



COOPER HALL

A CREATIVE HAVEN





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“Welcome to our Creative Haven”

Morag McLaren Creative Director

MORE ABOUT COOPER HALL

Established in 2012, as an inter-disciplinary art space Cooper Hall hosts an eclectic programme of events throughout the year from Jazz to Opera, Classical to Folk, Cabaret to Comedy and In-House Productions.

In 2020, a Cooper Hall Talks programme was launched, which will encompass a broad range of topics and discussions with experts in their field and will continue to expand to include pre-concert chats with performers before live events.

The Cooper Hall Foundation is committed to celebrating diversity and cross genre performances particularly from emerging artists who are at the forefront of what is happening in the contemporary music scene.

As a Charitable Trust (Registered Charity No. 1151565) a key aim is to provide a local audience with the unique opportunity of experiencing work of the highest quality,

and in order to make events affordable, seat prices are often subsidized by the Foundation.

Each November cellist and composer Gregor Riddell curates a concert to celebrate St Cecilia, The Patron Saint of Music. Her symbolism resonates throughout the space – her image shapes our gallery window and her lyre our foundation's logo.

"A warm welcome awaits at Cooper Hall whether you are attending one of our events, participating in a workshop or hiring the hall for rehearsal or recording."

Fay Goodridge, Associate Director

We hope to see you at Cooper Hall soon!



MORE ABOUT COOPER HALL

Cooper Hall is filled with light during the day and can be transformed with full blackout and theatre lighting. A rear terrace overlooks the sculpture garden and the whole site is surrounded by woodland. A bright acoustic, a Steinway B Grand Piano and contemporary artwork complete the décor of this intimate performance space.



“I hope Cooper Hall creates a peaceful space that inspires, recuperates and refreshes. The creative process thrives in an environment where there is freedom to experiment, discover, take risks and play – without harsh judgement.”

Morag McLaren
Creative Director

“Cooper Hall is a place especially dear to my heart. Firstly, it is owned and run by dear friends who gave me the special honour and privilege to choose the beautiful Steinway that lives there and which makes performing there a true pleasure. Then there are the always warm and welcoming audiences who share this wonderfully intimate space and truly are part of the whole experience – as performers we can feel an immediate connection with them, which in music-making is vital and really what it is all about. I have been lucky enough to

perform there not only as a solo artist (unusually for me), but also in my usual occupation as song accompanist with two leading lights of the singing world – Dame Felicity Lott and Sir Willard White, and the relaxed environment and hugely enthusiastic listeners made these two concerts especially memorable occasions. Cooper Hall is a magic venue and I can’t wait to return.”

Eugene Asti. Steinway Artist.



Left to Right:
Eugene Asti, Morag McLaren,
Sir Willard White, Martin Dimery

MEET THE TEAM



MORAG MCLAREN Creative Director & Chair of Trustees



PERFORMER | EDUCATOR | DIRECTOR | FACILITATOR

Morag McLaren has enjoyed a rich and varied performing career spanning Opera, West End, Physical Theatre and Improvisation. She has also devised, produced and performed a variety of one-woman shows. As the Creative Director of The Cooper Hall Foundation Morag has a passion for sharing her skills, connections and professional experience.

After gaining a degree in Education, she completed a 4-year opera performance training at The Royal Northern College of Music. As a mature student, she went on to achieve an MA in Performance, Health and Personal Development. This course included in-depth study of Performance Psychology, and the Creative Process which defines her education work today.

Morag is a founder member of Impropera, a company that performs improvised opera. She is also co-founder of and regular tutor for Vox Integra, a provider of specialised career development courses for students and professionals in the vocal arts in the UK and Europe.

As an Educator, Morag specialises in freeing the voice and personal creativity through Emotional Expression and Physicality. She has worked with students from the Guildhall School of Music, Trinity Laban Conservatoire, London, London College of Music and provides a key element to the Iford New Generation Artists Programme as part of their pre-production development and education process.

Morag has directed 3 professional operas at Cooper Hall – *Turn of the Screw*, *Hansel and Gretel* and *Così fan Tutte*, in collaboration with Bath Philharmonia as well as directing *Dido and Aeneas* for London College of Music.

Morag donates the proceeds of any personal performance events to support the work of Frome Festival, of which she is Patron; Dorothy House Hospice Care and Fair Frome.

... she also likes
cleaning floors!





FAY GOODRIDGE

"... Brilliant! Thanks so much Fay. We've had a great start to the campaign and a large part of that is down to you and your hospitality..."

