

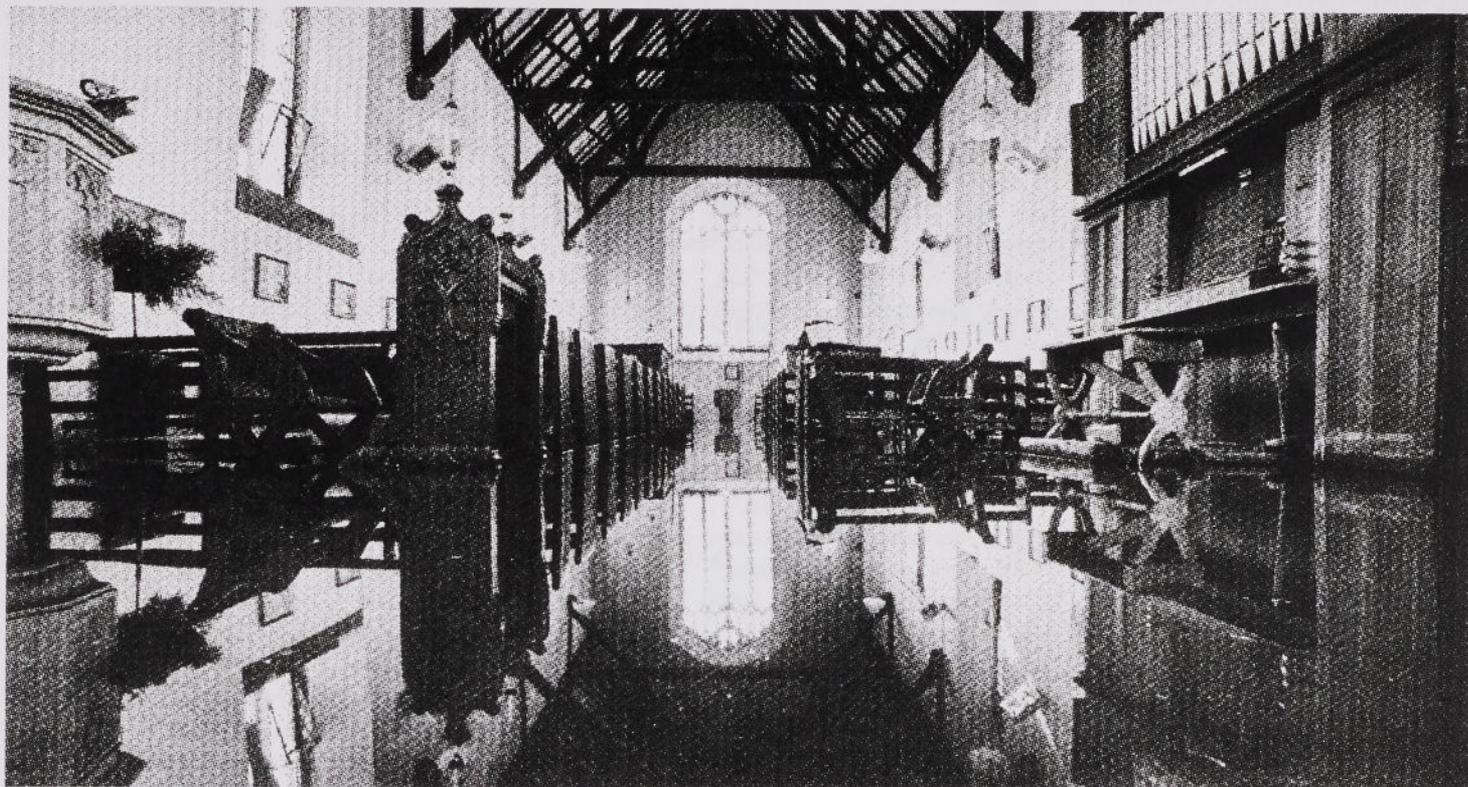
Saturday 19th July 2014

FREE!

INSIDE: Sing along to the Hymns in the show – we've got the words!

PLUS: Reflections on the flooding in the Somerset Levels

The Dove



Moorland Church by Matilda Temperley (matildatemperley.com)

GREAT BRITTEN!

Kneehigh and Charles Hazlewood collaborate on a performance of Britten's Noye's Fludde, presented by Orchestral.

On Saturday, a huge shed at Bath and West Showground was transformed for a day into Noah's Ark for a performance of Britten's 1957 opera, complete with a chorus of hundreds of local school children. Project Coordinator Ellie Velazquez said:

"The opera is a unique and exceptional musical vehicle that has the power to bring people of all generations together.

We hope that Benjamin Britten is watching and singing from our hymn sheet."

