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Engineer: Adaq Khan

Mix and master: Martin Atkinson

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14/03/2024 (Songs with Johnny Herford)

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Album cover: San Clemente at Dawn

Layered glass by Gregory Warren Wilson

Gregory's work is represented by Joanna Bird Contemporary Collections joannabird.com

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PAUL HONEY
GREGORY WARREN WILSON

BETWEEN MIDNIGHT AND SUNRISE

BETWEEN MIDNIGHT AND SUNRISE

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|----|-------------------------------------|------|
| | Earth's Imagined Corners | |
| 1 | Willows | 5'56 |
| 2 | Leatherback | 4'11 |
| 3 | Fireflies | 3'39 |
| 4 | Pomegranates | 6'04 |
| 5 | Spring's First Migration | 2'06 |
| 6 | San Clemente At Dawn | 3'46 |
| 7 | Obliquity | 2'10 |
| 8 | Between Midnight and Sunrise | 3'18 |
| | Dancing Alone | |
| 9 | Dance In Mid-Air | 2'34 |
| 10 | A Slow Waltz | 2'49 |
| 11 | Sitting Out The Tarantella | 1'36 |
| 12 | The Renaissance Dancing Master | 2'41 |
| 13 | In An Empty Theatre | 3'52 |
| 14 | Any Other Way | 4'42 |
| | A Wing of Light | |
| 15 | Lullaby | 2'10 |
| 16 | Zugunruhe | 1'53 |
| 17 | Snow Line | 3'27 |
| 18 | Synapse | 1'38 |
| 19 | Nocturne | 2'39 |

Total time: **61'14**

Between Midnight and Sunrise

Vocal Settings by Paul Honey of Gregory Warren Wilson's Poetry

An unspoken synergy attends all creative partnerships. That fact is universally recognised, though the basic assumption itself is seldom questioned in order to help us to understand why or how, but there can never be any dispute over the eventual outcome. The fruits of such symbioses – whether between a Strauss and Hofmannsthal, Schubert and Goethe, or even a Lerner and Loewe – stand out as triumphant talismans, reminding us of the undeniable potency of collaboration.

The settings heard on this disc meld together the talents of two outstanding creative artists, the composer Paul Honey and the poet Gregory Warren Wilson, producing a collection in which the inner life of the listener is both confronted and empowered.

As Paul Honey explains, however, this project was to have an unduly long and frustrating gestation.

It's been quite a journey ... Sometime in 2019 I was enjoying a post-session pint in a pub just off London's Baker Street with my good friends and colleagues, cellist Justin Pearson and saxophonist Chris Caldwell. Our conversation turned to some settings of poetry by Gregory Warren Wilson that I had written for chamber choir and solo violin, and how some day I would like to record the music, solely for my own satisfaction rather than as something that would be commercially released. Justin made the intriguing suggestion that, if I re-versioned the piece for cello, he would be

happy to record the music. A plan was hatched, and so the journey began. Jonathan Darbourne, who would direct the choir, assembled a hand-picked choir of 16 voices, the recording venue was booked and producer and recording engineer were hired. And then along came Covid ...

After a few thwarted attempts to bring everyone together (thanks to the 2nd, 3rd waves, etc. of the virus), we finally convened at St George's Headstone in March 2022. At the first rehearsal, as soon as the choir had sung just a few bars, I realised I should do something more than merely keep the music to myself.

A plan was hatched ... I've known Greg as a violinist as well as a poet and visual artist for a number of years but we were both very keen to develop a creative relationship and suddenly here was an opportunity for us to work together, setting his poems to music.

Two years on from that initial recording with Justin and the wonderful choir, we now have more than an album's worth of settings of Greg's poetry. It's been a hugely rewarding and at times challenging experience writing and recording the music. I've been lucky to work with some outstanding artists who have all been so generous with their time, enthusiasm and encouragement.

