been the chairman of the Benevolent Fund, which provides financial help for orchestra musicians when they incur an injury. It is vital support which can literally keep you on stage! Recently Liz has been

involved in increasing the range of therapies covered by the Benevolent Fund to include mental health support, including personally training as a mental health first aider.

Outside of the orchestra, Liz enjoys travelling, reading, DIY, gardening and piano playing

whilst also being a demon cryptic crossword solver and is often caught with crosswords and reading the Sunday papers on the CBSO Moseley coach (the transport to our out-of-town concerts). We will miss Liz and wish her well in her new journey.

Sally Morgan, Tutti Double Bass

■ This concert marks the last appearance in Birmingham with the CBSO of our dear friend and colleague, Liz Fryer who has been a dedicated member of the viola section for 39 years. Throughout this time, she has given sustained performance at the highest level – quite an achievement in a profession which demands such skill and concentration. Liz has set an admirable example of how to look after one's playing over a long career and has always paid great attention to detail, putting the composer's intentions at the forefront.

As well as her devoted playing duties with the CBSO, Liz has participated in several education projects and coached the Youth Orchestra viola section. She has been a keen teacher for many years and has always given younger generations of viola players much help, encouragement and support. She has served as the Chair of the CBSO Benevolent fund for nine years, and in various roles on the Players' Committee, as well as being Player Chair. Her unstinting efforts have contributed in no small part to the health and wellbeing of CBSO employees, both staff and orchestra.

Liz has a great sense of humour and has always been willing to share a joke and help to keep the atmosphere relaxed and I have fond memories of the two of us knocking out a Carpenter's number in a karaoke bar in Tokyo.

Join me and all our friends and colleagues at the CBSO in sending Liz our love and very best wishes for the next phase of her life.

Chris Yates, Section Leader Viola

## CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND CBSO CHORUS



**Under the baton of its Music Director Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO) is the flagship of musical life in Birmingham and the West Midlands, and one of the world's great orchestras.**

Based in Symphony Hall, Birmingham, in a normal year the orchestra performs over 150 concerts each year in Birmingham, the UK and around the world, playing music that ranges from classics to contemporary, film music and even symphonic disco. With a far-reaching community programme and a family of choruses and ensembles, it is involved in every aspect of music-making in the Midlands. But at its centre is a team of 75 superb professional musicians, and a 100-year tradition of making the world's greatest music in the heart of Birmingham.

That local tradition started with the orchestra's very first symphonic concert in 1920 – conducted by Sir Edward Elgar. Ever since then, through war, recessions, social change and civic renewal, the CBSO has been proud to be Birmingham's orchestra.

Under principal conductors including Adrian Boult, George Weldon, Andrzej Panufnik and Louis Frémaux, the

CBSO won an artistic reputation that spread far beyond the Midlands. But it was when it discovered the young British conductor Simon Rattle in 1980 that the CBSO became internationally famous – and showed how the arts can help give a new sense of direction to a whole city.

Rattle's successors Sakari Oramo (1998-2008) and Andris Nelsons (2008-15) helped cement that global reputation, and continued to build on the CBSO's tradition of flying the flag for Birmingham. Now, under the dynamic leadership of Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla, the CBSO continues to do what it does best – playing great music for the people of Birmingham and the Midlands.

### **Meet the family**

The CBSO Chorus – a symphonic choir made up of "amateur professionals", trained by Simon Halsey CBE – is famous in its own right. The CBSO Children's Chorus and Youth Chorus showcase singers as young as six. Through its unauditioned community choir – CBSO SO Vocal in Selly Oak – the CBSO



shares its know-how and passion for music with communities throughout the city. The CBSO Youth Orchestra gives that same opportunity to young instrumentalists aged 14-21, offering high-level training to the next generation of orchestral musicians alongside top international conductors and soloists. These groups are sometimes called the “CBSO family” – over 650 amateur musicians of all ages and backgrounds, who work alongside the orchestra to make and share great music. But the CBSO’s tradition of

servicing the community goes much further. Its Learning and Participation programme touches tens of thousands of lives a year, ranging from workshops in nurseries to projects that energise whole neighbourhoods.

