

One of the UK's leading violinists, **Thomas Bowes** (b. 1960) has had a career taking him to every part of the music business. He brings to all he undertakes a zest and energy that belie his years, and his music-making gives voice to long experience and deep conviction. His playing is consistently noted for its arresting communicativeness, vitality, emotional range and depth.

Tom is a native of Hertfordshire and one time chorister here at St Michael's. His violin studies had to compete with promising starts as a cricketer (fast bowler) and as a sprinter (200 and 400 metres) but at the age of 17 he had the good fortune to be accepted as a student of the legendary Hungarian pedagogue Bela Katona at Trinity College of Music in London under whom he studied for the next 7 years. By the age of 30, Tom had given a notable London recital debut; been a section violinist with the London Philharmonic Orchestra (under the batons of maestri Tennstedt, Solti, Haitink, Svetlanov, Rattle); been a member of the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields; led the Maggini String Quartet as its founding first violinist, and had been elected concertmaster of London's oldest established chamber orchestra, The London Mozart Players.

In 1992, he left both the Maggini Quartet and the LMP with a deliberate and self-imposed plan to deepen and broaden the range of his playing. Meanwhile, he continued to be in great demand as a guest concertmaster for many top orchestras in the UK - notably the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, the London Symphony and Royal Philharmonic Orchestras – as well as abroad with orchestras in France (Toulouse) and later in Australia (Sydney). He toured the USA as guest leader of the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields Chamber Ensemble and with the Moscow Chamber Orchestra as soloist, playing Mozart and Tchaikovsky. By 2009 had become a favourite concertmaster and violin soloist for many leading film composers. He continues to be in great demand in this genre and enjoys working closely with film composers. He has to date, some 260 film credits to his name. Notable recent contributions being to scores by Alexandre Desplat for films by Guillermo del Toro (Pinocchio) and Ellen Kuras (Lee, starring Kate Winslet), by Alberto Iglesias for Pedro Almodóvar (The Room Next Door, starring Julianne Moore and Tilda Swinton), and for Gabriel Yared's score to Sophia Loren's last movie (The Life Ahead).

Tom has been an eloquent and constant advocate of the music of his wife, the composer Eleanor Alberga OBE, premiering and recording her two violin concertos - both written for him - as well as recording her three string quartets and other chamber music with Ensemble Arcadiana, a group formed from the festival Arcadia founded in 2010 by Bowes and Alberga as a way of integrating classical music into the rural community where they live on the Shropshire-Herefordshire border. Tom is at present developing a species-rich wildflower meadow on land adjacent to their house.

In 2013 Tom created his two-month, award winning 'Bach Pilgrimage', playing 50 concerts of 'Sei Solo' (Bach's Six Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin) across the UK, including here at St Michael's.

Tom has recently recorded the Elgar concerto at Abbey Rd – a place rich in Elgarian atmosphere. It is scheduled for release in 2026. Also scheduled for release is an album of the hair-raising 24 Caprices of Paganini to go with a Tom's touring show 'Mystery, Myth and Magic' which we will enjoy today.

Tom is privileged to play and own a violin by one of the great Cremonese master makers – a 'grand pattern' Nicolo Amati of 1659.

Patricia Cope studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama having won scholarships from major musical trusts and gained her Associate Diploma with distinction. She has performed at most of the leading concert halls and theatres in the UK including the Royal Albert Hall, Southbank and Barbican Centre. She has broadcast for the BBC, including Friday Night is Music Night, Songs from the Shows and Among your Souvenirs, and also for Radio Telefis Eirann in Dublin. She has sung on television in Holland, Belgium and the United States.

Patricia has worked for Scottish Opera, Opera North and English National Opera and sung most of the soprano roles in the Savoy Operas with The London Savoyards. With this company she has toured the United States and Canada six times. She also spent three and a half years in London's West End playing the role of Madam Giry in the Phantom of the Opera.