



Bach *Weihnachts-Oratorium* **(Christmas Oratorio) Parts 1, 2, 5 & 6**

Cadogan Hall
5 Sloane Terrace
London SW1X 9DQ

Saturday
18 December 2010
7.30 pm



£2.50



Since its formation in 1949, Kingston Choral Society has earned a reputation for concerts of a high standard and for performing a wide range of music. The Society enjoys singing the familiar favourites of the choral repertoire, but is not afraid of tackling ambitious projects and has, for example, performed a new commission by Peter Maxwell Davies, Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* in Russian and other pieces in Czech, Hebrew, Finnish and Swedish.

Kingston Choral Society has over 115 members drawn from southwest London and north Surrey. New members are welcome. The choir performs four concerts a year, usually in Kingston Parish Church, and two of the concerts are with a professional orchestra. Rehearsals are held on Thursday evenings (8-10 pm) at The 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, please talk to any member of the choir during the interval or at the end of the concert. You can also contact the membership secretary on kcs-enquiries@blueyonder.co.uk or Denis Down on 020 8949 4961 for more information and arrange to come to a rehearsal.

GRAHAM ROSS – Musical Director

Graham Ross is a composer and conductor of a wide range of repertoire. He studied at Clare College, Cambridge and at the Royal College of Music, supported by an H.R. Taylor Trust Award for Conducting and a BBC Performing Arts Bursary. He is co-founder and Principal Conductor of The Dmitri Ensemble, with whom he has explored in particular many rarely performed and newly-composed works, and recorded works by James MacMillan (Naxos), Vaughan Williams (Albion Records), Judith Bingham (Signum) and Giles Swayne (Naxos). He guest conducts ensembles and orchestras across the UK and beyond, and is increasingly involved in the field of opera, having conducting in Jerusalem, Aldeburgh, Glyndebourne and beyond. He has assisted Diego Masson and the RCM Symphony Orchestra, and worked as chorus master for Ivor Bolton and the Mozarteum Orchester and Sir Colin Davis and the London Symphony Orchestra.

In the 2010/11 season projects include re-engagements with Aalborg Symfoniorkester in Denmark, *Così fan tutte* in Provence and London with Vignette Productions, concerts with Hertfordshire, East Anglia and Kensington Chamber Orchestras.

As a composer he has had performances and broadcasts given by, amongst others, Aurora Orchestra, Australian Chamber Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, Choir of London, City of London Sinfonia, National Youth Choir of Great Britain, the Solstice Quartet and O Duo. Forthcoming works include performances at the Edington, Farnham, Musique-Cordiale, Three Choirs and London Contemporary Church Music Festivals.

In September 2010 Graham became Director of Music at Clare College, Cambridge, and this is therefore his last concert as Musical Director of Kingston Choral Society.

MARY BEVAN - Soprano

Mary is in her second year of the Royal Academy of Music Opera School studying with Lillian Watson and Audrey Hyland. Mary grew up in Somerset and Berkshire and studied Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic at Trinity College, Cambridge. Recent performances include Handel's *Messiah* with the English Chamber Orchestra (ECO) and Raymond Leppard (Cadogan Hall), Thomas Arne's *Alfred* with the Classical Opera Company at King's Place, a 'Sisters' recital with Sophie Bevan at the Oxford Lieder Festival, a Valentine's Day concert at the Wigmore Hall, a solo recital at the Oxford Lieder Festival, Rutter's *Requiem* at the Albert Hall, Britten's *Les Illuminations* on the ECO Music Cruise with Vladimir Ashkenazy and at Cadogan Hall, Handel's *Apollo e Dafne* with the Classical Opera Company at King's Place, Bach's *St Matthew Passion* with the Hanover Band (Canterbury Cathedral).

Recordings include a première of *Fen and Flood* by Patrick Hadley with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and Paul Daniel, and *Handel in the Playhouse*, a CD of Handel duets and songs with L'Avventura London. Operatic roles include Barbarina and cover Susanna for Garsington Opera's 2010 production of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Despina (*Così fan tutte*) for Musique Cordiale Festival in France and with John Cox and Jane Glover for RAO Opera, Iris in Handel's *Semele* under Sir Charles Mackerras, Pamina and Papagena in *The Magic Flute* (Palestine Mozart Festival and British Youth Opera respectively), and Frasquita in *Carmen* (Opera de Baugé). Future engagements include Handel's *Messiah* (Royal Albert Hall), and Rebecca in the premiere of Nico Muhly's opera *Two Boys* for English National Opera. At the Academy, Mary recently won the prestigious Richard Lewis/Jean Shanks Competition and also the Isabel Jay Prize for opera. She is a Kohn Bach Scholar for the Bach Cantata series and a member of the Song Circle. She has been recently made an Associate Artist of the Classical Opera Company, and has been generously supported by the Countess of Munster Musical Trust, the Ian Fleming Charitable Trust Education Award (MBF), the Baroness de Turkheim Award, and a Harold Wingate Scholarship.