READ MORE



The Cast

Noah: Jimmy Holliday

Mrs Noah: Amy J. Payne

God: Eleanor Westbrook

Gossips: Robbie Armstrong, Ella Corlett, Lucy Wade, James Karpinski, Amelia Mercer, Sophie Gallagher, India Hutton, Miranda Claxton, Florence Lunnons, Maddie Macfarlane

Children of Noye:

Dillon Whitehead, Mary Johnson, Molly Hall, Hattie Peck, Fabian Mercer, Benedict Mercer, Marcus Bray, Rowan Wilson

Raven & Dove:

Maxwell Nicholson-Liley courtesy of Rambert School

Animals: Children of Brookside Community Primary School

ORCHESTRA featuring

Musicians of the Philharmonia Orchestra (Soong Choo, Gideon Robinson, Gwen Fisher, Karen Stephenson, Cathy Colwell), Andrew Barclay (Principal Percussion of the London Philharmonic Orchestra), James Risdon (Recorder Soloist, British Paraorchestra), Paul Ellis (Choirmaster and Organist of Sherborne Abbey) Caroline Jaya Ratnam (Repetiteur and Pianist), Barbara Murray (Pianist), Exeter Recorder Orchestra, Chiselborough Hand Bell Ringers, Quangle Wangle Choir, Members of the Avalonian Free State Choir, Members of the Wessex Strings, Choristers from Sherborne Abbey, young musicians of Brookside Community Primary School and pupils of Wells Cathedral School.

COMPANY

Director:

Simon Harvey

Conductor:

Charles Hazlewood

Designer:

Rosanna Vize

Project Coordinator:

Ellie Velázquez

Production Stage Manager:

Liz King

Stage Manager:

Steph Curtis

Set Construction:

Andy Scrivens (c/o Bristol Old Vic), Josh Reeves

Web Design:

Richard Keenan

Communications

Coordinator:

Chloe Rickard

PR:

Megan Thomas of Full Fat and Marianne Sweet of Damselify Communications

Orchestral team:

Annie Michie, Lisa Pickering, Lance Moir, Henrietta Lang, Ellie Velázquez, Fern Laurie

Children from Brookside Primary School

Laurie Badman, Theo Boyle, Archie Cleaves, Jayden Coles, Thomas Darbo, Lila-Rose Fouracre, Cameron Freestone, Marley Hiscox, Isaac Hooper, Oliver Jones, Alfie Keast, Jessica Lambert, Ashleigh Lund, Madyson McLean, Alexis Padgett, Spencer Petch, Millie Pugh, Archie Robinson, Erin Rowlands, Maisy Smith, Tallulah Speakman, Daniel Turner, William Walker, Ronnie Weatherall, Katie Whitehead, Evie Withers, Cain Attwell, Sasha-Jayne Chinnock, Lorien Collins, Harvey Cowling, Jaiden Headley, Sophie Higgins, Archie Holme, Jake Leavy, Owen Legresley, Corey Mitchell, Kaylee Nisbet, Liberty Pole, Harry Redman, Sadie Rowland, Benjamin Russell, Roxana Rusu, Alice Taylor, Emily Trotman, Jack Tweed, Toby Webster, Ellie Whitty, Rhys Anderson, Evie Bath, Samuel Bolton, Honey Bryan, Anneliese Calvert, Charlie Clifford-Jones, Liam Criddle, Yasmine Davey, Ethan Difford, Lucy Durston, Tyler Evans, Ruth Goldring, Taylor Govier, Amelia Moore, Eleanor Napper, Oliver Shakesby, Jessica Spencer, Oliver Sturgess, Jack West, Alice Willerton, Daisy-May Wilton, Bella Winn, Benjamin Card, Troy Carey, Jasmine Fouracres, Harry Rushman, Samuel Adams, Rebecca Bailey, Barnaby Bradford, Mia Buxton, Dylan Churches, Katie Cordery, Emillie Frost, Jessica Gerrard, Elizabeth Gibbons, Samuel Gilby, Bethany Govier, Riley Higgs, Eva James, Dillon Lang, Madeline Lavis, Tanisha Legresley, Flynn McAfee, Olivia McBain, Kaya Potts, Georgia Roberts, Anna Rose, Ethan Sharman, Daniel Walker, Mollyanne Walters, Rebecca Weech, Lily Williams, Gabrielle Wilson, Madeleine Winsor, Shay Bobbett, Nicholas Bosley, Archie Carter, Erin Crofts, Seth Culliford, Daisy Durston, Glenn Edwards, Callum Evans, Eloise Frankland, Lee Harris, Jaden Hole, Teigan Lang, Ellie Makin, Sophie McEvoy, Maisy Napper, Antonia Rowe, Finlay Sandiford, Mollie Spraggon, Elise Steadman, Poppy Stone, Jasmine Stringer, Lily Vowles, Emily Watts, Maisy Williams,

