



TRING CHORAL SOCIETY

CONCERT  
PROGRAMME

SATURDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2024

## THE CHOIR

### SOPRANOS

Gillie Bligh  
Jackie Bignell  
Jane Brown  
Corinna Chute  
Hilary Colbert  
Margaret Collier  
Elaine Florsheim  
Mary Haywood  
Zoe Hill  
Katie Hughes  
Alison Humphrys  
Sue Jones  
Christine Keen  
Jane Kendall  
Lucy Kibble  
Rosie Loker  
Charlotte Mackinder-Fulford  
Hattie Mackinder  
Sarah Magee  
Victoria Markey  
Brigid Mathers  
Heather Nash  
Eileen Patterson  
Barbara Pearce  
Elina Rantenen  
Pam Rush  
Jennie Shaw  
Kate Smith

Rosie Southworth  
Elizabeth Thompson  
Gillian Vila  
Jenny Watt

### ALTOS

Karen Baldwin  
Nicky Bull  
Jean Bygate  
Kathy Chantler  
Valerie Clark  
Rachel Cobb  
Sue Collins  
Kate Davies  
Susanna Davies  
Debbie Lea  
Ann Denwood  
Rosemary Dixon  
Sophie Dowson  
Margaret Flanigan  
Louisa Gartrell  
Natasha Gething  
Bea Glover  
Jane Glover  
Janet Graves  
Eiluned Jones  
Suna Kayakiran  
Rhian Nicholls  
Elizabeth Norris  
Mary Owens

Harriet Queralt  
Chris Sivers  
Melissa Smellie  
Heather Wignall  
Kate Winterbottom

### TENORS

Jenny Brannock Jones  
Richard Brown  
David Hamilton  
Philip Hayes  
Richard Jarvis  
Kevin Scott  
Chris Smith  
Russell Smith  
David Wilde

### BASSES

John Adderley  
Robert Allnutt  
Andy Barratt  
Adrian Collin  
Bob Davies  
Richard Grylls  
Richard Holder  
Tony Mackinder  
Richard Onslow  
Stephen Spall  
Rob Stevens  
John Wignall



## MUSIC SCHOLARSHIP

TCS offers a Music Scholarship scheme for local, young musicians willing to participate in the choir for a year, under which a bursary of £250 is awarded to support the student's music tuition.

The aim is to encourage young singers to take part in the choir's rehearsals and performances thus broadening their musical experience and enabling them to acquire a wider musical knowledge, improved technical and sightreading skills and academic achievement.

For further details, go to the Membership page on the website [www.tringchoral.org.uk](http://www.tringchoral.org.uk) and click on the Scholarship link, or email [secretary@tringchoral.org.uk](mailto:secretary@tringchoral.org.uk).



TRING CHORAL SOCIETY  
AND ORCHESTRA  
CONDUCTOR - COLIN STEVENS

HANDEL  
MESSIAH



SOLOISTS

SOPRANO	EMILIA BERTOLINI
MEZZO SOPRANO	NANCY COLE
TENOR	MATTHEW LONG
BARITONE	JONATHAN BROWN



Welcome everybody to tonight's concert. We are very excited to be singing Handel's wonderful work again this evening. It still retains its magic however many times it is performed.

The choir has had a fantastic year, celebrating Colin Stevens' 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as Musical Director in the summer, followed by a very successful 'Come and Sing' *Carmina Burana* workshop day with around 100 other singers joining us from local choirs and beyond. A huge thank you to you, our audience, for coming to support us tonight. I hope you have a very pleasant evening and, on behalf of all of us at TCS, I extend our best wishes for a very happy Christmas.



Robert Allnutt - Chairman

## THE SOLOISTS

### SOPRANO – Emilia Bertolini

Emilia Bertolini is an Australian soprano of Irish and Italian heritage, currently performing across the UK and Europe. She holds a Master of Arts (vocal) from the Royal Academy of Music.

