

PERGOLES

STABAT MATER



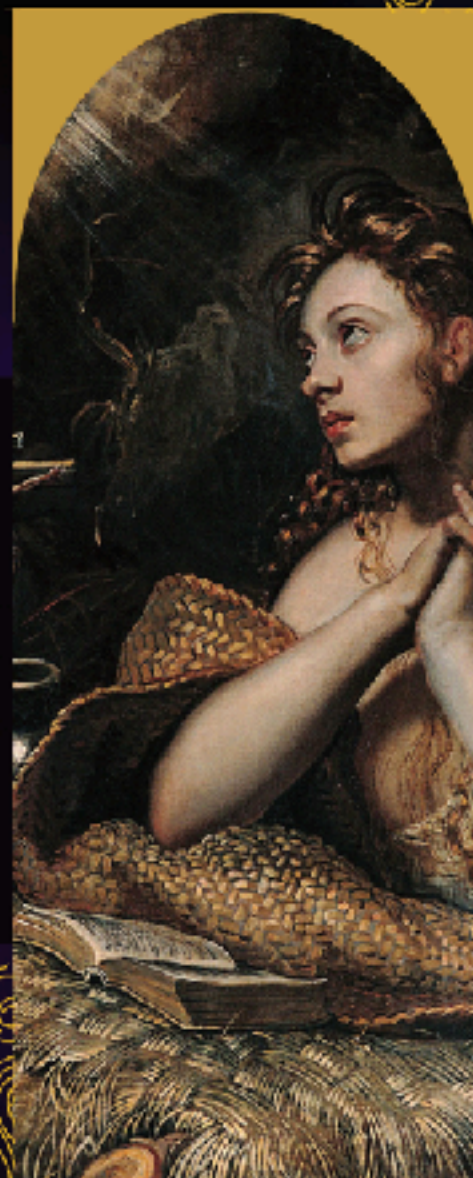
REBEL

LES ÉLÉMENTS

SIMON ROBERT SHAW
CONDUCTOR

SARAH CASTLE
MEZZO SOPRANO

LILLIAN RAMM
SOPRANO



THE SKAPARIS AT EASTER LIVESTREAM

SATURDAY 3RD APRIL 2021 19:00 GMT

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT: WWW.SKAPARIS.UK



Welcome!

I would like to thank each and every one of you for purchasing an online ticket and programme for the 'Skaparis at Easter' live stream concert. I hope that you enjoy the programme of incredible music that I've chosen - it's being played and sung by some of the world's finest musicians.

This is the first time that the Skaparis has met since the successful UK Tour with the electronic artist Gary Numan in November of 2018, and due to the Covid-19 crisis that started at the beginning of 2020, this concert had to be postponed until this year. We are very grateful to the Lighthouse Church in Salford, UK for enabling us to put on the concert and global live stream.

However, now that we are well in to 2021, I am incredibly excited to be performing two works that I have waited a very long time to conduct: Jean Féry Rebel's 'Les Elemens' and Pergolesi's 'Stabat Mater'. Both are masterpieces.

I'm also really thrilled to be sharing the debut of my orchestration of Mozart's fabulous violin sonata in G major Kv. 310 with you. I decided to write a third movement to Mozart's two-movement sonata which I've always felt needed an extra movement, giving it a sense of finality instead of being left somewhat in the air.

As a performing and recording orchestra, the Skaparis will be broadcast live to the world via livestream from the Lighthouse Church on Saturday 3rd of April at 19.00 with a commercial live CD being produced as well. This will be released later in the year.

We love meeting our audiences, but as we are not able to have a live seated audience this time, we would encourage you to join us in the Skaparis's Crowdcast forum during the concert. I will answer as many of your questions as I can in the interval! We will also be holding a raffle so you will get the chance to win some fabulous Skaparis prizes!

Details on how to enter the forum as well as how to purchase last minute tickets can be found on the Skaparis website: skaparis.uk

I would also like to thank Gillian Ramm (Soprano) for stepping in for Madeleine Pierard at short notice, and we would like to wish Madeleine all the best with her pregnancy in New Zealand.

I hope you all thoroughly enjoy the concert!



