



HANDEL

MESSIAH

Wells Cathedral

PROGRAMME

Saturday 8 December 2018

Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society

Mhairi Lawson soprano

Stephen Harvey countertenor

Nick Pritchard tenor

Benjamin Bevan baritone

Music for Awhile Orchestra

on period instruments; leader Maggie Faultless

Stuart Beer conductor

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George Frideric Handel

Messiah

A Sacred Oratorio, words by Charles Jennens

Mhairi Lawson soprano

Stephen Harvey countertenor

Nick Pritchard tenor

Benjamin Bevan bass

Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society

Music for Awhile Orchestra (on period instruments)

Maggie Faultless leader

Stuart Beer conductor

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Programme by Neill Bonham





George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

***Messiah* (1741)**

Handel has enjoyed a special place in the musical life of our country for over 250 years. Most popular now is his Oratorio *Messiah*. Although well received when premiered in Dublin in 1742, its first performance a year later in London at Covent Garden, was greeted by the hostility of the critics who deplored the presentation of sacred music in a theatre. It was only in 1750, when *Messiah* began to be presented in annual performances for a London charity at the Foundling Hospital chapel, that the public embraced the work.

Handel was born in 1685 in Halle, 30 miles from Leipzig. His mother was the daughter of a Lutheran pastor and his father an eminent surgeon serving the court at Wiessenfels. They had him christened Georg Friedrich Händel. By the age of 9 his playing on the palace organ re-

ceived the attention of Duke Johann Adolf of Saxony who subsequently became his lifelong benefactor. He then had extensive training as assistant organist in Halle where the organist, who had an extensive international music library, expected Handel to compose weekly services from the age of 11. When 18 he had a post in a Hamberg opera company orchestra and within two years had produced his first two operas.

During 1704 he was employed by the Medicis, who wished to develop opera in Florence, and was also writing church music in Rome. There he signed his *Dixit Dominus* as G. F. Hendel (to help the Italians cope with the German ä). He was influenced there by the Baroque composers, especially Corelli and Scarlatti.

Not wishing for a career writing church music in 1712, at 27, Handel, decided to

settle in England. He lived in London for the rest of his life, becoming a naturalised British subject in 1727 and there signed himself George Frideric Handel. Within fifteen years he had worked with, or started, three opera houses and between 1711 and 1739 more than 25 of Handel's operas were premiered at the Queen's Theatre alone (now Her Majesty's Theatre). In all Handel wrote a total of 42 Italian operas.

In 1737, aged 52, Handel suffered a stroke which left him with a disabled right hand and some confusion. It was not expected that he would play again. However, after a stay at the spa in Aachen, he returned to London and turned his attention to oratorio. Public taste for Italian operas had declined and oratorio became popular, giving audiences a

chance to hear works in their own language. When Handel continued this trend after writing *Messiah* he produced a series of 20 oratorios which helped him regain his title as the country's favourite composer.

In 1741 Handel was invited to visit Dublin to stage a series of concerts. Shortly after receiving this request, and in a period of just over three weeks (with much of the music borrowed from his operas) he created *Messiah*, probably with his visit to Ireland in mind. Every word is taken from the King James 1611 version of the Bible.

Credit for the ingenious way in which such widely scattered texts have been welded into a perfect whole must go to the compiler, a Leicestershire squire named Charles Jennens who was a close friend of Handel and had for a while tried

to persuade him to write such a work. His preface to the libretto expresses the idea which inspired it: 'And without controversy, great is the mystery of Godliness: God was manifest in the Flesh, justified by the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in Glory. In whom are hid all of the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge.'

Messiah is unique among Handel's oratorios in being entirely undramatic. The soloists do not represent characters nor, except for the short nativity section, is there any narrative. The entire work is a meditation on Our Lord as Messiah. It begins with the prophesies of Isaiah and other Old Testament writers. Christ's Nativity, Passion and Resurrection follow in a majestic procession of recitatives, arias and chorus-