Oli Powell, Production Manager,
Robert Plant And The
Sensational Shape Shifters

Associate Director and Trustee, Fay Goodridge has worked alongside Morag McLaren since the creation of The Cooper Hall Foundation. A creative small business owner for over 30 years, Fay also founded The LIST Frome magazine which still thrives and prospers in the town today under new ownership. She now ensures the smooth day to day running of Cooper Hall ... looking after the administration, branding, marketing and publicity, and she is generally the first point of contact. Fay has a particular interest in Jazz and Folk music and brings her knowledge to sourcing and co-programming these artists. Happy to turn her hand to almost anything, she works as Front of House Manager, Production Manager for in-house performances: hosts the hiring of Cooper Hall and adapts to pretty much anything asked of her – as one of our artists once said, *"Fay Can Do That!"*

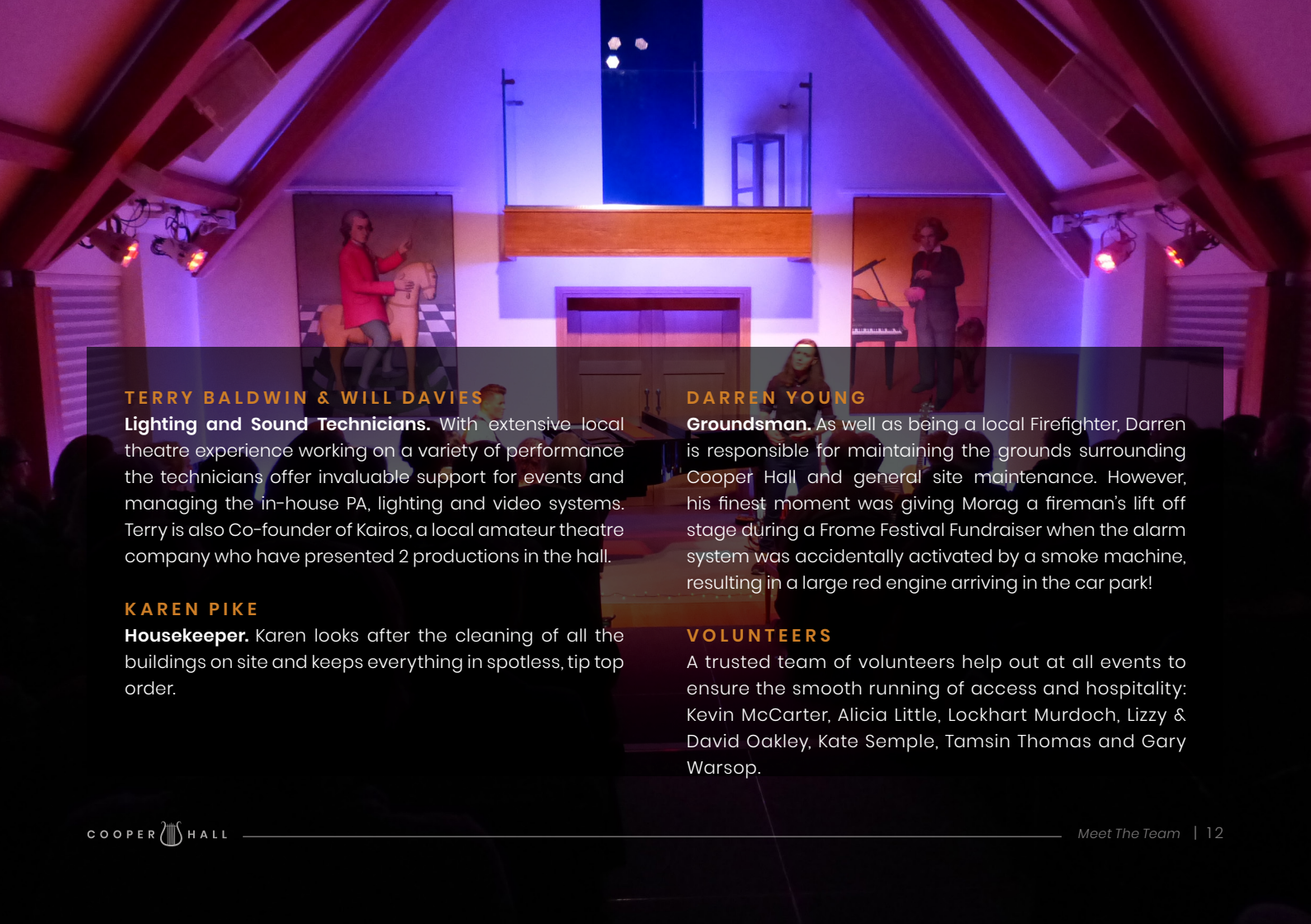


TORUN SÆTER STAVSENG

Chamber Music Consultant and Trustee Torun Sæter Stavseng is a Norwegian cellist with diverse musical interests active as a soloist, chamber musician, orchestral leader and teacher. In 2010 she was awarded the Swedish Royal Academy of Music honorary prize after her debut in Britten's Cello Symphony with Stockholm Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. In the same year she was awarded the Young Swedish Soloist prize and offered the principal cellist position of Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra.