SR SHINDIGS LTD. Presents;

The SKAPARIS ORCHESTRA at EASTER

Conductor and Musical Director: **SIMON ROBERTSHAW**

Soprano: **GILLIAN RAMM**

Mezzo-Soprano: **SARAH CASTLE**

JEAN FÉRY REBEL - LES ÉLÉMENTS (THE ELEMENTS)

MOZART - VIOLIN SONATA NO.18 IN G MAJOR (KV. 310)

1st and 2nd movements orchestrated and 3rd movement composed and orchestrated by

SIMON ROBERTSHAW

----- **BREAK OF 25 MINS** -----

GIOVANNI BATTISTA PERGOLESI - STABAT MATER



The Skaparis (from the old Norse *Skapa* - 'to Create') was formed by conductor, composer and arranger Simon Robertshaw and had its debut concert at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, UK on the 16th December 2016. Simon brought together the best players that he could find while he was on the two year Associate conducting course at the RNCM so that they could perform and play works that he chose, with a goal to performing his 1st Symphony.

Since forming in 2016, the Skaparis has skyrocketed into the public arena, and its first professional collaboration with Classical Uproar (a dance/acid house collective with artists such as Alison Limmerick, Luke Neptune, former Prince singer Tameka Jackson Bekka Nightgeist and DJ XTC) was extremely successful, and included the Skaparis being broadcast on BBC Regional News. This led to further concerts with Classical Uproar and the Skaparis was invited to perform with them at Leeds International Festival in April 2018.

Simon then collaborated with the iconic electronic artist Gary Numan for a UK tour in November 2018 which suddenly launched the Skaparis into the international spotlight having only been active for just over a year! Critics were extremely forthcoming in their praise for Gary and the Skaparis, the orchestra now having a dedicated following of Gary Numan fans (the Numanoids) as well as a global audience. The Live DVD of the Bridgewater Hall performance in Manchester was released by the record label BMG on the 13th December 2019, and a limited release of one thousand 3-disc coloured vinyl sets became available on the 28th August 2020, selling out in just two days.

One of the founding tenets of the Skaparis is that it is a modern orchestra, able to morph in to any size with any genre of music depending on the project, creating different worlds and soundscapes. Reflecting this, the next project after these Easter concerts for the Skaparis will be a collaboration with DJ Jay Wearden at the iconic Manchester venue GORILLA. Simon has arranged four classic dance tunes and the Skaparis set will be the main event late evening on November 6th 2021.

The next large project the ensemble will perform is for the 'Skaparis at Halloween' concert on Saturday 30th October 2021 at Stoller Hall, the amazing, newly refurbished £7 million concert hall that is now part of Chetham's School of Music in Manchester. It will be a larger orchestra including wind, brass and percussion featuring music by Simon, Franz Liszt (his 250th anniversary year!) and John Williams.

The British international concert pianist Martin Roscoe will also be making an appearance with the Skaparis in the first half of the concert, for a performance of Franz Liszt's 'Totentanz' which we are very much looking forward to!

Details of how to purchase tickets can be found on the official Skaparis website:
www.skaparis.uk



The PLAYERS



Leader

Madeleine Fitzgerald

1st Violins

Cleo Annandale

Savva Sverev

(Savva appears by kind permission of the Royal Northern College of Music)

Dannii Meagher

Heather McLeod

2nd Violins

Craig Stratton

Glen Perry

Megan Thompson

Molly Wrafter

Violas

Ben Kearsley

Dáire Roberts

Abi Hammett

Alex Robertson

Harpsichord/Organ

Neil Taylor

Cello

James Heathcote

Double Bass

James Goode

Oboe

Heather Cossins

Trumpet

Roland Parsons

Flute

Hugh Roberts

Horns

Rupert Browne

Callum Ward

Flute/Piccolo

Tim Bingham

Timpani

Sophie Smith

Clarinet

Emily Wilson

Bassoon

Alice Braithwaite

Skaparis Orchestra Manager

Esther Wakeman





JEAN-FERY REBEL (1666 - 1747)



Rebel's influence

Rebel (pronounced 're-BEL'), a child violin prodigy, was the most famous offspring of Jean Rebel, a tenor in Louis XIV's private chapel. He later became a student of the great violinist, singer, conductor, and composer Jean-Baptiste Lully.

