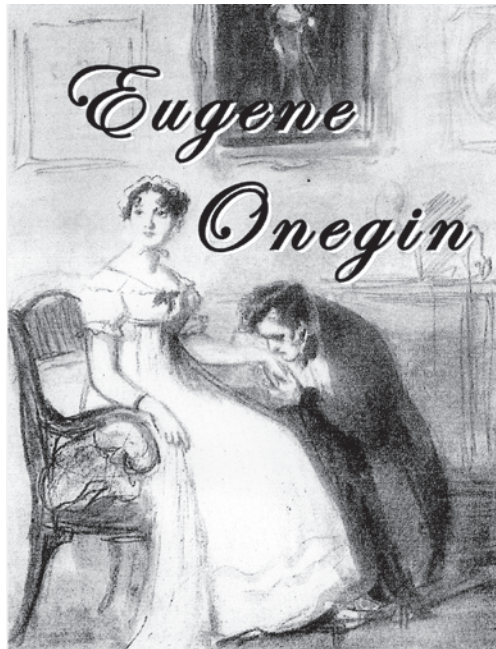


*west london sinfonia*

**St Matthew's Choir**



St Matthew's Church  
North Common Road  
Ealing, W5

7<sup>th</sup> June 2008

[www.westlondonsinfonia.org](http://www.westlondonsinfonia.org)  
[www.smce.org.uk](http://www.smce.org.uk)

# Eleanor Parry

## Leader

Born in 1981, Eleanor began to learn the violin following the Suzuki method at the age of two with Trevor Jones. With a family home in Grantham, Eleanor was a keen participant of county music groups; a particular highlight included being one of four students to perform Mendelsson's Octet with the Schidlof Quartet at venues in both Leicester and Lincoln.

More recently Eleanor has earned a much sought after place on the 'Future Firsts' Apprenticeship Scheme with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. This scheme involves numerous and varied with activities with the orchestra but the highlight so far has been to lead the 'Future Firsts' ensemble in an un-conducted chamber orchestra concert in the Purcell Room in February 2006. The challenging programme included Schoenberg's 'Chamber Symphony Number 1' and Wagner's 'Siegfried-Idyll'. Eleanor also continues to establish a promising chamber and solo career with recent recitals at the Portrait Gallery, the Crush Room at Covent Garden Opera House and a very successful recital in January 2006 for the Grantham Music Club. In 2006 Eleanor has performed the Bruch Violin Concerto with the Reading Symphony Orchestra and the Beethoven Violin Concerto with the Norfolk Symphony Orchestra in May 2006, the prize resulting from her win at the Holbeach and District Civic Society 'Young Soloists Competition'.

# Philip Hesketh

## Conductor

In 2001 Philip Hesketh made his highly acclaimed debut at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, replacing the great Russian conductor Evgenii Svetlanov in the Royal Ballet's season of *The Nutcracker*. This was the latest milestone in a wide-ranging musical career that is bringing this English conductor's name to the attention of audiences both in the UK and abroad.

Philip has a talent for accompanying dance that is considered rare amongst conductors and has worked very successfully with choreographers and dancers including Sir Anthony Dowell, Sir Peter Wright, Wayne Sleep, Harold King and Cathy Marston. Recently, as well as further work with the Royal Ballet he collaborated with Irek Mukhamedov on a new ballet of *The Prince and the Pauper* for the London Children's Ballet, of which he is Musical Director.

In addition to the West London Sinfonia, Philip is also Musical Director of the Richmond Orchestra, St. Peter's Camerata, London Children's Ballet and he makes frequent guest appearances with orchestras in Britain and Europe. Over several years he has developed a close working relationship with the Salon Orchestra of the Wiener Volksoper, the home of Viennese Operetta. Performing with them in Vienna's Kursalon he has introduced and conducted many summer concerts of music by the most popular Viennese composers. In Britain he is becoming much in demand as a witty, entertaining and informative speaker on all aspects of classical music.

# Paul Marsh

## Russian Language Coach

Paul Marsh read Russian and Italian at Christ's College, Cambridge, and then worked for seven years in the BBC Russian service. During this time he was commissioned by EMI to translate the libretto of Prokofiev's opera "War and Peace" for the booklet that accompanied the Soviet recording by Melodiya, which at the time was the only one in existence. Since leaving the BBC he has worked mainly as a translator and language teacher, and he numbers Michael Palin of "Pole to Pole" fame as one of his former students.

# Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

## “Eugene Onegin”

Tatyana  
Olga  
Onegin  
Lensky  
Gremin  
M. Triquet  
Captain/  
Zaretsky

Chorus Master  
Repetiteur  
Russian Language  
Coaches

Conductor  
Leader

West London Sinfonia  
St Matthew’s Choir

Madeleine Holmes  
Monika-Evelin Liiv  
Alastair McCall  
Alexandre Naoumenko  
Gerard Delrez  
Alex Pidgen  
Tristan Stocks

Phiroz Dalal  
Ken Williams  
Paul Marsh  
Xenia de Berner

Philip Hesketh  
Eleanor Parry



Madeleine Holmes



Monika-Evelin Liiv



Alastair McCall



Philip Hesketh



Phiroz Dalal



Alexandre Naoumenko



Eleanor Parry



Alex Pidgen



Tristan Stocks

# Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840 – 1893)

## Opera “Eugene (Yevgeny) Onegin”

### Aleksandr Pushkin (1799 – 1837)

On Friday the 6th June 1880 (Julian calendar) eighty one years after his birth a statue of Pushkin was unveiled in Strastnaya Square, near the end of the Tverskoy Boulevard in Moscow. At last a public statue had been erected to the writer of the verse-novel Eugene Onegin. By this time Pushkin was perceived as Russia’s greatest poet. At an evening banquet extracts from his writings were read aloud, and overtures from operas based on his works were played. Telegrams from many writers were read, including one from Tennyson and another from Victor Hugo.

The second day of the three-day celebration saw Turgenev deliver to a major literary society an address in glowing terms about the poet. On day three, Dostoevsky gave an even more impassioned speech, the reception stopping just short of hysteria, indeed, some of the audience fainted. A group of women came forward and placed a huge wreath around the neck of the statue, with a note that it was from the Russian women, about whom Pushkin had said many good things.

Aleksandr Pushkin was born in Moscow in 1799, descended on his paternal side from an old though undistinguished Boyar family, and more interestingly on the maternal side from Abram Petrovich Gannibal, who had been passed through successive hands, presumably as a purchased slave, and finished up being raised by Peter the Great and given an education and military training. He distinguished himself as a military engineer and achieved the rank of General, with an estate and family mansion. The name Gannibal (Hannibal) was given him early on when his sponsors decided that he should have a surname, and he felt most honoured at being given the name of the great Cartaginian leader. He is variously said to have been Ethiopian or Cameroonian, and Pushkin was very interested in his great-grandfather. The biography “The Moor of Peter the Great” was written by Aleksandr in honour of his ancestor, and part of his research included the recollections of an uncle, whose retirement hobby was distilling his own vodka. Pushkin recounts how the uncle called for vodka several times during one of his visits.

Pushkin was educated at the newly opened Lycée in St. Petersburg, founded at the behest of the Tsar who received advice from many knowledgeable people. It was therefore necessary for the young Pushkin to move from Moscow. The establishment was for the sons of the privileged to receive a free education fitting them for the important posts of government. At the time, Count A.K. Razumovsky was Minister for Education, and he was the brother of “Beethoven’s” Razumovsky, who had the same initials.

Pushkin was well known in literary circles by time he graduated, but he attracted the interest of the authorities because of his association with radicals and revolutionaries. At various times he was exiled internally for publishing seditious literature, for example to southern Russia, to his maternal family estate, and to Kishinev, compared to which he said Sodom was quite a pleasant little town! While on his mother’s estate he wrote “Boris Godunov” but was unable to publish it for five years. Interestingly enough the full unexpurgated play version was not performed until 2007.

The verse-novel “Eugene Onegin” was published in installments from 1825 until 1827. The eponymous anti-hero is a dandy who becomes disenchanted with the social round of town life and moves to the country to take up an estate left to him by his uncle. An important theme of the story is whether art imitates life or vice-versa. The form of the verse which he devised has become known as the Pushkin Sonnet, fourteen lines in length with a complex system of rhymes,

and the scansion involves stressed final and penultimate syllables, e.g., Tuesday or today. In total there are eight chapters, and a typical chapter might contain fifty stanzas. Characters, and the different stages of their lives are described in considerable detail. Apparently the Russians appreciate the style of narration more than the plot itself.