Torun has formed various ensembles with a broad span of repertoire including Duo TÖ with Swedish pianist Anna Christensson, Tre Voci alongside cellists/composers Gregor Riddell and Colin Alexander and TrioTaus with close long-term friends, violinist Liv Hilde Klock and violist Ida Bryhn. She is a member of Cikada Contemporary Ensemble and creative director of KRANTZ Chamber Music Series.

As an orchestral leader she has worked with Royal Opera Stockholm, Norwegian Radio Orchestra and Norwegian Chamber Orchestra. She is currently teaching cello at the Arctic Conservatory of Music Tromsø (Norway) and plays a cello by Matteo Goffriller (1725) on generous loan from Dextra Musica/ Sparebankstiftelsen. Torun is currently Principal Cello with Aurora Orchestra and Oslo Philharmonic.

The background image shows the interior of Cooper Hall, a theatre space with a high, vaulted wooden ceiling and exposed beams. The stage is lit with blue and purple lights. On the left, a man in a red jacket is on stage, and on the right, a woman in a dark dress is standing near a piano. The audience is visible in the foreground, mostly in silhouette.

TERRY BALDWIN & WILL DAVIES

Lighting and Sound Technicians. With extensive local theatre experience working on a variety of performance the technicians offer invaluable support for events and managing the in-house PA, lighting and video systems. Terry is also Co-founder of Kairos, a local amateur theatre company who have presented 2 productions in the hall.

KAREN PIKE

Housekeeper. Karen looks after the cleaning of all the buildings on site and keeps everything in spotless, tip top order.

DARREN YOUNG

Groundsman. As well as being a local Firefighter, Darren is responsible for maintaining the grounds surrounding Cooper Hall and general site maintenance. However, his finest moment was giving Morag a fireman's lift off stage during a Frome Festival Fundraiser when the alarm system was accidentally activated by a smoke machine, resulting in a large red engine arriving in the car park!

VOLUNTEERS

A trusted team of volunteers help out at all events to ensure the smooth running of access and hospitality: Kevin McCarter, Alicia Little, Lockhart Murdoch, Lizzy & David Oakley, Kate Semple, Tamsin Thomas and Gary Warsop.



"Cooper Hall is a beautifully modern, theatre/arts space. A treasure to find and a huge boost to the Frome community. Stunningly and thoughtfully designed to be adaptable for different productions, performances, events and classes. Morag and Fay go out of their way to welcome their guests and involve them in the event that is taking place. Thank you! Looking forward to returning again and again."

Ruth G

BUILDING THE HALL

"I never expected Cooper Hall to develop the way it has; to become such a unique space for such versatile use. Its beginnings started as an entertainment annex for the family of Selwood Manor – it was not meant to be."

After 30 years in the business, I have learned that nothing is cast in stone, and sometimes projects evolve to their own level. I have always felt that colour, light, lighting and detail are the key factors to look and ambience. This, I am told, has been achieved, and I hope people will continue to enjoy the space, whatever the event."

Jonathan Cooper

Designer/Project Manager & Trustee

THE GROUNDS

"In terms of restoration, definitive is always an uneasy word, it seems always to carry a prerequisite, something that leaves no room for a new interpretation. For us to say that the gardens at Selwood Manor are a definitive restoration would be wrong, which is a good thing. For what we have tried to create instead is an environment that reflects, not only Morag's brief in how she wanted the gardens to be, but also an environment around which The Cooper Hall and its ethos of holistic teaching and performance will flourish.

To achieve this has been a great endeavour, made possible only by a fantastic team in many guises. It is from our perspective a little like "Botanical Theatre" – but that's only half the story. Nothing about what we do, nor indeed horticulture itself is ever static. Perhaps this is where the creative in all disciplines interconnect. If no two performances are ever the same, then no two seasons are either. If the gardens here at Selwood reflect that, then perhaps it goes someway to embracing all that Cooper Hall represents as a unique and personal experience, both for those visiting and for all those invited to perform."

