

# Sicilian star makes welcome return to Samling

Soprano Nuccia Focile will lead her first Masterclass in May alongside our Patron Sir Thomas Allen

Nuccia Focile was last with us back in 2001 with her husband, tenor Paul Charles Clarke, marking Verdi's centenary year with a performance of Italian songs and operatic arias. The May Masterclass will not be the first time Nuccia has worked with Thomas Allen, either. Most recently she played a memorably sparkling Despina alongside Tom's suave Don Alfonso in Jonathan Miller's famous production of *Così fan tutte* at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and during its hugely successful tour.

After winning the Pavarotti singing competition and taking part in a famous concert with the tenor, Nuccia's international career quickly expanded from her debut in Turin in 1986 as Oscar in Verdi's *Ballo in Maschera* to La Scala Milan, Covent Garden, the Paris Opera as well as The Metropolitan Opera.

She is well known for her interpretation of many of Mozart's heroines yet her repertoire also focuses on Puccini, Verdi and bel canto as well as Tchaikovsky and Janáček roles. She recently sang the title role of *Jenufa* for Welsh National Opera when her voice was described as having "the perfect Central European timbre, the range ideal" and "best of all, she proved to be an actress who immersed herself in the role, a victim of one of opera's most tragic situations."

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Photos by Bill Cooper



Nuccia Focile as Despina and Sir Thomas Allen as Don Alfonso "The stars of the show...sang and acted with perfect nonchalance, cunning, deception and dexterity" in the 2004 Royal Opera House production of *Così fan tutte*.

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Hannah Morrison soprano



Kirstin Sharpin soprano



Cecelia Hall mezzo soprano



Peter Gijsbertsen tenor



Jean-Phillip Elleouet baritone



Gary Griffiths baritone



David Smith pianist

Nuccia Focile will come to the North East from the Metropolitan Opera's production of *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *I Pagliacci*. This Franco Zeffirelli production also starred Samling alumnus Christopher Maltman.

Leading a Samling Masterclass for the first time, Nuccia Focile's remarkable versatility will be put to great use with the young singers and accompanist selected for the May Masterclass, sopranos Hannah Morrison and Kirstin Sharpin, mezzo soprano Cecelia Hall, tenor Peter Gijsbertsen, baritones Gary Griffiths and Jean-Philippe Elleouet and pianist David Smith.

The soprano will be in the best of company – also lending their expertise to the singers and bringing new understanding of singing processes to the public audience will be acclaimed accompanist Malcolm Martineau, leading vocal consultant Paul Farrington and pianist Caroline Dowdle.

The opportunity to see Leaders and Scholars publicly work together will take place in the friendly environment of Hall Two at The Sage Gateshead, 2 – 5 pm on Wednesday 13th May.

Masterclass Scholars have a chance to shine alongside their experienced mentors in an evening of solo and ensemble pieces in the Samling Showcase at 7 pm on Saturday 16th May in Hall Two at The Sage Gateshead.

Samling Masterclass is supported by Bob and Jen Bowman

# 10 years of Party in the Garden



**2009 is the 10th anniversary of Samling's annual *Party in the Garden* at Dilston House, the home of generous hosts Roger and Eileen McKechnie. We aim to make it our best yet!**

As always this quintessentially British affair offers guests a scrumptious lunch, afternoon tea, drinks (supplementary) and a varied programme of live music throughout the afternoon, all in delightful surroundings.

This year's featured artists will include Michael Ewart, Clifford William Blakey, Sarah Blackett-Ord, Susan Dobson and Ian Greensitt. A live auction of enticing lots will be among the day's highlights. Children will be well catered for with a variety of fun, creative and sporty activities to keep them amused all afternoon.

What could be more enjoyable than a relaxed and entertaining summer's afternoon in rural Northumberland? If you are thinking of arranging a day for clients, friends or family we can make special arrangements and reserve tables for you.

Tickets booked in advance are priced lower than those bought on the day and are exclusively available through Samling. Please book early to avoid disappointment.



