



**Charles Gounod** (1818-1893) is best known for his opera Faust, and for setting the Ave Maria to a Bach Prelude. Roméo et Juliette was first performed at the Théâtre Lyrique in Paris on 27 April 1867.

There was difficulty casting Roméo – it is a big role (although not quite as big as Juliette’s). In this production we have given the parts of Mercutio and Roméo to a mezzo-soprano and soprano. Gounod himself cast Stephano as a trouser role for another mezzo-soprano.

Roméo et Juliette was very popular from the first, having over 300 performances in its first 14 years. Peterborough Opera chose to perform this in Gounod’s anniversary year.



**Musical Director** (from the piano)

Our musical director **Kate Wishart** started her professional life as an orchestral timpanist, joining the Academy of the BBC at age 19. Before deciding to become a doctor she worked with several opera companies including Phoenix Opera, D’Oyly Carte and Kent Opera, then directed by Roger Norrington.

She has always loved opera, having first played in the orchestra at the Birmingham School of Music’s annual opera performances from age 14 to 16. At medical school she took up the baton to conduct the music society, including performances of Ruddigore and Pirates of Penzance, Carmina Burana and Vivaldi’s Gloria.

More recently Kate was the musical director for Oundle G&S Players, and took the role for Peterborough G&S for one year to fill their MD’s sabbatical. Kate has been repetiteur for Chelsea Opera Group, and recently Thrapston Opera as well as Peterborough Opera. She retired from her work in medical education in 2016.



**Karen Davies** is a soprano based near Bedford. Initially a flautist and composer, Karen began studying voice at Bangor University where she was awarded a scholarship. Her principal roles with the University Opera include Pamina (Die Zauberflöte), Susanna (Le Nozze de Figaro), Poppea (The Coronation of Poppea).

Karen is a member of the North Wales Opera Studio for whom her roles include Violetta (La Traviata), Marguerite (Faust), Gilda (Rigoletto) and Lucia (Lucia di Lammermoor). She also performed the role of Gilda on the World Stage at the International Eisteddfod. Karen has performed as a soloist with renowned ensembles such as the NEW Sinfonia, the London Welsh Male Voice choir and Wrexham Symphony. Most recently, Karen joined the Lucy Cavendish singers as a guest soloist. Karen is delighted to be joining Peterborough Opera for the first time in the challenging, new role of Juliet.



**Lyndsey Evans** began singing with Peterborough Youth Choir when she was 14. She teaches music and French at an Academy in Lincolnshire and is a member of St Botolph’s Church Choir (Boston) and Tapestry Singers (Huntingdon). Roles include Edgar (Ballo in Maschera), Lauretta (Gianni Schicchi), Olga (Merry Widow) and the Countess (Marriage of Figaro). She will be performing with Tapestry at the Carnegie Hall later this year.



**Liz Williams** has frequently appeared in concerts, oratorios and recitals, predominantly as a mezzo-soprano. Stage roles include Carmen, Azucena (Il Trovatore), Amneris (Aida), Santuzza (Cavalleria Rusticana), Musetta (La Bohème), Mrs Lovett (Sweeney Todd) and most recently Amelia (A Masked

Ball) and the Mother in Amahl and the Night Visitors (Menotti). She has also directed Madam Butterfly, Die Fledermaus and La Vie Parisienne for Thrapston Plaza Opera.



**Colin Pendrill** taught history at Oundle School for 35 years and was bass soloist with Peterborough Opera for 30 years. Key roles include Figaro in the Marriage, Mephistopheles in Faust and Ford in Falstaff. He currently sings with the Cambridge University Symphony Chorus.

We are very grateful to Colin for taking on the role of Capulet at short notice after the sudden death of Michael Demetris Dale.



**Michael Hammond** has sung Lenski in Eugene Onegin, Gaston in La Traviata (Thrapston Plaza Opera), Walter Wilkins in Merrie England and Sylvano in A Masked Ball (Peterborough Opera). He has sung many roles in productions of Gilbert and Sullivan, and has just performed Nanki Poo in The Mikado for Peterborough G&S Players on tour.