CHRISTOPHER AINSLIE - Counter-tenor

Christopher Ainslie started his singing career as a chorister in the choir of St George's Cathedral in Cape Town, his home city. It was with this choir, under the direction of Dr Barry Smith, that his solo career began. After moving to London in 2005 he completed his post-graduate studies at the Royal College of Music with distinction in 2007, and is now performing at some leading venues around the world. He studies privately with Mark Tucker, Paul Farrington and Audrey Hyland.

Christopher was the first counter-tenor to win the Richard Tauber Prize at the Wigmore Hall (2008) and won the Michael Oliver Prize in the 2007 Handel Singing Competition. He is a 2010 *Classical Opera Company* Associate Artist. His performance in the title role of Handel's *Poro* (conducted by Laurence Cummings, directed by Christopher Cowell, and part of the London Handel Festival) was highly acclaimed. Other opera roles include Innocent 4 in the world première of Birtwistle's *The Minotaur* at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (directed by Stephen Langridge and conducted by Antonio Pappano), the title role in Handel's *Tamerlano* in the Goettingen Festival, Germany (conducted by Nicholas McGegan and directed by Johanna Garpe), Ottone in *L'incoronazione di Poppea* in Drottningholms Slottsteater, Sweden (directed by Johanna Garpe and conducted by Mark Tallow), the title role in Arne's *Artaxerxes* at the Royal Opera House (Linbury Theatre, directed by Martin Duncan and conducted by Ian Page), Medoro in *Orlando* with Independent Opera at the Wigmore Hall and at Sadler's Wells (directed by Alessandro Talevi and conducted by Gary Cooper), Arsace in Handel's *Partenope* in *Les Azuriales Opera Festival*, France, The Voice of Apollo in *Death in Venice* with Opéra de Lyon (directed by Yoshi Oida and conducted by Martyn Brabbins), Ruggiero in Handel's *Alcina* with Latvian National Opera, the title role in *Rinaldo* in Sigulda, Latvia, Alessandro in *Tolomeo Rè d'Egitto*, in the 2006 London Handel Festival (directed by James Conway and conducted by Laurence Cummings), Arsamenes in an Edinburgh Festival Fringe production of *Xerxes* and *The Spirit in Purcell's Dido* and Aeneas at the Spier open-air theatre, Stellenbosch, South Africa.

Recent oratorio performances include Bach's *Weihnachts-Oratorium* in the Moscow Conservatory, conducted by Vladimir Jurowsky, Purcell's *Ode to St Cecilia* and Handel's *Te Deum* in D (Innsbruck, Utrecht and Antwerp Festivals) with *B'Rock* and Timothy Brown, the title role in Handel's *Solomon* (London Handel Festival), conducted by Laurence Cummings, *The Messiah*, with the Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Christopher Warren-Green and with the *Irish Baroque Orchestra*, conducted by Gary Cooper, Belshazzar (Cyrus) in the *Frauenkirche* in Dresden, Saul (David) in *St John's*, Smith Square, London, Judas Maccabeus in *Vilnius*; Blow's *Venus & Adonis* (Cupid) with Gary Cooper and *B'Rock* in Brugge and Ghent, Bach's *Matthäus-Passion* in Worcester Cathedral and with the London Handel Players in St George's, Hanover Square, Bach's *Johannes-Passion*, conducted by Madeleine Lovell and Vivaldi's *Gloria* with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra.

Christopher is rapidly establishing himself as a leading interpreter of repertoire within and outside the traditional confines of the countertenor voice-type. He enjoys giving recitals, and has recently performed at the Wigmore Hall (including works ranging from Dowland to Schubert and Mahler), in the London Handel Festival with *Ensemble Choclat*, with Laurence Cummings and the *Croatian Baroque Ensemble*, and with Harry Bicket and players from *The English Concert*.

Upcoming engagements include Ottone in Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* with Glyndebourne on Tour and his US opera debut in the title role in Handel's *Amadigi* at Central City Opera.

While qualifying as a Chartered Accountant in Cape Town, Christopher studied singing part time with Sarita Stern at the University of Cape Town College of Music, and viola with Jürgen Schwietering and Hermina de Groot. Since moving to London he has had lessons with Mark Tucker, Paul Farrington, Ryland Davies and David Daniels and has sung in master classes with Michael Chance, Peter Harvey, Ashley Stafford and Sarah Walker.

