

Six of the best

The chance to work closely with one of the world's greatest baritones is something most young singers only dream of.

For six of the best up and coming artists this opportunity is about to become a reality as they prepare for a week-long Samling masterclass with Sir Thomas Allen and his team in April at Farlam Hall in Cumbria.

Nearly one hundred young singers are recommended by the principal music colleges in the country to apply and audition for a place on Samling masterclasses each year but with only twelve places available annually, competition is tough.

So who has made it onto this April's course? Here's a quick run down on who's who.

We have two mezzos, Wendy Dawn Thompson and Susan Atherton.

Wendy hails from New Zealand and is currently in her second year of Advanced Opera Studies at the Benjamin Britten International Opera School at the Royal College of Music. London-born Susan is a Cambridge graduate and has studied opera with the English National Opera, The Royal Academy of Music and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama.

Our soprano is Alexandra Rigazzi-Tarling from Surrey who graduated from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in 2003. She is currently studying at the Zurich Opera House Studio in Switzerland.

Two tenors and one baritone make up the male contingent. From Spain, we have tenor Jonas Durán, who received his musical education at the University College of Opera in Gothenburg and the RCM Benjamin Britten International Opera School. The other tenor, Ed Lyon, is a Cambridge graduate and is now in his final year at Royal Academy Opera.

Our baritone Byron Watson, is of dual nationality – Australian and British - and is currently in his second year of the Opera School at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama.

"The aim of masterclass is to nurture these talented individuals, who we believe are some of the brightest



Wendy Dawn Thompson



Susan Atherton



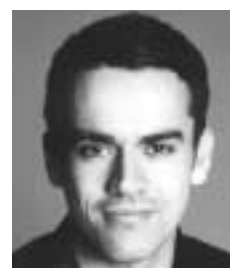
Alexandra Rigazzi-Tarling



Jonas Durán



Ed Lyon



Byron Watson

young singers to emerge into the music world," said Artistic Director of the Samling Foundation, Karon Wright.

"The concert on the 24th April will give these six an opportunity to shine when they take centre stage with Sir Thomas Allen and Patricia MacMahon at St Cuthbert's Church in Carlisle."

If you want to find out more about any of the singers taking part in our masterclass log on to www.samlingfoundation.org

Concert A Magical Evening of Opera and Song Starring Sir Thomas Allen

with Patricia MacMahon

and six up and coming young singers

with pianists Simon Over and Caroline Dowdle

St Cuthbert's Church, Carlisle
 7pm, Saturday, 24th April 2004

Tickets: £12 or £10 concessions are available from:

The Samling Foundation
 Tel: 01434 602885;

Tullie House Museum, Castle Street,
 Carlisle Tel: 01228 534781;

Bookends, Castle Street, Carlisle
 Tel: 01228 529067

Tickets including dinner with the artists after the performance at The Tithe Barn, Carlisle £60.

Open Afternoon, Wednesday, 21st April 2004, 2pm-5pm. St Cuthbert's Church, Carlisle. Tickets: £7.50 (also available from Tullie House Museum and Bookends)

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Computer generated image of The Sage Gateshead

Cosi is cast!

In the last edition we promised to keep you updated on the Samling's first opera production, 'Cosi fan tutte', which will also be the first opera to be staged in 2005 at the stunning new centre for music and musical discovery The Sage Gateshead.

Well, the latest news is that 'Cosi' is cast! Auditions have taken place over the past few months and director Sir Thomas Allen has now decided who will perform the six roles of this well-loved opera.

The two sisters, Fiordiligi and Dorabella will be played by Henriikka Gröndahl and Carolyn Dobbin respectively. Mattijs van de Woerd and Rafael Vázquez take on the roles of the two suitors, Guglielmo and Ferrando.

Don Alfonso, who creates mayhem between the two couples, is played by Richard Morrison and the scheming maid, Despina, by Sarah Redgewick.

Composed in 1789, Mozart's 'Cosi fan tutte' is an opera in two acts with a story that reads a bit like one of Shakespeare's comedies.

Setting out to prove his theory that all women are fickle, Don Alfonso wagers his two officer friends, Guglielmo and Ferrando, that once they are out of sight their sweethearts will succumb to the charms of two exotic strangers.

What follows is a web of deceit and a multitude of disguises, which finally results in Don Alfonso winning his wager as the two sisters, Fiordiligi and Dorabella, fall for each other's betrothed, who are of course in disguise! All is revealed at the end of the opera and both couples are reconciled, wiser for their experience.

The cast, all Samling scholars, will begin rehearsals in June next year in Gateshead. Behind the scenes a whole host of people are required to get the production up and running, as well as setting up a vital education programme involving performing arts students from across the North East. So we'll keep you posted on appointments and plans in the next newsletter.

