



Saturday 18 December, 7.30pm  
St Martin's Church

## **BREMF@CHRISTMAS**

Katy Hill *soprano*  
Luthien Brackett *mezzo-soprano*  
Kieran White *tenor* Evangelist  
Robin Datta and Dominic Wallis *tenors*  
Andrew Robinson *baritone*  
Stuart O'Hara *bass-baritone*

## **BREMF Consort of Voices**

Deborah Roberts *director*  
soloist James Elias *baritone*

## **BREMF Singers**

John Hancorn *director*

## **BREMF Community Choir**

Andrew Robinson *director*  
with Leah Stuttard *harp*

## **BREMF Players**

Alison Bury *leader*  
Alice Earll *violin*  
Annette Isserlis *viola*  
Rachel Stott *viola*  
Gavin Kibble *bass violin*  
Zoe Shevlin *bassoon*  
Johan Löfving *chitarrone*  
Claire Williams *organ*

## **The English Cornett & Sackbut Ensemble**

Conor Hastings and Helen Roberts *cornetti, recorders*  
Emily White, Tom Lees and Adrian France *sackbuts*

## The music

Procession – chant	Resonet in laudibus
Anonymous arr. Leah Stuttard BL Arundel 248, fol. 154a (c.1300)	Gabriel, fram evene kingh
Jean Mouton c.1459–1522	Nesciens mater
Giovanni Gabrieli c.1554/1557–1612	O magnum mysterium
Michael Praetorius c.1571–1621	In dulci jubilo
Heinrich Schütz 1585–1672	Der Engel sprach zu den Hirten (after Andrea Gabrieli)
Schütz	Hodie Christus natus est
Johann Vierdanck c.1605–1646	Sonata 28 a 3 tromboni e cornetto
Schütz	Magnificat
Interval	
Schütz	The Christmas Story

In the darkest days of winter, we have always sought hope and light. In ancient times people possibly even wondered if the light would return. Christmas brings together both an ancient pagan festival and a story of the birth of a god made man in order to bring light into the world. As we face another wave in the pandemic we also need to find some light, and hope tonight's concert can provide that.

We are acutely aware of risk to vulnerable people and hope we can all support one another and show that music and the arts can continue safely. Thank you all for your co-operation.

The BREMF Community Choir kicks off tonight's concert with a rare performance in modern times of the popular Advent carol *Angelus ad Virginem*, in a Norfolk dialect from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, clearly showing the strong influence of Teutonic languages in the early development of the English language. The rest of the first half spans Christmas music from France, Italy and the German speaking world, to introduce Heinrich Schütz, a composer whose music so effectively fuses these different influences into a unique style that paved the way to establishing the flourishing German Baroque, culminating in the music of JS Bach.

Born in 1585, his early musical education took place in his native Germany before he went to Venice to study with Giovanni Gabrieli in 1609. The influence of Italian music, and Gabrieli in particular, was to affect all that he subsequently composed, and especially in his love of polychoral music. He even arranged *Der Engel sprach zu den Hirten* from a Latin motet composed by Giovanni Gabrieli's father, Andrea Gabrieli. He subsequently spent much of his life working in Dresden as court composer for the Elector of Saxony but with several periods working in other European cities, including a return to Venice where he may have met Monteverdi.

His *Historia der ... Geburt ... Jesu Christi* (The Christmas Story) was published in 1664 when he was in his 70's and during a period in which he also composed a number of Passion settings. The style is far closer to what we think of as 'Baroque' with a clearly defined independent basso continuo and delineated recitatives, arias, ensembles and chordal choral writing. Heinrich Schütz died in 1672 at the age of 87. 2022 will mark the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death and hopefully a plentiful celebration of a prolific and powerful voice.

Deborah Roberts

## The texts

**Resonet in laudibus** cum iucundis plausibus  
Sion cum fidelibus,  
apparuit quem genuit Maria.

Christus natus hodie ex Maria virgine  
sine viri femine  
apparuit quem genuit Maria.

Pueri concinite, nato regi psallite,  
voce pia dicite,  
apparuit quem genuit Maria.

Sion lauda Dominum Salvatorem hominum,  
purgatorem criminum  
apparuit quem genuit Maria.