He is grateful for the significant support from Independent Opera in the formative years of his career.

SIMON WALL - Tenor

Simon Wall held a choral scholarship at St John's College, Cambridge, before taking up a scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music in London. In 2003 he premiered solos in John Tavener's epic *The Veil of the Temple* at both the Lincoln Center, New York, and at the BBC Proms. He has appeared as a soloist for Laurence Cummings, John Eliot Gardiner, Richard Hickox, Stephen Layton, John Rutter, and Sir David Willcocks. Operas include *Orfeo* and *Fairy Queen* with Emmanuel Haim, both for Opéra de Lille and Opéra du Rhin. He also created the role of Owl in *The Birds* by Ed Hughes, which premiered at the City of London Festival in July 2005. His 2008 Temple Festival *Dido and Aeneas* Sailor saw Andrew Porter/The Times describing him as 'a model of unforced, attractively direct English singing'. Recordings include Barber's operetta *A Hand of Bridge*, conducted by Marin Alsop, with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Tavener's *Veil of the Temple*, directed by Stephen Layton, Caccini songs with La Nuova Musica, Charles Wood's *St Mark Passion* (Evangelist) with the choir of Jesus College, Cambridge, Monteverdi *Vespers* with The Rodolfus Choir and *Lamenti* with Emmanuelle Haïm and Le Concert d'Astrée.

Recent performances include the Gilles *Requiem* at Dartington for Andrew Parrott; a John McCabe premiere at the 2009 Three Choirs Festival and for BBC Radio 3; the title role in Handel's *Jephte* at the 15th Haapsalu Early Music Festival, Estonia; a BBC Chamber Prom with Iestyn Davis, Richard Egarr and Academy of Ancient Music; the *St Matthew Passion* Evangelist at Snape Maltings for Mazaaki Suzuki and in King's College Chapel with King's College Choir and Stephen Cleobury; and various Handel Arias with Haydn's *Nelson Mass* at Snape Maltings with Trinity College Choir, the City of London Sinfonia and Stephen Layton.

SAMUEL EVANS - Bass

A former choral scholar of King's College Cambridge, Samuel is currently studying with Russell Smythe at the Royal College of Music International Opera School. He is a Samling Scholar and was a finalist in the 2007 Kathleen Ferrier Awards. In 2009 he won the Maisie Lewis Prize, which led to a Wigmore Hall recital, and also took First Prize and the Audience Prize at London Welsh Young Singer of the Year. He was recently a finalist in the Welsh Singer of the Year Competition at St. David's Hall, Cardiff.

In opera, he appeared on the 2009 Essential Scottish Opera tour, and has also performed Figaro *Le nozze di Figaro* and Guglielmo *Così fan tutte* for Vignette Productions in London and France, Traveller *Curlew River* for Mahogany Opera, Aeneas *Dido and Aeneas* for the Armonico Consort, Pallante *Agrippina* for Barber Opera in Birmingham, Leporello *Don Giovanni* for opera-by-definition, Sprecher *Die Zauberflöte* and Tirenio *Il Pastor Fido* at the Royal College of Music International Opera School (RCMIOS), and Judas *The Pilgrim's Progress* at Sadler's Wells under Richard Hickox. In concert he has performed the role of Le Grand Prêtre in Rameau's *Castor et Pollux* at the Salle Pleyel in Paris, under Sir John Eliot Gardiner.

Concert engagements have included Bach *Christmas Oratorio* at the Spitalfields Festival, Mozart *Requiem* at the Royal Albert Hall and St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Mozart *Vesperae Solennes de Confessore* in Salzburg Cathedral, Bach *St Matthew Passion* at the Fairfield Halls, Bach *B minor Mass* at the Prague Conservatorium, Faure *Requiem* and Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem* for Highgate Choral Society, Handel *Messiah* at the Leith Hill Music Festival, Handel *Samson* in Canterbury Cathedral, Rutter *Mass of the Children* with the Choir of London, as well as the roles of Centurion and Nicodemus in the UK première of Francis Greer's *The Passion of Jesus of Nazareth*, conducted by Stephen Cleobury and broadcast on BBC Radio 3. He recently gave the world première performance of Karl Jenkins' *Gloria* at the Royal Albert Hall.

Forthcoming engagements include the role of Jupiter in Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld* for the RCMIOS, recitals with the London Bridge Ensemble in the Peak Festival and with pianist William Vann at St. John's Smith Square.

