

Friends of *SESTINA*

Sestina Music is a Northern Ireland Registered Charity, No. NIC100067

Newsletter Three March 2015

Dear Friends,

As you can see, this Newsletter is rather full! I've added some news of our various Sestina Singers and Players to our forthcoming events and I look forward to seeing you at some of our recitals. Mark Chambers and Paula Chatcauneuf begin the season with an invitation-only recital (to which you are all invited) of Venetian Song in Dublin, Armagh and Belfast (18th to 20th March) as a prelude to our major Venetian Festival after Easter in the same venues. Listen out for Mark and Paula on the IN TUNE Radio 3 broadcast from the MAC in Belfast on 17th March.

The Venetian Festival will be magical. As usual, the Sestinas will be mentored by specialists all week and then on the weekend of April 10th, there will be a series of courses for youngsters run by Lucia Vernon Long culminating in music composed by the children. There will be mask-making, puppeteering, street theatre and madrigal composing! Excellent stuff. While that is going on, His Majesty's Sagbutts and Cornetts and The Monteverdi String Band will be entertaining you and even Mr. Chambers, and Paula will be putting on another show. All this comes before Monteverdi's masterpiece, The Vespers of 1610, performed by Sestina and the two bands together. We will be performing the Vespers in Armagh and Dublin while the youngsters put their pieces together over the weekend, and will come back We will be performing the Vespers in Armagh and Dublin while the youngsters put their pieces together over the weekend, and will come back to join in and finish the weekend with a performance of the Vespers in the Museum Atrium. The whole week is being supported by Arts Council NI and Arts & Business NI.

As always, we are being handsomely backed by Exitex Ltd of Dundalk and we owe an immense debt of gratitude to Mark and Oonagh Allport for their involvement at all levels in our work.

Looking ahead a little further, Sestina will be part of the opening Concert on the Charles Wood Festival and Summer School in Armagh Cathedral on 23rd. August, 2015 which also hosts the Northern Ireland International Organ Competition. Following that wonderful event, Sestina renews its association with Tom Guthrie and joins Johannes Leertouwer (violin) in our September programme of works by JS Bach, again in Dublin, Armagh and Belfast. This programme is, in part, a preparation for three staged performances of the St. John Passion in those venues in our Easter series of 2016, which will be an extraordinary experience for Sestinas and audience alike. A wonderful series of programmes indeed!!

Thank you for all your support. I look forward to seeing you this April when the music of Venice will thrill your senses! We continue to look for more Friends of Sestina; any help you can give will be gratefully received!

Fiona Flynn
Secretary, Friends of Sestina

Sestina Music is supported by:



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SESTINAS NEWS

AARON O'HARE has been a part of the Opera North/RNCM mentor scheme and is about to sing the role of Demetrius in RNCM's production of Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He has covered Marcello in Nevill Holt Opera's *La Boheme*, Papageno in NI Opera's *The Magic Flute* and played Bogdanovich in *The Merry Widow*. He will be performing at the Buxton Opera Festival this summer.

LAURA LAMPH now lives in London working as a freelance singer with Polyphony directed by Stephen Leighton, Philharmonia Voices directed by Aidan Oliver and Britten Sinfonia Voices directed by Eamonn Dougan. She's a member of Chamber Choir Ireland, directed by Paul Hillier and recently became an ad-hoc member of The Sixteen. A huge achievement! Solo projects this year have included Rossini's *Petite Messe Solenne* with Axminster Choral Society and Verdi's *Requiem* in March in The National Concert Hall, Dublin.

BRIAN McALEA was awarded a scholarship for a Masters in Vocal Performance at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama starting in September. He performed as Pane and Giove in *La Calisto* with New Chamber Opera, in the *Archangel Suite* in St John's Smith Square, London with the Royal Philharmonic, as Dr. P in Michael Nyman's *The Man Who Mistook His Wife For A Hat* and sung in the Oxford Lieder Festival.

DAVID LEE has had a busy year singing at the proms with the Ulster Youth Choir, accepting a place to study with a choral scholarship at King's College, London and becoming a member of All the King's Men. He will sing Lisetta in Haydn's *Il Mondo della Luna* this March.

