# OVERSPILL

**Rising seas, maps redrawn, an island rendered.**
**The decision to set sail.**

Fat Lady Opera presents OVERSPILL
An environmentally charged programme of operatic response to the ancient megaflood and current challenges facing local insect biodiversity and bird life.

## Sat 7 Nov 2026
## 3pm & 6.30pm
## Harbour Church, Folkestone

## PROGRAMME

First Drop - Ira Jones
Can I Find You? - Oakley Hogben
Flight Paths - Rishank Lahkar
Noye's Fludde - Benjamin Britten

Running time approx 1hr 15m. No interval

*No one leaves home unless home is the mouth of a shark...*
*No one puts their children in a boat unless the water is safer than the land.* **Warsan Shire**

# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

OVERSPILL began with a series of questions:

- What does it take to leave home with no certainty of safe passage?
- Can connection with deep time landscape heritage give us useful ways of thinking about current climate challenges?
- How is Kent's insect life responding to rising sea levels?
- Most of all.... **DO WE NEED A BIGGER BOAT?**

It was against this back drop of inquiry that the idea to stage a new production of Benjamin Britten's Noye's Fludde arose. A large scale community performance inspired by the deep time history of our local coastline, that would invite people out into the landscape to examine, consider, observe and respond to the complex biodiversity and unique geology of the area.

We have chosen to orient our flood response rescue towards six at-risk insect populations that are local to the Kent coast, and to respond to the miracle play aspects of the work by acknowledging consequence and championing kinship rather than wrathful judgement.

As part of the operatic process we have spent time gazing into our green and chalky spaces, thinking about the incredible perspectives and fragility of small creatures and visiting new water thresholds.

Some of us also got our feet wet in the rising tide.

We hope you enjoy this site responsive and collaborative approach to the making of a community opera.



# DO WE NEED A BIGGER BOAT?

Pictures from children across Kent who responded to a call for new designs for a rescue ark made out of something that might float.



































# CONDUCTOR'S NOTE

As musical director, the most moving element of conducting Noye's Fludde (the first time for me) is the way its intrinsic message is reflected in the music-making and the very act of performing it. In the biblical story, Noah cannot build the ark, gather the animals and save his family on his own. The task involves bringing together different creatures and people, each with a place within the larger undertaking. Britten creates something similar musically. His ingenious scoring brings together professional musicians, amateurs and children, each with their own contribution to make to create something that none could achieve alone. The different instruments (standard classical ones to unconventional ones like slung mugs/tins, wind machine and even sandpaper) and levels of experience are not obstacles to overcome, but essential elements of the work's character. Some parts are technically demanding, others simple enough that a child who only started learning the violin a few months ago can play. But the music depends on the layering and contribution of all working together. Incredibly to me, Britten refused to dumb down the music to achieve his goal. Sophisticated yet accessible, for performers and audience alike, the sound world is deeply pictorial and expressive in an inclusively crafted way. We do not simply tell a story about cooperation, community and hope: we experience those things ourselves through collective music making. When the audience joins in the hymns right from the very start of the opera, we are reminded that it is not a story simply told to us, but an experience we are all sharing. I don't know of any other work which enables the musical director not only to bring a score to life, but in doing so to enable an entire community to discover what it can achieve together.



# CHOREOGRAPHER'S NOTE

Throughout this process, the creative team researched the six insects, observing their behaviour and identifying the key characteristics that we could bring to life within the performance. We translated these observations into dance, exploring how the insects move, interact and respond to their surroundings.

We also explored the different clans and Noah's extended family, embodying their characters alongside the natural forces of rising water and the power of the storm.

For the ravens and the dove, we experimented with the idea of moving as one. The ravens became a large, unified flock, with each dancer bringing their own interpretation to the collective, creating the impression of birds flying across the church.

As a community dance project, it has been wonderful to see everyone come together, bringing their individual passions, creativity and joy to the process. Each dancer has contributed something unique, helping us bring the characters and the world of the story to life with a wider team of artists, collaborators & performers.



# YOUNG COMPOSERS' PROGRAMME NOTES

**Ira Jones - First Drop** This three-part choral piece was composed as an exploration of our collective community response to the future threat of rising sea levels, extreme weather, and flooding, whilst also reflecting on how we come to terms with events beyond our control.

I wanted the music to enhance the words in the poem and bring it to life. I did this through the use of contrasting dynamics to emphasise the emotional phrasing, creating tension, release and mirroring the unpredictable force of the flood. I also explored different vocal sounds to create effects of sea and wind, which can be heard clearly in the opening and closing bars.