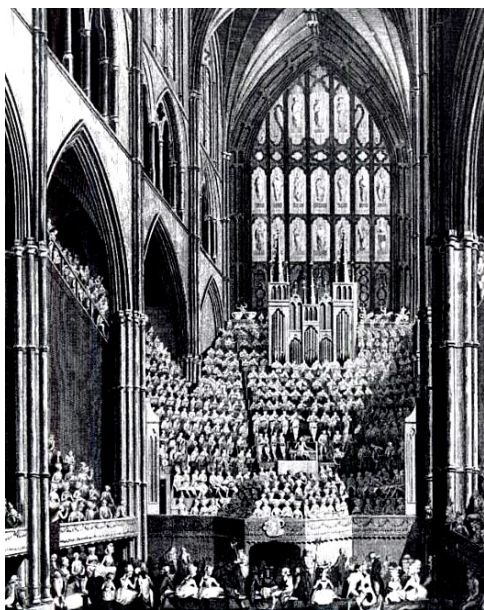


The Great Music Hall in Fishamble Street, Dublin, where *Messiah* was first performed

es, ending in the great hymn of praise from the Book of Revelation. The work was first performed during Lent in preparation for Easter, but it has become common practice since Handel's death to perform *Messiah* during Advent, preparing for the Christmas season.

Handel first staged a dozen successful concerts in Dublin and then announced with a fanfare that his new oratorio would receive its premiere on 13th April 1742. With 26 boys and 5 men, from St Patrick's and Christ Church cathedrals—plus soprano and contralto soloists who also helped with the choruses—he arranged for a public rehearsal to take place the day before. This caused a sensation and hundreds of eager listeners had to be turned away from the first performance.

King George II attended the first London



Westminster Abbey during the 1784 Handel commemoration

performance and as the first notes of the triumphant 'Hallelujah' chorus rang out he rose to his feet and remained standing until the end of the chorus. The audience and orchestra also stood, initiating a tradition that has lasted for two centuries. The exact reason why the King stood at that point is not known, but the most popular explanations include:

- He was so moved by the performance that he rose to his feet.
- Out of tribute to the composer.
- He arrived late and the crowd rose as he finally made an appearance.
- His gout acted up at that moment and he rose to find relief.
- He mistook the first few notes in the chorus for the national anthem and stood out of respect.

It is still the accepted practice for the audience to stand for the 'Hallelujah' chorus.

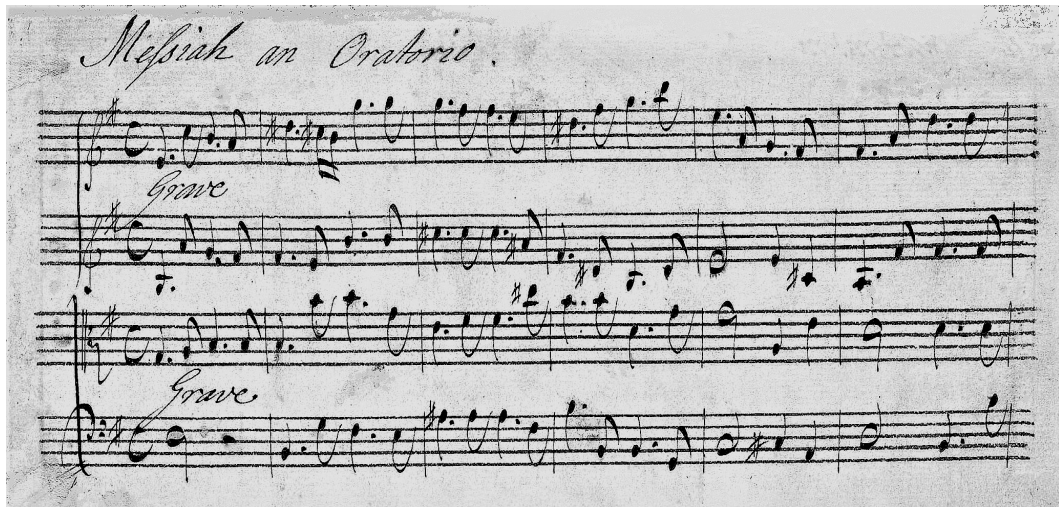
At the end of his life in 1754 Handel was the equivalent of a millionaire, leaving a large amount in his will to purchase a grand monument in Westminster Abbey. At his funeral there in 1759, there were more than three thousand mourners and he was given full state honours.