By 1699, at age 33, Rebel became first violinist of the Académie royale de musique (also known as the Opéra). He travelled to Spain in 1700. Upon his return to France in 1705, he was given a place in the prestigious ensemble known as the Les Vingt-quatre Violons du Roi. He was chosen Maître de Musique in 1716.

His most important position at court was Chamber Composer, receiving the title in 1726. Rebel served as court composer to Louis XIV and *maître de musique* at the Académie, and directed the Concert Spirituel (during the 1734-1735 season).

Rebel was one of the first French musicians to compose sonatas in the Italian style. Many of his compositions are marked by striking originality that include complex counter-rhythms and audacious harmonies that were not fully appreciated by listeners of his time. Just the opening chords of Rebel's 'Les Éléments' (first on the programme tonight) are enough to invoke a feeling that indeed, the Universe had just come in to being.

The Elements in Antiquity

The Ancient Greeks held three notions about the nature of the universe that held sway for centuries over Western scientific and religious thought. The first was that the world was composed of basic elements. Some named five - earth, fire, air, water, and ether - but the last was excluded from the theory of Empedocles, whose formulation was adopted by most later Ancient philosophers, including Plato and Aristotle.

The second important Ancient concept was that a state of chaos preceded the creation of the Universe. The third influential idea was that the sun, moon, stars, and planets revolved around the Earth in proportions that reflected musical intervals, a theory articulated by the philosopher and mathematician, Pythagoras. (It was even said that Pythagoras himself could actually hear this celestial music.)

Chaos and the Beginning

Rebel began his “new symphony” as a dance suite, to which he appended a revolutionary six-minute movement, called “Chaos”, which employs the technique of musical dissonance (until then nearly unknown in music) to depict the disorder that preceded creation. One might easily mistake this movement for the atonal work of an avant-garde, twentieth-century composer; yet it is the shockingly original work of a seventy-one-year old, Baroque composer whose previous compositions had been lauded for their “taste and tenderness” and their eschewal of the “frightening and monstrous.”

In Rebel’s own words:

“The introduction to this Symphony is Chaos itself; that confusion which reigned among the Elements before the moment when, subject to immutable laws, they assumed their prescribed places within the natural order. This initial idea led me somewhat further. I have dared to link the idea of the confusion of the Elements with that of confusion in Harmony. I have risked opening with all the notes sounding together, or rather, all the notes in an octave played as a single sound. To designate, in this confusion, each particular element, I have availed myself of some widely accepted conventions.

The bass expresses Earth by tied notes which are played jerkily. The flutes, with their rising and falling line, imitate the flow and murmur of Water. Air is depicted by pauses followed by cadenzas on the small flutes, and finally the violins, with their liveliness and brilliance, represent the activity of Fire. These characteristics may be recognised, separate or intermingled, in whole or in part, in the diverse reprises that I have called Chaos, and which mark the efforts of the Elements to get free of each other. At the 7th appearance of Chaos these efforts diminish as order begins to assert itself.”

(Programme notes: Wikipedia, Simon Robertshaw, and The Imaginative Conservative)

We will be playing **six** movements from Les Éléments:



LES ELEMENS - THE ELEMENTS



1. Le Chaos
2. Loure II
3. Premiere Tambourin
4. Deuxième Tambourin
5. Sicilienne
6. Caprice



MOZART (1756 - 1791)



Violin Sonata No.18 in G major

Orchestrated by Simon Robertshaw (b. 1971)

3rd movement composed and orchestrated by Simon Robertshaw

Mozartian wizardry

Over the period of his short life, Mozart composed 36 violin sonatas. His first sonatas were among his earliest works and composed when the young prodigy was a mere six years old. They encompass several of Mozart's firsts as a composer: for example, his first works incorporating the violin, his first works with more than a single instrument, his first works in more than one movement and his first works in sonata form.

The Violin Sonata No. 18 in G Major (K 301/293a) is a much later work, and was composed some twenty years later in March 1778 in Mannheim, Germany. Here, we still have the glint of the boy *wunderkind*, but these two movements show Mozart's maturity to the highest degree, and the musical narrative has elegance and clarity which the earlier sonatas do not.