Emilia has a particular affinity for baroque music, with recent highlights including winning first place in the Concours Corneille baroque singing competition in Rouen, Normandy, and receiving the Young Talent Award as a finalist in the inaugural Cavalli Monteverdi Competition in Cremona. She recently performed the title role in Eccles' *Semele* with La Risonanza in Milan, Ninfa in Monteverdi's *Orfeo* at Teatro Ponchielli di Cremona, and Drusilla and Fortuna in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* with La Venexiana. Emilia also appeared as Cupid in Blow's *Venus and Adonis* at the Baroquestock Festival in London and at the Ryedale Festival. She participated in solo recitals at the Festival Radio France Montpellier and the Nouvelles Voix en Normandie tour with Le Poème Harmonique. Additionally, she performed as the soprano soloist in Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* with Le Poème Harmonique, conducted by Vincent Dumestre, in Nice.



Emilia is also a passionate choral and chamber singer, performing regularly with esteemed ensembles such as the BBC Singers, Chamber Choir Ireland, the Gabrieli Consort, and the Choir of the Age of Enlightenment.



### MEZZO SOPRANO – Nancy Cole

Mezzo Soprano Nancy Cole enjoys a varied career of solo work and consort singing. Nancy is based in London where she is a permanent member of the BBC Singers and is a regular soloist with them. The BBC Singers perform a huge variety of repertoire which very much keeps Nancy on her toes! When not at the BBC she tours with the country's leading ensembles. Her oratorio work varies from baroque to the present day and leads her all around the UK.



Recent repertoire includes Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Haydn's *Mass in Troubled Times* and Bach's *St Matthew Passion*. Her stage work has included chorus member of Simon Rattle and Peter Sellars' staged tour of Bach's *St John Passion* and the 3-month sell-out production of *All the Angels* at the Sam Wannamaker Theatre, The Globe. Recital appearances include St Martin in the Fields, The Handel House Museum and the Queen's Gallery at Buckingham Palace. She is a member of The Choir of the Chapels Royal, HM Tower of London.

Brought up in Lancaster, Nancy was a Choral Scholar at St Edmund Hall, Oxford 2006-2009, where she studied music. She then gained a distinction in her Music Masters at York University and spent one further year training for a graduate diploma at the Royal College of Music. In 2011-2012, Nancy was part of the inaugural year of The Sixteen's training programme, Genesis Sixteen, led by Harry Christophers. In her spare time Nancy and her husband can be found running after their 3 year old, taking a trip to the theatre or spending time with her extended family.

### TENOR – Matthew Long

Matthew Long was a successful treble soloist, singing the role of Miles in Britten's *Turn of the Screw* for Italian Opera houses. He studied music at the University of York and sang as a choral scholar in the choir of York Minster during his time there. He later won a scholarship to the Royal College of Music, London. Whilst there he was a Susan Chilcott Scholar and a Royal Philharmonic Society Young Artist. At various times he has been a member of the celebrated chamber choirs 'The Sixteen' and 'Tenebrae' and he continues to sing as part of the solo voice ensemble 'I Fagiolini'.



Matthew appears regularly as a soloist with many highly regarded ensembles including The OAE, The English Concert, The Hanover Band, The Dunedin Consort, The Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and The LPO. Highlights have included Bach's *St Matthew Passion* for the Boston Handel and Haydn Society; Britten's *War Requiem* for Jonathan Willcocks in Salisbury Cathedral and Monteverdi's *1610 Vespers* at the Royal Albert Hall for the National Youth Choirs of Great Britain. From 2017–2019 he performed the title role in Monteverdi's *Orfeo* to critical acclaim in a series of semi-stage productions in Norway, Belgium and the UK with 'I Fagiolini'. In December 2017 Matthew sang the Evangelist for three concerts of Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* with the Danish Radio Choir in Copenhagen. More recent concert work has included the solo tenor role in Monteverdi's *1610 Vespers* for the RIAS Kammerchor in Osaka, Japan, performing and recording the role of Peter in Handel's *Brookes Passion*

for Arcangelo and Jonathan Cohen, and performances of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* and Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, as Aeneas and Orfeo respectively, in staged performances with puppets for Tom Guthrie and Music and Theatre for All in Norway and the UK.