Having recently enjoyed its 100th birthday, the CBSO, more than ever, remains the beating heart of musical life in the UK’s Second City. Kazuki Yamada has been appointed as its Chief Conductor and Artistic Advisor with effect from 1 April 2023. ■



**Simon Halsey CBE**  
**Chorus Director**

Supported by the John  
Ellerman Foundation

Simon Halsey CBE holds positions across the UK and Europe as, amongst

others, Chorus Director of City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra Chorus, Choral Director of London Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Artistic Director of Orfeó Català Choirs and Artistic Adviser of Palau de la Música, Barcelona. He is the trusted advisor on choral singing to the world’s greatest conductors, orchestras and choruses, and also an inspirational teacher and ambassador for choral singing to amateurs of every age, ability and background. He is also a highly respected teacher and academic, nurturing the next generation of choral conductors on his post-graduate course in Birmingham and through masterclasses at Princeton, Yale and elsewhere. He was made Commander of the British Empire in 2015, was awarded The Queen’s Medal for Music in 2014, and received the Officer’s Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany in 2011.



**Julian Wilkins**  
**Associate**  
**Chorus Director**

Julian Wilkins is a versatile, dynamic and inspiring conductor, organist and pianist. Educated

at Wells Cathedral School and at St Catharine’s College, Cambridge, Julian has performed in many of the world’s cathedrals and leading concert venues as conductor, soloist, and accompanist. He has appeared on television and radio, and on Peter Gabriel’s GRAMMY-winning soundtrack for Martin Scorsese’s film *The Last Temptation of Christ*. He directs the CBSO Youth Chorus and Children’s Chorus, the University of Birmingham Chorus and University of Birmingham Voices. He is Associate Chorus Director of the CBSO Chorus, preparing them for conductors such as Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla, Kazuki Yamada, Edward Gardner, Vassily Sinaisky, and John Wilson. As a respected teacher and choral consultant, he is a visiting lecturer at the University of Birmingham and the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and a member of the teaching panel for the Association of British Choral Directors.

# CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

## VIOLIN I

Eugene Tzikindelean  
Jonathan Martindale \*  
Andrew Harvey  
Philip Brett  
Colin Twigg  
Jane Wright  
Stefano Mengoli \*  
Colette Overdijk \*  
Kirsty Lovie \*  
Mark Robinson †  
Catherine Chambers  
Katharine Gittings  
Wendy Quirk  
Adam Hill

## VIOLIN II

Kate Suthers\*  
Moritz Pfister  
Catherine Arlidge \*\*  
Amy Jones \*\*  
Richard Thomas  
Timothy Birchall  
Gabriel Dyker \*\*  
Georgia Hannant \*  
Bryony Morrison \*  
Amy Littlewood  
Bethan Allmand  
Lara Sullivan

## VIOLA

Chris Yates \*\*  
Adam Romer \*\*  
Catherine Bower \*\*  
David BaMaung \*  
Angela Swanson †  
Michael Jenkinson \*\*  
Amy Thomas †  
Elizabeth Fryer \*\*  
Jessica Tickle \*  
Helen Roberts

## CELLO

Eduardo Vassallo \*\*  
Arthur Boutillier \*  
David Powell \*\*  
Miguel Fernandes \*  
Jacqueline Tyler \*\*  
Catherine Ardagh-  
Walter \*\*  
Helen Edgar \*\*  
Sarah Berger

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Anthony Alcock \*  
Julian Atkinson \*\*  
Damián Rubido  
González  
Jeremy Watt \*  
Sally Morgan \*\*  
Julian Walters \*\*

## FLUTE

Marie-Christine  
Zupancic \*\*  
Veronika Klirova \*

## PICCOLO

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Robert Looman

## OBOE

Steven Hudson  
Emmet Byrne \*

## COR ANGLAIS

Rachael Pankhurst \*

## CLARINET

Oliver Janes \*  
Joanna Patton \*\*

## BASS CLARINET

Mark O'Brien \*

## BASSOON

Nikolaj Henriques \*  
Simone Cipriano

## CONTRABASSOON

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## HORN

Elsbeth Dutch \*\*  
Flora Bain  
Mark Phillips \*\*  
Jeremy Bushell \*  
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Richard Blake \*  
Jonathan Quirk \*\*

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Andrew Cole  
Anthony Howe \*\*

## BASS TROMBONE

David Vines \*\*

## TUBA

Graham Sibley \*\*

## TIMPANI

Matthew Hardy \*

## PERCUSSION

Adrian Spillett \*\*  
Andrew Herbert \*

## HARP

Katherine Thomas \*

## CELESTE

Julian Wilkins

† Recipient of the *CBSO Long Service Award*

\* Supported player

## RICHARD BLAKE FAREWELL

*The Cunning Little Vixen* marks the end of Richard's six-year relationship with the CBSO – the performance in Paris will be his final concert as a member of the Orchestra. Tonight is his last performance with us in Symphony Hall, and we all wish him the very best as he goes on to pursue his career.