Finley Burleton, Georgia Chapman, Molly Clinkard, Luke Cowling, India Crossman, Thomas Cumow, Piper Dart, Caitlin Dixon, Eli Gibbons, Ellie Green, Jacob Harris, Joshua Hegarty, Samuel Higgs, Bronwyn Job, Kieran Keal, Isobel Knight, Amie Maidment, Sophia Murphy, Emily Probert, Theo Rampere, Chloe Rogers, Callum Rose, Daniel Rubino, George Scriven, Jak Stone, Eloise-Rose Thompson, Florence Turner, Tiggy Upshall, Dillon Wilding, Eleanor Allman, Neave Bellamy, Jamie Birch, Sean Branchflower, Abigail Calvert, Milly Chapman, Chloe Chung, Thomas Crowley, Owen Curtis, Ellissa Hamlett, Holly Harvey, Caitlin Job, Silas Parker-Bombosch, Georgina Poggiali, Thomas Prettlejohn, Alfie Russell, Lily Sandiford, Kailie Sibley, Jack Smith, Abbey Tweed, Mia Vaughn, Connor Willerton, Evie Williams, Harrison Williams, Dorian Buchanan, Cerys Chapman, Sophie-Jane Richards, Chloe Allen, Jamie Brooks-Giles, Joseph Chapman, Seth Checkley, Lucas Chilcott, Kaiden Clarke, Elba De La Oliva, Henry Genge, Brook Gencer, Tyler Higgs, Jacob Kiddle, Luke Loud, Ethan Mitchard, Jack Morris, Isla Murphy, Alesha Nisbet, Nelly Rafinska, Harrison Roberts, Imogen Shakesby, Bethany Sheldrick, Ben Stewart, Lola Walby, Ryan Wheller, Toby Wigginton, Jasmine Winter, Magnus Barnes, Millie Beckingham, Callum Birch, Imogen Bond, Imogen Bright, Lara Cook, Logan Dixon, Joshua Fairbrother, Ruby Fowler, Molly Greuter, Cody Hamer, Ryan Harwood, Isobel Hicks, Jacob Hicks-Keeley, Ruby Little, Maiya Neal, Antonia Quilligan, Daniel Redman, Hannah Reid, Ruby Reynolds-Jones, Hollie Roberts, Amelia Sanders, Nicole Tidball, Alexie White, Caleb Aldridge, Winnie Carmichael, Finley Carroll, Samuel Clowes, Amelie Cook, Lottie-May Dixon, Taylor Edghill, Nia Fowler, Jessica Frost, Freddie Hasell, Mckenzie Keene, Loren Neale, Spencer Needle, Finley Norris, Freya Rayner, Jada Rowland, Summer Russell, Rosie Seaward, Brooke Simms, Rebeca Stamate,

Zak Thompson, Alfie-Joe Weatherall, Lauren Wells, Toni Willerton, Kyle Wilson, Kelvin Zhang, Jack Peppard, Naomi Sage, Declan Wilcox, Keira Alston-Pottinger, Alexander Bolton, Ellie May Costanza, Abbie Curtis, Lilly-Mae Dean, Emmie Difford, Joseph Durston, Abigail Edwards, Elysia Harwood, Grace Henley, Sophie Jones, Emily Knight, Rylea Lang, Alfie Marjeram, Cody Mates, Gracie McLean, Jaxon Pickersgrill, Joseph Rowlands, Kriztian Salvador, Jessica Sturgess, Charlie Taylor, Russell Turner, Oliver Watts, Aisha Webb, Arthur Wilson, Harrison Wisniewski, Jenny Zhang, Ebony Birch, Flynn Burrough, Ava Carmichael, Grace Culliford, Daisy Curnow, Callum Everard, Olivia Frankland, Mika Govier, Benjamin Growland, Lara-Leigh Gray, Mia Harmsworth, Lilia Higgins, Chloe Higgs, Tabitha Lowndes-Northcott, Kaleb Maunders, Caitlin Nicholson, Emily Reid, Ashton Taylor Reynolds, Joshua Russell, Amber Selby, Millie Seymour, Syd Speakman, Amelia Sturgess, Melissa Syddall, Ellen Weech, Phoebe White, Archie Wigginton, Reuben Badman, Macey Cox-Roberts, Kyle Dart, Harriet Ford, Emily Genge, Erin Gibbons, Charlotte Gilby, George Groves, Corey Hackwood, Daisy Hasell, Ellis Higgs, William Higgs, Chelsea Keal, Luke Kiddle, Harvey Lamb, Ashton Lang, Scott Matthews, Logan Murphy, Taylor Neal, Reuben Poggiali, Archie Rossiter-Coles, Lily Seaward, Luca Stamate, Alicia Strange, Samuel Trotman, Ellis Walby, Dominic White, Tamzin Wilding, Lillian Willerton, Chloe Atkins, Elliot Beckingham, Tiyanna Billett, Nellie Carter, Madison Churches, Alfie Coad, Kasey-Mae Coles, Jacob Crossman, Louis Crowley, Ashton Day, Teri Hamer, Frederick Jones, Benjamin Lambert, Amelia Lavis, Kieran Lawrence, Katie Lovelock, Imogen Lowndes-Northcott, Hugh McLennan, Joshua Morris, Madison Palmer-Gowan, Emily Rawlings, Demi Rowe, Laila Rowe, Lily Sibley, Alfie Smith, Thomas Taylor, Jake Wilding, Jemima Winsor.

