

Celebrating Twenty Years



Rowan Pierce as Miss Wordsworth in
Samling Academy Opera's *Albert Herring* 2013

Photograph © Mark Pinder / Meta-4

Twenty years ago Karon Wright and businessman Roger McKechnie hatched an ambitious plan to bring the world's best artists together with talented young professionals under one roof to work, perform and be inspired.

From the very first concert given by Katarina Karnéus, who had just won the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition, and the poet Tony Harrison, in a converted barn on Windermere, Samling has blossomed into an internationally renowned centre for excellence. As we turn twenty we are proud of our legacy which stretches across the globe through the outstanding singers and pianists who have received Samling's unique training.

Over the coming months our twentieth anniversary celebrations include a spectacular birthday concert in the beautiful grounds of the Old Vicarage at Bywell in Northumberland in July, our very special Anniversary Masterclass and Showcase at Wigmore Hall in November with Sir Thomas Allen and, rounding off our birthday in early 2017, a 'Coming of Age' Gala Concert with the Royal Northern Sinfonia at Sage Gateshead.

Our Samling Artist Programme week in February welcomes for the first time the acclaimed mezzo-soprano Ann Murray DBE, as well as international baritone Olaf Bär and pianist Caroline Dowdle. You can join our distinguished leaders and eight Samling Artists at Sage Two on Saturday 27 February for a Masterclass, during which the audience supports the work on stage. The afternoon is rounded off by a short concert showcasing the repertoire highlights from the week.

When Samling Academy was established in 2012 one of our main aspirations was that participants might eventually return to us as young professionals to take part in our Artist Programme. We are therefore truly delighted that North East born soprano Rowan Pierce will be one of the eight Samling Artists joining us in February. Samling Academy participant Rowan's return to us as a young professional completes a 'virtuous circle' of learning and development.

Throughout the Spring work continues with Samling Academy and through our new initiative Samling Futures. This has been established to widen access and break down

perceived barriers to classical music by inviting students from every middle and high school in the North East to come to a 'Taster Day' in February. Two Summer concerts are also planned giving further performance opportunities to Academy participants and, following six days of intensive study at the start of the new academic year in October, we will once again present a Samling Academy Concert on Sunday 23 October at Sage Gateshead.

In November we will welcome Angelika Kirchschrager, Patricia MacMahon and Malcolm Martineau to lead our final Artist Programme week of the year. Our anniversary celebrations conclude with a 'Coming of Age' Gala Concert on Friday 17 February 2017 with Samling Artists from over the years and members of our Academy with Royal Northern Sinfonia, so please save this unmissable date in your diary.

As Samling enters its twentieth year we thank each and every one of the artists, audience members, friends and colleagues who have supported us along the way and hope very much that you will join us throughout the year to celebrate. Here's to the next twenty years.

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'My week with Samling has been one of great learning in a way I never imagined. It has given me much to think about, and momentum.' Heather Lowe, Samling Artist November 2015.

Introduce a Friend



As a charity that receives no regular or statutory funding we need to raise significant funds to sustain our work and inspire the next generation of young artists. Samling Friends are at the heart of our creative community and help make the Samling experience unique.

We recognise that often the best way of meeting someone is to be introduced by a mutual acquaintance and, with that in mind, we are writing to all existing Samling Friends in the coming weeks to ask them to Introduce a Friend and how to do so. We are pleased to offer a free ticket to one of our Samling Artist Programme events for each new Friend, as well as for the existing Friend who recommends them.

'In this special year for Samling we are very keen to increase the number of Friends, who are so important to us in supporting the charity,' said Chair of Samling Friends, Paul Stockdale. 'Experience has shown that many people only need to be introduced once for them to embrace all that Samling and its young artists have to offer.'

The cost of Friends' membership has remained the same for the past three years but from 2016 the membership fee will increase slightly to £40 annually. We are also introducing a new 'Couples' rate of £60 for a joint membership. An increasing number of our Friends choose to pay for their membership via Standing Order and from January Samling is offering the option to pay in quarterly instalments as well as the existing option of one annual payment.

All Friends of Samling receive a complimentary drink in the company of emerging and international stars after events at Sage Gateshead, assisted ticket booking if required and, should they wish, acknowledgement in our concert programmes. We are as ever hugely grateful to all our Friends for their continued support.

Academy to Professional

Soprano Rowan Pierce will become the first ever Samling Academy participant to return to us as a young professional taking part in Samling Artist Programme in February.

From Saltburn-by-the-Sea in the North East of England, Rowan is currently studying at the Royal College of Music. She was one of over 120 highly talented young singers to attend Samling Artist Programme auditions last year, successfully winning one of only twelve places available.

