

MEDIA RELEASE: IMMEDIATE

***Sailing to the Marvellous*: Local Talent, International Inspiration**

Talented local musicians of all ages have been working with international artists to create the premiere production of '**Sailing to the Marvellous**', a new piece of musical theatre for Bridlington's 'Priory 900' celebrations.

This one-off show, performed on **Sat 19 October, 7.30pm at The Priory, Bridlington**, involves over 100 local people of all ages, including Beverley Minster Choir, Bridlington Community Choir, East Riding Young Percussion Ensemble, and local East Riding schools.

Over the past month local people have worked with top musical artists to learn new skills and stretch their musical ability. The result has been an astounding learning experience, and a skilful fusion of musical abilities, for what promises to be an unmissable international event, made in Bridlington.

Jonathan Lo, Musical Director says: 'You don't have to be a professional musician to be musical. What we've tried to do is bring out the musicality of all the performers, their feel for music, and to help them, if necessary, develop the appropriate skills to express it alongside more experienced musicians. We're fortunate that the level of musical teaching and skills in the East Riding are of a very high standard.'

Sailing to the Marvellous has involved East Riding schools from its very beginning. The words of local children are sung during the performance, and the children themselves form a crucial part of the cast and have been working with locally-based director Rebecca Jenkins, who says:

'It's such a privilege to work with children on a project like this; they bring such freshness and just a hint of the unpredictable - which is always fun in a live performance. I've been helping them to find their voices and their strength on stage. It's beautiful to watch and listen to them grow in confidence, singing such wonderful melodies and such poignant lines as "how beautiful the flower".

Alongside children, Bridlington's very own community choir has been singing up to the mark with the help of Edward Caine, a professional choir trainer:

'The Bridlington Community Chorus is a fantastic group of ladies, all very enthusiastic and game for trying anything. It's been very rewarding to work with such openminded musicians. The harmonies in '*Sailing to the Marvellous*' are lovely and we've enjoyed playing around with them.'

So if you want to hear fresh local talent excel themselves alongside top, young, professional musicians, '*Sailing to the Marvellous*' is for you. Book your tickets now and prepare for a courageous and moving musical journey.

**Sat 19 October, 7.30pm, The Priory Church of St Mary, Bridlington, YO16 7JX
Tickets: £5 & free for under 21s**

To book tickets and for more information go to www.priory900.org or Telephone 075383 432163 or in person at -

The Shop, The Priory, Church Green, Bridlington YO16 7JX (open Monday to Friday 10 am to 4 pm; Saturday 10 - 12 noon; Sunday 1 -4 pm)

ENDS

Press Contact: Lara Goodband, Wingbeats Project Director

lara@laragoodband.com; wingbeats@btinternet.com

mobile 07960067698

MEDIA INFORMATION

1) Sailing to the Marvellous

Sailing to the Marvellous is an innovative work of musical theatre by Cheryl Frances-Hoad and Adam Strickson. It is a dramatic cantata for choirs, instrumentalists and child actors.

The cantata tells a powerful contemporary story. Runa, a young Christian woman from Iraq, flees persecution. She meets a group of children who have escaped from wars in Africa. Together they travel to Britain in an old fishing boat. Eventually the boat reaches Bridlington where Runa and the children seek sanctuary.

The work is in sixteen sections, each marking a point on a spiritual journey, from birth to death and then re-birth. The libretto is sung in English, Kurdish and Latin, and refers to the experience of refugees in Yorkshire and to traditions of worship at the Priory. Descriptions of heaven collected from Bridlington children are sung by the adult chorus.

2) Priory 900

Sailing to the Marvellous was commissioned by 'Priory 900', a year-long programme of events celebrating the nine-hundredth anniversary of the foundation of Bridlington Priory. The stated theme of the programme is: Celebrating the Journey. This involves: the exploration of the original vision of the Priory's foundation to promote spiritual growth, learning and hospitality for the whole community; the life and achievements of the Priory and its people, past, present and future, and its place in the wider community; the life of the whole of the community of Bridlington and its hinterland. Priory 900 acknowledges funding from Arts Council England, East Riding of Yorkshire Council and Heritage Lottery Funding. For further information regarding Priory900 go to: www.priory900.org.

3) Wingbeats

Sailing to the Marvellous is produced for Priory 900 by Wingbeats. Wingbeats was the East Riding of Yorkshire's Cultural Olympiad project and part of '[Imove](#)', [Legacy Trust](#) UK's celebratory programme for Yorkshire and part of the Cultural Olympiad. *Sailing to the Marvellous* is by Adam Strickson and Cheryl Frances-Hoad, the creative Wingbeats duo who wrote and composed the critically-acclaimed *Amy's Last Dive*. They were awarded an Arts Council England grant to

write this work, and Frances-Hoad received funding from the Performing Rights Society 'Women in Music' programme.

