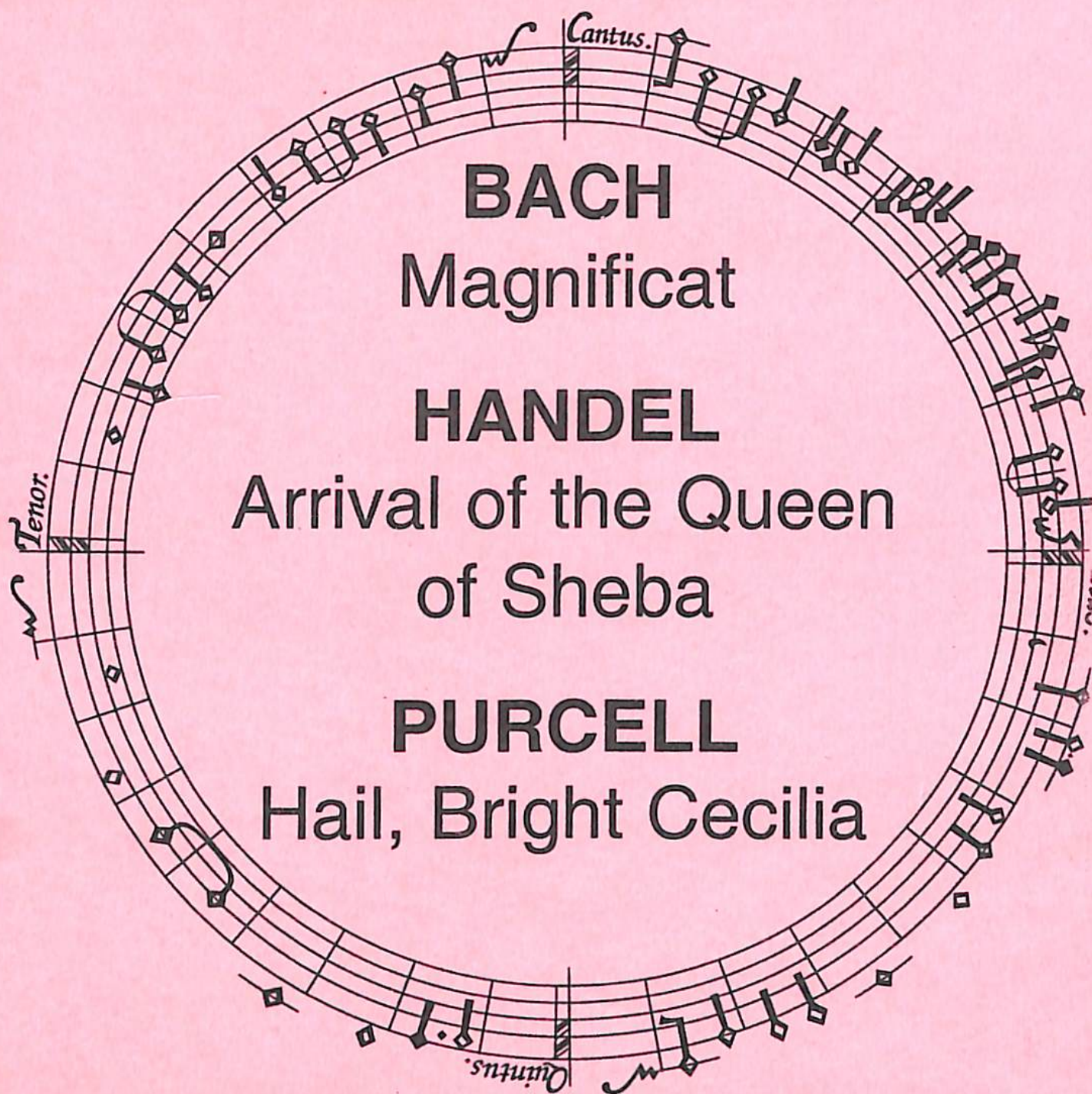




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Society**



All Saints Parish Church
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Programme £1

Saturday 9th November 2002
7.30pm




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Kingston Choral Society
 presents

The Magnificat

JS Bach

Arrival of the Queen of Sheba

George Frideric Handel

Hail, Bright Cecilia

Henry Purcell

Orchestra — Purcell Orchestra

Conductor — Robin Page

Saturday 9 November 2002 at 7.30pm
 All Saints Parish Church, Kingston upon Thames



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Kingston Choral Society gratefully acknowledges the continuing financial assistance of The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames.