Roger and Eileen McKechnie in the gardens of Dilston House

# Samling Outreach



Simon Over conducts County Durham school children in Samling's 2008 Outreach project.

Photo by Mark Pinder

## Young musicians in Durham will be starting the summer term with Prokofiev and Verdi as part of Samling's Outreach project in the county.

Working with seven schools, aspiring young musicians will be introduced to the composers in readiness for a week of workshops, presentations and performances in September. Samling will be bringing four of its Scholars – Nicola Mills, Melis Jaatinen, John-Colyn Gyeantey and Lukas Kargl – and the full 32-piece chamber orchestra Southbank Sinfonia (SbS) to the North East to work and perform with children. This will be the fifth such collaboration with SbS, who were represented in the first year of this particular project by the Berkeley Ensemble – all eight musicians were formerly members of the orchestra.

In January this pioneering young orchestra was acclaimed in national broadsheet reviews for its co-production of a "play for actors and orchestra", Tom Stoppard and Andre Previn's 1977 collaboration *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour*, with National Theatre. The young musicians will not only give presentations in schools but also offer

our budding school players a unique chance to work one-on-one and alongside them. Their insight and advice may be crucial, for not only will the children be working with a full, professional orchestra and Samling Scholars, conducted by SbS Director Simon Over, but they will also perform two showcase concerts in the main auditorium of Durham Gala Theatre. Samling's Director Karon Wright is already carefully tailoring the programme, which will see two 100-strong choirs, the Samling Scholars and side-by-side professional and pupil orchestras performing a repertoire of opera, choral music and songs of Northumberland on 2nd October.

Schools taking part this year are Ludworth, Pitlington, Sherburn Village and St. Hild's C of E Primary Schools, Belmont School Community and Arts College, Durham Gilesgate Sports College and Sixth Form Centre and Durham Johnston Comprehensive School.

## Samling at Covent Garden

Royal Opera House, Covent Garden



Photo by Peter Mackertich

Samling Scholars have been invited to perform a lunchtime recital in the Crush Room at the Royal Opera House, 1 – 2 pm on Monday 7th December. Soprano Pumeza Matshikiza, mezzo soprano Louise Collett and pianist James Baillieu will perform a specially selected programme.

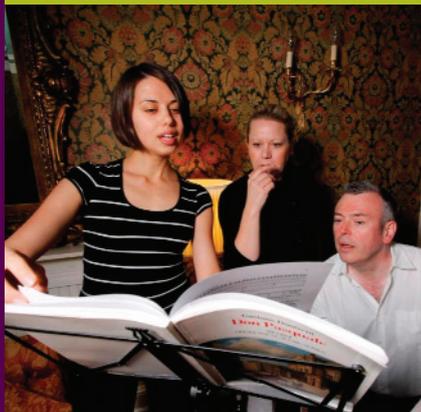
Tickets for the lunchtime concerts are free. A proportion of tickets can be reserved online nine days before the concert date and must be collected from the Royal Opera House Box Office by 12.40 pm on the day of the performance, after which they will be released.

The remaining tickets will be available at the Royal Opera House Box Office from 10 am on the morning of the recital.

This is a great opportunity for the young singers to perform together ahead of the Samling Showcase at Wigmore Hall on 11th December and a first for Samling at the Royal Opera House.

# Become a Samling Partner

Melis Jaatinen in Masterclass with Amanda Roocroft and Malcolm Martineau.



Could you play a vital role in the development of outstanding talent?

The new Samling Scholar Partner programme has been developed in order to provide support to exceptional young classically trained singers and pianists, specially selected by Samling as part of our Masterclass programme.

Photo by Mark Pinder

Through this scheme you will not only be able to offer a life-changing opportunity to a highly gifted individual, you will also enter into a position of partnership with Samling, an organisation with a reputation for excellence, whose programme is attracting international attention from the foremost conservatoires and opera houses.