Richard Groves Head Gardener



SCULPTURE AT COOPER HALL

The grounds surrounding Cooper Hall are enhanced by the work of local, professional sculptors:

Kate Semple thestonecarvingstudio.org

Ian Marlow marlowsculpture.co.uk

Barry Cooper barrycooperarts.co.uk

Phaedra Politis phaedraglassgifts.co.uk



“It is from our
perspective a little
like *Botanical Theatre*”

Richard Groves, Head Gardener

SUSTAINABILITY AT COOPER HALL

The Cooper Hall Foundation is committed to helping develop and implement sustainable energy initiatives and the grounds have been used as a research centre for designing geo-exchange energy efficient sustainable heating and cooling technology for many years.

Erda Energy's (www.erdenergy.com) patented directional coaxial geo-exchange boreholes, and ground source heat pump technology was first developed and tested in the grounds of Cooper Hall. The original system is still used to heat and cool the buildings and facilities in the Cooper Hall grounds as well as providing a base for continued research and development. To illustrate the impact of this research and development, to date Erda Energy's geo-exchange sustainable energy systems have been installed

in multiple superstores and other buildings, providing heating and cooling, as well as refrigeration optimisation. The impact is proven – superstores use 81% less energy, reduce the store carbon footprint by 67% and result in an average cost saving of 25% for store heating and cooling. Erda Energy geo-exchange heating and cooling systems are now being designed for University campuses, housing scheme developments, healthcare facilities, airports and smaller supermarket applications.

The research at Cooper Hall is now being focused on Machine Learning Technology for managing industrial borehole geo-exchange systems, hybridisation of ground-sourced heat pumps with other technology such as solar power and borehole technology improvements.

EVENTS AT COOPER HALL

Cooper Hall aims to provide diverse, accessible, and affordable high-quality events. The programming covers a broad range of musical genres; educational workshops for all abilities; talks and specialist presentations on a variety of topics. The space is also hired for filming, recording and rehearsing.

COOPER HALL

Sanskriti Shrestha

Events at Cooper Hall | 18



Lady Maisery



Alex Stuart



Elena Kiseleva & Anna Hashimoto



Cevanne



COOPER HALL

Erikka Maalismaa, Anna Christensson & Torun Stavseng



Pee Wee Ellis



Neil Cowley



Events at Cooper Hall | 19

Birdworld



John Shirley Quirk



Clare Hammond



Tamsin Whaley-Cohen & Huw Watkins



Siobhan Miller



COOPER HALL

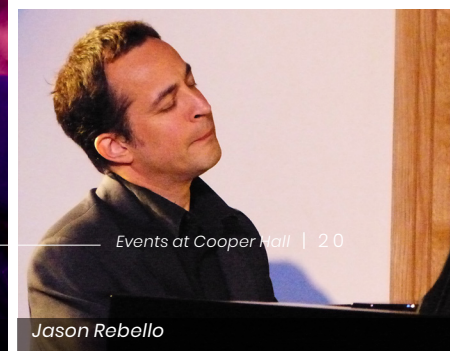
Galya Bisengalieva



Laura Jurd



David Owen Norris



Jason Rebello

Events at Cooper Hall | 20



Iain Ballamy & John Law



Gregor Riddell



Principal Players Aurora Orchestra



COOPER HALL

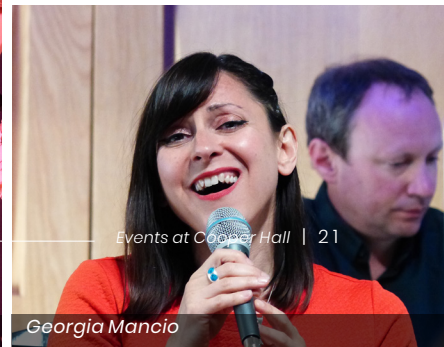
O'Hooley & Tidow



Cara Dillon



Corrie Dick




Georgia Mancio

Events at Cooper Hall | 21

EDUCATION & WORKSHOPS

"I was pushed outside of my comfort zone, but in a really supportive environment which was ideal. The mini Masterclasses were fabulous as we could learn from others and watch Morag work in detail."

"The workshop far exceeded my expectations and I enjoyed it thoroughly. I feel I left with a renewed passion for performing as well as with many new tools to help me access and explore my creative abilities."



Cooper Hall run a series of one-day vocal workshops throughout the year from small groups of up to 8 solo participants with Morag McLaren to larger community projects for a maximum of 40 singers run by invited tutors who are specialists in their field. To date, these have included, *A Taste Of African Singing*, *a Gospel Workshop*, *Choral Singing* and *Finding Your Voice*. The Cooper Hall workshop programme is constantly expanding and evolving.

"I would like to say a massive thank you so much for the invitation and your superb hospitality at yesterday's workshop. I had a really great time with you all. What was really touching was when some of the workshop participants personally thanked me and told me how much the songs / music had impacted them. Absolutely fabulous."