Looking for a place to land

Sadly, time is up for Tom Woolford's 'Landmark', which has been removed from the concrete buttress below Tynemouth Priory.

The artwork has a temporary home at the Coastguard's station at Tynemouth but we need somewhere more permanent – preferably with a tall ceiling - for the four metre high letters to be stored.

We are hoping this piece of work will have a longer lifespan as there has been interest in resurrecting it - if a suitable site can be found - for the Tall Ships Race in 2005.

If anyone can help find 'Landmark' a home please call the Samling Foundation on 01434 602885.



Two of the Isis team prepare to remove the final letter

If you're a regular reader of the Samling Newsletter then the name Mark Pinder may sound familiar. If you look carefully at almost every photograph then you will see why.

North East based photographer Mark Pinder has been documenting the work of the Samling Foundation for over three years, starting with our North East visual arts project 'Divining' back in 2001.

After studying documentary photography at Gwent College, Mark moved back to the North East to start a career as an editorial photojournalist, specialising lately in the arts and television documentary stills.

"My career has been varied, ranging from documenting the Kurdish refugee camps along the Turkey/Iraq border soon after the bombing of Halabja in 1988 to general magazine work," said Mark.

For the Samling, Mark has documented masterclasses and visual arts projects, the most recent being 'arena'. "I don't often get the opportunity to work on something so comprehensively over an extended period," he said. "I very much enjoyed working with Antony Gormley and the five visual artists and seeing at such close hand how the creative process develops. It was a unique and special experience."

Away from his commercial work, Mark puts his energy into self-initiated projects. "I am pulling together a body of



work, either for exhibition or book publication, exploring the social geographies of the North East and the way in which culture is changing" he explained.

"My photography is as much about producing the best images I can, as being allowed access to places outside the everyday and occasionally witnessing history being made.

"I can't think of another career that would give me such a potentially varied and interesting life and the autonomy that suits my temperament," he added.

You may be wondering about the leaflet enclosed in this edition of the newsletter. In a move to raise our profile and reach more supporters we have produced it as part of a new marketing and public relations campaign.

Designed to help spread the word about the Foundation more effectively, this newly designed piece of literature will target existing and potential supporters.

"It has been created to offer two-way communication with our target audience," said Karon Wright, Artistic Director of the Samling Foundation. "Its simple, fresh design informs and hopefully creates an interest. It also invites people to find out more about the work we do. Support for the Samling Foundation can come in lots of different ways and we hope that this leaflet demonstrates that," she added.