Writing for voices is quite different from writing for instruments. I had to think more carefully about the range, breathing, how the words and phrases might be sung, and how lyrical content might be interpreted through the musical treatment. I wanted to make sure that my musical ideas supported the lyrics rather than taking attention away from them.

**Oakley Hogben** - ***Can I Find You?*** Approaching this commission, I was inspired by the idea of searching, and how, for some, that journey does not have a final destination. I wanted to draw on the notion of a lifetime of longing and the elusiveness of a place of refuge.

I chose to write for the piano as I felt that its inherent duality, between soft singing melodies and hard percussive sounds, echoed the yearning for comfort against the reality of discomfort experienced on a journey that is never over despite moments of apparent destination.

This idea of unresolved movement is heard through the application of polyrhythms and textural shifts. However I don't believe that the question "Can I find you?" is definitively answered by the end of the piece. I wanted to reflect our common experience, so cadence differs slightly the second time around to demonstrate how the journey may differ, but the spirit remains in yearning.

**Rishank Lahkar**- ***Flight Paths*** is a piece that explores the life of bees - starting at a moment of sun shine which is represented by the short motif played by the cellos at the beginning of the work. The piece creates an atmosphere of abundance and community, aiming to represent the "waggle dance" that bees perform to signal where food is. The piece later emphasises the arrival of the queen bee through a momentary shift in the harmonic structure - highlighting her importance in the hierarchy of the community. Eventually, as the queen bee dies, the music rhythmically dismantles, highlighting the disarray in the remaining colony. The music simplifies harmonically, and also aims to mimic the substrate vibrations (mechanical waves) that bees create when they feel fear (through the use of plucked strings). Eventually, the strings reduce to a quiet, pianissimo, sound, with the sun motif returning at the end, alluding to the importance of the protection of these communities as well as the maintenance of biodiversity as a whole.













# OVERSPILL CREATIVE & PRODUCTION TEAM

Director - Tania Holland
Conductor - Floriane Peycelon
Choreographer - Michaela Cisarikovà
Designer & SM - Michael Gallager
Film Maker - George Perez
Costume - Michèle Rowland
Producer - Naomi Rosser
Project Manager - Kate Love
Production Manager - Simon Foster
DSM - Wendy Fitt
SM Assistant - Beatrice Graham
AV Technician - Matt Pearson
Repetiteur - Edward Greenhalgh
Photographer - Point of View Photography

## CAST

**NOYE**
Simon Thorpe

**NORA**
Linda Hirst

**THE VOICE**
Teresa Gallagher

### IMMEDIATE FAMILY

**THE SEMS**
Friesia Schuil
Emily Wrigley
Angela Turner

**THE HAMS**
Juliet Pedrazas
Julia Noakes

**THE JAFFETTS**
Ellie Russell
William Sangster Moris

### GOTTSIBBS RIGGERS & SALTS

Juliet Alderdice
Kate Love
Patti Pike
Vanessa Rose
Tanner
Henry Uniacke

Sue Burrows
Nikki Carter
Erendira Lohikoski
Rita Lee
Tania McDonald
Stella Papi
Catherine Sangster
Karen Smith
Bernard Sealy

Sue Childs
Bernie
Cumberland
Maddie Holgate
Eddie Lee
Paul Moran
Kathy Pearce



### MCDC DANCERS

Katrina Binks
George Perez
Chiara Irrera
Lara Skilling

### INSECT HABITATION AND COLONIES

KS2 children from the following primary schools largely in their colony groups:

Byron - Wart Biter Crickets
Seabrook CoE - Dainty Damselflies & Adonis Blue Butterflies
St. Eanswythe's CoE - Shrill Carder Bees
St Peter's CoE - Dover Twist Moths
Warren Wood - Violet Click Beetles

## STOWAWAY CHORUS

Val Allan
John Backwell
Helen Blake
Sue Blakesley
Peter Burns
Janet Coleman
Pat Garlick
Carol Govan
Helen Govier
Trevor Greening
Linda Harris
Peter Holland
Honor Hunt Cooke
Jackie Lawrence
Kate Lawson
Mark Lingham
Denise Martin
Linda Mumford
Wendy Richley
Martin Wood

## ORCHESTRAL PLAYERS

**STRING QUINTET**
1**st Vln.** Antony Dennant
**2nd Vln.** Joanna Saul
**Vla.** Sara Thorpe
**Vlc.** Julie Peat
**Db.** Robert Ferguson

**RECORDERS**
**Tbl. Solo Rec.** Nathan Winter
**Desc. Rec.** Krystyna Creek
**Desc. Rec.** Peter Le Feuvre
**Desc. Rec.** Rosa Smith
**Tbl. Rec.**Alison Chambers
**Tbl. Rec.** Beth Lewsey

