

Constanza Chorus

HANDEL'S MESSIAH

WEDNESDAY 25TH MAY 2011

AT 7.30 PM

At St Sepulchre-without-Newgate
Holborn Viaduct

WITH SOLOISTS

Elizabeth Weisberg - Soprano
Ben Williamson - Alto
Nathan Vale - Tenor
Julien Charles - Bass

AND

Constanza Consort

CONDUCTED BY JOANNA TOMLINSON

Constanza Chorus

Soprano

Ailsa Heinlein-Thompson
Angharad Jones
Anna MacDonald
Anna Yew
Anne Khazam
Anne-Claire Bouzanne
Carrie Flanagan
Catherine Evans
Chantal Debreuil
Christalla Gerolemou
Claire Humphreys
Cornelia Thomas
Eleanor Budden
Eilis McCarthy
Emily Flynn
Genevieve Poirier
Helen Parkin
Helene Guild
Heulwen Leonard
Jennifer Will
Jessica Brook
Judith Mulholland
Kate Wratten
Lally Pollen
Lizzie Brook
Lucy Abel
Natalie Rambaud
Nicola Kalimeris
Rosa Pickford
Rosalind Fane
Ruth Chapple
Sarah Fuggle
Ursula Hoermannsdorfer
Victoria Bates

Alto

Abi McGregor
Angela Hughes
Aoife Ni Luanaigh
Caroline Prew
Catrin Williams
Charlene Hannon
Claire Whittle
Clare Colvin
Glyn Rider
Hannah Murphy
Harriet Walker
Jacqueline Palloway
Jen Winfield
Jennie O'Reilly
Jenny Hughes
Jessica Brockbank
Joanna Stott
Judith Damerell
Julie Slack
Kate Buttrey
Libby Tomlinson
Liz Williams
Liz Nightingale
Lucy Coates
Michelle Bartsch
Naomi Baster
Sara Donaldson
Sarah Howells
Sarah Crompton
Sheila Scobie
Simone Olds
Sue Hudson
Talia Lash
Vicky Mirfin

Tenor

Alan Reilly
Alfred Carter
Andrew Aitken
Andrew Froggatt
Ben Shepherd
Charlie Rome
Chris Jenkins
Colin Evans
Dermot Ryall
Les Williams
Nick Jackson
Sam Bibby
Stephen Catling
Steve Flanagan

Bass

Aleksas Kekys
Andrew Gordon
Andy Marchesi
Bill Rigg
Charles Tomlinson
Cos Gerolemou
Eddy Kleiser
Gabriel Tate
Geoff Kenton
Henry Llewellyn
Ian Kemp
Ian Kernohan
Jeff Longman
Joe Freer
John Bicknell
Jonathan Fisher
Jonathan Whitby
Martin Haigh
Neil Reeder
Philip Lott
Simon Harrison
Stephen Jones
Stephen Hill
Steve Rider

Programme

Sinfonia

Comfort ye my people - *tenor recitative*
Ev'ry valley shall be exalted - *tenor aria*
And the glory of the Lord - *chorus*
Behold, a virgin shall conceive - *alto recitative*
O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion - *alto aria and chorus*
For behold, darkness shall cover the earth - *bass recitative*
The people that walked in darkness - *bass aria*
For unto us a child is born - *chorus*
Pifa (Pastoral Symphony)
There were shepherds abiding in the field - *soprano recitative*
And the angel said unto them - *soprano recitative*
And suddenly there was with the angel - *soprano recitative*
Glory to God - *chorus*
Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion - *soprano aria*

INTERVAL – 20 MINUTES

During which wine, soft drinks and nibbles will be served

Behold the Lamb of God - *chorus*
He was despised - *alto aria*
Surely he hath borne our griefs - *chorus*
And with his stripes we are healed - *chorus*
All we like sheep have gone astray - *chorus*
All they that see him laugh him to scorn - *tenor recitative*
He trusted in God - *chorus*
Thy rebuke hath broken his heart - *tenor recitative*
Behold, and see if there be any sorrow - *tenor aria*
Why do the nations so furiously rage together - *bass aria*
He that dwelleth in heaven - *tenor recitative*
Thou shalt break them - *tenor aria*
Hallelujah - *chorus*

I know that my redeemer liveth - *soprano aria*
Since by man came death - *chorus*
Behold, I tell you a mystery - *bass recitative*
The trumpet shall sound - *bass aria*
Worthy is the lamb that was slain - *chorus*

Constanza Consort

The **Constanza Consort** draws together some of the country's top Baroque instrumentalists who have worked with orchestras including the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Gabrieli Players, English Baroque Soloists and the Academy of Ancient Music. The instruments played are old instruments, many dating back to the seventeenth century. The stringed instruments of Handel's time had gut strings and a slightly curved bow. Valves for the trumpets had not been invented so the trumpets you will hear are played by changing the pitch with the mouth. Baroque instruments are based around A415 rather than modern A440, so the pitch of the instruments was slightly lower than modern counterparts. This gives a more authentic feel to the performance, and more accurately represents how Handel would have envisioned his piece.