Daniel Thomas, Leader Of A Gospel Singing Workshop

RESIDENCIES

The Cooper Hall Foundation provide professional development opportunities via a regular programme of small-scale residencies for individuals, ensembles and professional, creative teams. Throughout 2020-21 the residency programme continued to expand in a Covid-secure environment in order to help support creative projects during these difficult, restricted times.

Artists are invited to use the hall and grounds to germinate new ideas or continue work-in-progress. If required, Creative Director, Morag McLaren donates her skills as Facilitator, Educator, and Director and Workshop Leader.



RESIDENCY AWARDS TO DATE INCLUDE:

- Iford Arts New Generation Artists Programme
- Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance
- Donna Lennard and Andrew Geffré-Gardiner, Dancer. Society of Strays
- Daisy Brown, Soprano
- Salon Music
- Innocent Masuku, Tenor
- Rosie Middleton, Mezzo Soprano
- Fiona Finsbury, Soprano, *La Voix Humaine*
- Hesta Banks
- Troupe Collective
- Salon Music

"I feel far less inhibited in performance and find it easier to give myself permission to "just go for it" and try things out ... I felt like we created a genuinely safe space within our group ... thank you for facilitating that because it enabled me to really grow and challenge myself in ways that I have not felt safe enough to do before."

Anna Marmion

COLLABORATIONS

The Cooper Hall Foundation has initiated several creative, professional, collaborations and donates the use of the Hall and Foundation team to facilitate the development of new projects with invited individuals and professional companies.

COLLABORATIONS TO DATE INCLUDE:

- Bath Philharmonia, Turn of the Screw, Hansel and Gretel
Cosi Fan Tutte
- Iford Arts, New Generation Artists Programme (IANGA)
- Robert Marsden, Director, Weekend In The Country



Angharad Lyddon and Oliver Gooch

"We are very proud of our fruitful collaboration with Cooper Hall, indeed it forms an integral part of our New Generation Artists programme. Through her innovative workshops, Morag creates a rich, immersive working environment in which the singers are able to explore and develop their dramatic creativity. They are stimulated, challenged, empowered and supported throughout and, as a result, they leave Cooper Hall not only with improved confidence but with a wealth of new skills which inform their practice and enrich their performance."

Oliver Gooch Artistic Director, Iford Arts.

BURSARIES

The Cooper Hall Foundation offers small bursary awards to individual artists and groups in the form of financial support or donated use of the hall, facilities and personnel support to develop a particular creative project.

BURSARIES TO DATE INCLUDE:

- Erin Alexander, Soprano
- Georgia Ashford Miller, Student
- Astrid Bishop, Musical Theatre Student
- Jetsam, Contemporary Music Collective
- Alejandro López Montoya, Baritone
- Helen Ottaway, Staged Productions
- Aaron Veness, Stage Management
- Iain Ballamy & Jason Rebello Lockdown Live Streaming
- Hesta Banks
- Kairos Theatre Company, *By Jeeves*, and *It Shoulda Bin You*



Erin Alexander

“Without the support I have received from Cooper Hall I would never have had the confidence to promote myself so actively in this competitive industry, and push my creative boundaries every step of the way. It is this continued support and mentoring that has made me a more generous, more daring, and more exciting performer”

Erin Alexander

SPONSORED PROJECTS

Selected events are subsidised by the Cooper Hall Foundation in order to bring high quality performance from International calibre artists to a local audience, raise money for local charities, and support professional creative development.

- Aurora Orchestra
- Bath Philharmonia
- Salon Music
- Dame Felicity Lott Recital
- Sir Willard White Recital

In addition, other initiatives supporting the work of performing artists have received donations from The Cooper Hall Foundation:

- The Cherubim Trust
- Jackdaws, Maureen Lehane Vocal Awards
- Pegasus Opera Company
- Vox Integra



Aurora

SPONSORED PRODUCTIONS

The Cooper Hall Foundation sponsors both in-house and external productions. In her role as Patron of Frome Festival, Cooper Hall Creative Director Morag McLaren promotes and presents fundraising events during the Festival and throughout the year.