Matthew's debut solo disc with the LPO and accompanist Malcom Martineau, *Till the Stars Fall*, was released in 2015. It was recorded at Abbey Road Studios and gems from the English song repertoire sit alongside folk songs in celebration of some of Britain's finest music.

In his spare time, Matthew is a keen photographer and follower of wildlife conservation. He lives with his wife and two children near Brighton.



## BARITONE – Jonathan Brown

Jonathan Brown was born in Toronto and studied at the RCM (Toronto) and the University of Western Ontario. After moving to England, he continued his studies at the University of Cambridge as well as the Britten-Pears School in Aldeburgh with Sir Thomas Allen and Anthony Rolfe Johnson.

Operatic roles include Marcello (*La Boheme*, Royal Albert Hall), Count Almaviva, Yamadori (*Madama Butterfly*), Giove (*La Calisto*), Orestes (*Giasone*), Garibaldo (*Rodelinda*), Ariodate (*Xerxes*), Silvio (*I Pagliacci*), Malatesta (*Don Pasquale*), Masetto (*Don Giovanni*), Shepherd (*Venus and Adonis*) and Aeneas

(*Dido and Aeneas*). He performed the role of Trojan (*Idomeneo*) for Sir Simon Rattle with the Berlin Philharmonic in the Salzburg Easter Festival. He recently created the role of Leon in Tom Smail's new opera *Blue Electric* in London.

Jonathan made his debut with Sir John Eliot Gardiner in Holland as the baritone soloist in a concert of Bach cantatas, and thereafter was a regular soloist with performances in Zurich, Brussels and Paris. He performs regularly as a soloist with the OAE, most recently on tour with the *St John Passion* and *Princess Ida* at the Royal Festival Hall and a programme based on *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* at the Southbank. He has performed most of the major oratorios in the UK and abroad, recently Elgar's *The Kingdom* with the Norwich Philharmonic, *The Creation* with the Oxford Philharmonic and Mozart *Requiem* with Brighton Festival Chorus. He features as a soloist in Purcell's *Ode to St Cecilia* and *Dido and Aeneas* for Harmonia Mundi. He has recorded the baritone solos in the Fauré *Requiem* with the London Festival Orchestra for BMG, and appears in the role of the Forester in Sullivan's *The Golden Legend* for Hyperion. Recent recordings have included world premieres of Wesley's cantata *Confitebor Tibi, Domine* (Priory), Eccles' *Semele* and Weldon's *Judgement of Paris*, both with Cambridge Handel Opera and the Academy of Ancient Music.



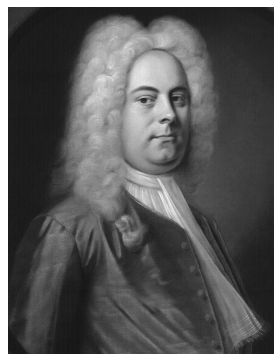
## Handel's *Messiah*

# Messiah an Oratorio

Title on Handel's  
autograph score

A very quick surf of the Internet has revealed at least five performances of *Messiah* taking place in London this Christmas season, and at least seventeen other performances all over the UK, including one in Tring, of course! It would be fascinating to be able to ascertain the total number of performances taking place worldwide this December, maybe almost 100. So, how is it possible that an oratorio composed 282 years ago can still have such immense popular appeal? One American commentator wrote: "The single-most attractive quality of *Messiah* is its melodies. The piece is hit after hit after hit." It is undeniable that the work is full to the brim with good tunes. Even the more complex contrapuntal choruses, like *For unto us a child is born* and *His yoke is easy*, have thoroughly tuneful themes. Furthermore, the text, which is all taken from the King James Bible or the Book of Common Prayer (Coverdale version), is simple, direct, oft-repeated and memorable. Added to all this, for a great many individuals – possibly including a few audience members this evening – their first choral or classical music live experience was attending or singing in a performance of *Messiah*, an event no doubt strongly etched in their memories. The piece is indeed a very special 'phenomenon', and will no doubt continue to be so for many years to come.