Get involved & Sing along!

Benjamin Britten put three well known hymns in his opera Noye's Fludde so that absolutely everyone could perform on the day to generate a very special and powerful energy. Join in and become a Voice of the Flood!

HYMN NO. 1

*'Lord Jesus,
think on me'*

*Following an orchestral
introduction at the start of
the opera, sung by everybody*

Lord Jesus, think on me,
And purge away my sin
From earthborn passions set me free,
And make me pure within
Lord Jesus, think on me,
Nor let me go stray;
Through darkness and perplexity
Point thou the heavenly way.
Lord Jesus, think on me,
When flows the tempest high:
When on doth rush the enemy
O Saviour, be thou nigh
Lord Jesus, think on me,
That, when the flood is past
I may eternal brightness see,
And share thy joy at last



HYMN NO. 2

*'Eternal Father
Strong to Save'*

*During the storm – 1st verse
sung by the cast only*

Verse 1 (Sung by the cast only)
Eternal Father strong to save,
whose arm doth bind the restless wave,
Who bids't the mighty ocean deep
Its own appointed limits keep:
O hear us when we cry to thee
For those in peril on the sea

Verse 2 (Everyone)
O Saviour, whose almighty word,
The winds and waves submissive heard,
Who walkedst on the foaming deep,
And calm amidst its rage didst sleep
O hear us when we cry to thee
For those in peril on the sea

Verse 3 (Everyone)
O Sacred Spirit, who didst brood
Upon the chaos dark and rude,
Who bad'st its angry tumult cease,
And gavest light and life and peace
O hear us when we cry to thee
For those in peril on the sea

HYMN NO. 3

*'The Spacious
Firmament on High'*

Verse 1 (Cast only)
The spacious firmament on high
With all the blue ethereal sky
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great original proclaim.

Verse 2 (Cast only)
Th'unwearied sun from day to day
Doth his Creator's power display,
And publishes to every land
The works of an almighty hand.

Verse 3 (Cast only)
Soon as the evening shades prevail
The moon takes up the wondrous tale,
And nightly to the listening earth
Repeats the story of her birth.

Verse 4 (Cast only)
Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

Verse 5 (Everyone)
What though in solemn silence all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball,
What though nor real voice nor sound
Amid their radiant orbs be found.

Verse 6 (Everyone)
In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice;
Forever singing as they shine,
The hand that made us is divine. Amen.

Mr & Mrs Noye: Profiled



Jimmy Holliday,
'Noye'

Jimmy Holliday started singing aged 6 at Lichfield Cathedral. He studied for four years at The Royal College of Music where he won numerous awards, and completed his studies at the prestigious National Opera Studio, London. Opera roles from RCM productions included Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Britten), Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* (Mozart) and Kecal in *The Bartered Bride* (Smetana).

He made his debut with ENO in Wolfgang Rihm's *Jakob Lenz*, and has performed Nick Shadow in *A Rake's Progress* (Stravinsky), and King Heinrich in *Lohengrin* (Wagner) with Ostrava Opera Company, Czech Republic.

Recent projects include *Colline* in *La Bohème* (Puccini) for Opera North, and future projects include Billy Jackrabbit in *La Fanciulla del West* (Puccini) for ENO. He also works with various ensembles including EXAUDI, the Deutsche Grammophon award winning Ensemble Plus Ultra, The Sixteen, *Tenebrae*, I Fagiolini and The BBC Singers.



Amy J. Payne,
'Mrs. Noye'

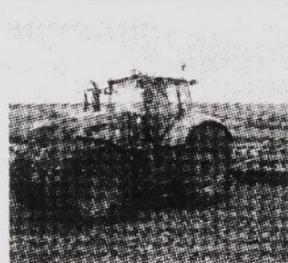
Amy was born and brought up in South Devon. She trained at The Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where she was awarded the prestigious English Song Prize and won The Susan Longfield Competition. Amy is a Samling Scholar and holds a Bachelor Honours degree in French and German from King's College, London.