Handel was much admired by Bach who was born a month after Handel and who had tried but failed to meet him in Halle. Beethoven said of Handel "the master of us all... the greatest composer that ever lived. I would uncover my head and kneel before his tomb". Beethoven emphasised above all the simplicity and popular appeal of Handel's music when he said, "Go to him to learn how to achieve great effects, by such simple means." Mozart said of him: "Handel understands *affect*

better than any of us. When he chooses, he strikes like a thunder bolt.”

The first published score of *Messiah* was issued in 1767, eight years after Handel’s death, though this was based on relative-ly early manuscripts and included none of Handel’s later revisions. This evening’s performance uses Watkins Shaw’s final

edition of 1992 that he had worked on between 1957 and 1965. With access to many of Handel’s papers, including his conducting score from the first Dublin performance, this edition of *Messiah* revolutionised its interpretation, and has been called ‘a landmark in what we now know as the Early Music movement.’



1. Sinfonia (Overture)

2. Recitative Tenor

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness; prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

(Isaiah 40: 1-3)

3. Air Tenor

Ev’ry valley shall be exalted, and ev’ry mountain and hill made low; the crooked straight and the rough places plain.

(Isaiah 40: 4)

4. Chorus

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. (Isaiah 40: 5)

5. Recitative Bass

Thus saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts: Yet once a little while and I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. And I will shake all nations; and the desire of all nations shall come. The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.

(Haggai 2: 6-7) (Malachi 3: 1)

6. Air Countertenor

But who may abide the day of His coming, and who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire. *(Malachi 3: 2)*

7. Chorus

And He shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. *(Malachi 3: 3)*

8. Recitative Countertenor

Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Emmanuel, God with us. *(Isaiah 7: 14; Matthew 1: 23)*

9. Air and Chorus Countertenor

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain. O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, behold your God! Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. *(Isaiah 40: 9)*

10. Recitative Bass

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. *(Isaiah 60: 2-3)*

11. Air Bass

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. *(Isaiah 9: 2)*

12. Chorus

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. *(Isaiah 9: 6)*

13. Pifa (Pastoral Symphony)

14a Recitative Soprano

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. *(Luke 2: 8)*

14b Recitative Soprano

And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. *(Luke 2: 9)*

15. Recitative Soprano

And the angel said unto them: "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." *(Luke 2: 10-11)*

16. Recitative Soprano

And suddenly there was with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying: *(Luke 2: 13)*

17. Chorus

"Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will towards men." *(Luke 2: 14)*

18. Air Soprano

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy King cometh unto thee; He is the righteous Saviour, and He shall speak peace unto the heathen. *(Zechariah 9: 9-10)*

19. Recitative Countertenor

Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. *(Isaiah 35: 5-6)*

20. Air Countertenor and Soprano

He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; and He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young. *(Isaiah 40: 11)*

Come unto Him, all ye that labour,
come unto Him that are heavy laden,
and He will give you rest. Take his
yoke upon you, and learn of Him, for
He is meek and lowly of heart, and ye
shall find rest unto your souls.

(Matthew 11: 28-29)

21. Chorus

His yoke is easy, and His burthen is
light.
(Matthew 11: 30)

Interval - 20 minutes

Wine and soft drinks are available in the Transepts



22. Chorus

Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh
away the sin of the world. *(John 1: 29)*

23. Air Countertenor

He was despised and rejected of men,
a man of sorrows and acquainted with
grief. He gave His back to the smiters,
and His cheeks to them that plucked
off His hair: He hid not His face from
shame and spitting. *(Isaiah 53: 3, 6)*

24. Chorus

Surely He hath borne our griefs, and
carried our sorrows! He was wounded

for our transgressions, He was bruised
for our iniquities; the chastisement of
our peace was upon Him.

(Isaiah 53: 4-5)

25. Chorus

And with His stripes we are healed.
(Isaiah 53: 5)

26. Chorus

All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned every one to his
own way.
And the Lord hath laid on Him the
iniquity of us all. *(Isaiah 53: 6)*

27. Recitative Tenor

All they that see Him laugh Him to scorn; they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying: (*Psalm 22: 7*)

28. Chorus

“He trusted in God that He would deliver Him; let Him deliver Him, if He delight in Him.” (*Psalm 22: 8*)

29. Recitative Tenor

Thy rebuke hath broken His heart: He is full of heaviness. He looked for some to have pity on Him, but there was no man, neither found He any to comfort him. (*Psalm 69: 20*)

30. Air Tenor

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow. (*Lamentations 1: 12*)

31. Recitative Tenor

He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgressions of Thy people was He stricken. (*Isaiah 53: 8*)

32. Air Tenor

But Thou didst not leave His soul in hell; nor didst Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption. (*Psalm 16: 10*)

33. Chorus

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in.

Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in.

Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory.

(*Psalm 24: 7-10*)

34. Recitative Tenor

Unto which of the angels said He at any time: “Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee”? (*Hebrews 1: 5*)

35. Chorus

Let all the angels of God worship Him. (*Hebrews 1: 6*)

36. Air Countertenor

Thou art gone up on high; Thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men; yea, even from Thine enemies, that the Lord God might dwell among them. (*Psalm 68: 18*)

38. Air Soprano

How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things. (*Isaiah 52: 7; Romans 10: 15*)

40. Air Bass

Why do the nations so furiously rage together, and why do the people imagine a vain thing?

The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His anointed.

(*Psalm 2: 1-2*)

41. Chorus

Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yokes from us. (*Psalm 2: 3*)

42. Recitative Tenor

He that dwelleth in Heav'n shall laugh them to scorn;

The Lord shall have them in derision. (*Psalm 2: 4*)

43. Air Tenor

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. (*Psalm 2: 9*)

44. Chorus

Hallelujah: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever. King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. Hallelujah!

(*Revelation 11: 15; 19: 6 & 16*)



45. Air Soprano

I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. *(Job 19: 25-26)*

For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep. *(I Corinthians 15: 20)*

46. Chorus

Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. *(I Corinthians 15: 21-22)*

47. Recitative Bass

Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. *(I Corinthians 15: 51-52)*

48. Air Bass

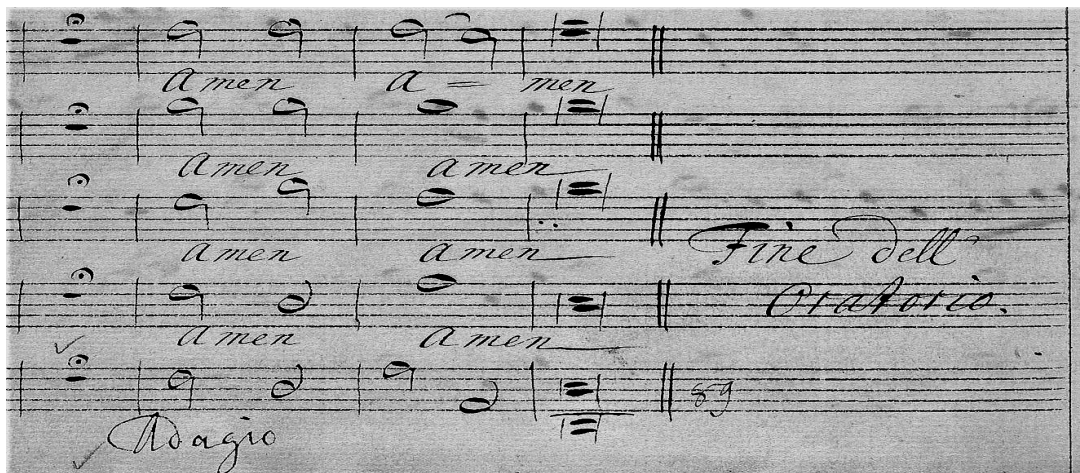
The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. *(I Corinthians 15: 52-53)*

52. Air Soprano

If God be for us, who can be against us? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is at the right hand of God, who makes intercession for us. *(Romans 8: 31, 33-34)*

53. Chorus

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Blessing and honour, glory and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. Amen. *(Revelation 5: 12-14)*



MHAIRI LAWSON **soprano**

Mhairi Lawson has performed in opera houses and concert halls worldwide with such companies as English National Opera, The Gabrieli Consort & Players, The Academy of Ancient Music, Philharmonia Baroque and The Scottish Chamber Orchestra. Whilst still a student at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, she won the International Early Music Network Young Artists Prize with the fortepianist Olga Tverskaya, which led to her first CD recording of Haydn's English and Scottish Songs.