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Kingston Choral Society

Since its formation in 1948, Kingston Choral Society has earned a reputation for concerts of a high standard and for performing a wide range of music. Under the guidance of Robin Page, Kingston Choral Society is not afraid of taking on ambitious projects and has, for example, performed Prokofiev's Alexander Nevsky in Russian. However, the choir also enjoys singing the more familiar favourites of the choral repertoire as demonstrated by the programme for the current season. Kingston Choral Society has around 100 members drawn from a wide area of southwest London and north Surrey. New members are always welcome. The choir performs four concerts a year, usually in Kingston Parish Church. Rehearsals are held on Thursday evenings (8pm-10pm) at Hollyfield School, Surbiton, in term time. Kingston Choral Society also holds regular social and fund-raising events and occasional musical workshops.

If you are interested in joining, we look forward to hearing from you. Please talk to any member of the choir during the interval or at the end of the concert about joining. You can also contact the membership secretary, Elizabeth Siberry (020 8399 2982) for more information and arrange to come to a rehearsal.

Programmes.

This season Kingston Choral Society performed an exciting and varied programme of music, including the world premier of *Matilda* by Antony Le Fleming. Our next concert, 14 December at St Andrew's church in Surbiton, will carry on the society's tradition of innovative and unusual Christmas concerts by presenting a selection of Christmas carols and music from around the world — and in some cases demonstrating the traditions peculiar to a country. Next year, two concerts are already planned.

The first, 5 April 2003, will be a performance of Haydn's Paukenmesse and Faure's Requiem. On 28 June 2003 Kingston Choral Society will perform the Coronation Cantata by Sibelius — a rarely performed work — as well as Puccini's *Messa di Gloria*. Details of future concerts can be obtained from the box office (020 8977 8665). As a Friend of Kingston Choral Society you will receive advance notice of all our concerts.

Robin Page — Musical Director

Robin is based in London where he is the principal conductor and musical director of Thames Sinfonia, the Purcell Orchestra, Worthing Philharmonic Orchestra and Kingston Choral Society. He has conducted the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the London Symphony Orchestra Chorus and has made many appearances at the Royal Academy of Music and the London College of Music as a conductor and lecturer specialising in contemporary repertoire and Scandinavian music. Robin has given acclaimed performances of Sibelius and Nielsen symphonies and conducted the inaugural concert of the UK Sibelius Society in London. He has also given the first performance of many Swedish works, including such com-

posers as Stenhammer, Rosenberg, Lidholm and Börtz. He is guest conductor to Sundsvalls Kammarorkester in Sweden and has broadcast on Swedish National Radio.

Robin also has close links with the Baltic states. As guest conductor to the Estonian State Symphony Orchestra, he gave the first broadcast performance and broadcast in Estonia of Elgar's Enigma Variations. Elsewhere in Europe he recently recorded film scores with the Budapest Symphony Orchestra and the Bulgarian Symphony Orchestra. He has given concert broadcast performances with Polish Radio National Symphony Orchestra, the Hungarian State Opera Orchestra and the Silesian State Philharmonic Orchestra (Poland).

In Britain, Robin travels widely. For many years he was the principal conductor of the Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra and also conducted the Hallé Choir, Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra, Worthing Symphony Orchestra and the West Sussex Philharmonic Choir where he was their musical director for many years. He has given broadcasts on BBC Radio 3 with the BBC Ulster Orchestra.

As well as conducting, Robin is in great demand as an adjudicator, notably with regular appearances at the National Festival of Music for Youth at the Royal Festival Hall. For many years he was a visiting lecturer at Kingston University and has given classes for the Bandmaster Course at the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall.

Robin studied at Magdalen College School, Oxford, as a choral scholar, Gonville and Caius Colleges, Cambridge, as a choral exhibitor and as a postgraduate at the Royal Academy of Music, London.

Mark Knoop — Rehearsal Pianist

Mark Knoop has performed in Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Mongolia, the Netherlands, Germany, Canada and throughout the UK. He has also played at festivals including the Melbourne and Adelaide Festivals, the Sydney Spring Festival and the 1997 ISCM World Music Days.

He is co-artistic director of the contemporary music group Libra Ensemble and has appeared with such groups as ELISION Ensemble (Australia), Melbourne Symphony, Ensemble Modern (Frankfurt) and the Kingston Chamber Orchestra. He has conducted Ensemble Offspring (Sydney) and ensembles of The Australian National Academy of Music.

With Libra, Mark has conducted premieres of works by Jason Eckardt (*Tongues*) and Benjamin Marks (...à l'abîme béant) and the Australian premieres of Elliott Carter's *Clarinet Concerto* (with Carl Rosman, clarinet), Hans Werner Henze's *Kammermusik* 1958 and Michael Finnissy's *Various Nations*. He also performed the Australian premieres of Finnissy's mammoth piano cycle *The History of Photography in Sound* and Richard Barrett's *Tract*.