THE PURCELL ORCHESTRA

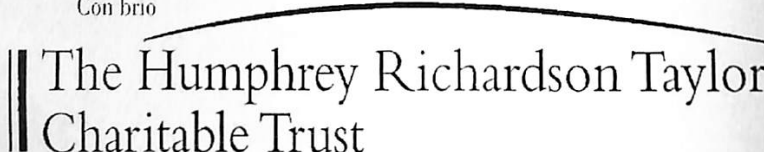
The Purcell Orchestra was founded in 1982 to give one of the very first performances of Purcell's *King Arthur* on period instruments, in a project devised by Robin Page and Richard Wistreich. The concert took place at the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London, with a group of handpicked singers including Evelyn Tubb and Emily van Evera.

Since then, the orchestra has accompanied numerous choral events, performing many major works of the baroque repertoire, including JS Bach *B Minor Mass*, *St Matthew & St John Passions*, *Magnificat* and *Christmas Oratorio*; CPE Bach *Magnificat*; Telemann *Tageszeiten*; Handel *Coronation Anthems*, *Messiah* and *Dixit Dominus*.

Since 2005, the Purcell Orchestra has given annual performances of Handel's *Messiah* at Christmas and Bach's *St John Passion* on Palm Sunday at the Church of St Mary Abbots, Kensington.

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JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

The death of Johann Kuhnau on 5 June 1722, meant that Leipzig needed a new Kantor for the Thomasschule. Six men applied, the most notable being Georg Philipp Telemann, the most famous German musician of the day, who had worked in Leipzig 20 years previously. The Leipzig town council offered him the post, and he accepted, but the authorities in Hamburg, where Telemann was already employed, would not let him go, and even increased his pay to keep him. The second choice of the Leipzig council was Christoph Graupner, but he too was unable to be released by his employers in Darmstadt. So the Leipzig council was forced to go for its third choice – Johann Sebastian Bach.

Bach took up his duties at the university church, the Thomaskirche, on 16th May 1723 with a performance of a church cantata, possibly number 59 "Wer mich liebet, der wird mein Wort halten". The post of Kantor at Thomaskirche was held jointly with the post of civic director of music. It involved organising the musical life of the four principal Leipzig churches - the Thomaskirche, the Nikolaikirche, the Matthaeikirche and the Petrikirche – as well as any other aspects of the town's musical life that were controlled by the town council; teaching Latin and music at the Thomasschule; playing the organ and training the choir. By 1729 Bach had also become involved with the collegium musicum, an ensemble originally established in 1702 by Telemann, composed of professional musicians and university students. They met weekly at Zimmermann's coffee-house to perform subscription concerts, and it provided Bach with an opportunity to compose secular music. It is not surprising, given his workload, that Bach was sometimes unable to complete everything that the town council asked of him, and there were frequent disputes between them.

Bach remained in Leipzig for the rest of his life, another 27 years, and during that time he wrote most of his important works, such as the B Minor Mass, BWV 232 (1749), St John Passion, BWV 245 (1724) and St Matthew Passion, BWV 244 (1736), Volume II of the Well Tempered Clavier, BWV870-893 (1722), the Goldberg Variations, BWV 988 (1741-2), the Art of Fugue, BWV 1080 (1740-5), the Musical Offering BWV 1079 (1747). These works are a summing up of Bach's knowledge and skill as a composer; they seem to show Bach consciously leaving a legacy for posterity.



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WEIHNACHTS-ORATORIUM - J. S. Bach

There were very few examples of musical settings of the Christmas story for Bach to draw upon as an example when he wrote his Christmas Oratorio, so it not surprising that he should revert to the style of his own Passion Oratorios. They share many characteristics; such as the use of Biblical text, chorales and freely written poems to tell the story, and in the wide variety of musical forms used.

It is believed that Bach wrote the Christmas Oratorio very quickly in the advent season of 1734, when cantatas were not performed in Leipzig, and so Bach had some time spare. It is a "parody work", compiled from music Bach had already composed. He used three secular cantatas written for Royal patrons (*Herkules auf dem Scheidewege*, BWV 213 written for the 11th birthday of Prince Friedrich of Saxony; *Tönet, ihr Pauken! Erschallet, Trompeten!* BWV 214 written for the birthday of the Maria Josepha, Electress of Saxony and Queen of Poland; and *Preise dein Glücke, gesegnetes Sachsen* BWV 215 written for the first anniversary of the Coronation of the Saxon King-Elector Friedrich August II as King August III of Poland) and a now lost cantata (BWV 248a), to furnish the arias (including the duets and trios). There is also a turbæ (crowd) chorus that was adapted from the St Mark Passion, BWV 247, a work that is now lost. The biblical choruses and chorales contain much that is new and original, so that the Christmas Oratorio is in no way subordinate to its models.