Sunt impleta quae praedixit Gabriel.  
Eya, Eya, virgo Deum genuit,  
quem divina voluit clementia.

Hodie apparuit, apparuit in Israel,  
ex Maria virgine est natus Rex.

**Gabriel, fram evene kingh**  
Sent to the maide swete,  
broute hire blisful tiding,  
and faire he gan hire greten:  
"Heil be thu, ful of grace arith,  
for Godes Sone, this evene lith,  
for mannes loven  
wile man bicomen  
and taken  
fles of thee, maiden brith,  
manken fre for to maken  
of senne and devles mith."

Mildeliche im gan andsweren  
the milde maiden thanne:  
"Wichewise sold ichs beren  
child withhuten manne?"  
Th'angle seide, "Ne dred te nout;  
thurw th'Oligast sal ben iwrou  
this ilche thing  
warof tiding  
ichs bringe.  
Al manken wrth ibout  
thur thi swete chiltinge,  
and hut of pine ibrou."

Wan the maiden understud  
and th'angles wordes herde,  
mildeliche with milde mud  
to thangle hie andswerde:

Let praises resound with joyous acclaim:  
to Sion's faithful  
the child born of Mary has appeared.

Christ, born today of the Virgin Mary  
without the seed of man:  
the child born...

Let us sing together to the Child, the newborn king  
and with pious tones, say:  
the child born...

O Sion, praise the Lord, the Saviour of mankind,  
He who cleanses sin:  
the child born...

What Gabriel foretold has been fulfilled.  
Eia, A Virgin bore God,  
as the divine mercy willed.

Today He has appeared in Israel:  
from the Virgin Mary is born a King.

Gabriel, from heaven's king  
sent to the sweet maid,  
brought her blissful tidings;  
and fair did he greet her:  
"Hail be thou; full of grace truly  
for God's son, this heavenly light  
for man's love  
will (desires to) become man  
and [desires to] take  
flesh of thee, maiden bright,  
mankind free to make  
from sin and devil's might."

Mildly she answered him  
the mild maiden then:  
"How should I bear  
a child without a man?"  
The angel said, "Dread thee not  
through the Holy Ghost shall be accomplished  
this same thing  
whereof news  
I bring  
mankind will be redeemed  
through thy sweet childbearing  
and out of suffering [be] brought."

When the maiden understood  
and heard the angel's words,  
mildly with mild heart  
the angel she answered:

"Hur Lordes theumaiden iwis  
ics am, that her aboven is.  
Anenttis me  
fulfurthed be  
thi sawe,  
that ics, sithen his wil is,  
maiden withhuten lawe  
of moder have the blis."

Th'angle wente awei mid than  
al hut of hire sithte;  
hire wombe arise gan  
thurw th'Oligastes mithe.  
In hire was Crist biloken anon:  
suth God, soth man ine fleas and bon,  
and of hir fleas  
iboren was  
at time,  
warthurw us kam God won.  
He bout us hut of pine  
and let im for us slon.

Maiden moder makeles,  
of milche ful ibunden,  
bid for hus im that thee ches,  
at wam thu grace funde,  
that he forgive hus senne and wrake,  
and clene of evri gelt us make;  
and evne blis  
wan hure time is  
to sterven  
hus give for thine sake  
him so her for to serven  
that he us to him take.

**Nesciens mater** virgo virum  
peperit sine dolore  
salvatorem saeculorum.  
Ipsum regem angelorum  
sola virgo lactabat,  
ubere de caelo pleno.

**O magnum mysterium,**  
et admirabile sacramentum,  
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum,  
iacentem in praesepio!  
Beata Virgo, cujus viscera  
meruerunt portare  
Dominum Iesum Christum.  
Alleluia!

**In dulci jubilo,**  
Nun singet und seid froh!  
Unsers Herzens Wonne  
leit in praesepio;  
und leuchtet wie die Sonne

"Our Lord's handmaiden truly;  
I am; who is here above.  
Concerning me  
carried out be  
your saying,  
so that I, since it is his will  
a maiden outside the law [of nature]  
enjoy the bliss of motherhood."

