

Handel-Inspired Suite*Overture - Air - Sarabande – Gigue***John Ellis** (b.1943)**Scherzo on 'Gopsal'****Alan Smith** (b.1962)**Hanover Prelude****Thomas Neal** (b.1990)

These three works were among the winning pieces for a 'Handel-Inspired' composition competition devised by the composer and organist Paul Ayres for a one-manual chamber organ by Goetze and Gwynn based on the Handel House Organ. John Ellis is a retired consultant paediatrician and church organist who writes that he 'admires Handel's ability to use each musical idea in various ways and to extend and modify the original theme in each and every movement.' Alan Smith has written over 200 pieces, mainly for organ solo or choir. His Scherzo on 'Gopsal' is a short, lively piece based on the tune Handel wrote for the hymn 'Rejoice! The Lord is King'. 'Gopsal' is the name of a house owned by Charles Jennens, the compiler of the libretto for Messiah. Thomas Neal is the youngest composer represented here. 'Hanover Prelude' is, he says, "inspired by Handel's organ concertos and chamber works and seeks to reflect the simplicity of the man behind the music".

(Oundle for Organists has also commissioned Thomas Neal – currently a Sixth Form student and soon to read Music at Clare College Cambridge – to write a setting of *Te lucis ante terminum* for choir and organ. It will be performed by students on Oundle's course for Prospective Organ Scholars, 21-26 July 2009 in Oxford, see page 62.)

Handel in the Strand**Percy Grainger** (1882-1961) (arr. Peter King)

In Percy Grainger's own words: "My title was originally 'Clog Dance'. But my dear friend William Gair Rathbone (to whom the piece is dedicated) suggested the title 'Handel in the Strand' because the music seemed to reflect both Handel and English musical comedy (the Strand is the home of London musical comedy). (At various points) I have made use of matter from some variations of mine on Handel's 'Harmonious Blacksmith' tune."

March on a Theme by Handel**Alexandre Guilmant** (1837-1911)

Guilmant's piece is based on the opening of the chorus 'Lift up your heads' from Messiah – but he only uses the first four notes! After a very dignified opening, an exuberant fugue eventually leads to a full-blown recapitulation of the opening theme.

Departure of the Queen of Sheba**Paul Ayres** (b.1970)

This little sorbet of a piece is an affectionate tribute to Handel's 'Arrival of the Queen of Sheba' with which we began. The composer writes: "I had in mind the Queen's gift-laden procession, dancing off into the desert ..."

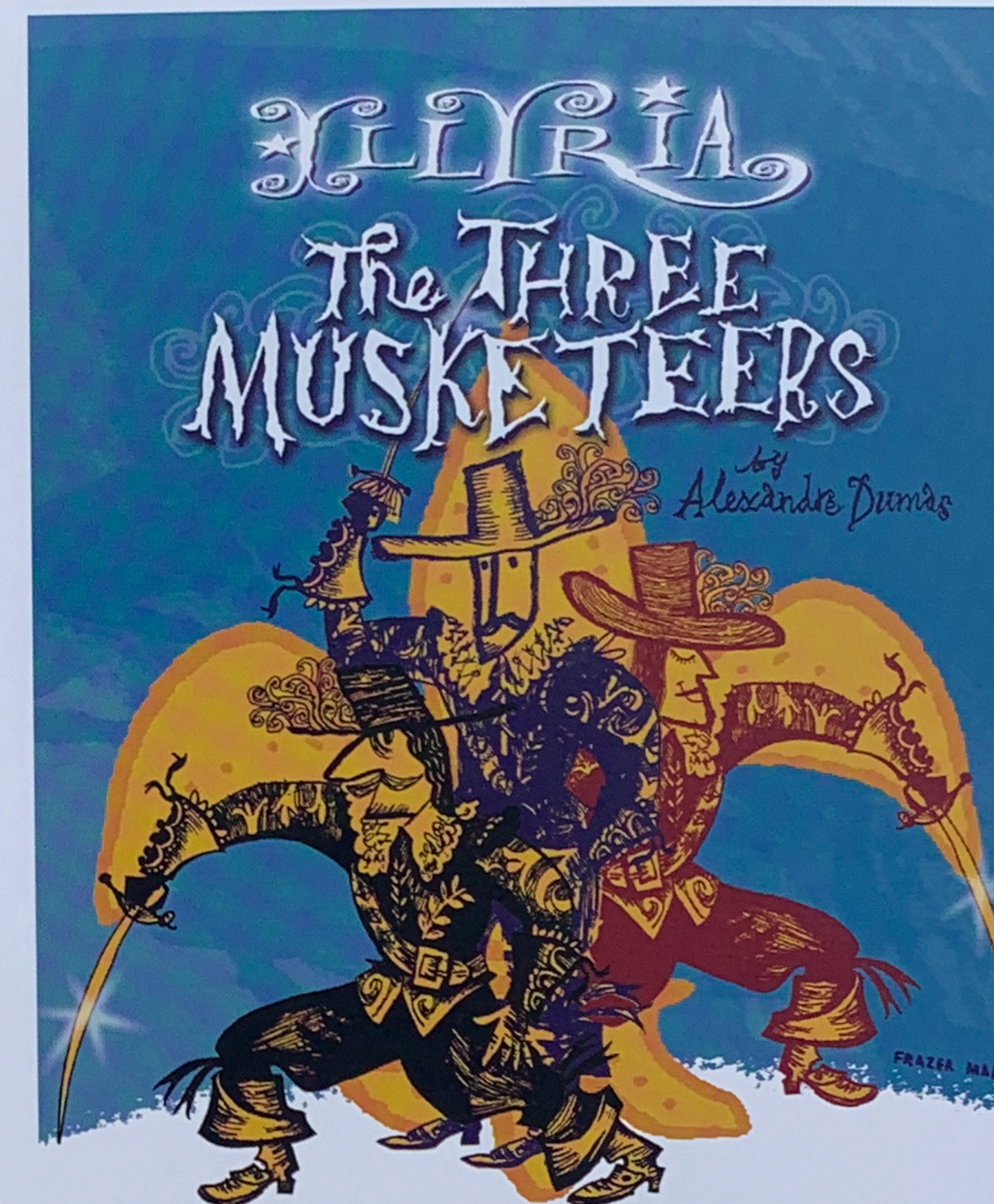
Gerard Brooks is a concert organist and teacher of wide experience. He studied music as Organ Scholar at Lincoln College, Oxford and then won the Stephen Arlen Memorial Award which enabled him to study with Daniel Roth in France where he was active as an accompanist and tutor. He also studied with John Webster, Susi Jeans and Nicolas Kynaston. He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists and was the first recipient of the Forsyth-Grant/Hurford Travelling Scholarship awarded by the RCO.