- Così Fan Tutte
- Give Music
- Hansel and Gretel
- Not On The Buses with Rare Species
- Opera Up Close
- Pants
- Weekend In the Country



Rehearsal Weekend In the Country



Chloe Pardoe, Ianga



Trinity Laban Students



Keith Pun, Ianga



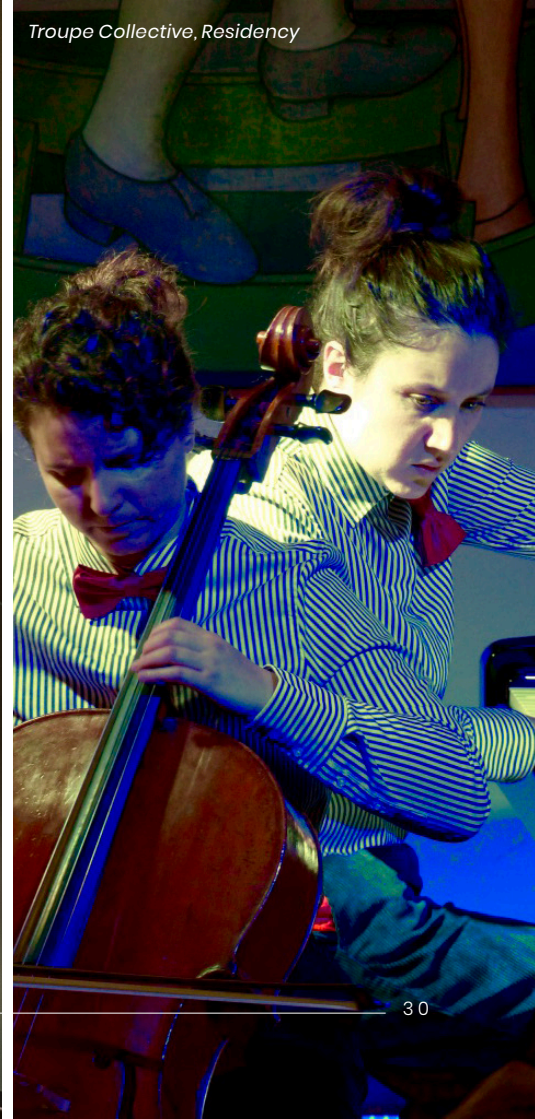
Robert Marsden, Weekend in the Country



Morag McLaren & Rosa Mannion, Ianga



Linda Kitchen, Director, Pants





Jason Thornton, Musical Director, Bath Philharmonia



Bath Philharmonia Ensemble



Dame Felicity Lott, Recital



Mary Hegarty, Nerys Hughes, Pants



Hansel & Gretel Cast



Donna Lennard Cosi Fan Tutte



OPERA AT COOPER HALL

In 2012 Morag McLaren led her first workshop at Cooper Hall for emerging artists and presented a selection of Opera Scenes to an invited audience.

Between 2013-2015 a collaboration with Bath Philharmonia was developed and Morag directed three in-house productions with young, professional singers – *Turn Of The Screw*, *Hansel and Gretel* and *Così Fan Tutte*.

Cooper Hall has also hosted recitals by internationally acclaimed opera singers Dame Felicity Lott and Sir Willard White as Charity Fundraisers.

"Yesterday evening was one of the greatest intimate opera experiences that Gaye and I have ever enjoyed. The orchestra was superb – such clarity. Never for one moment did I feel that I missed the full sound of a 'big' orchestra. The singers were very, very, good and their ensemble (with orchestra) was impeccable. Above all the drama worked: wit, humour, pathos, poignancy. All performed with an undercurrent of barely restrained eroticism. And as for the ending. Poor Fiordiligi – brilliant!"

Gabrielle & Richard Jelly – Così Fan Tutte



TURN OF THE SCREW

Sarah Forbes



HANSEL & GRETEL

Catherine Carter



COSI' FAN TUTTE

Joe Corbett



COOPER HALL

Catrin Elenid Lewis & Daisy Brown



Joanne Watson & Rosie Clifford



Opera at Cooper Hall | 33

Eve Daniel & Ailsa Mainwaring

COOPER HALL OPERA CLUB

Cooper Hall Opera Club (CHOC) started in 2015 and evolved from pre-opera talks given by Ash Khandekar, Editor of Opera Now magazine. Ash continues to support CHOC and generally hosts events when he can.

Combined with the insightful knowledge of pianist David Price and Morag's ability to source and coach the singers, CHOC takes an informative yet informal approach to presenting opera.

"Just a quick line to say how very much I enjoyed the evening on Thursday! I've been an opera lover for the last 40 odd years, so it was a real treat to hear the wonderful voices and to have an insight into the preparation behind the scenes. Looking forward to the next evening!"

