

Our artistic legacy

Helen Bailey receives the inaugural 'Buxton Festival Young Artists Bursary'



Helen Bailey as the title role in the *Leonore* cover show this summer

Providing opportunities for Young Artists in the appropriate development of their careers is a fundamental responsibility of all those in the creative arts, and Buxton Festival has long been championing the best young talent with pleasure and commitment. This year, thanks to the generous support of the members of the Directors Circle, we established the 'Buxton Festival Young Artists Bursary'. The bursary will be annually awarded to an outstanding member of the Festival chorus to assist in the further development of their career.

I am very pleased to announce that the 2016 Bursary has been awarded to Helen Bailey.

Helen is one of most talented young sopranos of her age. I have known her now for four years, and recognise in her a rare balance between self-knowledge, aspiration, musicality and technique. I invited her to join the Buxton Festival's chorus as a young artist after audition as she is exceptional in every way.

Her commitment to work is without flaw; her work ethic is mature and grounded. She is highly motivated towards study and observation and for Buxton Festival has understudied both major roles *Giovanna d'Arco* and *Leonore* attracting high praise from music staff and audiences alike. Her preparation was outstanding, and stylistically, vocally, musically and dramatically she commanded these roles completely. As a consequence of my high regard for her and her promise for the future I have cast Helen in the principal role of 'Dama' in *Macbeth* for the 2017 Festival.

Vocally, she is hugely gifted and wise beyond her years, nurturing her development carefully but purposefully, and keenly aware of the necessities of foundation and experience. I have no doubt at all that she has a good career in front of her over a wider repertoire than most.

Her plans for further study at present allied with carefully chosen oratorio and opera roles, including her own small opera production company and childcare seem absolutely appropriate. I had no doubt that Helen was an obvious choice for the inaugural 'Buxton Festival Young Artists Bursary' and she sets a high standard for all future bursary winners.

Receiving the 'Buxton Festival Young Artists Bursary' is a great honour, and will be used wisely to assist my career. It will enable me to afford regular singing lessons with my teacher, Elizabeth Ritchie, plus specialised coaching sessions with Kathryn Harries, National Opera Studio. It has always been a desire of mine to produce a 'proper' demo recording, which this bursary will fund. The demo will form the centre of a promotion pack and, together with new headshots, my CV and biography, will hopefully help me to gain more auditions and engagements.

Being part of Buxton Festival over the last two years has been a huge lifeline for me, both personally and professionally. My musicianship, stagecraft, and confidence have grown enormously as a result of working with such a talented and enthusiastic team, and I am thrilled to be returning next year to the Buxton family to sing the role of 'Dama' in *Macbeth*, as well as joining the wonderful chorus.



HELEN BAILEY
Soprano



STEPHEN BARLOW
Artistic Director,
Buxton Festival