Mark has worked with many respected composers including Michael Finnissy,

Chris Dench, James Dillon, Liza Lim, Adam Yee, Benjamin Marks, Richard Barrett, David Young, Matthew Shlomowitz, Thomas Meadowcroft and many others. Solo works composed for him include Chris Dench's *into the wormworks* and *the heart's algorithms*, both members of the *Phase Portraits* cycle, Benjamin Marks's *La Chûte* and Matthew Shlomowitz's *Thinking Remembering*. Current commissions include a work for piano and ensemble by Dominik Karski, to be premiered in 2003 with the Libra Ensemble alongside Messiaen's *Oiseaux Exotiques*.

Now based in London, Mark performs regularly in a duo with cellist Christina Waldoek as well as in other chamber music and as a soloist. He is currently undertaking a recording for the METIER label of Chris Dench's 30-year *Phase Portraits* cycle.

Purcell Orchestra

The Purcell Orchestra, performing on period instruments, is a collection of friends all of whom work with major London period ensembles and orchestras. Robin Page conducted the first London performance of Purcell's King Arthur with the orchestra at the Queen Elizabeth Hall in 1982.

Peter Hanson — Leader

Peter Hanson was brought up in a household full of renaissance recorders, baroque flutes, harpsichords and the sounds of baroque music. He became a member of the National Youth Orchestra and studied with Peter Cropper of the Lindsay String Quartet. While at the Royal Academy of Music he formed the Hanson String Quartet, which became noted for its performances of 20th Century works and Russian Romanics, giving regular BBC radiobroadcasts, foreign tours and London recitals. In 1988 the group was quartet-in-residence of the Aldeburgh Foundation. Peter has also played with some of London's most prominent chamber orchestras and ensembles, including the Nash Ensemble, the Academy of Saint Martin-in-the-Fields and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. More recently he has become absorbed in the baroque style of playing, appearing as a guest leader for Christopher Hogwood, John Eliot Gardiner and Rodger Norrington. In 1992 he was appointed leader of the English Concert under Trevor Pinnock. This involved him in many CD recordings, TV appearances and solo concerto performances. Peter has also performed with the Eroica String Quartet, dedicated to the performance of the romantic quartet repertoire. He plays a violin by Spiritus Sorsano made in the 1720s.



Rachel Chapman — Soprano

Rachel Chapman read Music at Manchester University and, following graduation, began her operatic training with English National Opera on the Young Performers course. Since then, her operatic roles have included Barbarina, First Lady, Mabel, Micaela, Mimi, Pamina and Susan, as well as excerpts from Antonia, Adele, Gilda and Norina. Rachel's singing career has taken her all over the UK and Europe and further afield to Australia, New Zealand and Japan. She has performed several recitals at London venues and her next recital engagement is at St Martin-in-the-Fields in 2003. Rachel has performed in masterclasses given by Thomas Hemsley, Malcolm Martineau, Jonathan Hinden and Enza Ferrari.

Concert appearances include Bach's *B Minor Mass* (Marlborough College) and *Christmas Oratorio* (Manchester University), Monteverdi *Vespers* (Thaxted, Essex), Mozart's *Mass in C Minor* (Hadleigh, Suffolk) and Scarlatti's *Stabat Mater* (Salisbury Cathedral). As a chorister Rachel sings both at home and abroad with Trevor Pinnock's The English Concert and has made numerous recordings with the Monteverdi Choir, Corydon Singers, The Geoffrey Mitchell Choir and Singscape. Her most recent engagements were with Grange Park Opera (summer 2002) in *La Traviata* and *Anything Goes*, followed by study in Spoleto, Italy, where she performed in local churches and opera houses. Rachel studies with Margaret Lobo.

Lucy Ballard — Mezzo Soprano

Lucy Ballard began singing while at school in Oxford. After completing a BSc in archaeological conservation at Cardiff University, she went on to study at the Royal College of Music. Since leaving college in 1995, Lucy has built up a thriving career in solo and consort singing, performing and recording with many of the leading early music ensembles both in the UK and abroad. These include:

Anthony Rooley's Consort of Musicke, with whom she has recorded Dowland and his contemporaries; the Monteverdi Choir with Sir John Eliot Gardiner; the Clerks' Group with Edward Wickham; the Gabrieli Consort with Paul McCreesh; the Cardinal's Music with Andrew Carwood and the Tallis Scholars with Peter Phillips. Recent work has included tours to the US, China and the Far East with the Tallis Scholars and the Clerk's Group as well as participation in the Monteverdi Choir's *Cantata Pilgrimage* by JS Bach, and headlining the York Early Music Festival with a new Consort of Musicke programme *Ghosts, Kings, Harlots and Penitents*, which was repeated in Germany earlier this year. Future engagements include an artistic residency at Basel's *Schola Cantorum*, Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* in St Alban's Cathedral and the *Matthew Passion* in Leicester Cathedral at Easter 2003.