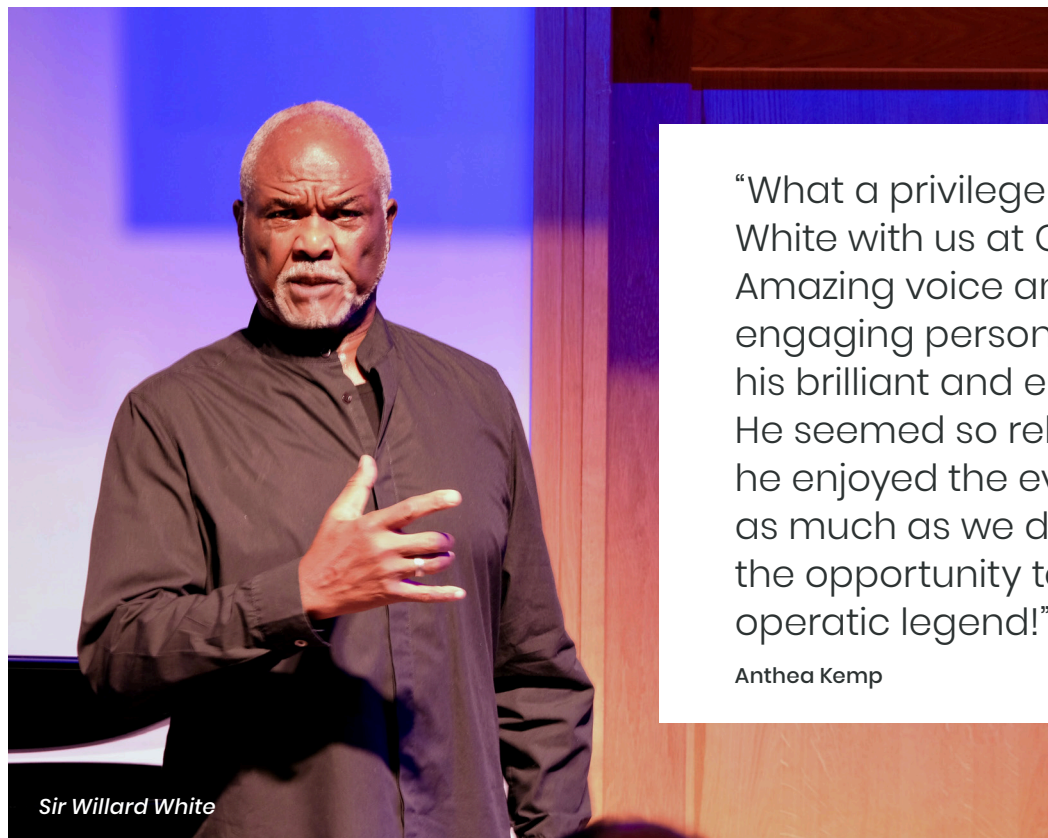
Jane Read



Ash Khandekar



Daisy Brown and willing members of CHOC



Sir Willard White

“What a privilege to have Willard White with us at Cooper Hall! Amazing voice and such an engaging personality, also Eugene his brilliant and empathetic pianist. He seemed so relaxed so I hope he enjoyed the evening almost as much as we did. Thank you, for the opportunity to hear such an operatic legend!”

Anthea Kemp



"This is a magical intimate venue that holds around 100 people. The acoustics are fabulous & the venue boasts a very lovely Steinway grand piano. If you get a chance to see a show here don't hesitate."

Gary B



CLIMATE CHANGE ALTERNATIVE ENERGY




In 2020 Cooper Hall launched its Talks programme with a debate between Juliet Davenport, CEO of Good Energy and Frome Festival Director and Green Party Councillor, Martin Dimery as the first of an ongoing series of talks around the subject of sustainability.

A talk recorded during the Covid pandemic between Aidan Lang, General Director of Welsh National Opera and Martin Dimery kicked off the first of a planned series of opera talks.

SUSTAINABILITY TIDAL LAGOON PROJECT

CHARITY AT COOPER HALL



The Cooper Hall Foundation is a Registered Charity No' 115156. The charity is committed to regularly supporting and providing education, professional development and performance opportunities for emerging artists combined with hosting high quality performance at an affordable price to the local community.

Morag McLaren in her role as Patron of Frome Festival donates the proceeds of an annual fundraiser to support the ongoing success of the town's largest annual event.

The Cooper Hall Foundation have hosted benefit events to support the work of The Dorothy House Hospice, Fair Frome and Frome Selwood Rotary Club.



HIRE COOPER HALL

SCOPE

Cooper Hall lends itself to a broad range of artistic and educational pursuits, to include:

PERFORMANCE & PRESENTATION

Acoustic
Cabaret
Chamber Music
Dance
Electronic & Contemporary Music
Fusion
Jazz
Meetings
Musical Theatre
Opera
Recital
World
Poetry/Spoken Word
Talks
Book Launch

EDUCATION

Collaborative projects
Conference
Exhibition
Lectures
Master-classes
Research & Development
Seminars
Workshops



RECORDING & REHEARSAL

Cooper Hall is hired as a live recording space with a bright acoustic and a beautiful Steinway B Grand Piano. The scope for recording is broad.