It was first published in the same year as part of Mozart's Opus 1 collection which was dedicated to Maria Elisabeth, Electress of the Palatinate and are consequently known as the Palatine Sonatas.

The work consists of two movements:

1. Allegro con Spirito
2. Allegro

As a violinist in my previous career I often wondered why some of Mozart's violin sonatas only had two movements. Most have three or even four movements, and I have always felt that those with only two always left the listener on a bit of a cliff edge!

My conducting mentor, the great Dutch conductor Jac van Steen asked me to orchestrate the sonata (in its original form) as part of my conducting training, and it was as I finished orchestrating the second movement in early 2020, that I felt a great impetus to keep going!

After suggesting this to Jac, I then set about putting myself in Mozart's head space. *What would Mozart have composed if he had written **another** movement??*

I stand to be judged by Mozart and by all of you!

(Programme notes: Wikipedia, Simon Robertshaw)



25 Minute Interval



Please come and join us in the CrowdCast platform forum and if you entered the raffle at the beginning of the show find out if you've won some **FABULOUS** Skaparis prizes!!

Simon will be also be answering your questions!



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THE **SKAPARIS ORCHESTRA**



GIOVANNI BATTISTA PERGOLESI

1710 - 1736



STABAT MATER - *lit.* a medieval Latin hymn on the suffering of the Virgin Mary at the Crucifixion

Divinity

As a conductor and composer, one of my many roles is to match words with music. Having an understanding of the sacred musical form gives greater depth to its interpretation and performance. Historically, sacred music started with just one voice in plainchant, but in time it progressed with the addition of a second voice.

This style of voices in unison continued for many years, but with developments in musical form such as counterpoint and polyphony, multiple voices were then used alongside liturgical rites.

Composers at that time started to realise the increasing variety of options available to them. They expanded the musical and written forms in the church and used vernacular instead of Latin. After the Council of Trent, however, Latin remained the dominant language during the Counter Reformation and the trend continued towards simplicity in sacred music.

Commission

It was in this context that the Confraternita Dei Cavallieri (the Brotherhood of the Knights) commissioned Pergolesi some 100 years later to write a sacred work for the annual Good Friday meditation, in honour of the Virgin Mary.

Pergolesi used 'Laudis', a Catholic compositional technique favoured by Jacapone da Todi, to define images of a restless and tortured soul through libretto.

This was now the Baroque period in music and the fact that Pergolesi had written very early operas (including his most famous, *La Serva Padrona*) meant that he had in his hands new compositional tools with which to intertwine highly emotive music with holy text.

1736 - the year before Chaos

Many pieces which were said to have been composed by Pergolesi have been misattributed; however, the *Stabat Mater* is definitely by Pergolesi, as a manuscript in his handwriting has been preserved.

Pergolesi composed it during his final illness - tuberculosis - in a Franciscan monastery in Pozzuoli, along with a *Salve Regina* setting, and, as it is said, finished it right before he died in 1736. This just **one year** before Rebel wrote *Les Éléments* - there couldn't be more stark a contrast in compositions.

When I heard the *Stabat Mater* for the very first time, although I didn't understand most of the Latin until I read the translation, I was utterly enraptured. The music opened up a portal to another Universe.

However, it was only from studying the intricacies of the Latin libretto that I realised just how masterfully Pergolesi had used certain harmonies, nuances of phrasing and dynamics to take us in to a completely different world. Another composer might have left us rather flat and very unfulfilled indeed.

The work is divided into twelve movements, each named after the incipit of the text. Much of the music is based on Pergolesi's earlier setting of the *Dies irae* sequence.