William Missin — Counter Tenor

William Missin studied history at New College, Oxford, and singing at the Royal College of Music. His performing repertoire ranges from renaissance choral music to contemporary operatic roles. Staged roles have included Britten's *Midsummer Night's Dream* for Anglia Opera, Gluck's *Orfeo* for Finchcocks Festival, Handel's *Il Pastor Fido* at the RCM, Monteverdi's *Orfeo in Aldeburgh*, Vanderharst's *The Sands of Time* in Belgium and the Netherlands, and Vinao's electro acoustic opera *Rashomon in Gothenburg* at the Almeida Festival.

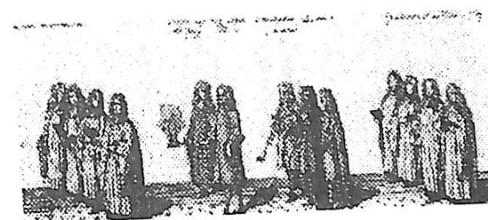
William regularly performs with early music groups such as Monteverdi Choir, the Tallis Scholars, Gabrieli Consort, the King's Consort and the Clerks' Group. In 1996 he was a winner of the Radio 3 Young Artists' Platform. As a concert soloist he has appeared in most of the major London concert halls. Recent performances have ranged from Bach's *St John Passion* in Wells Cathedral (sublime), to playing a castrato for the Royal Shakespeare Company in an 18th Century comedy (ridiculous), which won a mention in *Hello!* magazine.

Ashley Catling — Tenor

Ashley studied singing at the Guildhall school of Music and Drama and continues to study with William McAlpine. He recently completed postgraduate studies at the National Opera Studio on a scholarship from the Friends of Covent Garden and a Nelly Groner Bursary. He has performed a variety of operatic roles including Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, Nemorino in *L'Elisir*, Ernesto in *Don Pasquale*, Fenton in *Falstaff*, Basilio and Curzio in *Figaro* (for Pimlico Opera) and the male chorus in *The Rape of Lucretia*. Ashley recently created the role of Gawain in *Gywnneth and the Green Knight* by Lynne Plowman for Music Theatre Wales. Future engagements include *The Stargazer*, a new commission for solo tenor and orchestra, by Lynne Plowman with the London Mozart Players and the role of Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*.

On the concert platform, Ashley has appeared as a soloist at venues including the Barbican Concert Hall, the Royal Glasgow Concert Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, St John's Smith Square, St Martin-in-the-Fields and many others throughout the UK. Recent performances include Bach's *St Matthew Passion* with David Gibson and the Southampton Philharmonia Orchestra and chorus at Winchester cathedral and a recital of Britten songs for voice and harp in Aldeburgh.

Ashley has also worked with the composer Steve Reich touring Europe and the US, performing and recording the first part of his new video opera *Three Tales*.



Christopher Foster — Baritone

Educated at Newcastle University and the Britten-Pears School for Advanced Musical Studies, Christopher was a winner of the NFMS Young Concert Artists' Award. He was a finalist in the Richard Tauber Competition at the Wigmore Hall and was also selected to take part in Thomas Allen's inaugural singing course at The Samlings in the Lake District.

His concert work has seen him perform throughout the UK and Europe with orchestras that include the BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, Britten Sinfonia, Les Musiciens du Louvre, Chapelle Royale, Vlaams Radio Orkest, Anima Eterna and the Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg and conductors such as Pierre Boulez, Sir Andrew Davis, Mark Minkowski, Phillippe Herreweghe, Frieder Bernius and Joshua Rifkin. His concert work includes *The Messiah* at the Auditorio Nacional de Música (Madrid), the *B minor Mass* at the Teatro Monumental, Madrid, (for Spanish Television), the Latvian premiere of Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, two concerts in the Stravinsky Festival in Luxembourg and several concerts in Belgium performing works by Zelenka, Bach, Beethoven and Orff.

In December he will be the bass soloist in a performance of *The Messiah* in The Concert Hall of The Forbidden City, Beijing.