The process of compiling a parody work is not as easy as it would at first appear. Bach had to work out the biblical texts appropriate for the days on which the particular cantata would be performed; then the borrowed music would be chosen, based on the suitability of the character of the music to fit its new location. Finally the librettist had to provide new words to fit the required dramatic purpose within the existing metre of the music. We do not know for certain who the librettist was, but it is widely considered to have been Christian Friedrich Henrici, known as Picander, who had provided Bach with the texts to the St Matthew Passion, and who had provided parody texts in the past.

There is an interesting tension between whether the Christmas Oratorio is a single work or six separate works. It was Bach himself who called the work an "Oratorio", labelling it as such on the front pages of both the musical score and the libretto. According to the convention of the time this would have implied that it was a single work. This is reinforced further by the fact that it deals with a single section of the bible – the nativity of Christ and the events surrounding it up to the Epiphany. The key structure of the oratorio is based around D major, with the first, third and last parts all in this 'home' key, whilst Part II is in G major, and Part V is in A major, both a fifth away from the 'home' key, and Part 4 is the furthest away from the 'home' key, being in F major. Bach also used the same chorale melody for the first chorale in Part 1 and the last chorale in Part VI as a way of tying the work together. Despite that, the work was very definitely divided into six separate and distinct parts, which were allotted to be performed on specific days of the Christmas festival:-

Part I	1 st Day of Christmas 25 th December 1734	The Birth of Jesus
Part II	2 nd Day of Christmas 26 th December 1734	The Annunciation to the shepherds
Part III	3 rd Day of Christmas 27 th December 1734	The Adoration of the shepherds
Part IV	Feast of the Circumcision 1 st January 1735	The Circumcision and Naming of Jesus
Part V	1 st Sunday in the New Year 2 nd January 1735	The Journey of the Magi
Part VI	Epiphany 6 th January 1735	The Adoration of the Magi

Furthermore, the orchestral forces employed for each part are very different, and they were performed in two venues – the Thomaskirche and the Nicolaikirche. This did not cause Bach's audience any problems, the work's chief function was a religious one, and it was perfectly natural for it to be performed throughout the twelve nights of Christmas. However, these days we seem to have a shorter Christmas celebration and so it is more often to be heard in a concert hall than in a church, and, like tonight, as a truncated version, rather than as a whole oratorio.

Part I deals with the birth of Christ. It is scored for alto, tenor and bass soloists, four part choir, three trumpets, timpani, two flutes, two oboes, oboe d'amore, strings and basso continuo. It is predominantly in D major - the key in which natural trumpets sound their brightest. The opening chorus starts with the timpani beating out the theme that the chorus will enter on with *Jauchzet frohlocket!* Bach uses all the instruments to produce a very busy and jubilant movement; this music was taken from the opening of cantata BWV 214. Next come two recitatives, the first for the Evangelist (Tenor) with continuo, and the second for alto and the oboe d'amore. This leads to the alto aria *Bereite dich, Zion*, which has a lovely lilting accompaniment from violin and oboe d'amore; this movement is adapted from cantata BWV 213. Next is a touching chorale *Wie soll ich dich empfangen* for the choir to the tune *Herzlich tut mich verlangen* by Hans-Leo Hassler, familiar from its use in the St Matthew Passion. Then there is a short recitative for the Evangelist that leads to the chorale *Er ist auf Erden kommen arm*, for the sopranos with interruptions from the bass soloist. The next aria *Großer Herr, o starker König* for bass soloist with a trumpet, flute and violin accompaniment, is another adaptation from BWV 214. Part I ends with the touching chorale *Ach, mein herzliebes Jesulein* for chorus to the tune *Von Himmel hoch da komm ich her*.

Part II deals with the adoration of the shepherds. It is scored for alto, tenor and bass soloists, four part choir, two flutes, two oboe d'amore, two oboe da caccia, strings and basso continuo. It is predominantly in G major and is the only part to start with a purely instrumental movement, *Sinfonia*, which depicts the shepherds abiding in their fields watching over their sheep. The use of the oboe da caccia (literally translated this means "hunting oboe") represents the rustic pipes played by the shepherds.