At one stage Tsar Nicholas the First sent for the exiled Pushkin to come to Moscow for an interview. He asked a direct question about what Pushkin would have done had he been in Petersburg on the 14th December, the day of the Decembrist uprising. He answered that he would have been in the ranks of the rebels. However, during the rest of the conversation Pushkin gave Nicholas assurances that resulted in the lifting of his exile, the down side being that the Tsar would now be his personal censor. After the interview, Pushkin visited his uncle Vasily and the Tsar went on to a ball in the evening, at which he informed one of the guests that he had earlier spoken at length to the cleverest man in Russia, Pushkin!



Pushkin

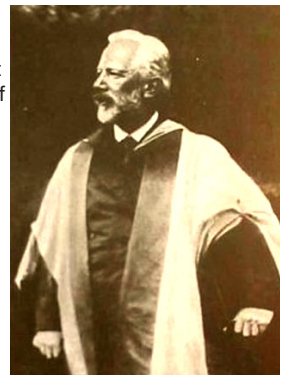
Pushkin married Natalya Goncharova in 1831, and he and his wife became members of court society. The Tsar gave him a court title, but of the lowest rank. Pushkin was not pleased as he thought this was only because it enabled his wife to attend court social events: she had many admirers including the Tsar himself. Eventually the Baron d'Anthès, adopted son of the Dutch ambassador, set his cap at Natalya, much to the annoyance of Pushkin. Natalya's sister had come to the capital looking for a husband, but she fell in love with d'Anthès, who, in order to see as much of Natalya as he could, gave the appearance of returning her affection. Only the intervention of friends averted a duel, and when d'Anthès proposed to the sister, who accepted, Pushkin was pacified. However, d'Anthès resumed his pursuit of Natalya, and Pushkin sent an insulting letter to the Dutch ambassador knowing that the adopted son would have to challenge Pushkin to a duel. D'Anthès fired first and mortally wounded Pushkin, who returned the shot while lying on the ground. The bullet hit d'Anthès but it was not a serious wound. Pushkin lingered on and died two days later. The slaying of the great Russian poet did not elicit one word of regret from d'Anthès, although the young author Lermontov penned an irate poem about the regrettable circumstances of the duel. When he circulated the poem he was exiled to the Caucasus for his pains.

## The opera “Eugene Onegin”

(Note: In tonight's performance some characters' parts have been cut to keep the length of the concert within reasonable bounds. Madame Larina and the old nurse Filipyevna have not been cast, but in the interests of continuity the programme notes mention them as if they were included.)

In 1877, the opera singer Lavroskaya suggested to Tchaikovsky that he write an opera based on Pushkin's poem. At first he was reluctant, but he later became enthusiastic, and planned the lyric scenes, as he called them, in one night.

Tchaikovsky and his friend and fellow-composer Konstantin Shilovsky wrote the libretto jointly, preserving much of Pushkin's verse form. Shilovsky, like Tchaikovsky, was a homosexual and had recently married in the interests of gaining respectability. This, and reflecting on Onegin's treatment of Tatyana in the opera, led to Tchaik-



Tchaikovsky

ovsky's disastrous marriage to a young celebrity freak which had such dire consequences including Piotr's unsuccessful attempt at suicide.

The opera was completed by January 1878, and presented important highlights of Onegin's life rather than a continuous story. The first production was with students of the Moscow Conservatory, and the premiere was at the Maly Theatre, Moscow, with Nikolai Rubinstein as conductor. The first performance at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow was on the 29th March 1879 (Gregorian Calendar) with Enrico Bavagnani conducting. Since then it has been produced frequently in many countries.

It may be well to review the events as set out in the poem, up to the start of the opera. The main characters include two Pushkins, the idealised Pushkin who is Pushkin the poet, a chatty soul who frequently takes the reader into his confidence, almost as a co-conspirator, and Pushkin the character in the poem who is a friend of Onegin. The "friend of Onegin" does not appear in the opera. Onegin's father was a well-to-do landowner who squandered money on various forms of high living including entertaining, and mortgaged his estate heavily. Onegin is educated at home, a rather hit-and-miss affair, and Eugene becomes better at appearing cultured than actually being so. Pushkin says as much in the narrative and remarks that he can quote a Latin epigram but would not understand the finer points of Latin verse, being more conversant with Adam Smith, the classical economist whose work was by this time widely known and understood. This is to hammer home the point that anybody taking on board the teachings of the Scottish moral philosopher would not have mortgaged the true source of wealth, the land. When Onegin's father died, the creditors took everything, and the future would have been bleak had not an uncle died leaving his estate to Eugene. In the poem, Pushkin appears as a friend of Onegin, and both were tired of the social round in town and had agreed to travel abroad together. The father's death had put paid to these plans, and the disenchanting hedonist thought that a move to the country to take up his uncle's estate might change his view of things, but the magic lasted for only a few days. His near neighbour is Lensky who has also just moved in to his own inherited estate, and they become friends. Both find the social life of the country as unattractive in its own way as that of the town, although Lensky has a fiancée, Olga Larina who lives on the Larin estate with her sister Tatyana and their widowed mother.