George Frederick Handel – the anglicised version of his name – was born in Halle, Germany, in 1685, the same year that Johann Sebastian Bach was born in Eisenach, the two towns being about 120 miles apart. Sadly, it seems the two great men never met each other, partly because in 1712 Handel settled in London where he lived until his death in 1758, whereas J.S. Bach remained in Germany for his whole life. Handel initially worked in London as a composer of Italian-style operas, very successfully too. But musical tastes in England changed, and competition from other composers of Italian opera (particularly a composer named Bononcini, hardly remembered at all today) forced Handel to change compositional direction, but not before a contemporary poet had penned the following ditty:

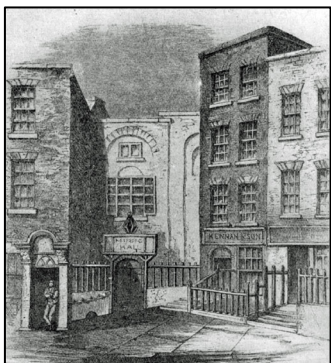


G.F. Handel by Balthasar Denner

*Some say, compared to Bononcini, that Mein Herr Handel's but a Ninny;  
Others aver, that he to Handel is scarcely fit to hold a Candle.  
Strange all this difference should be 'twixt Tweedle-dum and Tweedle-dee.*

In the mid 1730s Handel started writing oratorios, biblical stories composed in a format and musical style somewhat similar to that he had previously used in his operas. But his oratorios had English texts, contained less florid or operatic-style vocal lines, and were not 'staged'. These oratorios found great favour with the

concert-going public, especially during Lent, when opera performances were not permitted. However, the fact that 'religious' works were being performed in theatres (rather than in churches) raised eyebrows and at first created dissent. *Messiah* was Handel's sixth oratorio, the texts for some of the five previous ones having been compiled by a gentleman poet, Charles Jennens, with whom Handel had become good friends. Jennens was also a great benefactor of the composer.



The old Music Hall in Dublin

The first performance of the work actually took place in Dublin, at Eastertime 1742. The Duke of Devonshire, who was then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, had invited Handel to give concerts in Dublin and, because *Messiah* had only recently been completed, it was the new work that Handel wanted to try out. Two famous soloists were engaged to sing, and a 'sell-out' audience of 700 arrived at the Great Music Hall in Fishamble Street to hear the new work. Because all the seats had been sold and the hall was going to be very crowded, lady members of the audience were requested not to wear hoops and the gentlemen not to wear swords!

The two performances were both great successes. Among those to benefit from ticket sales were 142 debtors who were released from prison.

According to contemporary newspaper reports, the premiere was performed by 32 singers. The size of the orchestra is not known, though probably 20 players at the most, just strings, two trumpets, timpani and organ. Handel used his own organ, which he had had brought from London to Dublin. The number of singers and players for a performance of *Messiah* at the Foundling Hospital in London in 1754 are known - there were 19 singers and an orchestra of 38. This was the fifth year *Messiah* had been performed there to raise funds for the running of the hospital, an annual tradition that continued for a great many years.