The movement has a grace and simplicity that has made it justly famous. After a brief recitative from the Evangelist, we have a strong chorale for the chorus announcing the appearance of the angel, *Brich an, o schönes Morgenlicht*. The following recitative is for the Evangelist and the Angel, then a bass recitative introduces a brilliant aria *Frohe Hirten, eilet, ach eilet* for tenor exhorting the shepherds to hurry to see the holy child; this aria was adapted from cantata BWV 214. The Evangelist has a recitative that leads to the reflective chorale, *Schaut hin! dort liegt im finstern Stall*, on the same tune as the chorale that ended Part I. The bass recitative that follows leads to an exquisite cradle song for the alto, doubled by flute, and accompanied by oboes d'amore and violins, *Schlafe, mein Liebster, genieße der Ruh*; this movement was adapted from cantata BWV 215. A short recitative for the Evangelist brings us to the chorus *Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe* in which the whole orchestra and choir praise the glory of God. Another short recitative brings us to the chorale *Wir singen dir in deinem Heer*, which incorporates the tune from the opening *Sinfonia*, and so brings us full circle to the end of the Part II.

Part V deals with the journey of the Magi, and is scored for soprano, alto, tenor and bass soloists, four part choir, two oboe d'amore, strings and basso continuo. It is predominantly in A major. The opening chorus *Ehre sei dir, Gott, gesungen* is very fleet-footed, with lovely instrumentation and lots of imitation and interplay between the voices. Bach originally started to adapt a chorus from cantata BWV 215 for this chorus, but quickly realised that it was not suitable and wrote a new movement instead. Next there is a short recitative for the Evangelist, which introduces a chorus with alto recitative *Wo ist der neugeborne König der Juden?* The chorus is here used much in the style of a turbæ (crowd) chorus in the passion settings, to portray the three wise men, whilst the alto represents the response of the human spirit; this movement is widely believed to be an adaptation of a movement from the, now lost, St Mark Passion, BWV 247. There follows a stately chorale *Dein Glanz all Finsternis verzehrt*. In the aria that follows, *Erleucht auch meine finstre*, the bass is simply accompanied by a solo oboe and basso continuo; this movement is adapted from cantata BWV 215.

The next three recitatives, for Evangelist, alto, and Evangelist again, tell of King Herod's fear at the news of the new born king. The terzetto *Ach, wenn wird die Zeit ersch* is for soprano, alto and tenor soloists with solo violin and basso continuo and is believed to be an adaptation, but no model can be found among Bach's known works. A short alto recitative introduces the final choral *Zwar is solche Herzensstüb*.

Part VI deals with the adoration of the Magi. It is scored for soprano, alto, tenor and bass soloists, four part choir, three trumpets, timpani, two flutes, two oboes, oboe d'amore, strings and basso continuo and is predominantly in D major. The opening, fugal, chorus, *Herr, wenn die stolzen Feinde schnauben* has a prominent part for the trumpet which heightens the festive feeling. The recitative which follows is for the Evangelist and Herod, and deals with Herod's request to the wise men. The next recitative, for soprano leads directly into the soprano aria *Nur ein Wink von seinen Händen*, with oboes and strings. The Evangelist has a recitative that relates the arrival of the wise men with their gifts, and is followed by the chorale *Ich steh an deiner Krippen hier*. In the next aria the Evangelist tells of the dream the wise men have warning them not to return to Herod. The tenor then has a recitative followed by the heartfelt aria *Nun mögt ihr stolzen Feinde schrecken*, accompanied by the oboe d'amore. All four soloists have a recitative introducing the final chorale *Nun seid ihr wohl gerochen* with a virtuosic trumpet line, and using the tune *Herzlich tut mich verlangen* the same tune that was used in the first chorale in Part I.

Programme notes courtesy of Paul Chambers

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WEIHNACHTS-ORATORIUM - J. S. Bach

Part I: For the 1st Day of Christmas (25th December)

1. Chorus: Jauchzet, frohlocket, auf preiset die Tage

*Jauchzet, frohlocket, auf preiset die Tage
Rühmet, was heute der Höchste getan!
Lasset das Zagen, verbannet die Klage,
Stimmt voll Jauchzen und Fröhlichkeit an!
Dienet dem Hösten mit herrlichen Chören
Laßt uns den Namen des Herrschers verehren !*

Christians, be joyful, and praise your salvation,
Sing, for today your Redeemer is born.
Cease to be fearful, forget lamentation,
Haste with thanksgiving to greet this glad morn!
Come, let us worship and fall down before Him.
Let us with voices united adore Him.