**Martin Muir** gained an Honours B.Mus degree in Voice from the ANU in Australia and has sung numerous roles for amateur London companies, Peterborough Opera and Thrapston Plaza Opera. Recent roles include Eisenstein (Die Fledermaus), Sharpless (Madame Butterfly), Guglielmo (Cosi fan Tutte), Essex (Merrie England), Renato (A Masked

Ball) and the Judge in Sweeney Todd. He is a Biomedical Scientist by profession, a qualified youth football coach and a Trustee of a Uganda based charity, Friends of North Kigezi Diocese.



**Simon Thompson** joined Peterborough Opera in 2014. Recent principal roles include Zuniga (Carmen), Samuel (A Masked Ball), Captain Petrovich (Eugene Onegin), Marcel (La Vie Parisienne), Carlino (Don Pasquale), Long Tom (Merrie England) and the Doctor in La Traviata.

Capulet family vault when she wakes. On the way to her wedding Juliet collapses and is thought to be dead.

### Act V

Friar Jean tells Friar Laurence that he has been unable to deliver the message to Romeo.

Romeo arrives at the Capulet tomb and faced with Juliet's apparently dead body, takes poison. At that moment, Juliet awakens, and the lovers share a final dream of happiness. But when she realises that Romeo is about to die, Juliet takes his dagger and stabs herself. The lovers die asking God for forgiveness.

### Cast (in order of appearance)

Tybalt	Michael Hammond
Paris	Simon Thompson
Capulet	Colin Pendrill
Juliet	Karen Davies
Mercutio	Liz Williams
Romeo	Lyndsey Evans
Gertrude	Marie Hayes
Gregorio	Phil Hammersley
Friar Laurence	Martin Muir
Stephano	Ann-Marie Walsh
Benvolio	Laurence Lewis
The Duke	Martin Muir
Angelo	Adrian Wall
Pepita	Alex Steel
Manuela	Diane Harcourt
Friar Jean	Clive Morton

**Chorus:** Diana Awdry, Diane Harcourt, Marie Hayes, Anita Hodgson, Helen Reece, Audrey Springford, Alex Steel, Julie van Haperen, Ann-Marie Walsh, Ann Williams, Liz Williams.

John Attwell, Mark Ellse, Phil Hammersley, Mike Hammond, Laurence Lewis, Clive Morton, Martin Muir, Colin Pendrill, Simon Thompson, Adrian Wall.

## **Romeo & Juliet Synopsis**

*By Charles Gounod with libretto by J Barbier & M Carré*

*Translation by Dr Theo Baker*

### **Act I**

Verona in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

A feud has been raging for generations between the Capulets and Montagues. Juliet, Capulet's daughter, has been promised to Count Paris, but she is not interested in marriage. At her birthday party she meets Romeo, a Montague, who has gate-crashed with his friends, and the two instantly fall in love.

### **Act II**

That night, Romeo comes to Juliet's balcony and they confess and confirm their love.

### **Act III**

The next morning, the lovers meet at Friar Laurence's cell and hoping that uniting them might reconcile their families, he agrees to marry them at once.

### **INTERVAL**

Stephano, Romeo's young friend, taunts the Capulet boys, and a fight breaks out. Mercutio intervenes, but is then challenged by Tybalt, Juliet's cousin. Romeo arrives and tries to stop the fight – he is now Tybalt's kinsman – but fails, and Tybalt kills Mercutio. Romeo now decides to avenge Mercutio whatever happens to himself and stabs Tybalt, who dies. The Duke arrives and sentences Romeo to exile. Romeo vows that he will risk death to see Juliet once more

### **Act IV**

Romeo reluctantly leaves Juliet's bed at dawn and flees Verona. Capulet tells Juliet that she must marry Paris immediately to fulfil Tybalt's dying wish. Friar Laurence gives her a potion that will simulate death, and promises he will get word to Romeo to fetch her away from the



**Ann-Marie Walsh** was born in Finland and has been living in England since 2003. She studied at Dartington College of Arts, and whilst there won several local festivals with her performances of Lieder, opera arias and English art song.

Her recent roles include Suzuki in Madame Butterfly, Olga in Eugene Onegin, Flora in La Traviata (Thrapston Plaza Opera), Mercedes in Carmen, Despina in Cosi fan Tutte, Queen Elizabeth in Merrie England and Ulrica in A Masked Ball (all with Peterborough Opera). She will be making her US debut performing as a soloist at the Carnegie Hall, New York, later this spring.

