

twentieth-century din

Mezzo-soprano *Allison Cook*

Conductor *Iwan Davies*

"Why, if there's a god in the sky, why shouldn't he grin?

High above this dreary twentieth-century din?"

Noel Coward, *Twentieth-Century Blues*

The twentieth century was arguably the most experimental, innovative and exciting in music history. Composers of the twentieth century made it their mission to find individual voices And new means of expression, breaking boundaries of forces and form. But their music is often considered difficult, inaccessible and obscure.

This new ensemble, comprised of outstanding young musicians, led by conductor Iwan Davies, will shine new light on the century's masterpieces and recontextualises seminal pieces of music.

Programme

Schoenberg *Pierrot Lunaire*

Britten Cabaret Songs

Elena Langer Selected songs and new works

Programme can also include the Cabaret Songs of Schoenberg, Poulenc, Bolcom, and Kurt Weill

Allison Cook



Allison Cook is internationally recognised as one of today's foremost singing actresses, combining an extraordinary vocal range with a dramatic fearlessness that has made her particularly sought after for some of opera's most psychologically and vocally demanding roles. Encompassing both soprano and mezzo-soprano repertoire, she has won particular acclaim for her interpretations of 20th- and 21st-century opera and for creating major roles in new works.

Recent seasons have seen Cook return to two of her signature roles, **Salome** and **Judith** in Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle*, alongside **Kundry** in *Parsifal* with Pablo Heras-Casado, Venus in *Tannhäuser*, **Miss Jessel** in *The Turn of the Screw*, **The Foreign Princess** in *Rusalka* and Schoenberg's *Erwartung*.

Other recent appearances include Mussorgsky's *Khovanshchina* at the Salzburg Easter Festival in Simon McBurney's production and *Pierrot lunaire* with Kazushi Ono in Brussels.

Most recently, Cook returned to English National Opera as **Mrs XE** in Kip Williams's new production of the UK premiere of Du Yun's *Angel's Bone*, which she performs again this season. She also made her role debut as **Elle** in Poulenc's *La voix humaine* at the Buxton International Festival and returned to Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire*. She will also reunite with conductor Eivind Gullberg Jensen in concert. Cook continues to expand her dramatic repertoire to encompass **Kostelnička** in Janáček's *Jenůfa* and **Klytämnestra** in Strauss's *Elektra*.

Iwan Davies



Welsh conductor Iwan Davies is Artistic Director of Aberystwyth Musicfest, one of Wales's leading music festivals.

With the Welsh National Opera orchestra, he has conducted Mark-Anthony Turnage's *The Railway Children* and Arwel Hughes's *Serch yw'r Doctor*. At the Salzburger Landestheater he conducted *La Gazzetta*, *The Trial*, *Wiener Blut*, and *My Fair Lady* with the Mozarteum Orchester. For the Buxton International Festival, where he is Head of Music, he has conducted *The Merry Widow*, *Trouble in Tahiti*, *La voix humaine*, *The Impresario*, *La Tragédie de Carmen*, *Viva la Diva*, *The Land of Might-Have-Been*, and *Cendrillon*. With English Touring Opera, he conducted *La bohème* and *The Golden Cockerel*, and

Rayfield Allied, Broomgrove Road, London, SW9 9TL, United Kingdom
Email: info@rayfieldallied.com Web: www.rayfieldallied.com
VAT Registration Number: 899 3551 58

Member of the International Artist Managers' Association
Rayfield Allied acts as agent only and can accept no responsibility as principal

for Music Theatre Wales, Conor Mitchell's *Unclean Beasts* and Luke Lewis's *The Echoes Return Slow*.

A champion of Welsh music, he conducted Gareth Glyn's first opera, *Wythnos yng Nghymru Fydd*, and his opera film for Channel 4 and S4/C, *Fires of the Moon*, with the Welsh National Opera orchestra, as well as new works by Sarah-Lianne Lewis, Gwydion Rhys, Claire Victoria Roberts, David Roche, and Simmy Singh, amongst others. In 2026 he made his BBC Proms debut with Sinfonia Cymru, broadcast live on Radio 3.

In 2026/7 he will conduct Gluck's *Orfeo* for ETO, Stephen McNeff's *Hedd Wyn: Eisteddfod Atomig* for WNO, a further world premiere for Music Theatre Wales, and *Les contes d'Hoffmann* at BIF. He trained at the Guildhall and the National Opera Studio.