2. Recitative (Evangelist - Tenor): Es begab sich aber zu der Zeit

*Es begab sich aber zu der Zeit, daß ein Gebot von
dem Kaiser Augusto ausging, daß alle Welt
geschätzt würde. Und jedermann ging, daß er sich
schätzen ließe, ein jeglicher in seine Stadt. Da
machte sich auch auf Joseph aus Galiläa, aus der
Stadt Nazareth, in das jüdische Land zur Stadt David,
die da heißet Bethlehem; darum, daß er von dem
Hause und Geschlechte David war: auf daß er sich
schätzen ließe mit Maria, seinem vertrauten Weibe,
die war schwanger, Und als sie daselbst waren, kam
die Zeit, daß sie gebären sollte.*

Now it came to pass in those days that there went out
a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world
should be enrolled. And all went to enrol themselves,
everyone to his own city. And there also went up
Joseph from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into
Judæa, to the city of David, which is called Bethle-
hem, for he was of the house and family of David, to
enrol himself with Mary his betrothed wife, being
great with child. And when they were there the days
were fulfilled that she should be delivered.

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3. Recitative (Alto): Nun wird mein liebster Bräutigam

Nun wird mein liebster Bräutigam, nun wird der Held aus Davids Stamm zum Trost, zum Heil der Erden einmal geboren werden. Nun wird der Stern aus Jakob scheinen, sein Strahl bricht schon hervor. Auf Zion, und verlasse nun das Weinen, dein Wohl steigt hoch empor!

See now the bridegroom, full of grace,
The hero of King David's race,
To save and heal the earth,
Doth stoop to mortal birth,
See now the star of Jacob shining,
Its beams delight our eyes,
Up, Zion, and forget thy sad repining,
For high thy bliss doth rise.

4. Aria (Alto):

*Bereite dich, Zion, mit zärtlichen Trieben,
Den Schönsten, den Liebsten bald bei dir zu sehn,
Deine Wangen müssen heut viel schöner prangen,
Eile, den Bräutigam sehnlichst zu lieben.*

Prepare thyself, Zion, with tender affection
The purest, the fairest this day to receive,
Thou must meet Him with a heart with love
o'erflowing,
Haste then, with ardour the Bridegroom to welcome.

5. Chorale:

*Wie soll ich dich empfangen,
Und wie begegn' ich dir?
O aller Welt Verlangen,
O meiner Seelen Zier!
O Jesu, Jesu, setze
Mir selbst die Fackel bei,
Damit, was dich ergötze,
Mir kund und wissend sei!*

How shall I fitly meet Thee,
And give Thee welcome due?
The nations long to greet Thee,
And I would greet Thee too.
O fount of light, shine brightly
Upon my darkened heart;
That I may serve Thee rightly,
And know Thee as Thou art.

6. Recitative (Evangelist - Tenor):

Und sie gebar ihren ersten Sohn, und wickelte ihn in Windeln und legte ihn in eine Krippe, denn sie hatten sonst keinen Raum in der Herberge.

And she brought forth her first-born Son, and she wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

7. Chorale (Sopranos) & Recitative (Bass): Er ist auf Erden kommen arm

Sopranos
*Er ist auf Erden kommen arm,
Daß er unser sich erbarm,
Und in dem Himmel mache reich
Und seinen lieben Engeln gleich.
Kyrieleis!*

Bass
*Wer will die Liebe recht erhöhen,
Die unser Heiland vor uns hegt?
Ja, wer vermag es einzusehen,
Wie ihn der Menschen Leid bewegt?
Des Höchsten Sohn kömmt in die Welt,
Weil ihm ihr Heil so wohl gefällt,
So will er selbst als Mensch geboren werden.*

Sopranos
He came so poor upon the earth,
Who rightly can the love declare
That fills our tender Saviour's breast?
He doth pity all of us,
O Lord, have mercy!
Bass
Yea, who can understand, or share
His grief for man by sin oppressed?
And in the heaven make us rich,
Himself the Son of God will give,
That we may be redeemed and live,
And like his angels in his heavenly home.
So now for this as Man behold Him born.

8. Aria (Bass): Großer Herr, o starker König

*Großer Herr, o starker König,
Liebster Heiland, o wie wenig achtest du der Erden Pracht,
Der die ganze Welt erhält,
Ihre Pracht und Zier erschaffen,
Muß in harten Krippen schlafen.*

Mighty Lord and King all glorious,
Saviour true, for man victorious,
Earthly state Thou dost disdain.
He who all things doth sustain.
Who all state and pomp supplieth,
In a lowly manger lieth.

9. Chorale: Ach, mein herzliebes Jesulein

*Ach, mein herzliebes Jesulein,
Mach dir ein rein sanft Bettelein
Zu ruhn in meines Herzens Schrein,
Daß ich nimmer vergesse dein!*

Ah! Little Jesu, my heart's love,
Make Thee a bed, soft, undefiled,
Within my heart, and there recline,
So that I may remember Thee.