ENGLISH SONG PRIZE

Amy recently made her Royal Opera House debut, singing the role of Moppet in ETO's Olivier-nominated production of *Paul Bunyan* at the Linbury Studio. Other roles include: Second Lady *The Magic Flute* (English Touring Opera); Edith *The Pirates of Penzance* (The G & S Opera Company); *Ragonde Count Ory* (Opera South); Annabel Clark *Through The Looking Screen* (Underbelly, Edinburgh Fringe Festival); Mrs. Partlet *The Sorcerer*, Ruth *The Pirates of Penzance* (Charles Court Opera); Second Lady *The Magic Flute* (Garsington Opera Emerging Artists); Mrs. Noye *Noye's Fludde*

(Faversham Fludde Festival); Florence Pike Albert Herring, Suzuki Madam Butterfly (Mid Wales Opera); Schwertleite *Die Walküre* (St. Endellion Summer Festival); *Dr Blind/Ida Die Fledermaus* (Iris Theatre/Orchestra of St Pauls); *Dorabella Così fan Tutte* (Westminster Opera); *Olga Eugene Onegin* (Dartington); *Un Pâtre/La Chatte/La Libellule L'enfant et les Sortilèges* (Syred Consort); *Coryphée Alceste* (Chelsea Opera Group). She has covered roles for Scottish Opera, D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, English Touring Opera and Garsington Opera.

Projects include: *Berta in Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at the *Musique Cordiale Festival* in Southern France and a revival of Anne Chmelewsky's one-woman opera, *Through the Looking Screen*, at the Royal Theatre in The Hague.



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SIMON HARVEY: DIRECTOR

Simon is Kneehigh's Associate Director. His recent work includes *Brief Encounter* (Australia tour), *Steptoe and Son*, *The Wild Bride*, *Midnight's Pumpkin*, *The Red Shoes* (National / International tour), *Hansel and Gretel*, *Brief Encounter* (UK / US Tour), *Rapunzel* (UK/US) and *Cymbeline*.

Simon has also performed in number of Kneehigh shows including *Rambles* (2012) *BLAST* and *The King of Prussia* (*Asylum* 2010) and *Wagstaffe the Wind up Boy* (2005) *Outside Kneehigh*, Simon is the Artistic Director of o-region a theatre and film production company for whom he has directed *Laughing Gas*, *One Darke Night*, *The Dead Monkey* and *Stay Brave Brian Gravy*. He also produced the feature films *The Midnight Drives* (wr/dir: Mark Jenkin) and award winning *Weekend Retreat*. (wr/dr Brett Harvey).

Most recently, Simon has directed *Great Expectations* (Rabbit theatre), *Alaska* (*Blackfish*) and *Above Bored* (*Owdyado Theatre*).

Rosanna Vize: Designer

Rosanna Vize graduated Bristol Old Vic Theatre School in 2013 shortly after which she became involved with *Noye's Fludde*.

Other credits include Set and Costume design for *The Wicked Lady* (Circomedia), *Edward Gants Amazing Feats of Loneliness* (The Alma), *Infinite Lives* (Tobacco Factory), *The Tinder Box* (Bristol Old Vic), *Talon* (Bristol Old Vic) *Black Sheep* (Soho Theatre). Costume design for *The Last Days of Mankind* (Bristol Old Vic). Set Design for *Now we are Three* (Southwark Playhouse).

In 2013 Rosanna was one of 12 young designers selected as a finalist for The Linbury Prize for Stage Design. Rosanna's work will next be seen in *The Picture of John Grey* (Old Red Lion). In September Rosanna will take one of two placements at the Royal Shakespeare Company as Trainee Designer.

CHARLES HAZLEWOOD: CONDUCTOR EXTRAORDINAIRE



Since winning the European Broadcasting Union Conducting Competition in his 20s, Charles Hazlewood has enjoyed a global and pioneering career conducting some of the world's greatest orchestras, including the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam, the Gothenburg Symphony in Sweden and the Philharmonia in London. He has conducted over 100 world premieres, working with artists as diverse as Wyclef Jean, Professor Green, Nigel Kennedy and Steve Reich and he played the first ever symphony concert on the Pyramid Stage at Glastonbury Festival.