1st Violin

Persephone Gibbs
Eleanor Harrison
Lucy Hunt
Siv Thomassen
Diane Terry

2nd Violin

Julia Black
Phil Yeales
Fiona Huggett
Eleanor Gilchrist

Viola

Jane Norman
David Brooker
Joanne Miller

Cello

Emily Robinson
Tim Smedley

Oboe

Gail Hennessy
Chris Hartland

Trumpet

Chris Bunn
Dominic Cotton

Bassoon

Ian Cuthill

Timpani

Scott Bywater

Harpischord and
Chamber Organ

Alistair Young

The Soloists

Elizabeth Weisberg studied at Stanford University and the Royal Academy of Music. On the concert platform Elizabeth has appeared in the Chichester, Winchester, Aldeburgh and Three Choirs Festivals and with conductors including Sir Charles Mackerras, Sir Roger Norrington, Iván Fischer, Emmanuelle Haïm, Trevor Pinnock, Harry Bicket, Nicholas Kraemer, Christopher Robinson, and David Hill. She frequently appears in concerts at St Martin-in-the-Fields with the Trafalgar Sinfonia and the Belmont Ensemble. Recent engagements include Handel's *Messiah* at St. Thomas', Fifth Avenue, New York, Haydn's *Creation* with Sir Mark Elder and the OAE in Poissy, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* at the Royal Albert Hall with the RPO and Ivor Setterfield, Galatea in *Acis and Galatea* for Mackerras in Aldeburgh, Bach's *St Matthew Passion* with the Manchester Camerata in Bridgewater Hall with Kraemer, and scenes from Purcell's *Fairy Queen* with Bicket and The English Concert at Cadogan Hall. Forthcoming engagements include Mozart's *C Minor Mass* at Cadogan Hall and a staged production of Rossini's *Petite Messe Solonelle* in Weimar, Berlin, Paris (Opéra Comique), Bregenz and Luxembourg.

Ben Williamson is currently studying on the Opera Course at the Royal College of Music. He was the winner of the 2009 RCM English Song Competition and a finalist in the 2010 RCM Singing Competition. Ben was a Choral Scholar at King's College, Cambridge, where he read Philosophy. Roles include Mirtillo in Handel's *Il Pastor Fido* and Tassile in Handel's *Alessandro* for London Handel Festival; Alessandro (cover) in *Tolomeo* for English Touring Opera; Tragedy in Stephen Oliver's *Euridice* for British Youth Opera; Hamor in Handel's *Jephtha* and Raymond Cocteau in *The Underworld* by Ed Hughes for Grimeborn; George Saintsbury [covering Michael Chance] in *The Lovely Ladies* by Peter Cowdrey for Opera Unlimited; Kaspar in *Kaspar Hauser* by Alexis Pope for Tête à Tête. Concert performances include Ben's Wigmore Hall debut in Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* for Retrospect Ensemble and Purcell's *Hail, Bright Cecilia* in St. Petersburg. Ben will be playing George Saintsbury for the Buxton Festival this July. Ben is generously supported by a Fishmongers' Company Music Scholarship and the Josephine Baker Trust. www.benjaminwilliamson.com.

Nathan Vale studied with Ryland Davies at the Royal College of Music and the Benjamin Britten International Opera School, where he was one of the first recipients of the Peter Pears Scholarship. He is the winner of the 2006 London Handel Singing Competition, where he was also awarded the Audience Prize. Nathan currently studies at the National Opera Studio, where he is generously supported by the Nicholas John Trust, English National Opera, The Seary Trust, The Elmley Foundation, and Christopher Ball. He has also recently been awarded the Independent Opera Scholarship at the National Opera Studio. Recent and future engagements include Lurcanio in Handel's *Ariodante* for Bolshoi Opera, Ravel's *L'enfant et les Sortilèges* with the Rai Orchestra Turin, Handel's *Messiah* with the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, Bach's *St John Passion* with Stephen Layton's Polyphony, Britten's *War Requiem* at Salisbury Cathedral, and Britten's *Spring Symphony* with the Midlands Festival Chorus at Worcester Cathedral.