The angel went away with that  
all out of her sight;  
her womb grew  
through the Holy Ghost's power.  
In her was Christ enclosed  
true God; true man in flesh and bone,  
and of her flesh  
was born  
at term,  
whereby God came to dwell with us.  
He bought (redeemed) us out of torment  
and let himself for us be slain

Maiden mother mateless (matchless/immaculate);  
of mercy full abounding,  
pray for us to him who chose you;  
with whom you found grace,  
that he forgave us our sin and injury  
and made us clean of every sin;  
and heaven's bliss  
when our time is  
to die  
allow us for thy sake  
[let us] serve him so here  
that he to us him take.

Knowing no man, the Virgin mother  
bore, without pain,  
the Saviour of the world.  
Him, the king of angels,  
only the Virgin suckled,  
breasts filled by heaven.

O great mystery,  
and wonderful sacrament,  
that animals should see the newborn Lord,  
lying in a manger!  
Blessed is the virgin whose womb  
was worthy to bear  
the Lord, Jesus Christ.  
Alleluia!

In sweet rejoicing,  
now sing and be glad!  
Our hearts' joy  
lies in the manger;  
and it shines like the sun

Matris in gremio.  
Alpha es et O!

**Der Engel sprach zu den Hirten:**

Ich verkündige euch große Freude,  
denn euch ist heute der Heiland geboren,  
welcher ist Christus der Herr  
in der Stadt David,  
und er heißt Wunderbar,  
Rat, Kraft, Held,  
ewig Vater, Friedefürst.  
Alleluia.

**Hodie Christus natus est:**

Alleluia  
Hodie Salvator apparuit:  
Alleluia  
Hodie in terra canunt Angeli,  
laetantur Archangeli  
Alleluia

Hodie exsultant justi, dicentes:  
Alleluia  
Gloria in excelsis Deo,  
Et in terra pax hominibus  
Alleluia.

**Magnificat** anima mea Dominum;  
Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo,  
Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae; ecce enim  
ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes.

Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est, et sanctum  
nomen ejus,  
Et misericordia ejus a progenie in progenies  
timentibus eum.  
Fecit potentiam in bracchio suo;  
Dispensit superbos mente cordis sui.

Deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit humiles.

Esurientes implevit bonis, et divites dimisit inanes.

Suscepit Israel, puerum suum, recordatus  
misericordiae suae,  
Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros, Abraham et  
semini ejus in saecula.  
Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto,

sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper: et in  
Saecula saeculorum. Amen.

in the mother's lap.  
Alpha and Omega!

The angel spoke unto the shepherds:  
I bring you good tidings of great joy,  
for unto you is born this day a Saviour,  
which is Christ the Lord  
in the city of David,  
and He shall be called Wonderful,  
Counsellor, Power, Hero,  
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.  
Alleluia.

Today Christ is born:

Alleluia  
Today the Saviour appeared:  
Alleluia  
Today on Earth the Angels sing,  
Archangels rejoice:  
Alleluia

Today the righteous rejoice, saying:  
Alleluia  
Glory to God in the highest.  
And in earth peace to all men  
Alleluia.

My soul doth magnify the Lord.  
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.  
For he hath regarded: the lowliness of his handmaiden:  
For behold, from henceforth: all generations shall call  
me blessed.

For he that is mighty hath magnified me: and holy is  
his Name.  
And his mercy is on them that fear him: throughout all  
generations.  
He hath shewed strength with his arm: he hath  
scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath  
exalted the humble and meek.

He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich  
he hath sent empty away.

He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant  
Israel:  
As he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his  
seed for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy  
Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:  
world without end. Amen.

## The Christmas Story

### INTRODUCTION

The birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, as it is written for us by St Luke and St Matthew.

#### *Evangelist*

In those days a decree was issued by the Emperor Augustus for a registration to be made throughout the Roman world. This was the first registration of its kind; it took place when Quirinius was governor of Syria. For this purpose everyone made his way to his own town.

So Joseph went up to Judaea from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to register at the city of David, called Bethlehem, because he was of the house of David by descent; and with him went Mary who was betrothed to him. She was expecting a child, and while they were there the time came for her baby to be born, and she gave birth to a son, her firstborn, she wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them to lodge in the house.