'Samling is a truly unique organisation and has already given me a wealth of experience for which I will always be grateful. I feel very proud to have come from an area where music and my profession are taken so seriously and looked after with so much care,' said Rowan.

She added: 'As a participant in Samling Academy I felt very safe in the hands of all the leaders and the ambition to become a Samling Artist was always at the back of my mind. The fact that I am now moving on to be a Samling Artist in such a nurturing organisation makes me feel like I am entering a family of some of the most respected musicians that our industry has to offer. I am very excited to continue my Samling journey.'



The week-long Samling Artist Programme will give Rowan the chance to work intensively with some of the world's greatest artists in a highly supportive environment, learning, working and gaining inspiration from distinguished professionals including Ann Murray DBE, Olaf Bär, Caroline Dowdle and Italian vocal coach Valentina di Taranto.

'Rowan's achievement provides further evidence for the success of Samling's Academy, a unique educational model and, judging from the number of recent Academy students winning places in conservatoires right across the UK, we believe that she will be the first of many,' said Samling's director Karon Wright.

Samling Futures

Samling Futures – an extension of Samling Academy – seeks to widen access to classical music for young people in the North East. A 'Taster Day' in February will introduce young singers to what Samling Academy has to offer, whilst a series of 'Development Weekends' will offer additional support to existing Academy participants and those who have shown potential.

Pupils in Years 8-12 from all schools in the North East are to be invited to take part in the Taster Day, which will be held on Saturday 13 February. The day will provide an idea of what it is like to take part in Samling Academy through group sessions, workshops and masterclasses. We will also be giving some handy audition tips as well as holding a Q&A session for any burning questions.

Hosted by our project partners, Newcastle and Durham Universities, Development Weekends will take place throughout the Spring. The focus will be on singing technique and interpretation providing additional training for those who need support not available elsewhere.

As part of the ECHO Rising Stars programme and following on from



their work last year with the Academy, Samling Artists baritone Benjamin Appl and pianist James Baillieu will also offer in-depth coaching to Samling Academy participants in a day of masterclasses focusing on German repertoire.

'We believe that in every school there is at least one young person with a voice that they have never found because they haven't been given the opportunity,' said Samling Creative Development Manager Mary Emmett.

'Through Samling Futures we aim to change that by giving as many young people in this region as possible the chance to benefit from both the wonderful experience of classical singing and the high quality of training that Samling offers.'

If you are interested in taking part in Samling Futures or know someone who might be, please contact Mary Emmett at mary@samling.org.uk, or by calling 01434 602885.

Samling 20 APPEAL

We would like to say a huge 'Thank You!' to all those who have already contributed to Samling's 20th Anniversary Appeal, which continues throughout the coming months until our 'Coming of Age' Gala Concert with Royal Northern Sinfonia in February 2017.

However, we are still a long way from our target of raising £1 million, which would allow us to build further on our work, to be stronger and more ambitious and to reach out to future generations.

Our firm focus is on the future and, with this in mind, we have developed a Legacy Giving scheme to ensure that generations

of musicians and audiences to come can continue to share in our pursuit of excellence and the joy of great music.

Enclosed with this Newsletter is a brochure giving more details of how a gift in your will or in memory of a loved one can ensure Samling's work lives on. Please see this brochure for details of how to contact us for a confidential discussion about leaving a Legacy gift.

Alternatively, to make a donation to our 20th Anniversary Appeal in general please write to Samling (20th Anniversary Appeal), Community Centre, Gilesgate, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 3NP, email enquiries@samling.org.uk or call us on 01434 602885.



'There have been a number of eminent artists and teachers who have contributed to Samling and I feel honoured to be invited to join their number. Samling's work is essential to all young artists to develop and realise their potential in preparation for the inevitable demands of a professional life.'

Ann Murray joins Samling's Leadership team

We are delighted to announce that celebrated mezzo-soprano Ann Murray DBE joins the Samling Artist Programme leadership team for the first time in February.

Born in Dublin, Ann has sung at the world's most prestigious opera houses and concert venues: she has especially close links with the Royal Opera House and English National Opera where she has sung numerous title and principal roles, and is particularly noted for her performances of Handel, Mozart and Richard Strauss.

In 1997 Ann Murray was made an Honorary Doctor of Music by the National University of Ireland, in 1998 she was made a Kammersängerin of the Bavarian State Opera and in 1999 an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music. In the 2002 Golden Jubilee Queen's Birthday Honours she was appointed an honorary Dame

Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire and in 2004 she was awarded the Bavarian Order of Merit.

'Ann Murray will bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the young singers and pianists taking part in our first Artist Programme week of the year and we are looking forward to welcoming her to the Samling family,' said director Karon Wright.