Onegin upset other neighbours by his stand-offish manner, his drinking red wine and his being a Freemason. The triangular apron fraternity had been infiltrated by revolutionaries and republicans who were frowned upon by the establishment, and furthermore Eugene introduced a low quit-rent and abolished the "Corvee" system of working part of the time for the overall landlord in lieu of rent. Back-door emancipation would have been unpopular as serfdom was still extant in Russia and effectively meant that the lower orders were no more than slaves, a situation most gratifying to their masters.

The idealised Pushkin presents a detailed outline of three of the characters, Olga, the fiancée of Lensky and daughter of the widowed landowner Madame Larina, Tatyana, Olga's sister, and Lensky. Olga is attractive and an extrovert, shallow and flirtatious, unlike her bookish introverted sister Tatyana, a reader of French and English romantic novels, including those by Richardson, whose long books feature characters male and female who are always struggling to do the decent thing. Lensky has just completed his studies at Göttingen, and his verse is heavily influenced by French and German models, thus he is the sort of poet who would not have found favour with the (real) Pushkin who is of the Russian school.

Onegin has asked about the Larin sisters, and is interested to meet them both to see which one Lensky is engaged to.

When the opera opens Madame Larina and the old nurse Filipyevna are making jam in the garden of the Larin estate. From inside the house, the sisters can be heard singing a duet about love

and sorrow inside the house. Madame Larina recalls singing the song when she was young, and hearing about Richardson's novels from her Moscow cousin Alina. Tchaikovsky's music represents the feeling of nostalgia. Madame Larina recalls when she was in love with a gambler and dandy, but had to change course because of an arranged marriage, and settled down to dutiful domesticity.

A band of peasants is heard approaching, with the news that the harvest is in. The joyous sound of the chorus is in complete contrast with the nostalgic opening. Larina asks the peasants to sing something jolly. The music is repetitive and very catchy, and during the singing Olga and Tatyana listen from the balcony. When the song finishes, the two girls react very differently, Tatyana saying such songs made her dream, whereas they made Olga feel merry, sighs and dreaming are not for her. Madame Larina thanks the peasants and sends them off for some wine, and Filipyevna with them to ensure they are looked after.

Next Lensky arrives with Onegin, who is duly introduced to the Larins. Eugene is surprised that Lensky is engaged to the extrovert Olga rather than the pale and interesting introvert Tatyana who according to Onegin would be better suited to a poet. Tatyana however immediately falls in love with Eugene. Later Lensky sings to Olga of his love for her and how he loves her as only a poet can.

The next scene is in Tatyana's room, where she tells the old nurse that she is in love. When the nurse leaves she writes the now famous letter to Onegin. The letter scene is quite long, and includes a particularly beautiful melody with a prominent part for the French horn. The letter is entrusted to Filipyevna on her return, with instructions to send it to Onegin.

In Scene three, Onegin meets Tatyana in the kitchen garden to answer her letter in person, and with great tact he says he is not cut out for love and marriage. This reply leaves Tatyana crestfallen and devastated.

Act Two starts with a ball to celebrate Tatyana's name-day. Lensky has invited Onegin, but he overhears the old ladies gossiping, pairing him up with Tatyana and commenting on his boorishness and love of red wine. Blaming Lensky for this, he decides to punish him by flirting with Olga, his fiancée, and this he does by monopolising her dance card. Olga is flattered and shows insensitivity to Lensky's feelings, eventually telling him that she will punish him for his jealousy by refusing to dance with him. Onegin pretends he has only just noticed that Lensky is not dancing, and asks him why he is brooding like some Childe Harold. This description is better suited to the disenchanting Byronic Onegin than to Lensky.