Please see our new Friends' brochure or contact Samling for further details.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2009

### SAMLING MASTERCLASS WEEK

*Sunday 10th May –  
Sunday 17th May 2009*

Led by Nuccia Focile, Sir Thomas Allen, Malcolm Martineau and Paul Farrington with pianist Caroline Dowdle and seven specially selected young musicians.

Hannah Morrison	soprano
Kirstin Sharpin	soprano
Cecelia Hall	mezzo soprano
Peter Gijbsbertsen	tenor
Gary Griffiths	baritone
Jean-Philippe Elleouet	baritone
David Smith	pianist

Wednesday 13th May, 2 - 5pm  
Hall Two, The Sage Gateshead  
Samling Masterclass, tickets £10

Saturday 16th May, 7pm  
Hall Two, The Sage Gateshead  
Samling Concert, tickets A/B: £20.50 C: £14

Tickets available from The Sage Gateshead:  
Box Office: 0191 443 4661  
Online: [www.thesagegateshead.org](http://www.thesagegateshead.org)

### PARTY IN THE GARDEN

*Sunday 21st June  
12 noon onwards  
Dilston House, Corbridge*

Live music, barbecue lunch, afternoon tea, auction and original art to buy.

Tickets in advance:  
£40/family (2 adults and up to 4 children),  
£18/adult, £5/child

Tickets on the day:  
£45/family (2 adults and up to 4 children),  
£20/adult, £6/child

All tickets available exclusively from Samling on 01434 602885

### SAMLING OUTREACH

*Tuesday 29th September –  
Friday 2nd October*

Four Samling Scholars and Southbank Sinfonia will take part in presentations and workshops with students from County Durham schools.

This will be the second year of a two year project.

The culmination of the residency will be two concerts conducted by Simon Over at Durham Gala Theatre on Friday 2nd October at 5pm and 7pm.

### SAMLING MASTERCLASS WEEK

*Sunday 1st November -  
Sunday 8th November*

Led by Sir Thomas Allen, Isobel Buchanan and Paul Farrington with pianists Simon Over and Caroline Dowdle and six specially selected young singers.

Narine Ojakhyan	soprano
Sung Eun Seo	soprano
Anna Huntley	mezzo soprano
Carlos Noguiera	tenor
Amar Muchhala	tenor
Richard Latham	baritone

Wednesday 4th November, 2 - 5pm  
Hall Two, The Sage Gateshead  
Samling Masterclass, tickets £10

Saturday 7th November, 7pm  
Hall Two, The Sage Gateshead  
Samling Concert, tickets A/B: £20.50 C: £14

Tickets available from The Sage Gateshead:  
Box Office: 0191 443 4661  
Online: [www.thesagegateshead.org](http://www.thesagegateshead.org)

### SAMLING SCHOLARS AT ROH

*Monday 7th December, 1 - 2pm*

A lunchtime recital by Samling Scholars in the Crush Room at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. The artists performing will be soprano Pumeza Matshikiza, mezzo soprano Louise Collett and pianist James Baillieu.

Tickets are free and available from the Royal Opera House 9 days in advance.  
Box Office: 020 7304 4000  
Online: [www.roh.org.uk](http://www.roh.org.uk)

### SAMLING SHOWCASE

*Friday 11th December 7.30pm  
Wigmore Hall, London*

In this historic venue, renowned for showcasing the world's most talented soloists and chamber musicians, Samling Patron Sir Thomas Allen and Malcolm Martineau present and take part in a special concert demonstrating Samling's unique format and style with Scholars soprano Pumeza Matshikiza, mezzo soprano Louise Collett and pianist James Baillieu.

Tickets £26, £22, £16 and £12, available from Wigmore Hall Box Office: 020 7935 2141 or online: [www.wigmore-hall.org.uk](http://www.wigmore-hall.org.uk)

There are a number of tickets, which include a three-course dinner, wine and coffee with the artists after the concert in the Bechstein Room. These are priced £125 and are available only from Samling on 01434 602885.

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