In order to produce and stage *Sailing to the Marvellous*, Wingbeats has received funding from Arts Council England through their Grants for the Arts Scheme, and from East Riding of Yorkshire Council, The Lords Feoffees of the Manor of Bridlington and private sponsorship. For more information about Wingbeats and its past work in Bridlington go to <http://www.imovearts.co.uk/past-projects/cultural-olympiad/wingbeats/>

4) Schools and Community Groups

Local musical partners include the choir of Burlington Junior School, pupils from Our Lady and St Peters and Sledmere Primary schools, the Bridlington Community Choir and the church choirs of the Priory and Beverley Minster, together with the East Riding Senior Percussion and professional soloists.

5) Cheryl Frances-Hoad (Composer)

Cheryl Frances-Hoad was born in Essex in 1980 and received her musical education at the Yehudi Menuhin School, Gonville and Caius College (University of Cambridge) and Kings College London. She was the first DARE Cultural Fellow in the Opera Related Arts in association with Opera North and the University of Leeds during 2012. Cheryl won the BBC Young Composer Competition in 1996 at the age of 15 and since then her works have garnered numerous prizes and awards, including the Royal Philharmonic Society Composition Prize (UK, 2007), the Sun River Composition Prize (China, 2007), The International String Orchestra Composition Competition (Malta, 2006), The Bliss Prize (UK, 2002), the first Robert Helps International Composition Prize (University of Florida, 2005), the Mendelssohn Scholarship (UK, 2002) and the Cambridge Composer's Competition (UK, 2001). In 2010 Cheryl became the youngest composer to win two awards in the same year at the BASCA British Composer Awards (her setting of Psalm 1 won the Choral category, and *Stolen Rhythm* for solo piano won the Solo or Duo category). Many of her works have been generously supported by the RVW Trust, the Britten Pears Foundation, the PRS for Music Foundation, the Nicholas Boas Charitable Trust and the Bliss Trust.

Cheryl's debut CD has received a 4 star review in *The Guardian*. Andrew Clements writes "There's something engagingly freewheeling about Frances-Hoad's works, the feeling that she is quite unselfconscious about the music she writes and oblivious to how others might categorise it."

Paul Driver in *The Times* writes "Frances-Hoad is a remarkable talent. This retrospective of her chamber works is like a declaration of faith in the eternal verities of composition". *The Glory Tree* was also picked as BBC Music Magazine's October "Chamber Music Choice".

<http://www.cherylfranceshoad.co.uk/>

6) Natalie Raybould (Soprano, Runa)

Soprano **Natalie Raybould** studied at St. Edmund Hall, Oxford, and the Royal Academy of Music, London, and was awarded an Associateship of the RAM in 2011.

Natalie has worked with Opera North, ROH2, The Opera Group, Tête à Tête, The RSC, National Theatre Studio, Little Angel Theatre, Aldeburgh Productions and others in developing new operas, concert works, music theatre and plays. Recent credits include Amy Johnson *Amy's Last Dive* (Cheryl Frances-Hoad), Cousin Shelley (cover) *Anna Nicole* (Turnage) for the Royal Opera House, and Crispina Philomena Crackweasel/Goosey John *Dr. Quimpugh's Casebook of Peculiar Afflictions* (Martin Ward/Phil Porter) for Summerhall, Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2013. Natalie is a regular guest artist with the French contemporary ensemble L'Instant Donné and the Birmingham *Doom Tuba* duo ORE, and has most recently devised, composed and performed in *Lullaby*, an interactive piece for babies for Polka Theatre. www.natalieraybould.co.uk

7) Jonathan Lo (Musical Director)

Hong Kong-born Briton **Jonathan Lo** was a **semi-finalist in the 2012 London Symphony Orchestra Donatella Flick Competition**, as well as the youngest of the competitors in the Malko Competition for Conductors 2012 in Copenhagen. Jonathan read music at the University of Oxford, before studying conducting at the Royal Northern College of Music on a major scholarship under Clark Rundell, graduating with distinction and winning the Mortimer Furber Prize in Conducting. Jonathan serves as an **assistant conductor for the Gabrieli Consort**, and is currently **Musical Director** of the Sheffield Philharmonic, University of Southampton Sinfonietta and King's College London Symphony Orchestra, as well as music director designate with the New Bristol Sinfonia.