### **Acknowledgements**

Costumes  
Programme  
Website  
Publicity  
Loan of props

Edition  
Front of House

The Cast  
Kate Wishart, Shirley Burchell  
John and Ann-Marie Walsh  
Lyndsey Evans  
St Peter's Church  
Vincent & June Davy  
Schirmer  
Bobby Turton  
Jean Fisher

## Honorary Patrons

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**Michael Demetris-Dale** trained at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and in the early years was successful singing opera around Europe. A freak accident at 27 rendered him unable to sing for over 34 years. His investigations into vocal mechanics led to the most senior voice teaching role in Australia. Michael ran a busy voice studio in Hartford.

In the last 4 years his voice had miraculously started to return, and Michael has sung roles including Prince Gremin in Eugene Onegin and Père Germont in La Traviata, both with Thrapston Plaza Opera, and Don Alfonso in Cossi fan Tutte with Peterborough Opera.

Michael was to have sung the role of Capulet in Romeo and Juliet, but died suddenly and unexpectedly on 14<sup>th</sup> March. We will all miss his generosity, his warmth and love and of course, his wonderful singing and musicianship.

Peterborough Opera is grateful for all donations made by our Patrons.

A Patron makes a minimum donation of £10 each year which if Gift Aided enables the Company to claim another £2.50 tax refund.

Details from [shirley.burchell@outlook.com](mailto:shirley.burchell@outlook.com)

## *Message from our Chairman*

Welcome to our concert version of Gounod's Romeo and Juliet which we hope you will thoroughly enjoy!

Romeo & Juliet is a lush romantic opera which, while remarkably faithful to Shakespeare's tragedy, dwells even more closely on the ill-fated couple. In Act V, Set in the Capulet's vault, Gounod and his librettists also bow to operatic tradition: they keep Romeo alive long enough so that he and Juliet can die in each other's arms! (still singing!)

Charles Gounod (1818-1893) is noted for producing some of his most beautiful, melodious and dramatically apt music in Romeo and Juliet.

We have thoroughly enjoyed rehearsing this entrancing opera and I would like to thank our Musical director, Dr Kate Wishart, for her wonderful inspiration and encouragement of us all in producing something that we hope will captivate you.

You will notice that these performances are in loving memory of Michael Demetris Dale, one of our most talented baritones, who died on 14<sup>th</sup> March. We will miss him.

Thank you for coming and supporting us

Clive Morton

Chairman  
Peterborough Opera

## **FUTURE PERFORMANCES**

**Viennese Concert** with City of Peterborough Symphony Orchestra

16<sup>th</sup> June 2018, 7.30pm at Queen Katharine Academy,  
Peterborough

**A Summer Concert: War and Peace**

6<sup>th</sup> July 2018, 7.30pm at Stilton Pavilion

## *Die Fledermaus by Johann Strauss*



*25<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at Queen Victoria Hall, Oundle*  
*28<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at The Key Studio, Peterborough*

And in our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year:

## **VERDI'S REQUIEM**

With City of Peterborough Symphony Orchestra and  
Take Note.

30<sup>th</sup> March 2019 (date tbc) at Queen Katharine Academy,  
Peterborough

## Join Us



The health benefits of singing, and especially singing with others, are well researched and documented. Singing uses the brain and the body, and improves breathing, posture and muscle tone. It is believed to release endorphins that help pain relief, and there is some evidence that it is beneficial for the immune system as well.

Learning new music is good for the memory, and singing produces a sense of happiness and wellbeing.

We meet weekly on a Friday evening at Folksworth Village Hall, and we always welcome new singers, of any voice. You will only audition if you wish to sing a principal role in an opera.

We do occasional concerts, as well as operas, and rehearse throughout the year. We have social events too, and most importantly lots of fun!

We also need non-singers to help with productions and concerts – backstage and front of house helpers. You can also support us as a Patron for a small donation.

You can find out more on our website: [www.peterboroughopera.co.uk](http://www.peterboroughopera.co.uk)

Or contact us at: [peterboroughopera69@gmail.com](mailto:peterboroughopera69@gmail.com)



### *Romeo & Juliet* *By Charles Gounod*

*St Peter's Church, Oundle*  
*Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> April 2018*  
*at 7.30 pm*

*St John the Baptist Church, Peterborough*  
*Sunday, 15<sup>th</sup> April 2018*  
*at 4 pm*

*In loving memory of Michael Demetris-Dale*