Mater Unigeniti (Mother of the Only-begotten)

Traditionally of course, during the *Excelsis Deo* in the Mass of the Lord's Supper, all church bells can be rung and the organ played. The bells and the organ are then silenced until the Gloria of the Easter Vigil. Imagine then after two days silence hearing the transcendent music of Pergolesi followed by this heartrending stanza:

"Vidit suum dulcem natum, morientum desolatum dum emisit spiritum"
"She saw her sweet son dying in desolation as he gave up the ghost"

(Programme notes by Wikipedia and Simon Robertshaw)



STABAT MATER



1. STABAT MATER DOLOROSA - GRAVE, F MINOR (DUET)

Stabat mater dolorosa
juxta crucem lacrimosa
dum pendebat filius

The sorrowing Mother stood
tearfully by the Cross
while Her Son hung there

2. CUJUS ANIMAM GEMENTEM - ANDANTE AMOROSO, C MINOR (SOPRANO ARIA)

Cujus animam gementem
contristans et dolentem
petransivit gladius

(Her Son) Whose soul - moaning
sad and saddening -
a sword has pierced

3. O QUAM TRISTIS ET AFFLICTA - LARGHETTO, G MINOR (DUET)

O quam tristis et afflicta
fuit illa benedicta
petransivit gladius

Oh, how mournful and suffering
was that blessed
Mother of the Only-begotten

4. QUAE MOREREBAT ET DOLEBAT - ALLEGRO, E FLAT MAJOR (MEZZO ARIA)

Quae morerebat et dolebat
et tremebat cum videbat
nati poenas incliti

She was grieving and aching
and trembling as She saw
the torments of her Renowned Son

5. QUIS EST HOMO - LARGO, < MINOR (DUET)

Quis es homo qui non fleret
Christi matrem si videret
in tanto supplico?
Quis non posset contristari
piam matrem contemplari
dolentem cum filio?
Pro peccati sua gentis
vidit Jesum in tormentis
et flagellis subditum

What human being would not weep
upon seeing the Mother of Christ
in such torture?
Who would fail to be saddened
when observing the faithful Mother
sorrowing along with Her Son?
For the sins of His people
She saw Jesus in torments
and subjected to whips

6. VIDIT SUUM DULCEM NATUM - F MINOR (SOPRANO ARIA)

Vidit suum dulcem natum
morientum desolatumdum emisit spiritum

She saw Her sweet Son
dying in desolation
as He gave up the ghost

7. EJA MATER FONS AMORIS - ANDANTINO, < MINOR (MEZZO ARIA)

Eja mater fons amoris!
Me sentire vim doloris
fac, ut tecum lugeam

O Mother, fount of love!
Make me feel the force of my pain,
so that I may mourn with you

8. FAC ET ARDENT COR MEUM - ALLEGRO, G MINOR (DUET)

Fac ut ardent cor meum
in amando Christum deum
ut sibi complaceam

Make my heart blaze
with love for Christ the Lord
so that I may please Him

9. SANCTA MATER, ISTUD AGAS - TEMPO GIUSTO, E FLAT MAJOR (DUET)

Sancta mater, stud agas:
crucifixi fige plagas
cordi meo valide

Tui nati vulnerati
jam dignati pro me pati
poenas mecum divide

Fac me vere tecum flere
crucifixo condelore
donec ego vixero

Juxta crucem tecum stare
te libenter sociare
in planctu desidero

Virgo virginum praeclara
mihi jam non sis amara
fac me tecum plangere

Holy Mother, do this:
strongly transfix my heart
with the wounds of the crucified one

divide with me the torments
of Your wounded Son
Who has now deigned to suffer for me

Make me truly weep with You
and suffer along with the crucified One
as long as I live

I desire to stand with You beside the Cross
to join with You willingly in weeping

Virgin, famous among virgins
do not bitter to me now
make me cry along with You

10. FAC UT PORTEM CHRISTI MORTEM - LARGO, G MINOR (MEZZO ARIA)

Fac ut portem Christi mortem
passionis fac consortem
et plagas recorde

fac me plagis vulnerari
cruce hac inebriari
ob amore filii

Make me bear the death of Christ
make me a sharer of His passion
meditating upon His wounds

make me afflicted with those wounds
and intoxicated with this cross
for love of Your Son

11. INFLAMMATUS ET ACCENSUS - ALLEGRO MA NON TROPPO, B FLAT MAJOR (DUET)

Inflammatum et accensum
per te, virgo, sum defensus
in die iudicii

Fac me cruce custodiri
morte Christi praemuniri
conferri gratia

In my ardor and zeal
let me be defended by You, Virgin,
on Judgement Day

Make me be guarded by the Cross
fortified by the death of Christ
and fostered by Grace

12. QUANDO CORPUS MORIETUR - LARGO ASSAI, F MINOR (DUET)

Quando corpus morietur
fac ut animae donetur
Paradisi gloria. AMEN. [In sempiternal saecular, amen.]

