

1770 – the year Mozart turned 14

Ian Page and The Mozartists turn the clock back 250 years to explore the life, works and influences of 14-year-old Mozart as part of their visionary MOZART 250 series

- A retrospective illuminating the musical year of 1770, featuring works by Vanhal, Gluck, Haydn, J.C. Bach and Mozart [9 January – Wigmore Hall]
- Three-day 'Mozart in Italy' mini festival exploring the music Mozart composed and heard during his travels in 1770 [6-8 March – Cadogan Hall]
- Concert performance of *Mitridate, re di Ponto* [26 November – London]

Ian Page and The Mozartists enter the sixth year of their ambitious and visionary MOZART 250 series, looking into the life, works and influences of Mozart 250 years on. In 1770 Mozart turned 14, and during 2020 Page and The Mozartists will present works by Mozart and his contemporaries written in 1770, including a three-day mini-festival at Cadogan Hall exploring the music Mozart composed and heard in Italy that year.

Ian Page, founder and artistic director of The Mozartists, writes: *"1770 culminated for Mozart with the triumphant première of Mitridate, re di Ponto, the first great success of his fledgling career, but he had spent the whole year in Italy, absorbing the wide range of music that he heard during the course of his travels. 250 years later, our 'Mozart in Italy' weekend in March will be the first ever in-depth retrospective of the music that Mozart composed and heard during the course of this formative trip, and will incorporate music by Guglielmi, Piccinni, Celoniati, Mysliveček, Jommelli, Galuppi and Gasparini as well as by the 14-year-old Mozart himself. We also present our annual January retrospective at Wigmore Hall, providing a pan-European overview of the music being composed and performed 250 years previously, and we will end the year with a concert performance of Mitridate, re di Ponto. I am very much looking forward to reliving the musical year 1770 with a fantastic group of colleagues, and to sharing our discoveries with our audiences."*

Page and The Mozartists launch 2020 with a performance at Wigmore Hall on 9 January featuring company Associate Artists Samantha Clarke and Ida Ränzlöv. The retrospective concert features a diverse overview of 1770, pairing dramatic minor-key symphonies by Vanhal and J.C. Bach with arias and duets by Gluck, Haydn, Jommelli and Mozart.

Mozart's time in Italy was a particularly important phase in the young composer's career. Building on the success of Page's *Mozart in London* weekend in 2015, The Mozartists present a three-day *Mozart in Italy* mini-festival at Cadogan Hall to explore the music that Mozart composed and heard during his travels in 1770. The weekend will feature symphonies, concert arias and extracts from the vocally spectacular opera *Mitridate, re di Ponto*, and the opportunity to discover a number of operatic works that Mozart heard during his time in Italy. These include Guglielmi's *Ruggiero*, Piccinni's *Cesare in Egitto*, Mysliveček's *La Nitteti* and Jommelli's *Armida abbandonata*, some of which have not been performed since the 18th century. Leading Mozart scholars Cliff Eisen and Sergio Durante will join to give talks and illustrated lectures, and full programme and casting details will be announced shortly.

Mozart's first year in Italy ended with the triumphant premiere of Mozart's *Mitridate, re di Ponto* in December 1770, and Page and The Mozartists will perform the opera in November 2020 (details to be announced nearer the time).

NEW ASSOCIATE ARTISTS ANNOUNCED

Classical Opera is pleased to announce sopranos **Samantha Clarke** and **Kiandra Howarth**, and keyboard player and assistant conductor **Jo Ramadan** as new Associate Artists. They join a list of exceptional young artists including sopranos **Soraya Mafi** and **Chiara Skerath**, mezzo-soprano **Ida Ränzlöv** and tenors **Gwilym Bowen**, **Alessandro Fischer** and **Stuart Jackson**.

The scheme was launched in 2006 by Ian Page to consolidate the company's work in assisting the development of young singers in the early stages of their career. This year, for the first time, the scheme has also been extended to include a keyboard player: Jo Ramadan has worked regularly with the company as répétiteur, and recently made his continuo début with the company in *Così fan tutte*.

Since 2006 there have been 39 company Associate Artists, including **Louise Alder**, **Mary Bevan**, **Sophie Bevan**, **Allan Clayton**, **Anna Devin** and **Natalya Romaniw**. Associate Artists receive prestigious performance opportunities with the company's period-instrument orchestra; extended rehearsal periods to enable them to explore the music and develop their craft in great detail; opportunities to present new repertoire in intimate private recitals; coaching, guidance and career advice from Ian Page; financial support to help with the cost of ongoing study, scores, CDs and concert dress; marketing and promotion to the press and within the profession; and mentorship and training to address specific needs.

Rebecca Bottone, Inaugural Associate Artist, says: "Ian understands the importance of helping a singer feel comfortable and this can only mean they can fly, whoever they are. The importance of mixing singers of different experience levels cannot be underplayed. As one of the inaugural young artists I can vouch for the huge value of the scheme and say that this has helped shape me as the artist I am today."

ALSO THIS SEASON

Aside from MOZART 250, The Mozartists return to the Queen Elizabeth Hall for *Mozart's Keys*, a programme which explores Mozart's special use of E flat major, pairing his Piano Concerto No. 22 with Symphony No.39, and arias from *Le nozze di Figaro* and *Don Giovanni* [30 April – QEH]. Ronald Brautigam performs with the ensemble for the first time and they are joined by soprano Samantha Clarke. This is part of a three-concert series devised around Mozart's final three symphonies, each paired with a piano concerto and opera arias all based around specific keys.

In June, the company makes its début at La Seine Musicale in Paris as part of Insula Orchestra's 2019/20 season, joined by Associate Artist Chiara Skerath, with a programme of music that Mozart and Haydn composed for London. [22 June – La Seine Musicale]. Skerath also returns for the final concert of their 2019/2020 season – 'Mozart's Czech Mates' – which delves into Mozart's links with Bohemian composers who settled in Vienna. Alongside Mozart the programme includes works by Vanhal, Gluck, Mysliveček, Benda and Kozeluch [14 July – Wigmore Hall].

Alongside their performances, Ian Page and The Mozartists continue to add to their growing discography on Signum Records, and next May sees the release of the first in a projected seven-CD series of *Sturm und Drang* recordings, which will feature music by Gluck, Traetta, Beck, Jommelli and Haydn, again featuring soprano Chiara Skerath.