Mhairi has enjoyed working with the Gabrieli Consort and Players for many years and projects with them include Bach's *St John Passion* and *St Matthew Passion*, the *Mass in B minor* and the *Wedding Cantata*, Handel's *La resurrezione*, and *Acis and Galatea*, and Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, *King Arthur* and *The Fairy Queen*. With Les Arts Florissants, Mhairi has performed dramatic music by Purcell, Charpentier, Landi and Monteverdi throughout Europe. At Wigmore Hall, she has performed operas by Purcell, Handel and Hasse with the Early Opera Company, and Handel's *Messiah* with the Netherlands Bach Society and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.

Recital engagements include songs from the British folksong tradition and Lieder by Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Schumann, Strauss and Wolf with appearances in the Edinburgh Festival, Newcastle and York Universities, and recordings for BBC Radio 3. Recent and future highlights include performances of Handel's *Messiah* with the Hallé Orchestra, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and also the Oxford Philharmonic, Purcell's *King Arthur* with the Academy of Ancient Music at the Barbican Centre, the title role in *Semele* with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, *Acis and Galatea* and Bach's *B mi-*



nor mass with the Gabrieli Consort, *Venus and Adonis* with the Dunedin Consort, Mozart's *Mass in C Minor* with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Raphaël Pichon, Haydn's *Creation* with the Arctic Philharmonic, residencies at the Carmel Bach Festival in the USA, a recital with lutenist Elizabeth Kenny as part of the St Magnus International Festival.

Mhairi continues her recital collaboration with Eugene Asti and also features on Les Arts Florissants' recent release of Monteverdi Madrigals vol. 3 'Venezia' for Harmonia Mundi.

STEPHEN HARVEY **counter-tenor**

Stephen Harvey studied singing at the Royal Academy of Music in London with Nicholas Clapton and Iain Ledingham and was formerly a student at the Royal Welsh College of Music



and Drama in Cardiff. Stephen currently studies with Isobel Buchannan.

Stephen and his family moved to Wells, Somerset, in 2008, where he currently sings as a Vicars' Choral in the Cathedral Choir. Besides this, Stephen continues his work as a soloist with various choirs and choral societies throughout the UK and Europe working under such directors as William Christie, Laurence Cummings, Matthew Halls and Jeffery Skidmore and performs with the period instrument ensembles The King's Consort, Retrospect and The Cecile Consort. On the concert platform, highlights thus far include solo performances at the Wigmore Hall for The King's Consort, a fully staged Baroque restoration project of Purcell's *Orpheus Britannicus* with Mercurius Company at Cadogan Hall, performing the cantata for alto and soprano *Amarilli Vezzosa* at the London Handel Festival under Laurence Cummings and performing duets with James Bowman at the Lichfield Festival. Stephen was also chosen as one of The King's Consort young artists in 2008.

NICK PRITCHARD **tenor**

Nick Pritchard read music as a choral scholar at New College, Oxford and studied at the Royal College of Music International Opera School. Last year, he won the 2017 Whatsonstage Opera Poll award for Breakthrough Artist in UK Opera.

Previous concert work includes *King Arthur* for the Early Opera Company under Christian Curnyn, Bach's *Mass in B minor* with the Monteverdi Choir and Sir John Eliot Gardiner, performances of Handel's *Messiah* with the English Festival Orchestra under Brian Kay at the Royal Albert Hall, *Instruments of Time and Truth* with Edward Higginbottom and the Nieuwe Philharmonie, Haydn's *Paukenmesse* with Stephen Cleobury, the Choir of King's College, Cambridge and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Mozart's *Requiem* for the Three Choirs Festival with Simon Halsey and the Philharmonia Orchestra and with the Gabrieli Consort, Bach's *St Matthew Passion* with the St Paul Chamber Orchestra under

Paul McCreesh, Coridon's *Acis and Galatea* with John Butt and the Dunedin Consort, Bach Cantatas with Ensemble Pygmalion and Raphael Pichon, amongst others.