Christopher has appeared on radio broadcasts in France, Belgium and at home on BBC Radio 3. These have included the world premiere of Britten's *The Rescue of Penelope* and Busoni's *Arlecchino* (both in the Aldeburgh Festival at the Snape Maltings). Christopher's operatic roles include Mozart's Figaro (Kentish Opera, First Act Opera) and Count Almaviva (covered for Sir John Eliot Gardiner), Germont Père (Pavilion Opera) in *La traviata*, Marcello in *La bohème* (Opera del

Mar), Sam in Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti* (Gent, Belgium) and Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress* (studied at Britten-Pears School). His recordings include Purcell's *Timon of Athens* conducted by Trevor Pinnock and Bach's *Cantata No. 34* conducted by Sir John Eliot Gardiner, both for Deutsche Grammophon.



Programme

The Magnificat

Chorus

Magnificat anima mea Dominum
My soul doth magnify the Lord

Aria (soprano)

Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo.

And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

Aria (soprano)

Quia repexit humilitatem ancillae suae; ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent.

For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth [all generations] shall call me blessed.

Chorus

Omnes generationes.
All generations.

Johann Sebastian Bach

Aria (bass)

Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est, et sanctum nomen eius.

For He that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is His name.

Aria (Duet — alto, tenor)

Et misericordia a progenie in progenies timentibus eum.

And His mercy is on them that fear Him from generation unto generation.

Chorus

Fecit potentiam in brachio suo, dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.

He hath shewed strength with His arm; He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

Aria (tenor)

Deposuit potentes de sede et exaltavit humiles.

He hath put down the mighty from their



seats, and exalted them of low degree.

Aria (alto)

Esurientes implevit bonis et divities dimisit inanes.

He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich He hath sent empty away.

Aria (trio — sopranos, alto)

Suscepit Israel puerum suum recordatus misericordiae suae.

He hath holpen His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy.

Chorus

Sicut locutus est ad Patres nostros, Abraham et semini eius in saecula. As He spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.

Arrival of the Queen of Sheba

George Frideric Handel
Purcell Orchestra

Interval

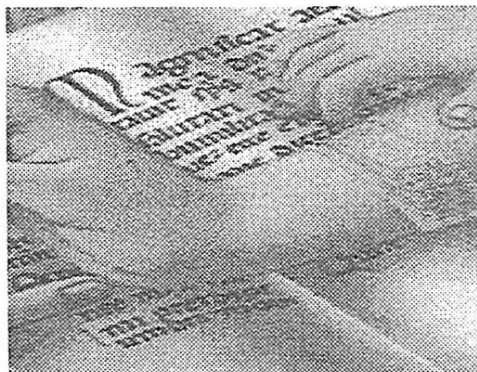
Hail, Bright Cecilia

Henry Purcell
Text by Nicholas Brady

Symphony

Chorus

Hail! Bright Cecilia, Hail! Fill ev'ry Heart
With Love of thee and thy Celestial Art;
That thine and Music's Sacred Love
May make the British Forest prove
As famous as Dodona's Vocal Grove:



Chorus

Gloria Patri, gloria Filio, gloria et Spiritui Sancto! Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Counter-tenor, bass

Hark! hark! Each Tree its silence breaks,
The Box and Fir to talk begin!
This in the sprightly Violin,
That in the Flute distinctly speaks!
'Twas Sympathy their list'ning Brethren drew,
When to the Thracian Lyre with leafy Wings they flew.

Tenor

'Tis Nature's Voice; thro' all the moving Wood
Of Creatures understood:
The Universal Tongue to none
Of all her num'rous Race unknown!
From her it learn'd the mighty Art
To court the Ear and strike the Heart:
At once the Passions to express and move;
We hear, and straight we grieve or hate, rejoice or love:
In unseen Chains it does the Fancy bind;
At once it charms the Sense and captivates the Mind.

Chorus

Soul of the World! inspir'd by thee,
The jarring Seeds of Matter did agree,
Thou didst the scatter'd Atoms bind,
Which, by the Laws of true proportion join'd,
Made up of various Parts one perfect Harmony

Soprano

Thou tun'st this World below, the Spheres above,
Which in the Heavenly Round to their own Music move.



Counter-tenors, bass

With that sublime Celestial Lay
Dare any Earthly Sounds compare?
If any Earthly Music dare,
The noble Organ may.
From Heav'n its wondrous Notes were giv'n,
(Cecilia oft convers'd with Heav'n,) Some Angel of the Sacred Choir
Did with his Breath the Pipes inspire;
And of their Notes above the just Resemblance gave,
Brisk without Lightness, without Dulness Grave.

Bass

Wondrous Machine!
To thee the Warbling Lute,
Though us'd to Conquest, must be forc'd to yield:
With thee unable to dispute,

Counter-tenor

The Airy Violin
And lofty Viol quit the Field;
In vain they tune their speaking Strings
To court the cruel Fair, or

praise Victorious Kings.
Whilst all thy consecrated Lays
Are to more noble Uses bent;
And every grateful Note to Heav'n repays
The Melody is lent.