In South Africa Charles co-founded the award-winning lyric theatre company *Dimpho di Kopane* (*The Mysteries*, *Carmen*, *The Snow Queen*) which toured London's West End and worldwide, winning

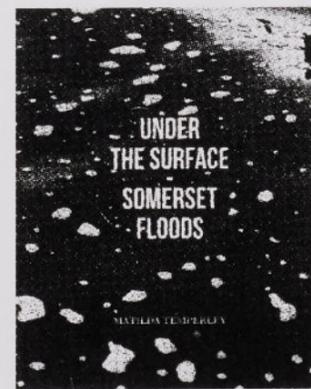
the Golden Bear Award for Best Film at the Berlin Film Festival for their movie *U Carmen e-Khayelitsha*. Continuing his theatrical success with Cornwall-based Kneehigh with whom he shares a maverick spirit, as well as collaborating on Britten's *Noye's Fludde*, Charles has composed the score and directed the music for Kneehigh's production of *Dead Dog in a Suitcase*, a *Beggar's Opera* for our times which has recently opened at The Liverpool Everyman to great critical acclaim.

SONY AWARDS

In 2012 he founded the world's first professional ensemble of virtuoso musicians with disabilities, The British Paraorchestra, who played at the Closing Ceremony of the 2012 London Paralympics.

Charles has authored, presented and conducted numerous television films on music for the BBC and Channel Four and for his BBC radio shows he has won three Sony Awards.

charleshazlewood.com/paraorchestra.com
[Twitter @CharlieHazlewood](https://twitter.com/CharlieHazlewood)



A beautiful hardback and cloth bound book on the 2014 Somerset floods.

Images by Matilda Temperley with captions by the community.

Available now from burrowhillbooks.com

Benjamin Britten: Composer & Visionary



Benjamin Britten was born in Lowestoft in 1913. His mother, a keen amateur singer, was thrilled that her youngest was born on 22 November: the feast day of St Cecilia, the patron saint of music. She hoped he would – after Bach, Beethoven and Brahms – become the 'Fourth B'.

PROGRESSIVE

He did indeed become a global musical figure. In just 63 busy years Britten wrote some of the most appealing classical music of the twentieth century, was hailed as one of the all-time great

opera composers, and – with his partner, the singer Peter Pears – performed around the world.

Britten was a progressive cultural figure too, ahead of his time on issues including pacifism, homosexuality and the role of artists in their communities.

Thanks to his amazing archive, and an extensive recorded legacy, the whole fascinating story is uniquely well documented.

You can find out more at britten100.org

The Philharmonia brings together the world's finest players, conductors and soloists to create truly inspiring musical performances

Regarded by many as currently the UK's premier orchestra, the Philharmonia are at the cutting edge of pioneering educational initiatives.

Testament to their strong working relationship with Charles, the Philharmonia have welcomed the opportunity to collaborate on the Noye's Fludde production.

PARTNERSHIP

Philharmonia's live education work is a core part of the orchestra's activity, and reflects its integrity, identity and quality. Distinctive,

bespoke projects are devised in partnership with a variety of organisations, reaching tens of thousands of people each year. Creativity and inclusivity is central to the ethos of the orchestra's work involving schools, community organisations and music hubs nationwide.

The Philharmonia have provided exceptional expertise for Project Noye 2014 with Charles Hazlewood and Kneehigh, always eager to support amateur players during rehearsals and preparatory workshops.

Headmistress of Brookside Claire Axten CBE: a tour de force since the conception of the opera project

Brookside Community Primary School is an extraordinary school with exceptional pupils staff, and Governors; courageous, positive and proactive. The support that Claire Axten has provided for this production is highly significant, as she and her school have welcomed the singers and musicians, providing rehearsal space and seem-

ingly limitless resources to support the opera.

EXEMPLARY

We have shared very special moments, singing, designing, creating and celebrating. The work ethic of Brookside is exemplary and it has been a unique and unforgettable experience to collaborate with the school.

Wells Cathedral School

It has been a privilege to work with the outstanding Music Department of Wells Cathedral School over the last eighteen months. Dorothy Nancekieve, Director of Music, has provided members of her department to create the core of the 'Children of Noye' and 'Gossips' choruses, in addition to instrumentalists for the orchestra and soloists

to perform at regular Music assemblies at Brookside School. The level of musicianship at Wells Cathedral School is exceptional and the positive outgoing nature of the pupils has opened many new and meaningful dialogues for the future. We also thank Dominique Swain, who has coordinated the pupils at Wells through this journey.

KNEEHIGH: AN AWARD WINNING TOURING THEATRE COMPANY

Kneehigh are a UK based theatre company with a local, national and international profile. For over 30 years Kneehigh have created vigorous, popular and challenging theatre and perform with the joyful anarchy that audiences have come to expect from this groundbreaking company.