Recent and future engagements include Ly-sander A *Midsummer Night's Dream* for the Aldeburgh Music Festival, Amphinomus in *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* for the Royal Opera House, Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* for Opera Holland Park, Henry Crawford in *Mansfield Park* for The Grange Festival, Acis in *Acis and Galatea* for the London Handel Festival under Laurence Cummings, John/Angel 3 in *Written on Skin* with Melos Sinfonia under Oliver Zeffman, Britten's *Les Illuminations* and *Serenade* with L'Orchestre de Chambre de Paris under Adrien Perruchon, Charpentier's *Te Deum* with the Early Opera Company at Wigmore Hall, a Schubert recital with Graham Johnson at Wigmore Hall, Handel's *Messiah* with De Nieuwe Philharmonie, Utrecht, Bach's *B Minor Mass* and Bach Cantatas with The English Concert under Harry Bicket and at the Al Bustan Festival in Beirut, Bach's *St John Passion* with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales under John Butt (arias), Polyphony and the OAE under Stephen Layton (Evangelist), and in New York with the Choir of New College, Oxford.

BENJAMIN BEVAN **bass**

Benjamin Bevan won a scholarship to the Guildhall School, London and made his debut at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden singing Henry Cuffe in *Gloriana* by Benjamin Britten and returned there to sing The Speaker in *Die Zauberflöte*.

In 2018, he made his debut at English National Opera as Baron Douphol in *La traviata* and at Welsh National Opera Benjamin sang Lescaut in *Boulevard Solitude* by Henze followed by Roderick Usher in *Usher House* by



Getty. He went on to sing Lescaut for the Royal Danish Opera and the Ferryman in *Curlew River* for Opéra de Dijon. In London, Benjamin created the role of Nameless Man in *Faust, Alberta* by Simone Spagnolo as part of Opera in the City to great critical acclaim.

Recent recordings include Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* with Bach Collegium Japan conducted by Masaaki Suzuki, premiere recordings of the *St Mark Passion* by John Joubert and Gerald Barry's opera *The Importance of Being Earnest*, conducted by Thomas Adès in the Barbican Hall, London and three well reviewed discs of Handel with London Early Opera.

Concert performances include Vaughan Williams's *Hodie* for MDR live on Christmas Day from the Leipzig Gewandhaus, Handel's *Messiah* for Bach Collegium Japan, The English Concert, The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, The Royal Northern Sinfonia, The Royal Scottish National Orchestra, The Colorado Symphony and many others. He has sung

live broadcasts of Bach's Passions for the BBC Philharmonic and RTE in Dublin, Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* with the Stavanger Symphony Orchestra under John Butt, and Bach's *B Minor Mass* at The Three Choirs Festival.

He sang the role of Pontius Pilate in a new staging of Bach's *St John Passion* for the Nationale Reisopera in the Netherlands, *The Dream of Gerontius* at Snape Maltings, Bach's *St John Passion* with the Irish Chamber Orchestra under Stephen Layton, Handel's *Messiah* with The Irish Baroque Orchestra (RTE Broadcast), Bach *Christmas Oratorio* in Monaco and Nice and *Carmina Burana* with the BBC Concert Orchestra. He has also sung in two performances of Bach Cantatas in Australia at the Perth International Festival (ABC Broadcast).

WCOS is extremely grateful to Stuart Beer who has stepped in for final rehearsals and to conduct tonight's performance in place of Matthew Owens who is unavailable.

STUART BEER **Conductor**

Stuart has enjoyed a varied career in music as a singer, conductor, teacher and composer. After a degree in music and a Choral Scholarship at Magdalen College, Oxford he won a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music to study singing with Roy Henderson. As a young professional singer in London, Stuart was a Vicar Choral at St Paul's Cathedral and sang both as an ensemble member and soloist alongside all the great singers and conductors of the emerging early music movement at that time.



A move to teaching took him to the specialist music departments of Wells Cathedral School and then to Chetham's School of Music in Manchester. Soon after this, still in his mid-twenties, he was invited to become Master of the Choir and subsequently Director of Music at Manchester Cathedral, a post he held for seventeen years, together with that of Musical Director of the Cathedral Cantata Choir, an able choral society of about 100 amateur singers. From modest beginnings he oversaw the musical growth of the Cathedral creating singing opportunities for men and women, boys and girls. The Cathedral Choir sang the music for five choral services each week together with a programme of concerts, recordings, broadcasts and tours; the Cathedral Cantata Choir sang four major concerts a year, most often with the Manchester Camerata, performing much of the great choral repertoire, old and new.