Julien Charles studied with Adrian Thompson and was a member of the Welsh National Opera Company. Since that time he has performed in major venues throughout Europe, such as Opera Municipale, Stockholm Concert Hall, Buxton Festival Opera, Soho Theatre, Opera South, the Royal Festival Hall, Birmingham Symphony Hall, Wigmore Hall, Oxford Lieder Festival, Chelsea Schubert Festival and Cadogan Hall. Future engagements include the roles of Colline in *La Bohème* for the Soho Theatre and Le Corporal in *La Fille du Regiment* for Diva Opera in England, France, Switzerland, Guernsey and Jersey and numerous concerts across the UK for the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Voices, London Handel Players, Spanish Place Ensemble, Morley College Choral Society, Oundle & District Choral Society, Peterborough Choral Society and Godalming Choral Society. Julien currently studies with Nicholas Powell and Stefan Bevier. He is an Olivier Award nominee and a Whatsonstage award winner.

Handel's Messiah

The libretto of Handel's Messiah is taken from the King James Bible, and is divided into three parts. Part One is mostly concerned with the Advent and Christmas stories. Part Two tells the story of Christ's passion, resurrection and ascension. Part Three is based primarily upon the events in the book of Revelation. Although we are making cuts in the piece tonight, the complete work lasts nearly two and a half hours without interval and Handel wrote this whole oratorio in just 24 days! This was probably only possible because Handel borrowed bits of other works (mostly his own) to incorporate them into Messiah. It was composed in London during the summer of 1741 and premiered in Dublin on 13th April 1742. Handel was paid £1000 for this commission, a substantial amount at that time. It was then repeatedly revised by Handel, reaching its most familiar version by 1754, when it was performed several times at the Foundling Hospital in Bloomsbury, in aid of the hospital and its abandoned children.

Forthcoming Constanza Chorus Concerts

Wednesday 12th October at 7.30 at St Sepulchre-without-Newgate

A performance of *Dido and Aeneas* by Henry Purcell with Constanza Consort professional principals and soloists from the choir. Also in the programme is Handel's *Zadok the Priest* and other pieces by Purcell and Handel.

Tuesday 13th December at 7.30 at St Sepulchre-without-Newgate

A Christmas Concert with a selection of magical Christmas music and carols, some well-known and others more unusual.

June 2012 at St Sepulchre-without-Newgate

Verdi's Requiem

The Choir

Constanza Chorus was founded in January 2010 by Joanna Tomlinson, Libby Tomlinson and Les Williams. The choir is named after Mozart's wife Constanze, herself a fine singer, who inspired Mozart's composition. Constanza Chorus is an unauditioned City-based choral society open to all singers keen to sing the great choral repertoire. It aims to be a welcoming and happy choir, whilst striving for the highest possible standards. Concerts in our first year included a performance of Mozart *Requiem*, a CD recording of a cappella choral works through the ages, with a CD launch concert and a repeat performance in aid of the Cystic Fibrosis Trust, and a Christmas concert including two new compositions. www.constanzachorus.org.uk

Conductor **Joanna Tomlinson** read Music at the University of Bristol before gaining a distinction in the post-graduate diploma in Singing at the Royal College of Music. Joanna began conducting whilst at Bristol where she conducted the University Chamber Choir at venues including St George's Brandon Hill and on tour in Provence. She now runs two chamber choirs, the Ince Choir and Headley Parish Choir. She recently conducted the Surrey Mozart Players in Schubert's 5th Symphony.

Joanna also works as a choral singer with groups including the BBC Singers, the Gabrieli Consort and Philharmonia Voices. Solo oratorio engagements include Beethoven *Mass in C* with the Whitehall Choir under Paul Spicer and Michael Stimpson's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* with the Exmoor Singers at St Martin-in-the-Fields. Opera work includes Trincula in *The Tempest* by Joe St. Johanser and Siebel in *Faust* for Guildford Opera, Echo in *Hansel und Gretel* for Opera Holland Park; *Fidelio* for the Geoffrey Mitchell Choir and BBC Proms, *Il Pirata* and *Ermione* for Opera Rara, and *Platée* for English Bach Festival. See www.joannatomlinson.co.uk for more information.

Our thanks to St Sepulchre for allowing us to perform in this historic church and to the Church staff.

We are so grateful to everyone who has helped front of house to make the evening run smoothly.

