

# ANNUAL CONCERT 2015

Our guests were introduced to us by  
THE SAMLING FOUNDATION

## Marnie Blair

Marnie is in her final year studying Music at University College, Durham. Whilst at Durham, Marnie has sung as a choral scholar for the University College choir, performed in the Chamber Choirs and played flute for Durham University Orchestral Society. As a soloist, many of her appearances have been with Durham Opera Ensemble and she has just recently performed the role of Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro* at the Gala Theatre. For the past year, Marnie has been Manager of Durham University Chamber Choir and also a choral scholar at University College. Marnie hopes to pursue a career in singing and plans on applying to music-college in the near future.



## James Quitmann

James is a second year geography student at Grey College, Durham University. He sings with the Durham University Chamber Choir and Durham Opera Ensemble, as well as holding a choral scholarship in St John's College Chapel Choir. Operatic roles include 'Sarastro' in the Durham Opera Ensemble's production of *The Magic Flute* in February 2014. Outside of university, James sings with the National Youth Chamber Choir of Great Britain, with whom he toured to Salt Lake City, Utah, in February 2015 to take part in the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) Conference alongside other British groups such as the King's Singers and Voces8. He has also performed extensively as a soloist throughout England. He sings regularly with Samling Academy, where he has worked with internationally renowned artists, and has taken part in masterclasses with Sir Thomas Allen and Roderick



Williams. In Durham, James studies under Miranda Wright, while at home in Guildford he is taught by Roy Rashbrook. James is also an accomplished flautist and rows for his college. He plans to study singing at a conservatoire after university before embarking on a career as a professional singer.

## David Murray

David has been recognised as one of the North East's most acclaimed pianists, and is in constant demand as a soloist, accompanist and chamber music partner. He has been a regular accompanist for David Haslam, Sir Thomas Allen, Ian Partridge, Bradley Creswick, and Alison Pearce, with whom he has appeared in recitals all over the world. He is also well known as a choral trainer and conductor, and is permanent conductor of Bishopwearmouth Choral Society, Ryton Choral



Society and Hexham Abbey Festival Chorus. On an educational front David has been lucky enough to have helped many young pianists who are now starting to make their way in the musical world, especially through his work at the Weekend School at the Sage Gateshead, where he was Head of Keyboard Studies from 2004 - 2013. He continues to teach privately and is Head of Keyboard Studies at the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne, a post which he has held since 2001.

## Samling

Since 1996 we have worked consistently with the best in the world to make our contribution to art and music in the United Kingdom, focussing on excellence. Samling Artist Programme invites world-class artists, teachers and experts to work with outstanding young singers and pianists from around the world. There are now over 270 Samling Artists, many of which have gone on to forge impressive international careers and see their work with Samling as a springboard at that crucial stage in their development.

Samling Academy aims to extend the reach of our professional Artist Programme to young musicians in the North East of England and is setting new standards in classical singing and piano accompaniment. Working with Newcastle and Durham Universities and Sage Gateshead, our success will be

measured when, in future years, its participants successfully audition for Samling Artist Programme as young professional performers – a ‘virtuous circle’ and a unique model in education.

Samling is a registered charity. We receive no regular or government funding. The only building we invest in is the future of classical music and a commitment to excellence. [www.samling.org.uk](http://www.samling.org.uk)

NB There will be an opportunity at the end of the concert for donations to be made towards the work of Samling. Donations will be matched from choir funds up to £100.

## **Our Musical Director JUDITH THOMPSON**



This is Judith’s third Annual Concert with the Prudhoe Gleemen, and she continues to enjoy rehearsals and concerts and even the cheek she often receives during practices! Judith has always had a passion for singing and particularly choral singing. Having been brought up performing in the theatre and singing in choirs from the tender age of 5, Judith has taken leading solo roles as a performer and also as a concert soloist. Whilst studying for a Degree in Music, Drama and Dance at Birmingham University, she studied conducting with Jon Joubert and orchestrating and arranging with Prof Ivor Keys and also studied singing at the Birmingham Conservatoire. As a solo singer, she successfully competed at Ryton, Consett and York Festivals and also performed as a soloist for many choral groups including the Prudhoe Gleemen, Ovingham, Riding Mill, Ryton and Newcastle Choral Societies. Prior to joining the Gleemen, Judith was involved with two large mixed choirs as a soloist, vocal coach and Assistant Musical Director. Judith is Assistant Head Teacher at Hill Top School which is a Special School in Gateshead where she teaches music and performing arts.