Counter-tenor, tenor

In vain the Am'rous Flute
and soft Guitar,
Jointly labour to inspire
Wanton Heat and loose Desire;
Whilst thy chaste Airs do

gently move
Seraphic Flame and Heav'nly Love

Counter-tenor

The Fife and all the Harmony of War,
In vain attempt the Passions to alarm,
Which thy commanding Sounds com-
pose and charm.

Chorus

Hail! bright Cecilia, Hail to thee!
Great Patroness of Us and Harmony!
Who, whilst amongst the Choir above
Thou dost thy former Skill improve,
With Rapture of delight dost see
Thy Favourite Art
Make up a Part
Of infinite Felicity.
Hail! bright Cecilia, Hail to thee!

Magnificat (1731) — JS Bach

The original version of the *Magnificat* dates from Christmas 1723, Bach's first year as Kantor at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig, where there was a tradition of performing the *Magnificat* twice a week in German. At Christmas, Easter and Pentecost the Latin text was used. This first version was in E flat and included interpolated texts for the Christmas celebrations. Between 1728 and 1731 Bach revised the score, making major changes and transposed to D major, the customary key for jubilant works, and incorporated trumpets and timpani. At the same time the Christmas interpolations were removed, the instrumentation changed (flutes replaced recorders) and the work was significantly edited with changes to melodies and rhythms. It is this last version which has entered the repertoire and is being performed tonight.

The *Magnificat* is scored for five soloists (SSATB), five-part choir, 3 trumpets, timpani, 2 oboes, strings and continuo. The work contains many of the Baroque musical commonplaces, but set in a new way, and has come to be one of the most popular of this period. The customary format for choral works of the period was to alternate between recitatives and da capo arias. Bach eschewed this in favour of 12 sections of paired texts arranged to frame the choral fugue, *Fecit potentiam*.

The work opens with the exuberant chorus *Magnificat* with full orchestra, timpani and trumpets working overtime. *Et Exultavit* affords an opportunity for word painting with a rising theme and a soprano line over strings and continuo.

Quia Respexit is a reflective movement for soprano and obligato oboe over bassoon and continuo. This is interrupted by the sudden entry of the full choir at *Omnes Generationes*. *Quia fecit* is a dignified bass aria with obligato bass and continuo. The duet for alto and tenor, *Et Misericordia*, has a wonderfully plangent tone. It is in the minor with obligato flutes over a gently rocking bass.

The choral fugue, *Fecit Potentiam*, is the heart of the work. In the jubilant mood of D major with full orchestra including trumpets and timpani, it returns followed by the tenor aria *Deposuit Potentes*, with a descending theme and an energetic accompaniment on strings and continuo.

The alto aria *Esurientes Implevit* has a lean texture of soloist and two flutes over continuo. In the trio *Suscepit Israel* the oboes intone a cantus firmus behind the semi-chorus trio. The repeated entries of the theme in the choral fugue, *Sicut Locutus Est*, give a feeling of perpetual motion leading to the Gloria with its tremendous (and tricky) rising and falling melismas on the word "Gloria". Finally, *Sicut Erat in Principio* provides the customary repeat of music from the first movement and ends the work with a satisfying unity.

Bibliography CD cover notes for 458 370-2, Decca, George Hall. CD Cover notes for 414 678-2, L'Oiseau-Lyre, Adrian P Powers and Stephen Daw.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750)

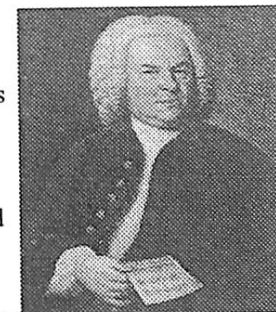
Johann Sebastian Bach was born in Eisenach on 21 March 1685, the eighth child of Johann Ambrosius Bach and Maria Lämmerhirt. He was educated at the Lateinschule, renowned for its humanist and theological education. Bach's musical education began early, with his father, a renowned musician and violinist, acting as teacher. When his father died in 1695, Bach (aged 10) went to live with his older brother Johann Christoph, the organist at St Michael, Ohrdruf. Although Christoph gave keyboard lessons to the younger Bach, he did not teach him composition — something it is believed he actively discouraged. Bach had an uncommonly fine soprano voice and in 1700 went to Lüneberg and joined the choir of the Michaelisschule.

While there he befriended the organist of the Johanniskirche, Georg Böhm (1661-1733), who fostered Bach's interest in the instrument. It was probably at Böhm's urging that Bach made several trips to Hamburg to hear Johann Adam Reinken (1623-1722) playing at the Katherinkirche. Reinken was Böhm's teacher, a pupil of the great Dutch organist Jan Pieterzoon Sweelinck (1562-1621) and an influential figure in organ music of the north German school. Bach's earliest known compositions date from this period and show the influence of Böhm.