So, as Handel conceived it, *Messiah* was to be performed with relatively small forces, though later in his life, in addition to altering and adding solo numbers to please various solo singers, Handel increased the size



The Foundling Hospital Chapel

of the orchestra and scored the music for a greater variety of instruments. After Handel's death and as a partial result of the many choral societies which were founded in Britain in the late 1700s and 1800s, it became the fashion to organise bigger and bigger performances. A performance in the Crystal Palace, London, in



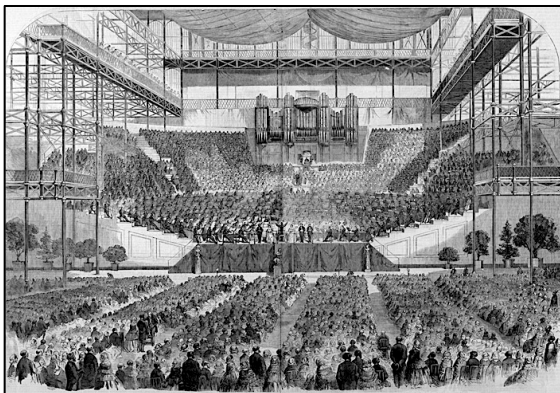
1857 featured a chorus of 2,000 singers and an orchestra of 500 players. Because of the huge forces, much of the music had to be performed at a very pedestrian pace and performances lasted a good three hours. Even bigger performances have happened since.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century many conductors tried to return to something closer to Handel's original concept of *Messiah*.

Numbers of singers and players used decreased dramatically, and period instruments were played to recreate the sound Handel would have known. In addition, new editions of the score of *Messiah* were compiled by editors who consulted as many old sources as could be found. It is in fact not possible to come up with a genuine 'original' edition, because Handel made so many changes to the score during his lifetime.

The edition we are using this evening was made by Clifford Bartlett and published in 1998. He chose to score *Messiah* for two trumpets, strings, timpani and organ, almost certainly the scoring first used by Handel. Oboes and a bassoon are optional extras. Bartlett also chose not to include dynamic (volume) markings in his edition, so these have been chosen by Colin Stevens, who directs this evening's performance.

From the quietish opening *Sinfony* to the blaze of glory in the final *Amen* chorus, *Messiah* will no doubt once again cast its musical magic spell this evening. Please enjoy!



*The Handel Festival at Crystal Palace, 1857*



## MESSIAH: AN ORATORIO – George Frederick Handel

### Part the First

- |                                           |                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| ✧ Sinfony                                 | ✧ Behold, a virgin shall conceive <i>Alto</i>    |
| ✧ Comfort ye <i>Tenor</i>                 | ✧ O thou that tellest <i>Alto &amp; Chorus</i>   |
| ✧ Ev'ry valley <i>Tenor</i>               | ✧ For behold, darkness <i>Bass</i>               |
| ✧ And the glory of the Lord <i>Chorus</i> | ✧ The people that walked in darkness <i>Bass</i> |
| ✧ Thus saith the Lord <i>Bass</i>         | ✧ For unto us a child is born <i>Chorus</i>      |
| ✧ But who may abide <i>Bass</i>           | ✧ Pifa                                           |
| ✧ And he shall purify <i>Chorus</i>       | ✧ There were shepherds <i>Soprano</i>            |

*contd...*

- ✧ And lo, the angel of the Lord *Soprano*
- ✧ And the angel said unto them *Soprano*
- ✧ And suddenly there was with  
the angel *Soprano*
- ✧ Glory to God *Chorus*
- ✧ Rejoice greatly *Soprano*
- ✧ Then shall the eyes of the blind *Alto*
- ✧ He shall feed his flock *Alto*
- ✧ His yoke is easy *Chorus*

### **Part the Second**

- ✧ Behold the Lamb of God *Chorus*
- ✧ He was despised *Alto*
- ✧ Surely He hath borne our griefs  
*Chorus*
- ✧ And with His stripes *Chorus*
- ✧ All we, like sheep *Chorus*