Alongside this Stuart continued to teach academic music at Chetham's, was a visiting

lecturer in harmonic techniques at Manchester University, musical director for a number of 'Songs of Praise' programmes for BBC television, he composed for church and cathedral and continued to sing when time and opportunity allowed.

For twelve years, until retirement in 2012, Stuart enjoyed a more rural (but no less busy) lifestyle as Director of Music at Benenden School in Kent, leading a large and active department in this prestigious girls' boarding school.

Now back in Wells, Stuart retains a wide interest in music, particularly in the cathedral and choral world. Now that teaching duties have diminished, he travels as an examiner for Trinity College London and enjoys more opportunity for composition, responding to commissions chiefly for choral and church music. It has been a particular joy to be asked to write for the Cathedral Choir here in Wells. The best of this work is currently in the process of publication by the Royal School of Church Music.

MUSIC FOR AWHILE ORCHESTRA

Artistic Director: Maggie Faultless

Since its first performance in 1996, Music for Awhile has continued to inspire audiences and performers with concerts in a variety of venues, and at its own Summer Festival in the magical setting of All Saints, Alton Priors. Musicians from Europe's most acclaimed ensembles come together to perform a wide range of repertoire spanning over two centuries. Music for Awhile specialises in performing English opera from Purcell's time, and thanks to sponsorship from the Cecil King Memorial Foundation it also fea-

tures the music of J. S. Bach. The ensemble regularly expands to form a larger orchestra enabling it to perform major choral works in venues such as Westminster Abbey and Gloucester, Hereford and Bristol Cathedrals. It also has its own chamber music series, held in smaller venues appropriate to the repertoire. Music for Awhile has established contacts with schools and groups of young musicians in order to attract children to rehearsals and concerts, and provides important access to live music for the local rural community.

Violin 1

Maggie Faultless, Rachel Stroud,
Claudia Norz, Olivia Jarvis,
Marguerite Wassermann

Violin 2

Anna Curzon, Elise Van Der Wel,
Ellen Bundy, Louise Ayrton,
May Robertson

Viola

Nick Logie, Jam Orrell, Alice Poppleton,
Hannah Gardiner

Cellos

Andrew Skidmore, Jon Rees, Emily Ashton

Bass

Jan Spencer, Marianne Schofield

Oboe

Bethan White, Nicola Barbagli

Bassoon

Zoe Shevlin

Trumpet

Paul Bosworth, Darren Moore

Timpani

Barnaby Archer

Harpichord

Benedict Williams

Organ

Luke Fitzgerald



**WELLS CATHEDRAL
ORATORIO
SOCIETY**

Patron: John Rutter, CBE President: The Dean of Wells
Chairman: Robin Duys

Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society (WCOS) was founded in 1896 and is one of the Southwest's leading choral societies. It performs the great choral works with some of the UK's finest soloists and professional orchestras in the glorious surroundings of 'The Queen of English Cathedrals'. Numbering around 160 voices, WCOS gives three concerts a year, under the direction of the distinguished conductor, Matthew Owens, Organist and Master of the Choristers at Wells Cathedral.

Under Owens it has performed Bach's *St John Passion*, *B minor Mass*, and *Christmas Oratorio*; Brahms's *German Requiem*;

Britten's *War Requiem* and *Saint Nicholas*; Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*; Fauré's *Requiem*; Handel's *Four Coronation Anthems*; Mendelssohn's *Elijah*; Mozart's *Requiem* and *C Minor Mass*; Orff's *Carmina Burana*; Verdi's *Requiem*; and major works by Finzi, Purcell, Rutter, and Vaughan Williams. The Society also presents Handel's ever-popular *Messiah*, each December. WCOS hosts an annual *Come and Sing* day each spring, to which any singers are welcome to learn and perform a work from scratch, in just a few hours.