Warren Wilson's metaphysically-infused set of haiku, **Earth's Imagined Corners**, derives its title from the seventh of John Donne's *Divine Meditations*, in an evocative setting for sixteen unaccompanied voices and solo cello. It was

conceived as a sequence of four individual movements (*Willows, Leatherback, Fireflies, Pomegranates*), three of which invoke the fundamental elemental forces at work on our planet – water, earth, and fire. The final constant explored here is time, that boundless exponential continuum within which the human experience itself unfolds.

Spring's First Migration considers the unceasing cycle of Earth's seasons, as witnessed through the eyes of a narrator who sees a returning swallow as the first harbinger of Spring. Warren Wilson's three-stanza poem juxtaposes the inbound flight of a Spring swallow and the opening of the iris of the human eye, a natural, routine phenomenon yet still tinged with the possibility of sadness at the falling of a tear (or is it a falling star?), which could *not be withheld any more*. This particular iris could equally well be the flower itself, opening to receive the Spring sun's warming rays which affirm the death of Winter.

San Clemente at Dawn draws upon Warren Wilson's personal impressions of Venetian life, and in particular of the ebb and flow of the tides within its great lagoon. San Clemente is one of the outlying islands of the archipelago, seen through the poet's imagination from afar, across its watery expanse at break of day.

Obliquity sets lines addressed to an imaginary lover. This reflective poem turns on the universal paradox that not everything we might wish to experience falls within the scope of our ability (and opportunity) to do so. Craving and longing, no matter how ardent and intensely felt, still leave ultimate knowing, of ourselves or of another human being, beyond our reach.

This album takes its title from the poem, **Between Midnight and Sunrise**, a depiction of the paralysis of a sub-zero mid-winter's night, and the attendant realisation that we know almost nothing of what actually does happen between those two fixed points in time. The stars alone provide certainty and assurance, as they try to penetrate the stillness of the night, leaving us to reflect on what is ... and what is unknowable.

This is followed by a series of five settings of poems called **Dancing Alone**. The first of these, *Dance in Mid-Air*, finds its inspiration amid the existential tensions which make live performance possible, irrespective of genre or discipline. *Live performance*, suggests Warren Wilson, *like the writing of poetry, depends on a willingness to take the first step into a precarious unknown – here seen metaphorically as a tightrope*.

The poet nevertheless finds his greatest creative freedom when he is at his most vulnerable; think of the tightrope walker, or the lone astronaut taking his spacewalk. Only at such moments are we too truly able to hear the 'Music of the Spheres'.

A *Slow Waltz* sets the tyrannical passage of time against aspiration and faltering endeavour, making us all question exactly what we've done with the time we've been granted:

*Having passed the midpoint of my life
I see the shortfall of every expectation but
I watch the clouds with more attention now.*

There is also the acknowledgement that, as is the case for so many of us, *life was never a garnering of certainty*, and that very often, we are what we are by reason of diversion, delusion, and difficulty.

Sitting out the Tarantella finds the narrator despondently re-evaluating his own work, and finding it insufficient and inadequate.

The innocuousness of his poems fills him with despair. Warren Wilson explains: *They lack the impassioned flair ... He longs for them to take on a furiously energetic life of their own, and then, in a moment of searing honesty, realises that what he wants for them is what he wants for his own life too*.

In *A Renaissance Dancing Master* we return to the modest formality of Elizabethan courtly dance, but this time with a deceitfully salacious twist.

Every dancing teacher, writes Warren Wilson, *who teaches a partnered dance that involves an embrace of some kind is, necessarily, in a position of close contact with the student. The potential for physical intimacy – and for the discomfiture and uneasiness that this may entail – is knowingly exploited by this sleazy and disreputable 'dancing master'*.

The final setting from **Dancing Alone** is *In an Empty Theatre*. To a performer, an empty theatre is a uniquely charged and evocative space. But, only just below the surface of consciousness here, as the dancer practises endlessly in pursuit of perfection, lies the more sinister apprehension of the artist being gradually subsumed by the genre he serves, until he himself becomes a part of it:

*Slowly he disciplines, trains and hones
what makes him a dancer, till he's owned
by a form so rigorous that, dancing alone,
he watches himself as he dances, alone.*

Any Other Way is a meditation upon another un-answerable question. It asks whether those beloved would know how deeply they are loved, were love never to be declared. In this setting, the song's cadences and refrains become the lover's reconciliation to what is one of love's enduring mysteries.