Now in this same country there were shepherds out in the fields, keeping watch through the night over their flock, when suddenly there stood before them an angel of the Lord, and the splendour of the Lord shone round them. They were terror-stricken, but the angel said:

### INTERMEDIUM I

#### *The Angel to the Shepherds in the fields*

Do not be afraid! I have good news for you: there is great joy coming to the whole people. Today in the city of David a deliverer has been born to you - the Messiah, the Lord. And this is your sign: you will find a baby lying wrapped in swaddling clothes, in a manger.

#### *Evangelist*

All at once there was with the angel a great company of the heavenly host, singing the praises of God:

### INTERMEDIUM II

#### *The Company of Angels*

Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth his peace for men on whom his favour rests.

#### *Evangelist*

After the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another:

### INTERMEDIUM III

#### *The Shepherds in the fields*

Come, we must go straight to Bethlehem and see this thing which the Lord has made known to us.

#### *Evangelist*

So they went with all speed and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby was lying in the manger. When they saw him, they recounted what they had been told about this child, and all who heard were astonished at what the shepherds said. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered over them. Meanwhile the shepherds returned glorifying and praising God for what they had heard and seen; it had all happened as they had been told.

Eight days later the time came to circumcise him, and he was given the name Jesus, the name given to him by the angel before he was conceived.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judaea during the reign of Herod. After his birth wise men from the east arrived in Jerusalem, asking:

### INTERMEDIUM IV

#### *The Wise Men from the East*

Where is the child who is born to be king of the Jews? We observed the rising of his star, and we have come to pay him homage.

#### *Evangelist*

King Herod was greatly perturbed when he heard this, and so was the whole of Jerusalem. He called a meeting of the chief priests and lawyers of the Jewish people and put before them the question. Where is it that the Messiah is to be born? They replied:

### INTERMEDIUM V

#### *The High Priests and Scribes*

At Bethlehem in Judaea. And they referred him to the prophecy which reads: Bethlehem in the land of Judah, you are far from least in the eyes of the rulers of Judah, for out of you shall come a leader to be a shepherd of my people Israel.

#### *Evangelist*

Herod next called the wise men to meet him in private, and ascertained from them the time at which the star had appeared. He then sent them on to Bethlehem, and said:

## INTERMEDIUM VI

### *Herod*

Go and make a careful inquiry for the child. When you have found him, report to me, so that I may go myself and pay him homage.

They set out at the king's bidding, and the star which they had seen at its rising went ahead of them until it stopped above the place where the child lay. At the sight of the star they were overjoyed. Entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and bowed to the ground in homage to him; then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned home another way.

After they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, and said to him:

## INTERMEDIUM VII

### *The Angel to Joseph*

Rise up, Joseph, take the child and his mother and escape with them to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the child to do away with him.

### *Evangelist*

So Joseph rose from sleep, and taking mother and child by night he went away with them to Egypt, and there he stayed until Herod's death. This was to fulfil what the Lord had declared through the prophet; "I called my son out of Egypt."

When Herod saw how the wise men had tricked him he fell into a rage, and gave orders for the massacre of all children in Bethlehem and its neighbourhood of the

age of two years or fewer, corresponding to the time he had ascertained from the wise men.

So the words spoken through Jeremiah the prophet were fulfilled: "A voice was heard in Rama, wailing and loud laments; it was Rachel weeping for her children and refusing all consolation because they were no more."

The time came when Herod died, and an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said to him:

## INTERMEDIUM VIII

### *The Angel to Joseph*

Rise up, Joseph, take the child and his mother and go with them to the land of Israel, for the men who threatened the child's life are dead.

### *Evangelist*

So he rose, took mother and child with him and came to the land of Israel. Hearing, however, that Archelaus had succeeded his father Herod as king of Judaea, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by a dream, he withdrew to the region of Galilee; there he settled in a town called Nazareth. This was to fulfil the words spoken through the prophets: "He shall be called a Nazarene."

And the child grew and became strong in spirit and full of wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him.

## CONCLUSION

Thanks be to God, our Lord Jesus Christ, who by his birth has lit our lives and has redeemed us by his blood from the work of the devil. Let us praise him with music and all the angels in heaven shall sing: Praise to God in the highest!