In 1703, having left Lüneberg, Bach acted as an examiner for a newly built organ in Arnstadt. He so impressed the authorities with his playing that he was hired as organist over the existing incumbent. In 1704 Bach asked for four weeks' leave to go to Lübeck to hear the great organ virtuoso Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707). Travelling on foot, he did not return for three months. This worsened the already strained relationship between Bach and the Arnstadt town council. In June 1707 he left to become organist at Mühlhausen.

Four months later he married his cousin, Maria Barbara Bach. In 1708 Bach was appointed organist and chamber musician to the Duke of Saxe-Weimar where he spent nine years, extending his reputation as a virtuoso organist and writing his most famous organ works.

In 1717 Bach was offered the post of Kapellmeister to Prince Leopold of Cöthen. He was at first refused permission to leave Weimar and was imprisoned for a month before being dismissed in disgrace. Bach, freed from having to compose church music, concentrated on instrumental composition — his violin concer-





tos, the Brandenburg Concertos and numerous sonatas, suites and keyboard works.

In 1720 Maria Barbara died while Bach was visiting Karlsbad. Just a year later he married Anna Magdalena Wilcke, daughter of a court trumpeter at Weissenfels. A week after this wedding, the Prince Leopold married. His wife showed little interest in the arts, so Bach's duties at Cöthen were reduced in number and importance. So when the position of Kantor of the Thomaskirche in Leipzig became free, Bach applied. Although the Leipzig

council approached first Telemann and then Graupner for the post, they both declined. Bach was hired and was responsible for the music in the four principle churches of Leipzig.

During this time he composed five cycles of cantatas for the church year, each comprising about 40 cantatas, a Magnificat and several Passions settings. By now Bach was renowned as a virtuoso organist and in demand as a teacher and an expert in organ construction and design. With the publishing of many of his works, his reputation spread.

From 1729 Bach composed less church music, writing works intended either for instruction or as a testimonial to his skills. From this period date the B minor Mass, the Christmas Oratorio, the Musical Offering and The Art of Fugue. He also took over the direction of the Collegium Musicum that Telemann had founded in 1702. This was an amateur society which gave regular public concerts. For these Bach arranged harpsichord concertos and composed several large-scale cantatas (or serenatas) to impress the Elector of Saxony, who in 1736 granted Bach the courtesy title of Hofcompositour.

In 1749 Bach's eyesight had significantly deteriorated and he was completely blind. He was operated on by the eminent English surgeon, John Taylor (who was later to perform a similar operation on Handel), operated on Bach but was only partially successful. The second operation and subsequent treatments Bach received probably hastened his death from a stroke on 28 July 1750.

Sources: *The New Grove Dictionary of Music*, *The Oxford Companion to Music*.

Hail! Bright Cecilia (1692) — Henry Purcell



The first record of a performance of a St Cecilia's Day concert in London dates from 1683. The newly formed Musical Society commissioned Henry Purcell to write a piece to a poem by Christopher Fishburn, *Welcome to all the pleasures*. It proved such a success that it became a regular event for the next 20 years. The concerts began with a church service and then went on to the new commission. Purcell was commissioned on two other occasions, culminating in 1692 with his most lavish setting, *Hail! Bright Cecilia*. The poem by Nicholas Brady is based closely on Dryden's ode of

1687. There are references throughout to instruments which Purcell's composition reflects with many changes of instrumentation and frequent word painting.

The score calls for six soloists (soprano, 2 altos, tenor, and 2 basses — although tonight we have only one bass soloist), a six-part chorus (SSAATB), flutes, bassoon, oboes, trumpets, timpani, strings and continuo. Writing on this scale of grandeur was a novelty for secular music at that time and the effect was so great that at its premier the work was "perform'd twice with universal applause".

Tonight we omit section 12, the bass duet. The overture comprises five sections and, with all its repeats, is one of the longest written at that time. It starts in D major with trumpets and timpani moving to the second section of the overture, canzona, a double fugue whose theme sare connected to the finale. The next movement *Hail! Bright Cecilia*, begins with a solo bass before the choir joins in with shouts of "Hail".

Hark each tree is in the form of a sarabande over a ground-bass, heard on its own at the beginning. The ground-bass was a technique much loved by Baroque composers and by Purcell in particular. It involves setting up a repeating bass line which is decorated with changing harmonies and over which a melody is floated. Purcell was particularly good at creating melodies which overcame the restrictions of rhythm and tonality which are implicit in a ground-bass.