Follow them @WeAreKneehigh and sign up to their mailing list for news of tours at kneehigh.co.uk

Kneehigh team
Chief Executive
 & *Executive Producer:*
 Paul Crewes
Joint Artistic Director:
 Emma Rice
Joint Artistic Director:
 Mike Shepherd
General Manager:
 Charlotte Bond
Associate Director:
 Simon Harvey
Production Manager:
 David Harraway
Company Stage Manager:
 Steph Curtis
Finance Officer:
 Fiona Buxton

Assistant Producer:
 Liz King
Communications
Co-Ordinator:
 Chloe Rickard
Administrator
 & *Development*
Assistant:
 Bethany Lyne
Rambles Lead Artist:
 Anna Maria Murphy
Production
Photographer:
 Steve Tanner
Graphic Designer:
 Dave Mynne
Film Maker:
 Brett Harvey

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



HARE CHASING

Labradors are famously water dogs, but our Poppy soon got fed up with the floods. Whatever happened to those long walks to Muchelney and the delicious smells along the disused railway path from Westover? The one advantage was that the lack of dry ground had sent hundreds of hares scurrying into the high fields. So hare chasing was some slight compensation for curtailed walks, and she was able to get twice the exercise in half the time. I'm glad to say that she never caught one.

Ros Carne
Dog Walker

DREDGING

My first thoughts are that it is very depressing to find the Drainage Board's predictions coming true. We asked that river maintenance (dredging) be made a priority back in 2006 when our original Water Levels Plans were agreed. These requests were ignored. More recently our staff have worked very hard to help get the 20 year plan up and running, including the dredging of the main rivers, a new culvert under the A372 at Beer Wall, pumps at Duball, a Parrett barrage, and widening of the River Sowe. We accept that it will be difficult to stop all flooding, but a reduction in the length and frequency of flooding will help property owners, businesses, farmers and others to survive.

Peter Maltby
A Member of the Drainage Board

FLOOD DEFENCES

The experience of being flooded is one of the most traumatic things that can happen to anyone. And during the course of this winter – the wettest winter ever, in England – virtually the whole country faced a battering from storms and rain. Overall about seven thousand homes were flooded, and my heart goes out to everyone affected. By a huge amount of hard work and by the flood defences that had been erected over recent decades, and by temporary defences that we put up during the emergency, we did manage to protect hundreds of thousands of homes and businesses. We all need to make sure we continue to improve flood defences into the future.

Lord Chris Smith
Chairman of the Environment Agency

HAUNTED

I am haunted by the faces of those affected by the flood. I saw despair, fear, hopelessness and resignation, not because they could not cope with the flood and the heart breaking damage that it caused, certainly not for the kindness and support they received from their neighbours. What I saw was a knowing that they would be left alone, abandoned, betrayed by their government, their people, their country. Nothing would be done to stop more floods. This is their fate, there is no escape. This is their torment. This is the despair I saw etched into their eyes. Noah's flood washed away the sinners, cleansed. This flood washed away the facade that we live in a caring society, baring humanity, for what it truly is.

Philip
Postman

GENEROUS

I live in the village of Muchelney with my brother, sister and parents. Almost every year at least one of the roads into the village floods, so we are all rather accustomed to flooding. The floods of last winter though were far worse and lasted far longer than we had foreseen which made things a little more difficult. The village was very lucky on the whole as transport was arranged as quickly as expected and a huge number of people were extremely generous donating food and vital supplies to cut-off villages, as well as the London Boat Show who donated a power boat to the village, and, of course, the men and women of the emergency services who manned the fire engines and other vehicles that allowed us to maintain some semblance of normality.

James McLeod
A Schoolboy living in Muchelney

BIRDS

The strange watery landscape became a wonderful habitat to thousands of birds. The sky was alive with wheeling lapwing, glittering dunlin and golden plover; heron, snipe and egret occupied the few unflooded droves and hundreds of teal and wigeon bobbed on the moors, their ceaseless whistling filling the air night and day. There were, alas, casualties of these unusual conditions; the barn owls on Beer Moor have not been seen since the autumn having lost their food source to the waters.

Peter Merry
A Bird Watcher

VICTIMS

We live in Thorney close to Muchelney. We watched with dread as the moor filled up over a couple of weeks, knowing that the Environment Agency wouldn't be pumping us. It came in inch by inch, like water torture. The night before it came we had the sofa on bricks and I remember watching telly. That evening was like the last supper. About a month after the waters came in, the Council provided a chemical toilet. About that time people started arriving – social workers, police, army, fire brigade – asking if we were alright. It was quite strange, particularly the social workers, head on one side, looking sympathetic. Box-ticking really. I suppose we were victims, but we didn't feel like victims. We just got on with it.

Roddy and Holly Baillie-Grohman
Flooded Residents of Thorney

COMMUNITY

As farmers we are grateful for the support of others and it has been heartening to witness the whole community pulling together over the last few months. Going forward, we would ask everyone to continue to think of all the householders and businesses affected by the floods and how we can all work to create a local solution to the problems we have encountered.