## The performers

**Katy Hill** studied music as a choral scholar at Cambridge before embarking upon a varied and vibrant career performing and recording with leading ensembles including The Sixteen, Monteverdi Choir, The Tallis Scholars and Tenebrae.

Past highlights have included Bizet's *Carmen* in the Toreador's home town of Granada, Bach in St Thomas', Leipzig, Macmillan's *Stabat Mater* from the Sistine Chapel, Handel's *Dixit Dominus* in Buckingham Palace, and the soundtracks for the most recent Bond and Star Wars films. Occasional forays into the world of opera have been at Covent Garden, the Opéra Comique in Paris and the Aix-en-Provence Festival.

Aside from attempts at home schooling, these past 19 months have seen Katy more often behind the microphones of Abbey Road and cameras for various online concerts from venues as diverse as Wigmore Hall and her kitchen. Her neighbours are delighted that she has been leaving home more regularly to sing

once again. Recent highlights include Faure's *Requiem* at the Royal Festival Hall, a European tour with The Tallis Scholars, and many of the UK's finest cathedrals and concert halls with The Sixteen.

Born in California to parents who loved to read, **Luthien Brackett** was named after a character in JRR Tolkien's legendarium. According to her mother and father, at the age of two, she clambered up onto the table during a dinner party and sang 'You Light Up My Life' from start to finish with perfect pitch. That was probably her first public performance. Today, she is praised by the press for her 'easy, appealing alto' and 'silky tone among all registers', and is in great demand as an alto soloist and professional chorister.

Luthien regularly appears with pre-eminent professional vocal ensembles including the Monteverdi Choir, Stile Antico, The Clarion Society, and Seraphic Fire, and her numerous commercial recordings include four GRAMMY-nominated albums. Luthien enjoys baking, traveling, reading, and hiking. She lives in Surrey with her partner, a pianist, and their collection of house plants.

[luthienbrackett.com](http://luthienbrackett.com)

British tenor **Kieran White** continues to enjoy success in the UK and is also establishing himself as a sought-after artist in mainland Europe. Recent engagements include his international operatic debut in Poland with Warsaw Opera Kameralna singing the title role of Castor in Rameau's *Castor et Pollux*. Jumping in at short notice as Damon in Handel's *Acis and Galatea* for Dorset Opera last summer, 'his true haute-contre was possibly the clearest and most focused voice of all the soloists,' and his Oronte in Handel's Alcina for Ensemble OrQuesta at the Arcola Theatre was hailed as 'a model of clarity and elegance' by Opera magazine. He is particularly passionate about music from the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, predominantly Bach's Passions in the role of Evangelist.

Kieran graduated from the Royal Academy of Music achieving a Masters with distinction. He is presently a student of renowned *haute-contre* Jean-Paul Fouchécourt. In 2021 Kieran was awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> place at the Froville International Baroque Singing Competition. When he is at home he can be found working on his father's farm in Dorset, singing whilst getting the cows in.

[kieranwhitetenor.com](http://kieranwhitetenor.com)

Born in Hull, East Yorkshire, **Robin Datta** studied Music at the University of York before studying Solo Voice Ensemble Singing under Robert Hollingworth alongside two of tonight's other soloists! Following choral scholarships and lay clerkships including The York Oratory-in-Formation and Liverpool Cathedral, he is currently enjoying the role of Music Administrator at Sidney Sussex College, University of Cambridge, as well as singing in the chapel choir under David Skinner. A passionate early musician and member of BREMF Live! ensemble The Swan Consort, he has previously featured as a soloist in Bach's Easter and Ascension oratorios (University of York Chamber Choir) and St John Passion (Liverpool Bach Collective), and the choral Vespers settings by Monteverdi - who Robin enjoys so much, he has a framed picture of Claudio in his room! Robin is delighted to be performing at BREMF in Schütz's Christmas Story, and looks forward to singing multiple roles in this great work.

