



## *Messiah: Part 1* - The Artists

Versatile Canadian violinist **Elyssa Lefurgey-Smith** grew up in Nanaimo, BC. She began her violin studies at age 5, with an inspiring teacher, which led her to a career as a professional violinist. In over a decade of performing with several Toronto ensembles, Elyssa cherished her time with Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra, which inspired her to pursue a specialty in early music. In 2016, Elyssa returned to her island roots, settling in Victoria to be closer to family. Excited to pursue new opportunities, and warmly welcomed by her west coast colleagues, she now holds permanent positions in Victoria Baroque and Pacific Baroque Orchestra (Vancouver).

Elyssa is an enthusiastic and passionate educator - involved in teaching, coaching and program development for over 15 years. In Toronto, Elyssa was the Director of the Strings program at the Kingsway Conservatory of Music (KCM), founding the KCM orchestral program and summer chamber music academies, and was the assistant strings teacher at Havergal College Senior School. Since moving to Cowichan Bay, Elyssa has founded the Cowichan String Academy, teaching a busy studio of students, ages 5-17. Elyssa has been on faculty at the Victoria Baroque Summer Academy since its inception in 2016 and has been invited as a guest coach to the Collegium Ensemble at UVic. In 2018, Elyssa became the coordinator of the Junior Summer String Academy at the Victoria Conservatory of Music and most recently founded the Victoria Baroque Youth Orchestra in 2022.

Canadian/British soprano **Eve Daniell** has performed across Europe, North America, and Asia in concert, recital, and opera. She has appeared on CBC's *North by Northwest*, BBC's *The Archers*, and *In Tune*, on *A Prairie Home Companion* with Garrison Keillor, and was a soloist in the BBC's *Last Night of the Proms* - singing Vaughan Williams' *Serenade to Music*. She's sung with the Victoria Symphony Orchestra, the RAM Song Circle, and Kohn Foundation Bach Cantata Series, at venues including the Powell River Academy of Music, Wilton's Music Hall, Colston Hall, Trafalgar Square, the National Portrait Gallery (UK), St John's Smith Square, and sang BC composer Tobin Stokes' *Canoe* at Canada House for Queen Elizabeth II, Prince Philip, and Governor General David Johnston.

Eve holds ARCT Performance diplomas in piano and in voice, the latter earning her a national gold medal. She holds a BMus from UVic, an MA and an Advanced Diploma in Opera from the Royal Academy of Music where she won the Pavarotti Prize. Eve is grateful for the support of the BC Arts Council, Koerner Foundation, International Opera Foundation, and the Sainsbury Family Charitable Trust.

Mezzo-soprano **Ciara Gallagher Beudin** studied music at the Académie Rainier III in Monaco before attending the Swiss Opera Studio (Bienne, Switzerland). Operatic roles include Cherubino (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Angelina (*Cenerentola*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), Nerone (*The Coronation of Poppea*) and Venus (*King Arthur*, Purcell). She is a laureate of *les saisons de la voix* (Gordes, France), a prize winner in the Nei Stëmmen competition (Luxembourg) and a finalist in several competitions including Beziers and Bordeaux.

Ciara has appeared as a soloist in concert with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo, the Orchestre régional de Cannes, the Civic Orchestra of Victoria, regional choirs in the Provence Côte d'Azur region and in Victoria. Now residing on Vancouver Island, when not singing, Ciara can be found working as an ICU nurse at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital or chasing after her children.

Calgarian-born tenor **Tim Carter** currently resides in Victoria, BC. He recently completed his Master of Music at the University of Victoria, studying under Benjamin Butterfield. Taking a round-a-bout path to opera, Tim studied Psychology at the University of Calgary for years before making the switch into music. Having a keen passion for the study of languages, as well as a deep love of performing, opera was a natural fit. Tim is in the early stages of a career in music and is particularly excited about showcasing queer narratives through this art form. Most recently, he premiered a new art song cycle by queer Edmontonian composer Stuart Beatch, *Still Running*, which describes the modern gay man's experience growing up in the prairies.

**Kyron Basu** is a versatile baritone with a repertoire ranging from Bach to Berio. He has appeared with groups such as Fretwork, Victoria Baroque, Victoria Philharmonic Choir, Sooke Philharmonic, Bach on the Rock, and Victoria Children's Choir. He has performed the role of Christus in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with the Victoria Philharmonic Choir, and operatic roles such as Polyphemus from Handel's *Acis and Galatea* and Papageno from Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*. Kyron has performed under the baton of Helmuth Rilling at the Bach Weimar Cantata Academy, singing several of Bach's sacred cantatas. Recent solo performances include Handel's *Messiah* with the Sooke Philharmonic and Bach on the Rock, and a recital of Clara Schumann's complete songs with soprano Eve Daniell and pianist Rykie Avenant.

Kyron is also a passionate teacher and is a member of the voice faculties of the University of Victoria and the Victoria Conservatory of Music.

**Victoria Baroque** presents dynamic, personal, and engaging performances of music from the Baroque and Classical periods.

Founded in 2011, the ensemble brings together early music specialists from Vancouver Island and beyond for explorations of chamber, orchestral, vocal and choral works. Guest directors have included Pacific Opera Victoria's Timothy Vernon; Tafelmusik's Jeanne Lamon; the leader of the English Baroque Soloists, Kati Debretzeni; and British harpsichordist Steven Devine. Guest soloists have included internationally acclaimed singers soprano Nancy Argenta and tenor Benjamin Butterfield.

Nurturing emerging talent is close Victoria Baroque's heart. Choral collaborations with St John Chamber Singers, educational workshops with the Greater Victoria Youth Orchestra, and the Baroque Instrument Summer Program at the Victoria Conservatory of Music have exposed and immersed young artists in the world of Baroque performance.

The **Victoria Baroque Youth Orchestra** was founded in 2022. This small ensemble plays without a conductor and focuses on collaborative opportunities including concertos featuring its members, projects with singers, and the opportunities to play alongside members of Victoria Baroque.

*Messiah: Part I* is Victoria Baroque's first oratorio youth project. Student instrumentalists have to be playing at a certain grade level to participate in the project and have been rehearsing the project over the autumn season.