SINEAD O'KELLY continues to do wonderful things making her professional debut singing First Lady in NI Opera's *The Magic Flute* and singing in IBO's *Messiah* tour. She commenced the Masters programme at the Royal College of Music on a full scholarship and took part in a live broadcast Masterclass with Sarah Connolly. She was selected as a BBCNI/NI Arts Council award holder and made her solo debut at the Royal Festival Hall and the Wigmore Hall. She will make her Royal Albert Hall debut in the role of Persephone for the world premiere of John Barber's new opera, *Sevens Seeds* this season.

FIONA FLYNN has had a busy year singing the roles of Barbarina in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, The Voice of the Dawn in Puccini's *La Rondine* and La Dame Élegante in Poulenc's *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* at the Alexander Gibson Opera Studio. She has also sung in Mozart's *Messe in C minor* at St. Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow and in a performance of Mahler's *Symphony No.8* with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra at Glasgow Royal Concert Hall and in The Usher hall in Edinburgh.

EMER ACTON is singing Marcellina in *Le Nozze di Figaro* for the Durham Opera Ensemble and has been singing with her university chapel choir in Durham. LAURA MCFALL is just back from a week's Kodaly course in Budapest and has started working for Live Music Now. Together with her accompanist, they have performed many concerts as 'Voice and Verse' and will soon be performing in the Guildhall and Christ Church in L/Derry. She also sung in NI Opera's *The Magic Flute* and will sing in their upcoming production of Puccini's *Turandot*. MICHAEL HONG has been singing as a choral scholar at St. Georges, Belfast and has accepted places with the Ulster Youth Choir and the National Youth Training Choir. He also won the Junior Repertoire prize and bursary at Ballymena Festival and was a finalist in the overall junior U18 vocal prize. Well done Michael! MATTHEW LONG will be singing with us in April and has just released his first solo album called *Till the Stars Fall*.

We've added some new members; GLENN MURPHY who has been singing with the UCD Choral Scholars for the past 4 years and is currently preparing to record with them for Signum Records. SARAH RENNIX is now an education officer for the Sixteen and we will be joined in April by other newcomers MATT KEIGHLEY, DAVID WALSH and RICH MOORE, a colleague of Aaron's from the Royal Northern College of Music.

CAROLINE JONES has had a busy year teaching in the Causeway School of Music, Coleraine, in Bellaghy Primary and as a tutor of Kodaly musicianship with the Belfast Phil Kids. She will be singing as the soprano soloist in Armagh City Choir's performance of Mozart's *Requiem* in April.

UPCOMING EVENTS

VESPERS OF 1610
BY CLAUDIO
MONTEVERDI

7.30pm - 10th April 2015

*St Patrick's
Catholic Cathedral,
Armagh*

7.30pm - 11th April 2015

*Christ Church,
Dublin*

8pm - 12th April 2015

Ulster Museum,
Belfast

Monteverdi's
masterpiece
performed by

SESTINA,
His Majesty's
Sagbutts & Cornetts

and

The Monteverdi
String Band.

Please stay for the
FRIENDS RECEPTION
in the Museum Bar
After the final
performance

BELLAFESTA
FESTIVAL OF VENETIAN MUSIC

IN THE ULSTER MUSEUM
Friday 10th to Sunday 12th April 2015

A weekend of courses for children in Venetian
Street Theatre - puppeteering, mask-making, music
making, culminating in a performance piece
created during the course on Sunday afternoon.

SUNDAY 12TH APRIL PROGRAMME

1230-1315 His Majesty's Sagbutts & Cornetts
MUSIC FROM ST MARKS
in the main Atrium

1400-1445 The Monteverdi String Band
THE MADRIGAL TRANSFORMED
in the Upper Gallery

1500-1545 Mark Chambers and Paula Chatcauneuf
THE SOLO SONG IN VENICE
In the Belfast Room

1600-1645 Sestina, Paula Chatcauneuf and Lucia
Vernon Long
CHILDREN'S MADRIGALS AND MUSIC
FOR THE FEAST OF FAT THURSDAY
In the Welcome Area

2000

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