## INTERVAL

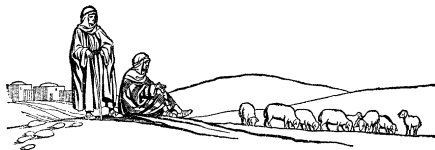
### **Part the Second contd.**

- ✧ All they that see Him *Tenor*
- ✧ He trusted in God *Chorus*

- ✧ Thy rebuke hath broken His heart  
*Soprano*
- ✧ Behold and see *Soprano*
- ✧ He was cut off *Tenor*
- ✧ But Thou didst not leave *Tenor*
- ✧ Lift up your heads *Chorus*
- ✧ The Lord gave the word *Chorus*
- ✧ How beautiful are the feet *Soprano*
- ✧ Their sound is gone out *Chorus*
- ✧ Why do the nations *Bass*
- ✧ Let us break their bonds *Chorus*
- ✧ He that dwelleth in heaven *Tenor*
- ✧ Thou shalt break them *Tenor*
- ✧ Hallelujah *Chorus (Audience please stand)*

### **Part the Third**

- ✧ I know that my Redeemer liveth  
*Soprano*
- ✧ Since by man came death *Chorus*
- ✧ Behold, I tell you a mystery *Bass*
- ✧ The trumpet shall sound *Bass*
- ✧ Worthy is the Lamb *Chorus*
- ✧ Amen *Chorus*



## THE ORCHESTRA

Leader	Janet Hicks
Violin	Roger Neighbour, Akiko Coulter, Linda Miller, Naomi Jacob, David Glenister, Marion Garrett, Annie Stamp, Fiona Jacob, Ian Brown, Diane Gallacher, James Lark
Viola	Katie Hayes, Steffi Cook, Chris Watson, Adrienne Cooke
Cello	Helen Godbolt, Mary Harris, Herrick Hayes
Bass	Sudhir Singh
Oboe	Victoria Parkins, Vivien Kroner
Bassoon	Caroline Cartwright
Trumpets	Ian Lynch, John MacDominic
Organ	Jon Lee
Timpani	Frances Beuttler





## Friends of Tring Choral Society

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Mr G Bull  
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Mr R Flanigan  
Mr R Franklin  
Mr C Garrett  
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Mr R O'Reilly  
Mr I Slatcher  
Mr J Stack  
Mr J Stanhope  
Mrs J Stevens

Mrs P Thomas  
Mrs S Todd  
Mr A Winterbottom

### Life Members

Mr and Mrs D Banyard  
Mr R Grylls  
Mrs R Southworth

### Why not become a Friend of Tring Choral Society?

For a minimum donation of £40, you too could become a Friend and be entitled to two free tickets per season. TCS is a registered charity and is very grateful for local support and donations to continue hosting high quality choral and orchestral concerts in Tring. If you already attend our concerts on a fairly regular basis we'd love to have you on board!

You'd also receive a newsletter with details of our forthcoming concerts and an invitation to join our social events (barbecue, autumn walk and quiz night).

If you're interested, please drop an email to [friends@tringchoral.org.uk](mailto:friends@tringchoral.org.uk), or go to the Friends section on our website ([www.tringchoral.org.uk](http://www.tringchoral.org.uk)), or call Brigid Mathers on 07745 106860.

TRING  
CHORAL  
SOCIETY

If you'd like to join Tring Choral Society, new members are always very welcome. We rehearse term-time on Monday evenings in Tring.

Please ring our Membership Secretary, Margaret Collier, on 01296 660406 for more information, or email: [membership@tringchoral.org.uk](mailto:membership@tringchoral.org.uk)

Further details about the choir, its background and activities can be found on our website at [www.tringchoral.org.uk](http://www.tringchoral.org.uk). You can also find details of the music we have sung at past concerts and what we plan to sing in the near future.

You can also find us on Facebook.



TRING CHORAL SOCIETY

FORTHCOMING CONCERT

Beethoven *Mass in C*

Mozart *Dominican Vespers*

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2025

7.30pm, Tring Church

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our thanks go to Richard Grylls for his music notes  
and to Zoe Hill for compiling this programme.