

## **JONATHAN REA**



Jonathan studied music at Cambridge, where he sang in the University Chamber Choir and studied piano with Peter Pettinger. He held choral and instrumental awards and won the Rima Alamuddin prize for piano performance.

After 10 happy years as Director of Music in Bangor Grammar School, he began a broader career in conducting, producing, writing, composing, arranging and piano accompanying. He has conducted many programmes for BBC Songs of Praise and directed the Belfast choir for Children in Need. For several years he was the Principal Examiner for A-Level Music Performance in Northern Ireland. He is the choral director for the annual Sing! conference in Nashville, for whom he has on two occasions directed choirs with 1000 participants. He now provides consultancy to a number of church-based organisations.

Jonathan is Creative Director and Chief Executive of New Irish Arts, whose choir, orchestra and youth choir perform at over 20 events per year. They have sold out Belfast's Waterfront Hall on numerous occasions, and often have over 250 participants in their larger concerts. Jonathan is increasingly in demand as a writer and speaker, occasionally contributing to programmes like Radio 4's Prayer for the Day and Morning Service.

In the Queen's Birthday Honours List in 2020, Jonathan was awarded the British Empire Medal for services to Music in Northern Ireland. He enjoys being a Federation adjudicator because he finds it immensely satisfying to play a part in helping people pursue their musical potential.

## MICHAEL BALL



**Michael Ball** was born in Manchester. Formal piano studies began at the age of six, followed by his first contacts with the Festival movement as a young participant at several of the Lancashire & Cheshire music festivals. He later went on to the Royal College of Music in London where he studied piano with Bernard Roberts and, as a Ralph Vaughan Williams Trust Scholar, composition with Herbert Howells, along with further studies in piano accompaniment, harpsichord & conducting. In his final year he was invited to participate in masterclasses with the distinguished French teacher Nadia Boulanger and after winning the College's major composition awards, including the Cobbett Prize for Chamber Music, was awarded the Octavia Travelling Scholarship which he used to study with Franco Donatoni at the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, Italy during the summers of 1972 and 1973. Whilst there, he also participated in masterclasses with Luciano Berio and György Ligeti. Alongside his RCM performance studies, he graduated from the University of London in 1967 and became a Doctor of Music of the same university in 2001.

Michael has worked within music education throughout his career, initially at Manchester Grammar School, where he was Assistant Director of Music from 1970-1986. He shared the administration of a large department of nearly thirty instrumental tutors and conducting of the several orchestras, bands and choirs. Along with the direction of academic music, his responsibilities included the regular training and provision of boys' choirs for many BBC broadcasts and for concerts, recordings and tours by the Hallé Orchestra. From 1972 to 1979 he gained extensive conducting experience as musical director of a small opera

company comprising an amateur chorus and professional soloists, and also worked for a period as a répétiteur to the Royal Swedish Opera in Stockholm.

In 1986 Michael decided to pursue a free-lance professional career in composition whilst still retaining strong links with music education in his work at Chetham's School of Music, Manchester, where he was Tutor in Composition from 1985-1992. He was appointed composer in residence to the University of Salford from 1988-90 and as external moderator from 1996-2000. Michael has been an adjudicator member of the British & International Federation of Festivals since 1997 and presently combines composition with a busy teaching schedule. This sits alongside his work as an examiner since 1981, both in Ireland & the UK and on many international tours to Germany, Scandinavia, Spain & Switzerland and particularly to the Far East. His music, which is regularly played and broadcast, is published principally by Novello and embraces most genres from short pieces for relative beginners to large-scale orchestral and choral works. He has fulfilled a number of major commissions, including six for the BBC, and his music has featured in leading performing festivals, including Cheltenham, Farnham, Gloucester Three Choirs, Harrogate, BBC Music Live! and the BBC Proms.

Michael has fond and lively memories of the vitality of the Cork music scene on his previous visits as adjudicator of the instrumental classes at Feis Maitiú and is much looking forward to his eighth visit in 2024.

## **GAYNOR KEEBLE**



Gaynor Keeble gained scholarships to the University of Warwick and the Royal Academy of Music. She combines a busy performing career with teaching both privately, at Warwick University and adjudicating at many festivals. She has also worked extensively with English Touring Opera's Education Programme and is vocal consultant to several local choirs.

She was a member of Welsh National Opera for three years and has worked for the Royal Opera, English National Opera, Opera North, D'Oyly Carte, Mid-Wales and English Touring Opera Carl Rosa. Roles with these companies include Carmen, Delilah (Samson & Delilah), Amneris (Aida), Marchioness (Daughter of the Regiment), Baba the Turk (Rake's Progress), Mrs Sedley (Peter Grimes), Meg Page (Falstaff), Maddalena (Rigoletto), Marcellina (Marriage of Figaro), Orpheus (Orpheus and Euridice), Tisbe (Cenerentola), Katisha (Mikado) and Azucena (Il Trovatore).

Concert include appearances with the London Mozart Players, London Bach Orchestra, CBSO Royal Philharmonic and The Philharmonia.

She was made an ARAM in 2009

She maintains a busy operatic career with recent engagements including Katisha (ENO), 3<sup>rd</sup> Lady Magic Flute, Voice of the Mother (Hoffmann) and Annina (Traviata) Royal Opera House, Hippolyta (Midsummer Nights Dream) and Gertrude (Romeo & Juliet) both for Opera North. Roles in 2012-2013 include 3<sup>rd</sup> Lady (ROH), Dame Hannah (Ruddigore) Opera North, Zita (Gianni Schicchi) and Larina (Onegin).