When my body dies
make my soul be given
the glory of Paradise. AMEN. [Time without end, amen.]



Gillian Ramm - SOPRANO



Australian born, Gillian completed her undergraduate training at the West Australian Conservatorium of Music, moving on to the Young Artist Programme with West Australian Opera. After winning multiple prizes in the prestigious Australian Singing Competition she travelled to England to undertake postgraduate studies at the RNCM. There she was generously supported by the Peter Moores Foundation, the Tait Foundation and the Ian Potter Foundation of Australia. She was awarded the Ricordi prize for Opera and the John Cameron Lieder prize.

Operatic engagements include Fiordiligi *Così fan Tutte* (Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Budapest Festival Orchestra, Salzburger Landestheater), the title role in Handel's *Rodelinda* (Iford Festival/ Early Opera Company), Donna Anna *Don Giovanni*, Vitellia *La Clemenza di Tito* and Tytania *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (English Touring Opera), Rita Donizetti's Rita (West Green House), Rosalinde *Die Fledermaus* (Glyndebourne Touring Opera), First Niece *Peter Grimes* (ENO, Opera de Oviedo), Second Niece *Peter Grimes* (Teatro di San Carlo, Napoli), *Aci Aci, Galatea e Polifemo* (London Handel Festival, Goettingen International Handel Festival), Yum Yum *The Mikado* (Carl Rosa), Valencienne *The Merry Widow* (West Australian Opera) and Clorinda *La Cenerentola* (Ryedale Festival, RNCM)

Concert appearances include *Messiah* with Paul McCreesh/Orquestra Filharmonica de Gran Canaria, Bach's *St John Passion* (Teatro Comunale di Bologna) and Angelic Voice in Korngold's *Das Wunder der Heliane* (LPO/Jurowski). She appears as Juno in the recording of Thomas Arne's *The Judgement of Paris* with the critically acclaimed Brook Street Band conducted by John Andrews, released under the Dutton Epoch label.



Sarah Castle MEZZO-SOPRANO



Sarah Castle was born in New Zealand and studied at the RNCM.

Roles for the Royal Opera, Covent Garden have included Flora La Traviata, Mlle Dangeville Adriana Lecouvreur; Page Salome; and Siegrune Die Walküre, Flosshilde Das Rheingold and Götterdämmerung. Recently she sang Mother and Witch Hansel & Gretel for Zurich Opera.

Other highlights include First Norn, Waltraute and Flosshilde Götterdämmerung in Karlsruhe; the title role in La Cenerentola (New Zealand Opera), Portia in André Tchaikowsky's The Merchant of Venice (Polish National Opera, Warsaw; Welsh National Opera; ROH Covent Garden); Marco in Tan Dun's Marco Polo, creating the role of Elektra in Manfred Trojahn's Orest, and Magdalene Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg (Netherlands Opera); Fox The Cunning Little Vixen (Welsh National Opera; Israeli Opera); Dido Dido and Aeneas (Lausanne); title role Carmen (Hallenstadion Zurich); Ruggiero Alcina, and Hänsel Hänsel und Gretel (Australian Opera); Flosshilde and Grimgerde at the Bayreuth Festival; Flosshilde (Munich; Opera North); Nicklausse Les contes d'Hoffmann (Teatro Real, Madrid; Gran Teatro de Cordoba); Nerone L'Incoronazione di Poppea, Sesto Giulio Cesare and Melibea Il Viaggio a Reims (Israeli Opera); Cherubino (Seattle Opera; San Diego Opera; New Zealand Opera); Stéphanie Roméo et Juliette, Siébel Faust, Lola Cavalleria Rusticana, and Nancy T'ang Nixon in China (San Diego Opera).

Concerts include the recent performances of Beethoven 9 with the Hallé Orchestra; Mahler's Das Lied von der Erde with Psappha in Manchester; Waltraute Die Walküre for the Hallé, New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, and Hong Kong Philharmonic; First Norn in Hong Kong; Elijah with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra; and LPO with Kurt Masur; and Mahler's Symphony No. 3 with Gustavo Dudamel. She has appeared several times at the BBC Proms, including in Mendelssohn's Lobgesang, and Parsifal, with the Hallé Orchestra.