Andrew Maltby
An Aller Farmer

“We couldn’t have done it without you”

Thanks go to Nick Axten, for his magnificent wind machine and a sea of other details, Jennifer Brint, for providing many young musicians and working so hard with all the pupils at Brookside, All the pupils, governors and staff at Brookside school, who have worked tirelessly cutting cardboard, glueing bamboo sticks and marching in Processions singing ‘Kyrie.’ Graham, who kindly opened doors at Brookside early in the morning on several weekends, closing late in the day, always ready to help. All the parents of all the children performing, for bringing them to rehearsals, making many packed lunches, and encouraging them in such a positive way, Dorothy Nancekieveille, for supporting the production and providing her outstanding pupils from Wells Cathedral School. Dominique Swain, for coordinating the very special Brookside/ Wells assemblies, and coordinating pupils for audition, Arturo Aserna for working with the members of Wessex Strings who performed, Jayne Obradovic, Percussion tutor at Wells Cathedral School for loaning her Timpani, Peter Merry for his excellent support in rehearsals, Lovely Rosie at Compton pianos, for providing a beautiful clavivona and being so helpful and supportive,

Pam Smith for rehearsing and bringing the fabulous Exeter Recorder Orchestra, Cilla Caswell, for always being so positive and bringing the beautiful Chiselborough Hand Bell Ringers, Juliet Harwood for all her Quangle Wangles, Lindsay Wilson for all her coordinating of the fabulous musicians of the Philharmonia Orchestra, Grace Campbell, for providing our superb dancers from the Rambert School and the London Studio Centre, The Copyshop, Shepton Mallet, for a lot of copying, Nigel Spring for his wonderful and inspirational support work, Chris Grant for coordinating details at the Bath and West showground, James Risdon for his stunning playing and generous spirit, Hugo Stanbury and all at Stage Electrics, The Market House Glastonbury for accommodating the production team, Nick Heal of Redlynch Agricultural Contractors, for lending us two flatbed trailers and a cherry picker, Rob Bayly for organising a fabulous hot air balloon orchestra event, and absolutely every musician and singer who has rehearsed and performed in this extraordinary production.

And a big big thank you to Arts Council England for their generous funding, without which this could not have happened.

Project Noye supports FLAG

Project Noye has supported FLAG (Flooding on the Levels Action Group) throughout the last six months, highlighting the challenges of flood victims and aiming to understand their contrasting perspectives.

OPEN HEARTS

In February, Charles Hazlewood and Annie Michie, with the help of the wonderful Ebenezer Team (Sarah Constantinides, Tony Anderson and Martin Keeley) organised a concert for people

living on the Somerset Levels. Many people came together to see The Southbank Sinfonia and Will Gregory with his Moog Ensemble contributing for free with time, talent and open hearts, to help celebrate the strength of people who have been affected by the floods. The concert raised over £3,000.

To find out more about FLAG and how you can help support victims of the flood visit www.flagsomerset.org.uk

KNEEHIGH AT BRISTOL OLD VIC IN OCTOBER

Catch Kneehigh’s blazing new show at Bristol Old Vic from 8th – 25th October. Based on the Beggar’s Opera, John Gay’s classic musical satire, Dead Dog in a Suitcase (and other love songs) is busting with wit, wonder and weirdness. An extraordinary Kneehigh cast of actor musicians shoot, hoot and shimmy their way through this twisted morality tale of our times... by turns SHOCKING, HILARIOUS, HEARTFELT and ABSURD!

The gorgeous and powerful live score combines trip hop and folk, Renaissance polyphony and psychedelia, and ska, grime and dubstep... echoing Gay’s original by plundering the sounds of our times. Dead Dog in a Suitcase is written by Carl Grose, with music by Charles Hazlewood and directed by Mike Shepherd.

Until 31st July there are special earlybird prices for the first five performances. Call 0117 987 7877 or go to bristololdvic.org.uk for tickets.

“A riot... Would I go and see this again? Like a shot.” The Times

CLARKS VILLAGE: Not Your Ordinary Shopping Outlet

Whilst shopping at Clarks Village designer outlet this August, discover a magical village of colour and curiosity including the World’s Largest Topiary Shoe (sponsored by Clarks Shoes), curious objects around every corner... and high in the treetops, giant teacups, flowers and toadstools, mysterious and magical tree decorations, more bunting than you could ever imagine, plenty of picket fencing and a scattering of stripy deckchairs, competitions galore (including the chance to win a year’s supply of Clarks Shoes) and a series of curious events for the whole family.

Visit the website for full details – clarksvillage.co.uk