**Dominic Wallis** started singing as a chorister at Bristol Cathedral at the age of 11. Enjoying a wide variety of music making, his formative singing experiences were with the National Youth Choir and the Welsh National Youth Opera. In more recent years, he was 2019-20 Choral Scholar at York Minster and is currently employed as a Lay Clerk at Clare College, Cambridge. In addition, Dominic is a frequent deputy at Chichester Cathedral, Ely Cathedral and St Stephen's Gloucester Road in London, and has been a member of the Ebor Singers, Close Company and The Swan Consort. Dominic is also an experienced soloist. In recent years, he has been cast in leading roles in both Handel's *Acis and Galatea* and Philip Venables' *Denis and Katya*, and has performed solo recitals around Cambridge.

**Andrew Robinson** lives in Lewes and sings regularly as a soloist with Spanish early music group, Resonet. His most recent collaboration was a concert tracing the origins of the chaconne, given in the Teatro Principal, Santiago de Compostela, in October. Andrew also sings regularly with Pippa Dames-Longworth's Singing Salon (*Operatic Adventures* at the Royal Pavillion). He will be singing the role of Polyphemus for

New Sussex Opera's production of Handel's *Acis and Galatea* in May 2022. Andrew is the Musical Director of the BREMF Community Choir.

**Stuart O'Hara** is a singer based in south east London. Among others, he sings with The Marian Consort, Ikon and Ensemble Pro Victoria, and has made some very silly appearances with I Fagiolini, for whom he has sung in Zulu, barked like a dog ('gnof' in Renaissance French), and filled a place at the Last Supper. Recent projects include French baroque cantatas with Canzona (hopefully coming to a venue near you soon, but only if you live in Poland), and an exploration of the ballads of Carl Loewe with Cypriot pianist Ioanna Koulepou.

Stuart was a Lay Clerk at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King in his home city of Liverpool for seven years, a Songman at York Minster for two, and is now a Lay Vicar in the Choir of Westminster Abbey. So far, only the job title of Vicar Choral eludes him.

[stuartohara.wixsite.com/bass-baritone](http://stuartohara.wixsite.com/bass-baritone)

Since its founding in 2010 as a student/top amateur ensemble open to some of the most challenging music from the whole of the Renaissance, **BREMF Consort of Voices** has certainly risen to the challenge! The group can vary in size as it takes on music in up to 40 parts but it can also supply its own soloists, as it did in 2015 for its Festival concert featuring the Vespers of nun composer Chiara Margarita Cozzolani, broadcast on BBC Radio 3. As well as annual appearances at BREMF and performing in other local festivals and venues, the choir promotes a regular series of concerts in St Paul's Church, West Street.

**Deborah Roberts** was born in Europe and graduated from Nottingham University with an MA in editing and interpreting renaissance and baroque music. She has remained fascinated by the discovery of new repertoire and performance styles ever since. As a long-term former member of The Tallis Scholars, Deborah performed with them in over 1,200 concerts in many weird and wonderful places around the world and in countless recordings of rare and beautiful renaissance music. She also sang with many other early music ensembles as a soloist and consort singer. She took up choral direction 20 years ago, and enjoys running courses in sacred polyphony and early opera. In 2002 she co-founded Brighton Early Music Festival with Clare Norburn and remains its artistic director.

The **BREMF Singers** was established in 2004 as the festival's own high quality chorus, able to tackle the full range of baroque and classical choral works from Monteverdi to Mozart. Over the years the choir has sung both popular and rare works by Charpentier, Bach, Handel, Valls, Haydn and Mozart, and even world premieres of new compositions by Tarik O'Regan and Orlando Gough. They made their stage debut in 2011 in Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* and in 2012 appeared with the International Baroque Players. Singers are individually selected for each project from a pool of auditioned members. The festival is always happy to consider new applicants, who should apply via the website: [bremf.org.uk](http://bremf.org.uk)

**John Hancorn** is music director of the BREMF Singers, Baroque Collective Singers, East Sussex Bach Choir and Eastbourne Choral Society and co-director of The Baroque Collective and Lewes Baroquefest!. Performances for BREMF include Bach's *St John Passion* and *Mass in B minor*, Monteverdi's *Vespers* and a staged performance of Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*. John leads vocal workshops and masterclasses specialising in baroque repertoire including regular visits to Early Music Fora and 'Sing and Discover' days with Richard Wigmore throughout the UK. He is Associate Lecturer in Choral Studies at the University of Chichester, Choral Director at East Sussex Academy of Music and is a specialist examiner for Trinity Laban. He directed chamber choir courses at Dartington for many years and was a tutor at AIMS Summer School.  
[johnhancorn.com](http://johnhancorn.com)