**TRUMPETS**
**Tpt.** David Cooper
**Tpt.** Ira Jones
**Tpt.** Amy Hambrook
**Tpt.** John Woodhams

**PERCUSSION**
**Timp.** Ryan Bellas
**Perc. 1** Millie Blunden
**Perc. 2** Rebecca Feldman
**Perc. 3** Charles Gibson
**Perc 4.** Jacob Burvill
**Perc. 5** Jennie Smith
**Perc 6.** Thomas Smith

**HANDBELLS**
Phillip Bedford
Elly Box
Lyn Thisse
Elizabeth Treweeks

**PIANO (Four Hands)**
Helen Crayford
Marianne Kelly

**ORGAN (on Keyboard)**
Oakley Hogben

**RIPIENO STRINGS**
**Vlns**
Rishank Lahkar (FYSO)*
Clare Mackay (FCP)*
Emily Osborn (FYSO)
Sarah Howlett (FCP)
Sarah Montgomery (FYSO)
Madeleine Burgess (FYSO)
Carole Collins-Biggs (FCP)
Peter Sangster (FCP)
Alison White (FCP)
Mariame-Isla Guillochon (FYSO)
Sarah Cooper (FCP)
Aurora Johnston-Mann (FYSO)
**Vla**
Wendy Smith (FCP)
Catherine Langley (FCP)
**Vc**
Adela Hansen (FYSO)
Liam Sutherland (FYSO)
Molly Kemp-Jones (FCP)
Amaari Patel (FYSO)
Isadora Race (FYSO)
**DB**
Serena Woolf
Grace Turner (FYSO)

* FYSO - Folkestone Youth String Orchestra
FCP - Folkestone Community Players

# LEAD PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES

**SIMON THORPE** Simon studied at the Guildhall School of Music and the National Opera Studio and his teacher is Robert Dean. He has sung at the Sydney Opera House, The Royal Opera in London and in France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Singapore and Spain. He also works at English National Opera, Welsh National Opera, Opera North and Scottish Opera and many other quality, smaller opera companies. As a Heldenbaritone his operatic repertoire includes Puccini; Scarpia (Tosca), Michele (Il tabarro), Jack Rance (La fanciula del West), Verdi; Rigoletto, Falstaff, Anckarström (Un ballo in maschera) and Wagner; Wotan, Höllander, Telramund (Lohengrin).

He sings regularly at major venues including the Barbican, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Royal Albert Hall. Particular highlights have included Carmina Burana with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, the Fauré Requiem with the Choir of King's College, Cambridge, Messiah with the Armonico Consort, Elijah at St David's Hall, Cardiff and Mozart. Requiem with the Hallé Orchestra conducted by Stanislaw Skrowacewski.

**LINDA HIRST** Dr. Linda Hirst is Head of Vocal Studies at Trinity Laban. Her 40 year singing career began with Monteverdi, Schutz and John Alldis Choirs in the early 70s. She was a Swingle Singer, then co-founded Electric Phoenix in 79. Both groups toured the world leading to a hugely varied solo career – Beethoven 9 and Berio Recital in the Proms, premieres by Osborne, Weir, Holt, Muldowney, Grange etc, recordings with Pink Floyd, Ivor Cutler, Ligeti, Henze, Cage and Lachenmann and a long love affair with Pierrot Lunaire. Linda's collaboration with Cantata Dramatica began in May 2012 and provides opportunities for students at Trinity Laban to take part in Cantata Dramatica productions.

**TERESA GALLAGHER** Teresa's acting career spans almost 50 years all over the UK and New York in theatre, TV, audio and film. Since 2001 she has worked exclusively in the audio recording industry, voicing countless children's TV animation characters in series such as The Octonauts, Thomas and Friends, Numberblocks, Amazing World of Gumball, Alphablocks .... as well as hundreds of BBC Radio dramas, readings and audiobooks (winning Sunday Times Audiobook of the Year, New York Radio Gold, Audie Gold, British Animation Best Performance). This is her first experience of voicing GOD!

# INSECT SUPER POWERS



**Adonis Blue Butterfly** - in flight their wings create so much static electricity that they can pull pollen towards them through the air. So they don't have to land to pick up food.



**Wart Biter Cricket** - alongside its super charged jump, these Crickets also have razor sharp mandibles, strong enough to chew through snail shells and tough vegetation.



**Shrill Carder Bee** This bee uses its wing beat to create a distinct, high-pitched hum which disorientates predators. It also has an extra long tongue that manages to unlock hidden nectar supplies. Like most bees it has an amazing set of navigation tools including iron oxide in its abdomen that acts like a sort of compass.