This album concludes with a series of five settings entitled **A Wing of Light**.

Perhaps one of the most probing explorations of human vulnerability to be experienced within this collection is Paul Honey's eloquent setting of Warren Wilson's poem, *Lullaby*. This is no slumber-inducing *Wiegenlied*, but rather an impassioned though understated cry of despair, imagining the predicament faced by geographically displaced parents who are coming to terms with the fact that their newborn child's first language will not be their own.

Earlier, the arrival of Spring heralded by the flight of the first swallow claimed our attention in Paul Honey's setting of *Spring's First Migration*. Now, however, in Warren Wilson's poem *Zugunruhe*, we sense the agitation of those same birds as they prepare to fly south once more as Autumn arrives. The German word, *Zugunruhe*, describes the heightened restlessness felt by birds before they migrate, evoking the human soul which knows intuitively that it, too, must embark on an inexplicable journey – albeit after death.

Snow Line envisions the bleakness of a border crossing point, lost amid the unpopulated vistas of some forbidding northerly latitude. Here the poet imagines traversing the frontier's desolate snowy landscape as a metaphor for his own interior self – the place where poems arise, and where they are critically challenged, as if by a wind that is *keen as criticism*.

The synapse is where nerve cells connect and communicate chemically with one another. Each nerve cell (or neuron) can have many hundreds of thousands of synaptic connections. In his poem *Synapse*, Warren Wilson likens the forking branches of an autumnal Japanese Acer to the neural networks of the human mind. The birds darting around in its foliage incessantly recall the fleeting imagery of the poet's own inner consciousness, leading him to pose the question – can a tree that *tastes the rain in its palmate veins*, and that is so beautifully articulated, really be *unmoved by words*?

We end on a deeply meditative note, with Paul Honey's haunting setting of the poem *Nocturne*. Once again, the poet's principle preoccupation is with light, expressed through his own imaginings with the same vaporously elusive subtlety as Whistler and Debussy. This contemplative poem is voiced by someone who has been detained in a cell, and who therefore has time to reflect on the movement of a *single wing of light* as it unfolds, and then folds again, across the span of a day. The light itself seems to be migrating into night.

Michael Jameson

EARTH'S IMAGINED CORNERS (I – IV)

I WILLOWS

The stream is poisoned;
fish with milky eyes float past
and willows sicken.

II LEATHERBACK

How urgent it is –
soft-shelled turtles scuttling
for the distant sea.

III FIREFLIES

At dusk the fireflies
settle like sparks from falling
stars gilding the grass.

IV POMEGRANATES

The pomegranates
will ripen given time in
the garden of love.

SPRING'S FIRST MIGRATION

Today the cloudless sky was changed
by a single swallow flying through;
its purpose altered everything.

Such a perfect field of blue
recalled the opening of an iris,
one whose colour was so pure
it could not be withheld any more
than the falling of a star, a tear
or the silent settling of dew.

SAN CLEMENTE AT DAWN

Light itself is made of waves
that move more swiftly than the tides

and so, at dawn, light sometimes aches
to be transfigured in new ways

just as the turning of the tide
is played out afresh to refresh each day.

When one shadow changes everything

the tilt of a single ripple gilds
all the waters of the world.

OBLIQUITY

Sometimes it's not by looking that I see,
but rather by welcoming what goes unseen
into the darkness in my eye. So it is with stars:

searching the night too avidly I find nothing
until, in the moment of turning away, a spark
from countless lightyears away finds its mark.

So it is between us, my imaginary lover –
you whose subtlest intimations I divine
as you do mine my love, as you do mine.

BETWEEN MIDNIGHT AND SUNRISE

The birds already know there will be snow;
they wait for time itself to ease, to yield,
as if the sky were paralysed by cold.

A glassy brilliance clarifies the night;
the stars all know to pierce the crystal screen
that, almost indiscernible, tries to intervene,
and snowflakes yet to fall already know
the birds will print their fossicking in code,
but I am still possessed by what I do not know.