New campaign unveiled

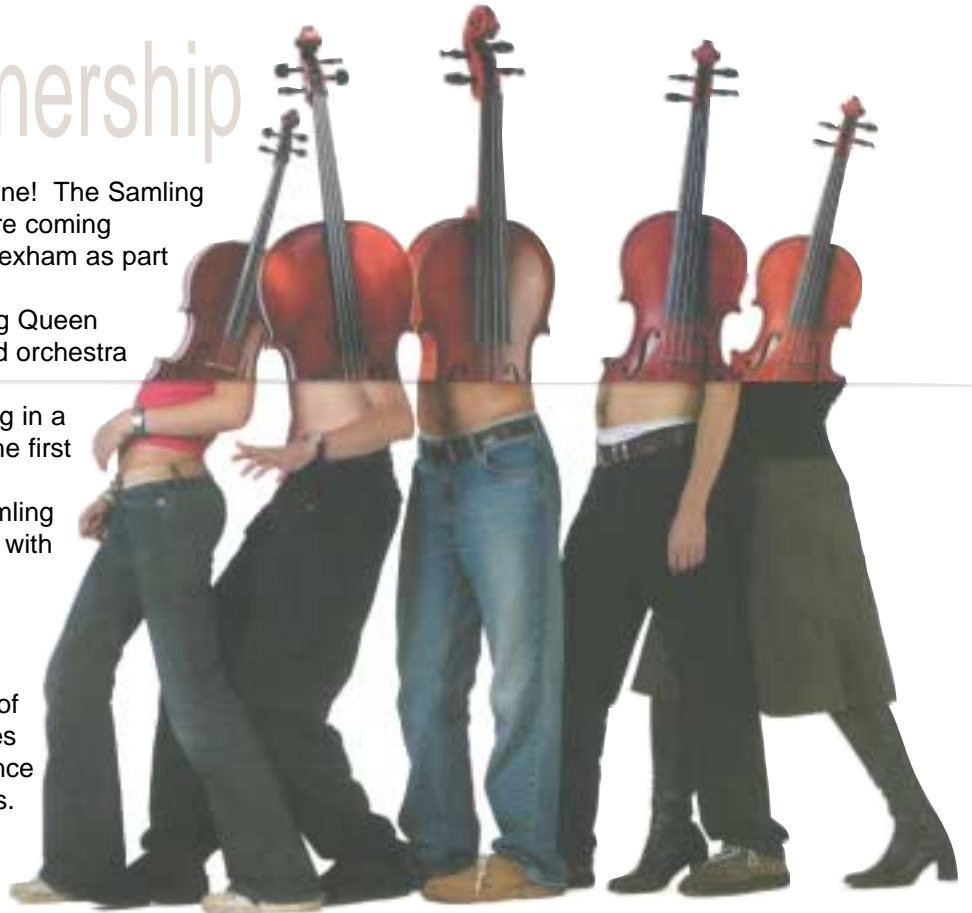
Harmonic partnership

A heavenly partnership if ever there was one! The Samling Foundation and the Southbank Sinfonia are coming together in September to bring music to Hexham as part of the town's Abbey Festival.

Working with schools in the town, including Queen Elizabeth High School, the Foundation and orchestra are busy making plans to work with music students over three days culminating in a one-off performance in Hexham Abbey - the first night of the Festival.

Also taking part in this collaboration is Samling Scholar Fiona Duncan who will be singing with the orchestra and QEHS Choir, as well as working in schools alongside the instrumentalists.

Pictured is a visual from one of the Southbank Sinfonia's eye-catching series of posters. The pioneering orchestra provides intensive performing and learning experience for talented, young, professional musicians. Tickets will be available from the Festival Box Office 01434 652477 in the middle of June.



Garden party plans hot up

If you thought that Trinidad was the 'Gateway to the Caribbean' then think again. One of the top young steel bands, Steel Quake, is actually based in North Northumberland in Wooler and they'll be adding a tropical touch to the Garden Party this summer.

The band, which features the talents of six 14-16 year olds, have just returned from a six-week long trip to Trinidad, where they immersed themselves in the music of the Caribbean.

Also on this year's musical bill is a jazz ensemble and Samling Garden Party favourite, Peter Tickell and Friends.

Throughout the house there will be an exhibition of original art featuring the work of - Ruth Stage, Julian Vilarrubi, Enrique Azocar and Malcolm Teasdale.

Chairman Roger McKechnie will once again be putting on his auctioneer's hat to auction some fantastic lots including holidays, artworks and more.



Steel Quake in action

As well as all this, there will be the usual delicious barbecue, licensed bar, raffle, entertainment for the kids and hopefully lots of sunshine. So please come and join us!

Tickets are available from the Samling Foundation on 01434 602885.



Concert success

Smiles all round from the gentlemen (left to right) - Jared Holt, Thomas Walker, Simon Over and Sir Thomas Allen - and the ladies (left to right) - Caroline Dowdle, Sophie Graf and Amy Black - after a fantastic performance at the London concert at St John's, Smith Square in January.

Thanks largely to the generous sponsorship from Bradford & Bingley we raised over £16,000 towards the cost of our prestigious masterclasses.

Diary dates 2004

Thursday January 29th Gala Concert with Sir Thomas Allen and Samling Scholars Amy Black, Sophie Graf, Jared Holt and Thomas Walker with pianists Simon Over and Caroline Dowdle at St John's, Smith Square, London 7.30pm.

Sunday March 28th Gala Concert with Christopher Maltman and Leigh Woolf and pianist Simon Over at the Mansion House, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne 7pm.

Sunday April 18th – Sunday 25th April Masterclass Week led by Sir Thomas Allen, Patricia MacMahon, Paul Farrington with pianists Simon Over and Caroline Dowdle and this year's specially selected young singers – Wendy Dawn Thompson, Susan Atherton, Alexandra Rigazzi-Tarling, Jonas Dúran, Ed Lyon and Byron Watson.

Open afternoon, Wednesday 21st April, 2pm - 5pm

Gala concert, Saturday 24th April, 7pm

Choral Day, Monday 26th April, 10am - 2.30pm

St. Cuthbert's Church, Carlisle

Sunday 20th June The Samling Picnic – The annual party in the garden at Dilston House, Corbridge, with non-stop live music, exhibition of art, auction and fun for all the family.

Tuesday 14th September – Thursday 16th September Performance and Outreach Programmes with Southbank Sinfonia and Samling Scholar, Fiona Duncan with a Concert including local schools on Thursday 16th September in Hexham Abbey.

Sunday 31st October – Sunday 7th November Masterclass Week led by Sir Thomas Allen, Patricia MacMahon and Paul Farrington with pianists Simon Over and Malcolm Martineau and actors Richard Pasco and Barbara Leigh Hunt plus six outstanding young professional singers.

Open afternoon, Wednesday 3rd November, 2pm – 5pm

Gala Concert, Saturday, 6th November 7pm

Choral Day, Monday 8th November, 10am – 2.30pm

Venue to be confirmed.

The Samling Foundation

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e-mail enquiries@samlingfoundation.org website: www.samlingfoundation.org

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