The quarrel is suspended while the Frenchman Triquet sings some verses in honour of Tatyana and her name-day. After this the quarrel is renewed more publicly, and Lensky declares that his friendship with Onegin is finished, and challenges him to a duel. Onegin accepts with much reluctance. What is more, Tatyana has seen a side of Onegin that she does not like.

The second scene opens early the next morning before the duel, with Lensky singing of his uncertainty about what fate has in store for him and wondering where the carefree days of his youth have gone, and what will become of Olga should the day go against him. This must be one of the saddest arias in all opera, with its heart-rending melody first introduced on the cellos and then sung by Lensky. The melody will make a partial re-appearance later in the opera, and may well have been meant by Tchaikovsky to represent the ill effect of Onegin on those around him. There is a brief melodic reference to Lensky's earlier love song during the aria. The duel starts with Onegin arriving well after the appointed time. The duel proceeds and Lensky falls dead.

The characterisation of Lensky's second, Zaretsky, as presented by Pushkin shows an allegedly punctilious expert in duel protocol as anything but that. The second's duty was primarily to at-

tempt to prevent the duel occurring, and on delivering the official challenge he should have asked Onegin if he wished to apologise, thereby having the challenge withdrawn. Instead of doing so, Zaretsky left immediately the challenge was accepted saying he had other business to attend to. As Onegin was over an hour late, Zaretsky should have declared Lensky the victor by default, but he did not do this. Instead of trying once more for an apology from Onegin, Zaretsky comments on Onegin's not having appointed a second. In a grossly insulting breach of etiquette Eugene appoints his valet, Guillot, as second, not a suitable solution because of Guillot's lack of status. With considerable anger Zaretsky accepts Guillot. The result of Zaretsky's expertise was one unnecessarily dead poet.

Onegin now being persona non grata he leaves and goes on his travels. To fill in a few gaps from the poem, Tatyana visits Onegin's library in his absence and wonders if he is a real person or just an amalgam of characters from novels. According to Pushkin, Onegin has not read many of the books. Pushkin also says of Olga that she shed a few tears over Lensky's grave, and then married another within a short space of time. Pushkin as a character in the story is asked what he thinks of the duel, and says it was wrong of Onegin to kill a poet and friend (in that order!).

In Act Three, time has passed and Tatyana has married Prince Gremin, a soldier wounded in the service of his country and highly esteemed at the Tsar's court. The first scene is at a nobleman's house in St. Petersburg, where a ball is taking place. Onegin is a guest, just returned from his foreign travels, and after the opening Polonaise he muses on his pointless life with no goal and no love, haunted by the memory of the friend he killed. Prince Gremin and Tatyana enter, and Onegin recognises her but is surprised at her dignity and bearing. Gremin approaches him, and they converse, Onegin seeking confirmation that the lady is indeed Tatyana, Gremin singing of his pleasant life and love of his wife. When Onegin asks who that is, Gremin says the Larins' daughter. Inwardly, Onegin finds himself wishing to regain her love. He is in love with her now, as she was with him many years previously. In the poem, Onegin writes a letter to Tatyana about his feelings for her.

In the turbulent final scene in Prince Gremin's house, Tatyana enters a reception room in some distress, with Onegin's letter in her hand. The agitated music soon quotes a few notes from Lensky's aria in the duel scene, and Tatyana sings of her dormant love for Onegin being re-awakened. Onegin enters, and goes down on his knees. She asks him to rise, and reminds him of his cold rejection of her years before. Why does he now find her attractive, after all a seducer's reputation would be enhanced by a conquest from the top drawer of society. Onegin pleads that his feelings are genuine, and Tatyana is moved to tears. Happiness was within their grasp at one time, but that time is now gone and she is committed to her marriage. Onegin continues to plead, eventually she admits that she still loves him, and they embrace briefly. She tears herself away saying that she is now another's and they cannot bring back the past. Onegin's further pleadings are fruitless and Tatyana leaves the room bidding him farewell for ever. The opera ends with Onegin bemoaning his fate. Tatyana has acquitted herself like a Richardson heroine or her own mother before her, by doing the decent thing, and Onegin has been sent packing.

An interesting theory suggests that Pushkin put the character of Onegin into his name. Eugene is Greek for "well-born" and the river and lake Onega are in the cold far north of Russia, hence he is a cold-hearted aristocrat.