DANCING ALONE (I – V)

I DANCE IN MID-AIR

The tightrope must be kept as taut
as possible, that being where
the poet finds his feet – midair –
a kind of earthbound astronaut.

The tightrope must be kept as taut
as possible, that being where
we hear the music of the spheres,
suspended like an astronaut.

The tightrope must be kept as taut
as possible, that being where
we risk the most because we dare
to dance when there's so little there.

II A SLOW WALTZ

Having passed the midpoint of my life
I see the shortfall of every expectation but
I watch the clouds with more attention now.

My life was never a garnering of certainty
or common sense or hard-won equanimity
but rather a slow waltz with disillusionment.

Clouds. They dance too, but their pavan
is magisterial, paced out in snow and hail,
in blue and silver, pewter, gold and grey.

III SITTING OUT THE TARANTELLA

If only the poems would get up and dance.
I stare at them, pastel wallflowers, and they
stare back at me so placidly I can almost smell
their sobriety. They know nothing of *duende*.

What did you have in mind? they smile,
well-intentioned to a fault. Shouldn't they be
kicking up their heels in crimson and black
and stamping off the page furiously? Oh yes.

What I want for them is what I want for me.

IV THE RENAISSANCE DANCING MASTER

Dispense with gloves. The dance is formal but
therein lies the wick of candour. Once danced
the dance is spent – nothing remains concealed.
Let every measure be a disclosure, since gesture
is a foretaste of how you love to move, and move
to love. Gallantry, like every galliard, is a form
of duplicity: both depend on what goes unsaid.
Begin by admiring, but then unbutton the glove.

V IN AN EMPTY THEATRE

The classical dancer is never alone;
conscious of tendon, ligament, bone,
he cannot escape the body he knows
gives form to what he does not own.

Slowly he disciplines, trains and hones
what makes him a dancer, till he's owned
by a form so rigorous that, dancing alone,
he watches himself as he dances, alone.

ANY OTHER WAY

He would not like it much, were I to say
it was his wrists, remembering his wrists
which tightened tiny draw-strings round my heart.

The photo of him in the snow –
smiling huddled in a shabby coat – shows
why I love him. He would not have it so.

Who can resist the make-believe
that keeps us at our best, glimpsed
by candlelight in antique mirrors,

or tousled by the sea, grinning ruggedly?
But it is not so. Today it snowed,
and I remembered him – his wrists

thin as plant stems, and his hands
opening in unprompted acts of kindness.
If I did not tell him, would he ever know

I thought of him today as it began to snow,
as whiteness made particular
each leaf I'd overlooked, as quietness

settled unobtrusively? Would he know
the snow made each frail cyclamen ache,
and that I would not have it any other way?

A WING OF LIGHT (I – V)

I LULLABY

Our lips tasted of tears.

We kept silent
even though we longed to speak out.

Why were we here?
Because we wanted to sing
without a second thought,

to improvise lullabies
for our newborn child
free of our mother tongue,
free of all that we had lost.

But our mouths tasted of tears.

II ZUGUNRUHE

Autumn is gathering –
flocks in the sky
are restless, unresting,
before they know why.

The soul is a bird,
and each bird a soul
that must migrate
before it knows why;

its cry is its song,
its song is its cry;
it opens its throat
without knowing why.

The voice has a soul,
and each soul a voice
that must take wing
before knowing why.

III SNOW LINE

My eyes have learned to be vigilant
as searchlights. This is the frontier,
and these incursions into the night
are excursions made from solitude.

My feet pace out the lengths I'll go to.
Nothing's at face value in this zone
where every single footprint's frozen
into a disclosure. This is the snow line

where I endure a wind that's keen
as criticism, and where I write
and rewrite under an impartial sky
of crystalline stars – stars I turn to

then turn against. Here, at a window
of frosted glass, I present my papers
in silence. What do they signify? I see
how vigilant my eyes have learned to be.

IV SYNAPSE

The acer is turning so vivid a crimson
it moves me to form these lines on seeing
the season played out through its canopy.