**Violet Click Beetle** Alongside its jet powered backflip which gets it back on its feet - The click beetle is a master of living completely off the grid. It spends almost its entire life cycle hidden deep within the hollow, decaying trunks of ancient trees.



**Dainty Damselfly** While they look fragile, damselflies are highly efficient predators. They can control all their four wings separately, so they can hover perfectly, fly backwards or sideways without needing to turn around and execute sudden 180-degree pivots at maximum speed.



**Dover Twist Moth** Moths are masters of camouflage. They can even hide themselves from bat sonar echolocation through tiny paddle shaped scales on their wings that absorb sonar frequencies.

# OVERSPILL THANKS

Byron Primary School
Folkestone Youth String Orchestra
Folkestone Community Players
Harvey Grammar School
MCDC
St Eanswythe's CoE Primary School
St Peter's CoE Primary School
Seabrook CoE Primary School
St Martin's CoE Primary School
Warren Wood Primary School
Shepway Voices

## THE INCREDIBLE WORK OF ALL THE OVERSPILL HANDS, NAVIGATORS & JACKTARS

### HANDS

Nik Carter
Janet Coleman
Jill Henderson
Sarah Howlett
Liz Johannsen
Kate Lawson
George Low
Jo Low
Linda Mumford
Julia Noakes
Liz Thomason
Angela Turner
Marilyn Wheeler

### NAVIGATORS

Sasha Angell*
Joy Angell*
John Garlinge
Nancy Hayward
Suzanne Holloway
Jess Hull*
Gabrielle Lindemann
Ben Millbery
Caroline Moran
Marketa Patelova*
Kim Sheridan
Marianne Taylor
Thomas Tengento*
Marilyn Wheeler*

### JACK TARS

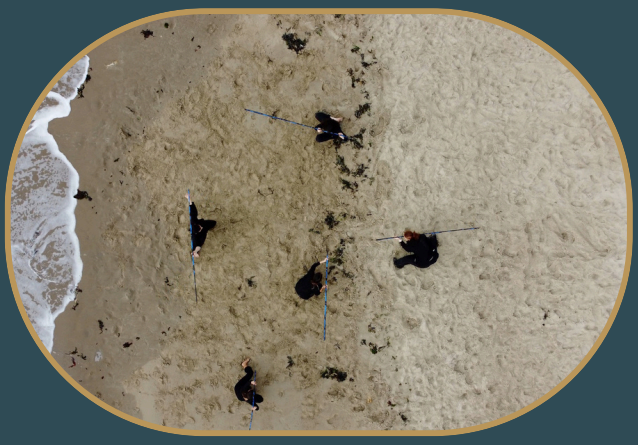
Rosie Clarke
Charles Defreitas
Pete Didier
Helen Govier
Carole Kliger
Jackie Lawrence
Phil Mason
Georgia Mazower
Caroline Moran
Fred Richards
Nicki Stewart
Liz Thomason

NB. Some pioneering people were involved in almost everything.
We have generally only included their names once.
People with asterisks joined us for the filming day.

















## AND ALSO HUGE THANKS TO

Arts Council England and National Lottery
Cross Channel GeoPark
Dover Museum
Folkestone & Hythe District Councillors
Folkestone Fringe
Folkestone New Music
Hythe Town Council
Kent County Council
Kent Downs National Landscape
Kite Spirit
MASC Charity
Roger De Haan Charitable Trust
Sharp & Enright
Sounds Folkestone
SpaceHive
Tower Theatre
Annie Catford
Ian Gordon
Grenville Hancox
Adam Jeanes
Mike Sanders
Matt Shipton
Anthony White
Andrew Ward

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Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

THE ROGER DE HAAN CHARITABLE TRUST

FOLKESTONE NEW MUSIC

sounds folkestone

Folkestone & Hythe District Council

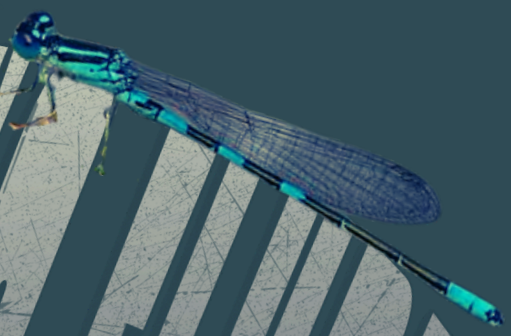
folkestone fringe

GEOPARK AMBASSADOR
CROSS-CHANNEL GEOPARK TRANSMANCHE

MASC

Kent County Council
kent.gov.uk

# WAVE FLIGHT



## DO WE NEED A BIGGER BOAT?

FAT LADY OPERA CIC