

Pickwick is to be released later this month!

*We've been receiving several enquiries about the upcoming release of *Pickwick* and its companion-piece *Cups and Saucers*, so we thought this would be the ideal time to send out a Newsletter reporting on the exciting progress we have made recently.*

Release of *Pickwick* and *Cups and Saucers*

We're delighted to announce that our recording of *Pickwick* and *Cups and Saucers* will be released later this month! The CDs will be delivered to us in the next few days, after which they'll be sent out in stages, first to Patrons, Life Members and Retrospect Friends; then to our overseas supporters; and then to our UK supporters.

The staged release is to spread the load of posting the pleasingly high number of mailings, and mindful that post sent to our overseas supporters will take several days longer than that within the UK.

The CD will be launched on 24 February at the Wordsworth Winter School at Rydal Hall in the Lake District. The Winter School is an annual conference on the poetry of William Wordsworth, and a number of attendees last year became *Pickwick* subscribers. As most of them are attending this year's event too, we're using the occasion to give them their copies of the CD in person. All are welcome, not just subscribers, and the event begins at 5.30.

To whet your appetite between now and receiving your copy, here's an exclusive look

at the wonderful cover design by Leigh-Anne Patsais!



Cover design of *Pickwick*

*You can hear five charming excerpts from *Pickwick* and *Cups and Saucers*, including *Pickwick*'s 'The Baker-Roll', in our **Online Listening Rooms**:*

http://www.retrospectopera.org.uk/Listening_Rooms.html

*Don't forget that our Listening Rooms also include excerpts from *Raymond and Agnes*, recorded live in concert in October 2015. Plenty of delightful music to listen to!*

Cast of *Raymond and Agnes*

We have some fantastic singers lined up for our recording of *Raymond and Agnes*, to be conducted later this year by the illustrious Richard Bonyngé:

- Mark Milhofer as Raymond
- Sally Silver as Agnes
- Andrew Greenan as the Baron
- Quentin Hayes as Antoni
- Alessandro Fisher as Theodore
- others yet to be cast!

In late January, Valerie attended auditions in London, with Richard Bonyngé and our associate conductor Jeremy Silver. Andrew Greenan had already been cast as the Baron,



but it was a chance to hear him speaking some of the Baron's dialogue. Valerie says we are all in for a real treat! Andrew – who has sung leading roles for many of the world's top opera houses – has

a rich, dark chocolate voice, and an instinctive understanding of the style needed for such a work.

It was absolutely fascinating to hear Richard Bonyngé's comments, and what he was looking for, namely a beautiful, unforced tone, clear diction, and a clarity of sound that would make it a good 'recording' voice. Richard demands very high standards, and has a way of getting more from his singers than they ever thought possible.



Mark Milhofer not only has a beautiful voice, he is also known as an outstanding interpreter of roles that are challenging both technically and musically. Mark is more than capable of the demanding role of Raymond.

Both Sally Silver and Quentin Hayes have worked with Richard on many occasions, most recently in the recording of Balfe's *Satanella*. Alessandro Fisher has recently been offered a role in this summer's Glyndebourne production of Cavalli's *Hipermestra*.



Odaline de la Martinez receives prestigious university alumni award

Many congratulations to Odaline de la Martinez, our wonderful conductor of *The Boatswain's Mate* who will also be conducting our upcoming recording of *Fête Galante*, on receiving the inaugural Vice-Chancellor's Alumni Lifetime Achievement Award from the University of Surrey.

This award was introduced last year as part of the University's 50th anniversary celebrations, and recognises a graduate who has made an exceptional contribution in their field (or to society in general) and who is an exemplary role model.

Odaline, a graduate of the University's MMus Music programme in 1977, was the first ever female conductor at the BBC Proms, and is internationally recognised for her promotion of Latin-American, women, and contemporary composers.



Further information on Odaline's award is available from the University of Surrey website, <http://blogs.surrey.ac.uk/music-and-media/2017/01/30/three-music-alumni-win-vice-chancellors-alumni-awards/>

Finally, a quick reminder that anyone who introduces a new Sponsor who donates at least £50 will receive a free *Pickwick* CD as a thank-you for your continued support!

Donations may be made through this link: <http://retrospectopera.org.uk/Donate.html>

And our CDs may be purchased here: http://www.retrospectopera.org.uk/CD_Sales.html



With thanks, as ever, from the team
at Retrospect Opera:
David, Valerie, Andy and Chris