Can blood-red leaves that taste the rain
within their palmate veins remain
unmoved by words? Finches flicker

like thoughts, darting among the branches
that fork, as if to reveal the span of nerves,
articulate in their precision, their delicacy.

V NOCTURNE

The light's slow spanning of each day
traces its own inevitable phrase
but leaves no trace, no palimpsest,
no smear or stain. Here there is time

to watch the single wing of light
unfold and fold into its own nocturne,
merging into the dark to emerge again;
to watch the light's migration into night.



Jonathan Darbourne



Justin Pearson



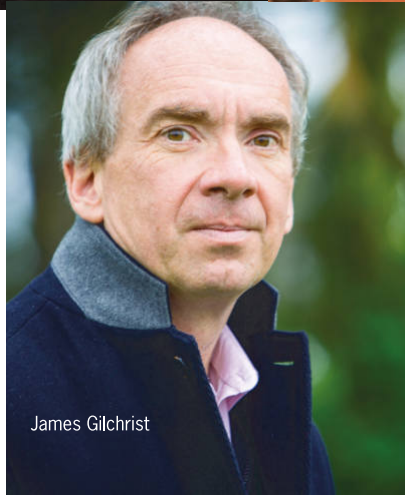
Anna Tilbrook



Johnny Herford



Matthew Fletcher



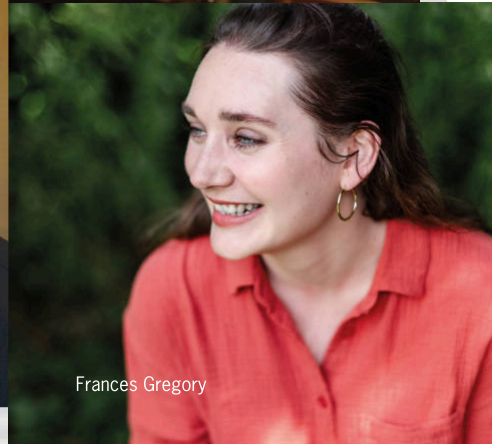
James Gilchrist



Grace Davidson



Jean Kelly



Frances Gregory

Artists' biographies

Gregory Warren Wilson (poet) trained initially at the Royal Ballet School for six years before going on to study violin and composition at the Royal College of Music. He subsequently worked with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and at the opera house in Florence. Upon returning to London, he combined a successful freelance career as a violinist with his work as a poet. He was a member of the Razumovsky String Quartet for three years, and the London Mozart Players for ten.

He has published six collections of poetry, winning the Staple First Edition Award for his first collection, *Preserving Lemons* (1996), and receiving an Arts Council Award for his fourth, *The Mercury Fountain*, in 2008.

He has also been commissioned to write sequences of poems for performance with Saint Saëns' *Carnival of the Animals*, Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, and J. S. Bach's *Goldberg Variations*. His libretto, *Through the Mirror*, has been broadcast and performed in Denmark and Sweden. Its successor, *Time's Up King Canute*, was staged during the 2023 Copenhagen Opera Festival. Gregory's visual art is represented by the Joanna Bird Gallery.

Paul Honey (composer) began his musical career as a chorister at Westminster Abbey, where he sang daily in the choir. He is a graduate of the University of Southampton, where he studied music history, composition and orchestration.

Early on in his career he worked primarily as a pianist and keyboard player, performing and recording as far afield as Australia, Japan, North America and

Europe. However, in the last few years he has concentrated on working as a composer, initially for Film and TV before shifting his focus to composing solely for live performance.

Paul has composed music for a wide variety of productions for all the major UK broadcasters and in 2023 he was nominated for a Royal Television Society Award and a Music and Sound Award for his score for the documentary feature *The People's Piazza: A History of Covent Garden*.

Most recently, he has been working in collaboration with Gregory Warren Wilson on a series of works for voice together with various ensembles, much of which forms the substance of this new CD. Their fruitful creative partnership continues with a collection of comic cabaret songs for tenor and piano called *Trysts, Tristesse and a Tepid Tango* and in complete contrast, a short opera for solo voices, chorus and orchestra titled *Pierrepoint: The Hanging Man*.