I am greatly indebted to my brother Paul Marsh for filling in gaps in my knowledge of the poem and of the customs, mores and social conditions of nineteenth century Russian society, and for his recommendations of reference books.

**David Marsh**



## **Madeleine Holmes -Tatyana (soprano)**

Madeleine studied French and Italian at Cambridge, where she was a choral scholar at Emmanuel College and also sang with the University Opera Society and as a jazz soloist at the annual May Balls.

She has since worked with consorts such as The Sixteen, I Fagiolini, Spiritus and Philharmonia Voices, in London's professional church choirs, and as a soloist across the UK.

In 2004 Madeleine made her BBC Radio 3 debut as soprano soloist in Harrison Birtwhistle's *Fields of Sorrow* with the Britten Sinfonia under Thomas Ades for the Aldeburgh Festival.

In 2006 she gave the opening recital of the first Bloomsbury Festival with harpsichordist Pawel Siwczak at the Foundling Museum, returning last year to give the première of Julian Philips' 'Life Lessens' with pianist Jonathan Beatty. She also appears regularly in recital alongside mezzo-soprano Polly May.

Since training on English National Opera's 'Knack' programme for young singers, Madeleine has appeared on stage as *Ida Die Fledermaus* for Eastern Opera, *Turnspit Rusalka* for Aylesbury Opera, *Yum-Yum The Mikado* for Windsor and Eton Opera, *Despina Cosi Fan Tutte* for Oxford Touring Opera, *Naiad* in a concert performance of Strauss' *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the 2006 Windsor Festival and *Tatyana Eugene Onegin* for Hampstead Garden Opera. This summer she covers *Tatyana* for *Opéra de Baugé*. Madeleine also teaches at the Tiffin Girls' School. She continues her studies with Stuart Kale.

## **Monika-Evelin Liiv - Olga (mezzo-soprano)**

Estonian mezzo-soprano Monika-Evelin Liiv studied at the Conservatoire of Tallinn, the Lithuanian Music Academy and the Estonian Music Academy. She has attended the Mariinsky Theatre Young Singers Summer Academy in Mikkeli and masterclasses with Irina Gavrilovic, Maria Acda, Larissa Gergieva, Hartmut Höll, Maria Cleva, Vladimir Atlantov and Jeffrey Goldberg. Awards include second prize in the Studio Bel Canto Vocal Competition in Malmö 2006 and third prize in the Mart Saar Song competition 2002.

Opera roles include *Flora (La traviata)*, *Voice from Above (Parsifal)*, *Serving Maid and Voice of Unborn Child (Die Frau ohne Schatten)* for Finnish National Opera, *Paulina (The Queen of Spades)* and *Third Lady (Die Zauberflöte)* for Estonian National Opera. She has performed in concert in Estonia, Finland, France, Lithuania, Sweden and Russia.

She joined the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme in September 2007 and made her Royal Opera debut as *Flora (La traviata)*, followed by *Second Lady (Die Zauberflöte)* and *Mercédès (Carmen)*. She has also understudied *Olga (Eugene Onegin)* and will understudy *Dryad (Ariadne auf Naxos)*. In the 2008/9 season, she will sing *Second Maid (Elektra)*, *Ines (Il trovatore)*, *Lady Artist (Lulu)* and *Flora (La traviata)* and understudy *Giulietta (Les Contes d'Hoffmann)*, *Mary (Der fliegende Holländer)* and *Maddalena (Rigoletto)*. She will also sing *Madame Popova (The Bear)* during Meet the Young Artists Week.

## **Alastair McCall - Onegin (baritone)**

Alastair has recently completed his studies at the Royal Northern College of Music, where he studied with Colin Iveson.

In RNCM operas Alastair has performed the roles of Jonathan Jeremiah Peachum (Threepenny Opera, Mar 2006), Rambaldo (La Rondine, Dec 2005), Colonel Killigrew (Dr. Heidegger's Fountain of Youth, Dec 2003) and Don Magnifico (La Cenerentola, Mar 2005). Alastair sung the role of Germont (La Traviata) for Mananan Festival Opera and James Kane in the European premiere of Daron Hagen's Bandanna. In March of 2007 he performed the title role in Tchaikovsky's Eugene Onegin at the RNCM.