Sarah will be performing Mahler's Symphony No. 2 in Skopje; 3rd Maid Elektra with the Royal Opera, Covent Garden; Juno/Ino Semele with New Zealand Opera in the coming future.



SIMON ROBERT SHAW

CONDUCTOR/MUSICAL DIRECTOR



Born in Scotland and coming from a highly musical family, Simon's musical education began in Nairobi, Kenya in 1974 and has taken him all over the globe following his passion as a player, conductor, arranger and composer.

After graduating from the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester with the Hiles Gold Medal in 1992 and studying violin with Lydia Mordkovitch, Simon became a 1st violinist in the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra for four years.

Continuing with his Postgraduate studies at the Vienna Conservatoire with Prof. Florian Zwiauer he then played with the Beethoven Ensemble of Vienna and Radio Symphony Orchestra of Vienna.

Simon completed his studies and decided to follow a playing/conducting route; he became a member of the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra for 14 years and started conducting the Northern Baroque Orchestra in 2006. It was there that he cut his teeth spanning the repertoire from C.P.E. Bach to Glazunov, and he invited soloists from the BBC Philharmonic to perform in concerts.

After participating in an international masterclass with the esteemed Dutch conductor Jac van Steen in 2015 at the RNCM, Simon decided it was then that he would have to leave the BBC Philharmonic to study conducting full time. Simon is continuing to have conducting lessons with Mr. Van Steen.

Simon was accepted on a prestigious conducting course at the RNCM where his tutors were Clark Rundell and Mark Heron. He was the first ever 'Associate Conducting Student' at the RNCM.

While on the conducting course, Simon conducted two Opera scenes: Rossini's *La Cenerentola* and Mascagni's *L'amico Fritz*. He also worked with many chamber and orchestral ensembles and conducted for visiting conductors including Philippe Bach, Mark Shanahan and Matthew Wood. During this intense period of study, Simon had his conducting debut with the Blackburn Symphony Orchestra and formed the Skaparis Orchestra shortly afterwards.

After completing his studies and leaving the RNCM, he soon found himself working non-stop, and in August of 2017 Simon had his opera debut, conducting Anna Appleby's '*Citizens of Nowhere*' chamber opera at RADA studios at the Tête a Tête Festival in London, to great acclaim. He collaborated on the project with Dane Hurst, the celebrated South African Ballet Rambert dancer.

Finding himself in demand as an extremely versatile conductor, he hand-picked and conducted the players for the computer game soundtrack of '*The Incredibles 2*', became M.D. of the Stretford Brass Band (Manchester) and conducted in the final concert of the London Masterclass series for the Boston Philharmonic chief conductor, Benjamin Zander.

2018 was an incredible year for Simon as he conducted the Skaparis for the very successful '*Harry Potter Convention*' concerts, which were held at Stoller Hall in Manchester and Salford. There were twenty sell out shows with over 7,000 audience members seeing the Skaparis perform John Williams film score classics.

The Gary Numan/Skaparis tour in November of 2018 took the Skaparis and Simon to new heights. He orchestrated twelve of the nineteen arrangements that made up the set for the tour and had his conducting debut at the Royal Albert Hall in London, which was completely sold out.



Needing to recover from such a massive output in 2018, 2019 began slowly - but plans started formulating to begin formal work writing his 1st symphony and Simon flew out to Finland to participate in the Jorma Panula Academy Masterclasses with the famous conducting pedagogue, Jorma Panula.

Since then, Simon has been twice to San Sebastián in Northern Spain to assist his ex-chief conductor Juanjo Mena with the Euskadi Orchestra in the Basque country in 2019/20, and assisted the Australian conductor Simone Young for four performances of Henze's opera '*Das verratene Meer*' at the Vienna State Opera in December 2020. This was Simon's very first professional conducting Assistantship.



THE SKAPARIS MANAGEMENT TEAM



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Skaparis would like to thank; The Lighthouse team, Glenn Perry, Alex Robertson, Edward Russell at the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra and Janet Fearn at RB Books

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