Jonathan Darbourne (conductor) is a former chorister in the choir of Southwark Cathedral.

He read Music and sang as a choral scholar at Magdalen College, Oxford, continuing with further study as a countertenor at the Schola Cantorum, Basel, and the Barock Vokal programme in Mainz. As a consort singer he performs with leading European baroque ensembles such as the Dunedin Consort, Concerto Copenhagen, the Marian Consort, and the Freiburger Barockorchester.

In 2020, Jonathan co-founded Vache Baroque, with whom he has directed a number of operas and projects from the harpsichord. Also in demand as a choral arranger, his commissions have been broadcast live on BBC Radio 3, and have been heard in concert at London venues including the Cadogan Hall and St John's, Smith Square.

Justin Pearson (cello) was born in Dublin and is one of London's busiest and most versatile musicians. He is Principal Cellist, Managing Director and Artistic Director of The National Symphony Orchestra (UK). He regularly performs in West End theatre, and continues to record scores for both film and television.

Aged 14, Justin left Ireland to study in England with Derek Simpson of the Aeolian String Quartet. He entered the Royal Academy of Music, where he won all available prizes for chamber music playing and later joined the Locrian String Quartet, touring frequently both domestically and internationally.

Justin also performed for many years as the cellist of the English Piano Trio, taking part in numerous recordings and international tours. He played frequently as Guest Principal Cello with the English Sinfonia, and in 1985 he founded the Locrian Ensemble of London. The Ensemble established a long-running concert series in London, at St. Martin-in-the-Fields, and gave many theatre concerts and festival performances throughout the UK.

Jean Kelly (harp) won a scholarship to study harp at the Royal College of Music, London, and today she is in great demand as a versatile harpist, with

an eclectic career ranging from Early Music to Contemporary Classical and Folk Music.

She has recorded three CDs with the Locrian Ensemble, including Handel's Harp Concerto and Mozart's Flute and Harp Concerto. She has recently appeared as a concerto soloist with the National Symphony Orchestra, Irish Chamber Orchestra and Göttingen Symphony Orchestra.

Jean has performed on film and TV soundtracks for composers such as Debbie Wiseman, Jonny Greenwood, Max Richter and Dario Marianelli. Jean regularly guests with The Telling and The Society of Strange and Ancient Instruments, playing medieval, gothic, Celtic and triple harps.

James Gilchrist (tenor) began his working life as a doctor, only turning to a full-time music career in 1996. His extensive concert repertoire has seen him perform in major concert halls throughout the world with renowned conductors including Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Sir Roger Norrington and Harry Christophers.

A master of English music, he has performed Britten's *Church Parables* in St Petersburg, London and at the Aldeburgh Festival, *Nocturne* with the NHK Symphony in Tokyo and the *War Requiem* with the San Francisco Symphony and the National Youth Orchestra of Germany. He has performed the role of Rev. Adams in Britten's *Peter Grimes* at the Edinburgh Festival, London's Royal Festival Hall and Covent Garden, the Grieghallen, Bergen, Opéra de Paris, Teatro Real Madrid, and Opera di Roma.

As an established recitalist, James has performed with pianist Anna Tilbrook for more than twenty-five years. Their discography includes song cycles by Beethoven, Schubert and Schumann, Vaughan Williams' *On Wenlock Edge* and *Songs of Travel*, and songs by Sir Lennox Berkeley, Benjamin Britten, John Jeffreys and Roger Quilter. They have also been involved in several new commissions from Sally Beamish, Julian Philips, Jonathan Dove, Alec Roth and Michael Zev Gordon.

Anna Tilbrook (piano) has appeared regularly in major concert halls and at festivals since her debut at the Wigmore Hall in 1999, and frequently broadcasts for Radio 3. In constant demand as an accompanist, she has collaborated with many leading singers and instrumentalists, including Ian Bostridge, Barbara Hannigan, Sir Willard White, Roderick Williams, Nicholas Daniel, Michael Collins, Natalie Clein, Philip Dukes, Chloe Hanslip, Guy Johnston, Laura van der Heijden, Jess Gilliam and the Fitzwilliam, Carducci, Sacconi, Elias, Navarra and Barbirolli string quartets. She has also accompanied José Carreras, Angela Gheorghiu and Bryn Terfel in televised concerts.