Ann will be joining Olaf Bär, Caroline Dowdle and Italian vocal coach Valentina di Taranto to instruct eight Samling Artists during a week of intensive training and development culminating in our public Masterclass and Concert at Sage Two on Saturday 27 February.

Tickets for the Masterclass and Concert next month at Sage Gateshead are now available. For further details please see the back page of this Newsletter.

UPCOMING EVENTS



SAMLING ARTIST PROGRAMME Sunday 21 – Sunday 28 February

Led by Ann Murray DBE, Olaf Bär, Caroline Dowdle and Valentina di Taranto

Samling Artists:

Kiandra Howarth	soprano
Katie Lowe	soprano
Rowan Pierce	soprano
Angharad Lyddon	mezzo-soprano
Romanas Kudriašovas	baritone
Christopher Nairne	baritone
Finnegan Downie Dear	piano
Jonathan Ware	piano



Samling Masterclass and Concert Saturday 27 February 1.30pm – 4.30pm and 5.15pm – 6pm Sage Two, Sage Gateshead

To be a classical singer is straightforward: all you need is the strength of an athlete, a top actor's timing, a dancer's grace, impeccable foreign languages – oh, and flawless control of your voice.

Samling's latest Masterclass takes you behind the scenes to show how classical stars are born. Eight young professionals are put through their paces live on stage by world-class artists Ann Murray DBE, Olaf Bär and Caroline Dowdle before showing in concert how they've learned from the masters.

Don't miss this chance to see just what it takes to be a classical artist at the highest level.

Tickets now on sale

Masterclass and Concert £15

Concessions £13 / Choirs £10 / Students £5

Available from Sage Gateshead

0191 443 4661 or www.sagegateshead.com



SAMLING GALA CONCERT IN THE GARDEN

Sunday 3 July, 6pm

Bywell, Northumberland

Celebrating twenty years. Samling Artists are joined by Northern Chords Festival Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Bloxham for a magical evening concert in the beautiful private gardens of The Old Vicarage in this ancient hamlet by the River Tyne.

Tickets now on sale, available exclusively from Samling

Sparkling reception with canapés, dinner and concert: £95

Concert only: £30 to include a welcome glass of wine.



SAMLING ACADEMY SUMMER CONCERTS

Thursday 21 July, 7.30pm

The Witham, Barnard Castle, County Durham

Saturday 23 July, 7.30pm

Saltburn Community Theatre,
Saltburn-by-the-Sea

A summer highlight, two concerts showcase this year's Academy students.

Tickets: £12 / Concessions £10
(Under 16s and Full-time Students)

Tickets go on sale later this year



SAMLING ACADEMY 7 – 9 and 21 – 23 October

Over two intensive weekends Samling Academy gives 25 singers aged 14–21 the chance to work intensively with Samling's world class team of artists, coaches and experts. In partnership with Newcastle University, Durham University and Sage Gateshead.



Samling Academy Concert Sunday 23 October, 7.30pm Northern Rock Foundation Hall Sage Gateshead

The culmination of six days of intensive study, this concert features some of the most talented young singers from across the North East, performing a mix of opera and song.

Tickets go on sale later this year, available from Sage Gateshead



20TH ANNIVERSARY WIGMORE MASTERCLASS AND SHOWCASE Tuesday 8 November, 1pm and 7.30pm Wigmore Hall, London

Sir Thomas Allen, Yvonne Kenny and Malcolm Martineau lead this Masterclass celebrating 20 years of Samling's work, before an evening concert showcasing the performance of past and present Samling Artists.

Masterclass: £8 / Concessions £6

Concert: £36, £30, £25, £20, £15

Available from Wigmore Hall Box Office

www.wigmore-hall.co.uk / 020 7935 2141

Tickets on sale from 31 May 2016

Join the artists after the concert

There are a number of special tickets available from Samling, which include best seats and a reception and supper with all the artists after the concert. Tickets available from Samling on 01434 602885 or by email to enquiries@samling.org.uk



SAMLING ARTIST PROGRAMME Sunday 20 – Sunday 27 November

Angelika Kirchsclager, Patricia MacMahon and Malcolm Martineau come together to pass on their knowledge and experience to the next generation.



Samling Masterclass and Concert Saturday 26 November 1.30pm – 4.30pm and 5.15pm – 6pm Sage Two, Sage Gateshead

Tickets go on sale later this year, available from Sage Gateshead



SAMLING'S 'COMING OF AGE' GALA CONCERT Friday 17 February 2017, 7.30pm Sage One, Sage Gateshead

Sir Thomas Allen
Royal Northern Sinfonia
Samling Artists and members of Samling Academy

As Samling turns twenty-one our anniversary celebrations reach their climax in this unmissable concert.

Programme details and tickets available later this year



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