Since leaving the RNCM Alastair has performed the role of Onegin in Lubeck, Germany and worked with both Opera North and the Halle. Oratorio tours have taken him to Malta and France and he performed H.K. Gruber's Frankenstein!! with Ensemble 10/10 at the Liverpool St. George's Hall.

He has recently performed with both the Festival Opera Company and Gilbert and Sullivan festival company in Buxton. Future plans include his Edinburgh Festival debut.

## **Alexandre Naoumenko - Lensky (tenor)**

Alexandre Naoumenko was born in Lipetsk, Russia. He is a graduate from the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatoire and of the Moscow Opera Studio. While in Moscow Alexandre sang the roles of Podkhkolusin in Mussorgski's The Mariage for the Bolshoi Theatre and Radio Moscow and Alfredo La Traviata, Lensky Eugeny Onegin and Don Giovanni in Dargomyzhski's The Stone Guest at the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatoire Bolshoi Hall.

He gave his American debut in the role of Platon Karataev in War and Peace under Gergiev. For English National Opera Alexandre he sang Doctor Caius Falstaff under Mark Elder, Ladislav's Two Widows and covered for the role of Lensky.

Concert works in Moscow includes Das Lied von der Erde with the Kremlin Orchestra, Mozart Requiem conducted by Yuri Simonov and Les Noces under Rozhdstvensky.

Alexandre has recorded Mosses Shahkes in Rotschild's Violin (Fleishman-Shostakovich) under Rozhdstvensky, Mydas in Bach's Phebus and Pan, Ode to Joy by Tchaikovsky and Complete Songs of Rachmaninov with Howard Shelly, Joan Rodgers, Maria Poppescu and Sergey Leiferkus for Chandos Records.

## **Gerard Delrez - Gremin (bass)**

Gerard Delrez studied with Norman Bailey and Raimund Herinx and has appeared at the London South Bank concert halls and all over UK and abroad with companies such as Chelsea Opera Group, Crystal Clear Productions and Opera a la Carte. Stage roles include Leporello, Ramphis, Colline and the title role in The Flying Dutchman. He has twice sung at the Bermuda Festival, as the Commendatore in Don Giovanni, and last year in La Boheme. In 2002 he sang Wotan in the first two Ring operas at Tunbridge Wells in the acclaimed production by The Ring Project. He sang the role of the Wanderer in Siegfried in concert last September in Leeds, with the Northern Wagner Orchestra, and his first Sachs (Die Meistersinger) in Edinburgh. Concert engagements include Mozart's Coronation Mass at St.John's, Smith Square with the Orchestra of The Age of Enlightenment, Handel's Messiah in Rouen and Mozart's Requiem in Santiago da Compostela, Mendelssohn's Elijah in Winchester Cathedral and the Verdi Requiem in Arundel Cathedral. He has recorded for the BBC, the European Broadcasting Union and on four CDs for the Herald label.

## **Alex Pidgen – M. Triquet (tenor)**

Alex is a graduate of Trinity College of Music where he was awarded the vocal faculty undergraduate prize "silver medal for outstanding vocal contribution." He is currently studying with Ian Partridge and David Thomas. He has also studied with Nigel Robson and has sung in a Master Class with Robert Tear.

Alex performs regularly as an oratorio soloist throughout Europe. Recent works include:- The Messiah (Handel); Mass in B minor & The St John Passion (Bach); Elijah (Mendelssohn); Creation (Haydn); Messa di Gloria (Puccini); 9th Symphony (Beethoven); Great Mass & Requiem (Mozart). Alex also has extensive choral experience having worked with the National Youth Choir, BBC Symphony Chorus and as a Dame Morden Scholar to the Old Royal Naval Chapel.

Recordings include the vocal track "Oh for the sea" for the Nelson 200 celebration in Trafalgar square and two songs for The London Transport Museum exhibition.

Alex is a regular soloist for Opera de Baugé in France, recently performing the role of the High Priest in Mozart's Idomeneo. For his portrayal of the Father Confessor in Poulenc's opera Dialogue of the Carmelites Alex was awarded the Paul Simm opera prize by Trinity College of Music. Alex recently made his debut at St John Smiths Square playing the Role of Gomatz in Zaide (Mozart).

Alex will be playing Septimius in Theodora (Handel) as well as Ms. Triquet in Eugene Onegin (Tchaikovsky) for Opera de Bauge.