For further details about WCOS, including how to join, please visit: www.wcos.org.uk

Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society Members

Soprano

Sarah Allen
Dora Almy
Ann Baker
Pam Booth
Helen Bowen ¶
Kate Brown
Denise Bush
Barbara Calverley
Felicity Chapman
Katherine Constable
Vanessa Coode
Julie Costley-White X
Cheryl Evans-Jones
Heather Forgham
Sandra Freeborn
Carolyn Fussell
Sue Gould
Maureen Grant
Jane Hancock
Susan Hanson
Sarah Hare
Sally Harvey
Frances Henderson X
Jenny Henderson
Rachel Hewson
Dorothy Hunter
Deborah Jenkins
Eleanor Jolley
Marion Jones
Carolyn Legg
Ruth Lickfold
Della Luetchford
Jennie Lunnon
Nancy McGiveron ¶
Donna-Marie
Macpherson
Sarah May
Louise Palmer
Ann Parsons
Maureen Pickford

Pamela Pye ¶
Margaret Raynes
Marion Robinson ¶
Gill Round
Frances Rowe
Maggie St Quintin
Janet Saxon
Margaret Sutton
Pamela Tomlinson
Emma Trantham
Christine Tudor
Helen Wade
Jan Weaver
Lucy Williams
Jane Withey

Alto

Jenny Abraham
Christine Barker
Maureen Boylan
Vivienne Burgess
Louise Burton
Liz Clay
Rosemary Cooke
Polly Corbishley
Sarah Curl
Sue Curragh
Gill Deamer
Sian Decamp
Joan Dovey
Robin Duys ¶
Kate Fielder
Barbara Green
Shelley Gudgin
Faith Guest
Elizabeth Hand
Catherine Hay
Gilly Hayward
Mary I'Anson
Jane James
Lynne Jarman
Jane Jarratt

Janet Johnson
Deborah Jonas
Jessica Leach
Alex Lemanski
Barbara Leuwer
Riches
Jennifer Mackenzie
Philippa Mains
Mary Massey
Della Menday ¶
Liz Metcalfe
Mary Newman
Claire Pennack
Janet Ravenscroft
Margaret Rayfield
Janet Rundle
Mary Sage
Celia Smith
Sue Stoughton-
Harris ¶
Celia Townend
Lynn Waldron
Ginny Waters
Sue Wells
Olivia Wilkinson
Fenella Williams
Kate Wilson
Jo Wright

Tenor

Neill Bonham ¶
Edmund Le Brocq †
Ian Bynoe
Samuel Clarke X
Ben Clay ¶
Andrew Cruickshank
Alexandra de
Glanville
Martin Godfrey
Martin Lovell
Nigel Lloyd
John Morton ¶

Bernard North
Andrew Phillips
Colin Rendell
Sarah Villiers
Peter Wagstaff X
Robin Walker ¶
Stacey Williams

Bass

David Abels
David Bevan †
Christopher Boddie
Michael Calverley
John Castree
Geoffrey Clarke
Harrison Cole X
Peter Farrell
Niall Garden
Adrian Grey
Wesley Hallam
Stephen Hamnett X
Michael Harris
Trevor Hazelgrove
Richard Henderson
Derek Hiller
Tony Iveson
Chris Jenkins ¶
Dennis Johnson
John King
Richard Lander
Michael Leach
Brian Marshall
Alan Rayfield
David Rosser
Robert Smallcombe
William Truscott
Kenneth Wade
¶ Committee
† Choral Scholar
X Guest Singer
-

Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society Friends

Your continued support as a Friend of Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society is greatly appreciated and we look forward to seeing you at our concerts.

The Society gives three concerts each year which include an annual performance of Handel's *Messiah* in December. The other two concerts are in early November and in the Spring.

The main features of the Friends' scheme are:

- Priority booking in March 2019 of up to four prime Nave seats for each of the November and December concerts
- Priority booking in September 2019 of up to four prime Nave seats for the Spring concert in 2020
- Names of Friends acknowledged in concert programmes
- Annual Newsletter
- Invitation to a social event with the Choir and Conductor each year
- Annual subscription of £24 for the season which runs from 1st September to 30th May. Subscription renewal is in March 2019 alongside priority booking for the November and December concerts.

Please contact our Friends Secretary at: friends@wcos.org.uk

Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society Corporate Patrons

The Society is most grateful to its Corporate Patrons, **Chalmers HB, Chartered Accountants**, of Chamberlain Street, Wells, and **Battens Solicitors**, of Princes Street, Yeovil for their support of the Society under our Corporate Patrons scheme.

Companies willing to join this scheme will be assured of a warm welcome. For further information, please contact Robin Duys at 01749 871105.

Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society Friends

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