With views straight out across the rear terrace and garden the environment is conducive to nurturing creative projects and provides spaces to relax between recording sessions. There is a small, self-contained cottage which sleeps up to 4 available to hire on site. Cooper Hall is about a mile from Frome where there are excellent local shops, cafes and restaurants.

We highly recommend a site visit if you are interested in hiring Cooper Hall. Please contact Fay Goodridge via email info@cooperhall.org who will happily show you around and give you further information.

"It's been a joy to watch and support so many creative projects come to life." **Fay Goodridge.**



"It really is a luxury to be able to use Cooper Hall to record in. It's such a serene and atmospheric space and to top it off has one of the finest Steinway B Grand Pianos I've ever had the joy to play."

Sam Lakeman



Ethan Johns & The Black Eyed Dogs

RECORDINGS MADE AT COOPER HALL:

BBC RADIO 3 Jazz Now – Laura Jurd and Dinosaur

Birdworld – UNDA

Cara Dillon – Wanderer

Coven (O’Hooley and Tidow, Lady Maisery and Grace Petrie) – EP

David Owen Norris – The Jupiter Project, Hyperion

Elizabeth Kenny – Ars Longa, Linn Records

Ian Shaw, Iain Ballamy, Jamie Safir – What’s New

Neil Cowley Trio – Spacebound Apes

Quercus June Tabor, Iain Ballamy, Huw Warren – Nightfall

Wendy Hiscocks, Susan Bickley, Christopher Gillet

– SONG Arthur Benjamin & Edgar Bainton

Filmed at Cooper Hall:

Perplexed Music. Mark and Paul McGann

Cara Dillon & Sam Lakeman Live at Cooper Hall

CONTACT

DIRECTIONS & ACCESSIBILITY

The entrance to Cooper Hall is adjacent to the main drive of Selwood Manor. There is ample parking immediately in front of the hall. Please contact us prior to an event if you require disabled access and we will reserve a parking space next to the pathway and a wheelchair space with additional seat for a companion in the hall.

KEEP IN TOUCH

Cooper Hall send out a regular, monthly newsletter to subscribers. Be the first to know about upcoming events and receive priority booking and invitations to special previews and presentations. Sign up via our website cooperhall.org

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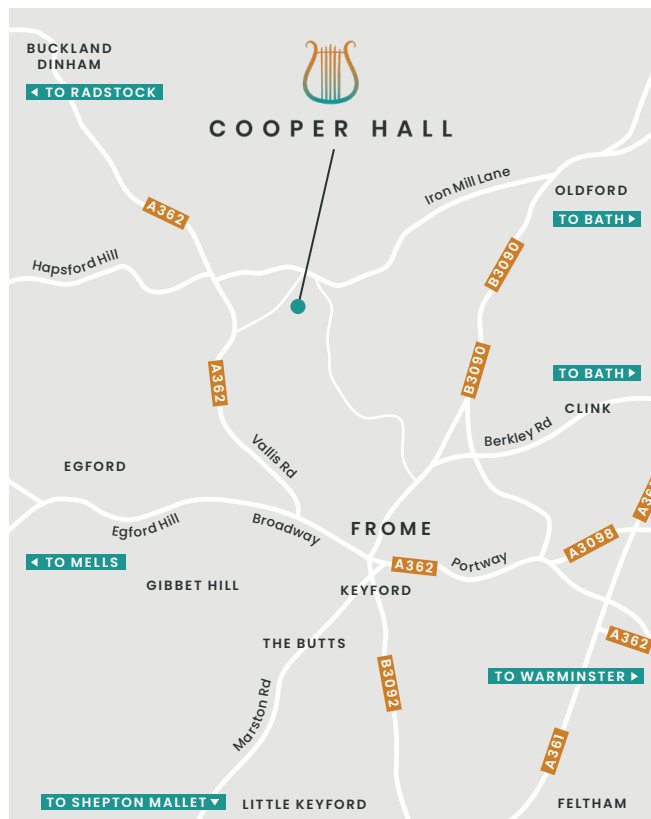


Photo credits: Fay Goodridge, Lucy Hunter, Kevin McCarter, Lockhart Murdoch, Hugh Riddell.



"Snuggled into the gorgeous countryside just outside Frome, Cooper Hall is a beautiful space where a whole range of musical events and learning experiences take place. The owners are friendly and out-going, the standards are high, and the atmosphere is both warm and exciting."

Suzanne, Frome



cooperhall.org