## **Tristan Stocks - Zaretsky (bass)**

Tristan Stocks formerly trained as a violinist before developing his ability as a singer. Having completed his undergraduate degree at Trinity College of Music, he currently studies singing with Robert Dean and will be embarking on a postgraduate course at The Guildhall School of Music and Drama in September.

Tristan frequently appears in recitals across London and also sings with a number of ensembles performing nationally and internationally. Tours have taken him to France, Holland, Spain, Italy, Slovenia and the Canary Islands and he has sung for broadcasts on both English and European television. Tristan was a prize winner at The John Lill Awards 2007.

Recent solo engagements include Handel's 'The Messiah', Haydn's 'The Creation', and J. S. Bach's 'St John Passion'.

Recent Opera performances include: 'Schaunard' in La Boheme for Suffolk Opera, Handel's Imeneo at St John's Smith Square, and at the Llantilio Crossenny Festival in Wales for Baroque Encounter.

This summer Tristan will also be taking the role of 'Zaretsky' - Eugene Onegin for the French company Opéra de Baugé.

## **Next Concerts**

### **West London Sinfonia**

**Saturday July 11th at 7.30. St John's Smith Square.**

We are proud that top international violin soloist Tamsin Waley-Cohen is playing Saint-Saens' wonderful 3rd Concerto with us at our end of season London concert. As well as the Violin Concerto we are also playing Mendelssohn's Ruy Blas Overture and Brahms' beautifully optimistic 2nd Symphony. Visit [www.westlondonsinfonia.org](http://www.westlondonsinfonia.org) or call 0208 997 3540 for further details.

### **St Matthew's Choir**

**Saturday October 4th 2008 at 7.30pm.** Vaughan Williams: Mass in G Minor and Five Mystical Songs. We make a welcome return to singing in English! Experienced singers who read music well are welcome to join us. Rehearsals begin on Thursday 19th June and run from 7.30pm to 9.30pm. Call 020 8998 2879 (evenings) for more information.

# West London Sinfonia

## **Violin**

Eleanor Parry (leader)  
Kate Faber  
Hannah Philip  
Wendy Booth  
Elizabeth Spurrell  
Nicola Garty  
Rosaleen Mann  
Karen Squire  
Claire Tocknell  
Catherine Lemmon

## **Violin II**

Suzanne Doyle  
Lydia Stevens  
Sachiko Isono  
Stephen Raleigh  
Helen Robinson  
Clodagh Li  
Hannah Copland  
Adele Tremenheere  
Richard Norris

## **Violas**

David Hesketh  
Sarah Peart  
Ruth Marshall  
Ellen Marshall  
Robyn Chesterton

Ann Lasota  
David Marsh  
Moira Cyriax

## **Cellos**

Rebecca Imgrueth  
Philip Sheldon  
Andrew Pears  
Fiona Dunn  
Melissa Dobson  
Alex Drew  
Veronica Tuke  
Corinna Javitz

## **Basses**

Lucy Mulgan  
Ronald Dunning  
Mark McCarthy  
Dominic Nudd

## **Flutes**

Ian Judson  
Bryony Lodge  
William Morton (picc)

## **Oboes**

*Anna Durance*  
*Vivien Karam*

## **Clarinets**

Andrew Keck  
Adrian Dewey

## **Bassoons**

Liz Hesketh  
Rebecca Adams

## **Horns**

Natalie Cole  
Vanessa Lincoln  
Chris Eyre  
Max Dinning

## **Trumpets**

Barry Yardley  
Matt Lindop

## **Trombones**

Alexia Constantine  
Martin Pope  
Hywel Walters

## **Harp**

Sophie Cartledge

## **Timpani**

Brian Furner

## St Matthew's Choir would like to thank;

### **Box office**

Molly Thomas

### **Front of House**

Mike and Matthew Philips  
Roy Burton

### **Interval drinks**

Diana Duff-Miller  
Mary Graham  
Jenny Shepard  
Fiona Thomas  
Trish Evans

### **Seating**

Jenny and Alan Price

### **Staging**

Members of the choir

### **Video Director**

Stephanie King

### **Video Mixer**

Nick King

### **Cameras**

Peter Cocup  
Benjy Evans  
Steven Brand  
Rick Myrtle  
Eleanor Britten  
Karen Steel

### **Cartoons**

David Marsh

Our heartfelt thanks to Peter Watkins, vicar of St Matthew's, and to the congregation for their generous support of this concert.