He is Director of Music at Methodist Central Hall, Westminster, and a Tutor with the St Giles International Organ School, and was for twenty years Associate Director of Music at All Souls, Langham Place. He has become particularly associated with French repertoire and has contributed many articles to music journals as well as writing the chapter on French and Belgian organ music for the Cambridge Companion to the Organ. He has recently recorded the complete works of Eugène Gigout on Cavaillé-Coll organs in France and has just begun a project to record the complete organ music of Saint-Saëns.

Gerard is a regular tutor for the Royal School of Church Music London organ week; he has taught for London Organ Day, RSCM courses, Oundle for Organists and the Edinburgh Organ Academy and he is a Director of the London Organ Improvisation Course. Concerts in recent years have taken him to England, Scotland, France, Germany, Italy and Yale University in the USA.

The recital ends at 2.10pm.

A pre-concert light lunch (for those who have pre-booked) is available at the church at 12 noon. Doors open at 12.55pm for those wishing to attend the recital only.

*Open-air theatre***ILLYRIA**

6.30pm (gates open 5.30pm) The Creed Chapel, Ashton

The Three Musketeers by Alexandre Dumas**Ruch Cataroche****Becky George****Ben Harrison****Andrew Lindfield****Oliver Parham**

All for One; One for All! Young D'Artagnan is desperate to join Athos, Porthos and Aramis as a Musketeer of the King's Guard. But are his swashbuckling credentials sufficient? Find out as the Fearless Four rescue the Queen's diamonds, restore her honour, survive the plots laid by the scheming Cardinal Richelieu, race the clock to save the hapless Mme Bonancieux and cross swords with one of the original and deadliest *femmes fatales*, Milady de Winter.

Alexandre Dumas wrote a series of five novels featuring D'Artagnan and the three musketeers: 'The Three Musketeers', 'Twenty Years Later', 'The Viscount of Bragelonne', 'Louise de la Vallière' and 'The Man in the Iron Mask'. Since the first book was published in 1844 the stories have enjoyed enormous popularity worldwide and have been translated into more than 100 languages.

The tone of each book is both thrilling and comic: the stories are not just examples of the Historical Romance genre, but are also delightful satires of that genre. The devilish intrigues, perilous fights and cliffhanging suspense set the pulse racing, despite the fact that the four central characters are either penniless gamblers or drunken reprobates - or both!

2009 marks Illyria's 18th open-air touring season. It was the first UK open-air theatre company to tour annual productions of classics other than Shakespeare. Its production of 'The Importance of Being Earnest' won a Best Performance Award at the Edinburgh Fringe and 'The Hound of the Baskervilles' was Time Out's Critics' Choice.

Following these nationwide successes, who better than Illyria to take on one of the greatest masterpieces of French comic literature! This brand new production has been specially adapted for the company and features some of the finest swordplay in the business.

There will be one interval of approximately 15 minutes

The performance ends at 9.10pm.