Born in 1987, Jonathan has conducted orchestras internationally and nationally, most notably the **Danish National Symphony Orchestra**, the **Manchester Camerata**, the **Gabrieli Consort**, the **London Sinfonietta**, and the **Orquestra do Algarve**.

In opera, Jonathan has conducted complete staged performances of *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan Tutte* (*Oxford Opera*), *Die Zauberflöte* (*Opera Lyrica, Oxford*), *Anna Bolena* (*Opera Seria, Manchester*), *Oresteia* (*Leeds*), as well as serving as conductor for the RNCM's opera excerpts programme. Equally comfortable in contemporary music, Jonathan conducted the premieres of the operas *Flight Path* by Stephen Kilpatrick and *Amy's Last Dive* by Cheryl Frances-Hoad.

Jonathan has worked and studied with conductors such as **Sir Mark Elder**, **Jac van Steen**, **Elgar Howarth** and **Paul McCreesh**. He has worked with internationally renowned musicians such as **Simon Keenlyside**, **Sarah Conolly**, **Nicholas Daniels** and **Benjamin Frith**.

<http://www.jonathanlo.org/biography.htm>

8) Adam Strickson (Writer/Artistic Advisor)

Adam is a poet, librettist and producer and is currently Teaching Fellow in Creative Writing (.4) at the University of Leeds. He has worked as a performer and maker, and co-founded Chol Theatre, the pioneering inter-cultural company based in Huddersfield.

His first collection of poetry, *An Indian Rug Surprised by Snow*, was published in 2005 by Wrecking Ball Press and he recently won the Yorkshire Prize in the Yorkshire Open Poetry Competition.

Adam regularly collaborates with composers and his opera, *Green Angel*, was premiered in Leeds in January 2011. He was the Director and Librettist for both Wingbeats' Cultural Olympiad performances, 'Flight Paths' and 'Amy's Last Dive'. He is currently Poet in Residence at Trinity Leeds, the largest retail development in Europe in 2013.

9) Rebecca Jenkins (Artistic Director)

Rebecca is an actor, director & arts events manager living on the Yorkshire Wolds, near Driffield. She is Director of Rusticus Theatre Arts who produce family arts events at Sewerby Hall. Other recent projects have included directing the Carriageworks Theatre Academy's summer production, Event Manager of the Flying Day at Sewerby Hall in July 2011 for Wingbeats, and co-directing the 2012 Beverley Literature Festival with Lara Goodband.

As a West End Actor, Rebecca's professional credits include William Shakespeare's 'As You Like It' with Sienna Miller at The Wyndhams Theatre, London and an award-winning production of 'Sweeney Todd' at the New Ambassadors Theatre & Trafalgar Studios London, and most recently, Craig Revel Horwood's production of 'Chess The Musical' at the Princess of Wales Theatre, Toronto

Rebecca is currently working with communities in Stamford Bridge and Driffield in developing public art as part of the Passing Places Project, along the Sustrans managed Way of the Roses Cycle Route from Morecambe to Bridlington.

10) Edward Caine (Choir Trainer)

Edward Caine is a Composer, Pianist and Conductor currently based in York, where he has just completed his doctorate in musical composition. Edd has an ongoing relationship with Wingbeats, Adam Strickson and Cheryl Frances-Hoad: he first performed for Adam's opera *Green Angel*; wrote the song cycle *Spitfire Irene* for the Wingbeats Festival in 2011 and was editor, rehearsal and ensemble pianist for the Wingbeats opera *Amy's Last Dive* in 2012.

Edd has worked as a choral conductor and singer for over 10 years, including creating "Vanbrugh Music", "Sicut Sol", Chimera Ensemble, and as a bass singer for The 24, YoMAMA, Medieval Music Society, Chechelele, University of York Choir, Durham Chamber Choir, Grey College Choir and Joint Quaker School events. As a pianist he has repetiteured and accompanied a variety of productions including Wingbeats, York Opera, The York Gilbert & Sullivan Society, Operagasmic, Viriditas Opera, Singlive, The 24, Vanbrugh Music.

As a composer, Edd's music has been performed nationally and internationally by both professional and amateur musicians and he has been the recipient of several high profile awards including the Sir Jack Lyons Celebration Award, the Sound and Music/HCMF Professional Development Scheme 2010, the Sound and Music/Cheltenham Festival Comission 2011 and the SPNM/SAM Shortlist 2008-2011. Recently his orchestral piece R'lyeh has been selected for the Opera North/DARE New Composer's Forum.

<http://www.edwardcaine.com/>