# CBSO CHORUS

## SOPRANO

Monika Arhar  
Rachael Baylis\*  
Sarah Beedle\*  
Lisa Bradburn  
Dianne Charles\*\*\*  
Catherine Foster\*\*\*  
Rebecca Gill  
Elizabeth Haines  
Prue Hawthorne\*\*\*  
Daisy Hibberd  
Alexandra Lewis  
Catherine Mason\*\*  
Ella McNamee  
Alison Needham  
Clare Noakes\*  
Nicole Plowman  
Jean Scott\*\*\*  
Karen Wilson-de-Roze  
Katherine Woolley

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Helen Chamberlain\*  
Louise Davis  
Rebekka Dickinson  
Rebecca Drew  
Sarah Ennis\*\*\*  
Sylvia Fox\*\*\*  
Judy Frodsham\*\*\*  
Christine Giles\*\*\*  
Miranda Heggie  
Hazel Hughes\*\*\*\*  
Val Lewis\*  
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Anna Parker\*  
Elizabeth Parkin\*\*  
Helena Robertson  
Diane Todd\*\*\*  
Sarah Trinder\*\*  
Belinda Wadsworth  
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## TENOR

Paul Barnett  
Paul Glossop\*\*\*  
Ed Harrisson  
David Lewis  
Allen Roberts\*  
Stuart Robinson  
Harpreet Sandhu  
Daniel Smith  
Neil Souter  
Ben Squire  
Ed Sykes  
Hugh Thomson\*\*

## BASS

Lawrence Bacon\*\*\*  
Phil Beynon\*\*  
Isaac Boothman  
Oliver Clayton  
Rob Cleal\*\*  
Tom Considine  
Mike Dernie\*\*  
Andrew Halstead\*  
Hugh Houghton\*  
Peter Leppard\*\*  
Andrew Packer\*\*\*\*  
Andy Parker\*  
Neil Parker  
Stuart Pauly  
Phil Rawle\*\*\*\*  
Calum Roberts\*  
Alan White\*\*  
Tony Whitehouse\*

*CBSO Chorus Member for: \* 10 years; \*\* 20 years; \*\*\* 30 years; \*\*\*\* 40 years*

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## CHILDREN FROM TRINITY BOYS CHOIR AND OLD PALACE SCHOOL

Joshua Webb – Cricket  
Christopher Bergs – Grasshopper  
Ben Fletcher – Frog  
Catherine Mulroy – Young Vixen  
Leo Jemison – Pepik  
Joshua D'Souza Konda – Frantik  
Daniel Todd – Fox Cub

# THANK YOU

The *Sound of the Future* is a £12.5m fundraising campaign – launched to mark the CBSO’s centenary – which will ensure the orchestra’s recovery from the pandemic and redefine its future for the benefit of everyone across Birmingham and the West Midlands.

*The Sound of the Future*

## EXCEPTIONAL SUPPORTERS

The following individuals, trusts and companies have nurtured the CBSO’s world-class excellence and broad community reach by offering exceptional philanthropic support to the CBSO and the CBSO Development Trust’s private endowment fund over time, either by making major gifts, by leaving a legacy or through sustained annual giving.

City of Birmingham Orchestral Endowment Fund	The late Mr P S Day Deutsche Bank The late Elnora Ferguson
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We are grateful to the following supporters for their major gifts this year and over the life of our *Sound of the Future* campaign.

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programming  
(\*Catherine Ardagh-  
Walter)

### £25,000+

Sir Dominic and Lady  
Cadbury

## MEMBERS

Over 1,500 members contribute annually to ensure the orchestra’s vital work both on and off the concert platform can happen. Thank you to each and every one of you.

## BENEFACTORS

### (£10,000+)

Lady Alexander of Weedon  
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supporters.*

Get closer to the music, the orchestra and its musicians – we’d love you to be part of it.

Joining as a member will not only provide vital support to help the CBSO recover from the Covid crisis but your gift will also be matched pound for pound thanks to the generous support of a CBSO member of our campaign board. Visit [cbsocobirmingham.co.uk/membership](https://cbsocobirmingham.co.uk/membership) for more information and to join online.

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