In August 2021 Lucy Crowe and Anna marked 20 years of working together by releasing their disc, *Longing*, featuring Lieder by Strauss, Berg and Schoenberg. In 2023 Anna was a member of the jury for the Song Prize for Cardiff Singer of the World.

Anna is Professor of piano at the Royal Academy of Music and teaches at the University of Oxford.

Grace Davidson (soprano) learned both the piano and the violin as a child, but it was singing that she loved best. She won a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music, and gained her degree and postgraduate artist diploma. In 2016 Grace was appointed an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music.

Since then, she has worked as a soloist with leading Baroque ensembles, under the direction of such luminaries as Sir John Eliot Gardner, Paul McCreesh, Philippe Herreweghe and Harry Christophers.

Her discography includes recordings with The Sixteen, including Handel's *Jeptha* (as Angel), *Dixit Dominus*, Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610* and the Lutheran Masses of Bach. On Radio 3's *Building a Library*, her singing in Fauré's *Requiem* left critic Richard Morrison to conclude that "Grace Davidson's *Pie Jesu* is matchless".

Grace has attracted many of the leading contemporary composers to write for her, most notably Max Richter, who chose her as the solo singer for many of his works, such as *Sleep*. Her solo recordings include a disc of sacred solo cantatas with the Academy of Ancient Music and *John Dowland: First Booke of Songes Or Ayres* with lutenist David Miller.

Johnny Herford (baritone) performs widely in opera, song and oratorio, and has won prizes in partnership with William Vann at the Kathleen Ferrier Competition and at the Wigmore Hall International Song Competition. In 2014 he was chosen by Philip Glass to create the role of Josef K in his opera, *The*

Trial. He has also appeared in Peter Eötvös' *The Golden Dragon*, and Pascal Dusapin's *Passion*.

He made his US debut for Opera Philadelphia in Philip Venables' new opera, *Denis and Katya*, and appeared at Opera di Roma in Deborah Warner's award-winning production of Britten's *Billy Budd*.

As a recitalist, Johnny has appeared at the Wigmore Hall, as well as at festivals including the Leeds Lieder Festival, the Oxford Lieder Festival, the Dartington Festival and Lied in London.

He features on various recordings, including *The Trial* by Philip Glass, the Vaughan Williams discs *Purer than Pearl* and *Pan's Anniversary* and contemporary English songs for Navona Records and Divine Art Recordings.

Matthew Fletcher (piano) has been a member of Glyndebourne Opera Festival's music staff since 2012. He was winner of both the Das Lied and Kathleen Ferrier accompanist prizes, and is a sought-after pianist and répétiteur.

He read music at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, where he was organ scholar. He then studied piano accompaniment with Michael Dussek and Pascal Nemirovsky at the Royal Academy of Music. He was made an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music in 2016, and was on their teaching staff as a vocal coach from 2015 – 22.

His performances have taken him to major concert halls, festivals and opera houses across the UK and Europe. He has also played with the London Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic, and BBC Philharmonic Orchestras, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe.

Praised for her “idiomatic and stylish singing” (*The Telegraph*), mezzo-soprano **Frances Gregory** is a recent graduate of Royal Academy Opera, and a newly appointed Rising Star with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. She begins the 24/25 season as Alcandro in *L'Olimpiade* with *Vache Baroque*, and as Cherubino in *Le Nozze Di Figaro* with the Mozartists.

While studying, she was a Karaviotis Scholar, semi-finalist in the National Mozart Singing Competition, winner of the 2018 Royal Academy of Music Club Prize and the Tom Hammond Opera Prize, a RAM/Kohn Foundation Bach cantata soloist, and a member of the Academy's prestigious Song Circle. Notable engagements have included Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* conducted by Trevor Pinnock as part of the RAM *Bach: the European* series, her Cadogan Hall debut and her Wigmore Hall recital debut, promoting the *Balladen* of Carl Loewe, for Song Circle.