**BREMF Community Choir** is a non-auditioned, enthusiastic and friendly group dedicated to studying and performing a wide range of repertoire from medieval through to classical periods, as well as traditional and folk music from around the world. It offers a high degree of vocal and choral training, workshops with visiting experts, regular concert performances and opportunities to go on singing tours abroad. The choir meets every Thursday evening in central Brighton – for more details and to apply, see [bremf.org.uk](http://bremf.org.uk)

**Leah Stuttard** hails from a Lancashire mill town and has played the medieval harp for over 20 years. The first medieval music she loved was on scratchy out-of-circulation David Munrow LPs that she bought for £1 from the local library. She now works globally as a medieval harpist, singer, composer, arranger and musicologist with well-known ensembles such as Hesperion XXI and Micrologus. As a soloist, she performs English medieval music, and with Danish/Swedish singer Agnethe Christensen she explores more Northern repertoires like Scandinavian ballads and folk hymns. In August 2019 she appeared on BBC Radio 4 talking to Roderick Williams about songs and singers in medieval Britain, and later that year BREMF commissioned her to direct its medieval extravaganza, 'The Feast of Fools'. Currently she is working on a doctorate, investigating the creative input of musicians working with medieval music today, funded by the North Eastern Consortium for Arts and Humanities.

[leahstuttard.com](http://leahstuttard.com)

The **BREMF Players** is made up of a potent blend of top international players and the most promising young musicians to emerge on the period instrument scene, many of whom have previously taken part in the festival's Early Music Live! scheme. All of them work regularly with leading ensembles and orchestras including the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Academy of Ancient Music and Gabrieli Players, and also with vibrant new groups including the International Baroque Players and Little Baroque Company. Under the leadership of Alison Bury the orchestra has forged its own unique sound, combining superb technical accomplishment with freshness and energy. They have made several appearances at the festival, both accompanying the BREMF Singers in major choral/orchestral works from Monteverdi's *Vespers* to Bach's *Mass in B minor*, and also in orchestral concerts of music from Bach and Handel to early classical works by Haydn and Mozart.

**Alison Bury** has been involved with the British early music scene since her student days at the Royal College of Music. In the 1980s she played with all the pioneering groups including the Academy of Ancient Music, The English Concert and the English Baroque Soloists. She led the EBS until 2008, touring all over the world and recording the Mozart operas and many of Bach's sacred choral works, including the Cantatas in the Bach Cantata Pilgrimage in 2000 with Sir John Eliot Gardiner. In 1986 she was one of the founder members of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. With OAE she has appeared on concert platforms throughout the British Isles, Europe and the USA as leader, soloist and director, as well as with conductors such as Sir Simon Rattle and Frans Brüggen. She now enjoys freelancing, guest leading and playing chamber music. Alison lives in Lewes, where she leads The Baroque Collective and, together with her husband, Richard Earle, is the artistic director of the Workshop Series of chamber concerts.

**The English Cornett & Sackbut Ensemble** is a virtuoso period instrument group, often collaborating with leading vocal ensembles such as I Fagiolini, Alamire, Resurgam, The Marian Consort and Westminster Cathedral Choir at major festivals including York Early Music Festival, BREMF and the BBC Proms. They have featured on several award-winning recordings including two Gramophone award-winning CDs: Alamire – *The Spy's Choirbook* and I Fagiolini – *Striggio Mass in 40 parts* (Diapason d'Or). In 2018 (ECSE's 25th anniversary year) they released *Music for Windy Instruments* (Resonus) and they regularly perform instrumental recital programmes in many European festivals. A new commission by Andrew Keeling followed along with a recital for BBC Radio 3's NCEM 2018 Young Composer Award. Internationally, they have performed throughout Europe and in Canada, Israel and Russia. 2022 work includes BREMF, Martin Randall Travel, Resurgam, and Monteverdi's *Vespers* with The Taverner Consort.

[ecse.co.uk](http://ecse.co.uk)

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