'Tis Nature's voice is a solo for alto, accompanied by cello, lute and continuo. In the first performance this "was sung with incredible graces [ornaments] by Mr Purcell himself". Purcell had an excellent bass voice and must presumably have sung this in falsetto.

The chorus, *Soul of the World*, has plenty of opportunity for word painting. The dissonance on 'The jarring seeds of nature' is particularly effective.

Thou tun'st this world is a minuet filled with dotted rhythms. It is in three sections; firstly a trio sonata for oboes, then a soprano aria and finally a chorus.

With that sublime celestial lay is a depiction of Cecilia playing the organ, with a trio of soloists (alto, tenor and bass), finishing with lute, cello and continuo evoking the organ.

Wond'rous machine is a particularly attractive aria for bass soloist, oboes, bassoon, cello, lute and continuo. This is another ground-bass which chugs away in a manner suggestive of a machine. *The airy violin* is appropriately scored for violins and tenor soloist. The duet, *In vain the amorous flute*, is the last of the arias on a ground-bass. The use of two recorders to mimic the amorous flute gives the piece a pastoral feel. The tenor aria, *The*

fife and all the harmony of war, has a suitably martial scoring of trumpets and timpani.

The finale *Hail! Bright Cecilia* is in three sections, first for chorus, which is repeated for a quartet of soloists. When the choir returns in the last section, the basses have the main theme in double augmentation (the notes of the main theme are extended to four times their note value) that gives it the feeling of a chorale tune.

Bibliography: *Programme Notes to CD CDA 66349, Hyperion, Robert King 1989. The Master Musicians, JM Dent & Sons Ltd, JA Westrup 1980, pp 191-194. Listening guide to this month's CD, BBC Magazine November 2002 (Vol 12, No 3), Simon Heighes, pp 5-6.*



Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

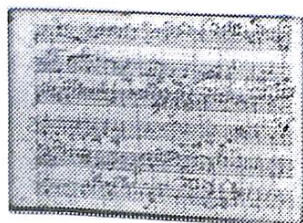
Henry Purcell lived at a time of great social and political change in Great Britain. However, details of his personal life are scant. Purcell was born in 1659, probably in Westminster, between June and November, but no record of his baptism has been found. Both his father (Thomas) and uncle (Henry) were professional musicians. There is no record of how they earned their living during the Commonwealth when music making was severely restricted. After the death of Oliver Cromwell and the Restoration in 1660, one of the first tasks the new King Charles II performed was to rebuild the royal musical establishment. Thomas and the elder Henry both became gentlemen of the Chapel Royal. In 1667 John Playford published *A Musical Companion* containing a song, "Sweet tyranness, I now resign", by Henry Purcell. It was once thought to be by the elder Henry (the composer's uncle). However, it is now believed to be by the eight-year-old Henry. In 1669 young Henry joined the Chapel Royal choir. That year had a distinguished intake including Michael Wise and John Blow, the latter becoming a lifelong friend of Purcell. As part of the choir training, Purcell learnt to play the organ and quickly became proficient. When his voice broke in 1673 he was apprenticed to John Hingston, the keeper of the King's instruments. The following year he was put in charge of tuning the organ in Westminster Abbey. At this time John Blow was the organist and it is likely that he gave Purcell organ lessons.

In 1677 Purcell was appointed Composer-in-ordinary to the King's violins. This gave him the opportunity to compose orchestral music and to develop his composing skill. In 1679 he was appointed organist at Westminster Abbey.

In 1680 Purcell married Frances Peters. Among Purcell's compositions at this time are numerous songs, four part fantasias, welcome odes for official occasions and the incidental music for the play *Theodosius*. In 1685 he was appointed to the King's private music, his last royal appointment.

By now Purcell was involved in all the arenas of music making in London — the court, the church and the theatre. The experience and skills that each provided benefited and fed into the others. In autumn 1695 Purcell became ill, caused, it is said, by being locked out of his house all night. On 21 November 1695 he made his last will and testament and later that night died. The dean and chapter decided to bury him at Westminster Abbey, and not charge his widow for the service. Frances chose the north transept, at the foot of the organ, for Purcell's final resting-place. The funeral was reported to have been "splendid" with the whole chapter attending in vestments, and choirs of the Chapel Royal and

Westminster Cathedral present. The music was the same as Purcell had composed for the funeral of Queen Mary only eight months earlier.



Bibliography: Programme Notes to CD CDA 66349. Hyperion, Robert King 1989. The Master Musicians, JM Dent & Sons Ltd, JA Westrup 1980, Listening guide to this month's CD, BBC Magazine November 2002 (Vol 12, No. 3), Simon Heighes, pp 5-6.

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