Part II: For the 2nd Day of Christmas (26th December)

10. Sinfonia

11. Recitative (Evangelist - Tenor): Und es waren Hirten in derselber Gegend

Und es waren Hirten in derselben Gegend auf dem Felde bei den Hürden, die hüteten des Nachts ihre Herde. Und siehe, des Herren Engel trat zu ihnen, und die Klarheit des Herren leuchtet um sie, und sie fürchten sich sehr.

And there were shepherds in the same country, abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid.

12. Chorale: Brich an, o schönes Morgenlicht

*Brich an, o schönes Morgenlicht,
Und laß den Himmel tagen!
Du Hirtenvolk, erschrecke nicht,
Weil dir die Engel sagen,
Daß dieses schwache Knäbelein
Soll unser Trost und Freude sein,
Dazu den Satan zwingen
Und letztlich Friede bringen!*

Break forth, O beauteous, heavenly light,
And usher in the morning;
Ye shepherds, shrink not with afright,
But hear the angel's warning.
This child so weak in infancy,
Our comfort and our joy shall be,
There to subdue the devil,
And bring us peace eternal.

13. Recitative (Evangelist - Tenor): Und der Engel sprach zu ihnen Recitative (Angel - Soprano): Fürchtet euch nicht

Evangelista
Und der Engel sprach zu ihnen:

Engel
Fürchtet euch nicht, siehe, ich verkündige euch große Freude, die allem Volke widerfahren wird. Denn euch ist heute der Heiland geboren, welcher ist Christus, der Herr, in der Stadt David.

Evangelist
And the Angel said to them:
Angel

Fear not; behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

14. Recitative (Bass): Was Gott dem Abraham verheißen

Was Gott dem Abraham verheißen, das läßt er nun dem Hirten-Chor erfüllt erweisen. Ein Hirt hat alles das zuvor von Gott erfahren müssen. Und nun muß auch ein Hirt die Tat, was er damals versprochen hat, zuerst erfüllt wissen.

What God to Abraham revealed, He to the shepherds doth accord to see fulfilled. To shepherds, lo! our gracious Lord His purposes unfoldeth. That blessing which, in days of old, He to a shepherd first foretold, a shepherd first beholdeth.

15. Aria (Tenor): Frohe Hirten, eilt, ach eilet

*Frohe Hirten, eilt, ach eilet,
Eh ihr euch zu lang verweilet,
Eilt, das holde Kind zu sehn!
Geht, die Freude heißt zu schön,
Sucht die Anmut zu gewinnen,
Geht und labet Herz und Sinnen!*

16. Recitative (Evangelist - Tenor): Und das habt zum Zeichen

Und das habt zum Zeichen: Ihr werdet finden das Kind in Windeln gewickelt und in einer Krippe liegen.

17. Chorale: Schaut hin! dort liegt im finstern Stall

*Schaut hin, dort liegt im finstern Stall,
Des Herrschaft gehet überall!
Da Speise vormals sucht ein Rind,
Da ruhet itzt der Jungfrau'n Kind.*

18. Recitative (Bass): So geht denn hin, ihr Hirten, geht

*So geht denn hin, ihr Hirten, geht,
Daß ihr das Wunder seht:
Und findet ihr des Höchsten Sohn
In einer harten Krippe liegen,
So singet ihm bei seiner Wiegen
Aus einem süßen Ton
Und mit gesamtem Chor
Dies Lied zur Ruhe vor!*

19. Aria (Alto): Schlafe, mein Liebster, genieße der Ruh

*Schlafe, mein Liebster, genieße der Ruh,
Wache nach diesem vor aller Gedeihen!*

*Labe die Brust, empfinde die Lust,
Wo wir unser Herz erfreuen!*

20. Recitative (Evangelist - Tenor): Und alsobald war da bei dem Engel

Und alsobald war da bei dem Engel die Menge der himmlischen Heerscharen, die lobten Gott und sprachen.

21. Chorus (Angels): Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe

Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe und Friede auf Erden und den Menschen ein Wohlgefallen.

22. Recitative (Bass): So recht, ihr Engel, jauchzt und singet

*So recht, ihr Engel, jauchzt und singet,
Daß es uns heut so schön gelinget!
Auf denn! Wir stimmen mit euch ein,
Uns kann es so wie euch erfreun.*

15. Aria (Tenor): Frohe Hirten, eilt, ach eilet

*Haste, ye shepherds, haste to meet Him;
Why should ye delay to greet Him?
Haste this gracious Child to see.
Glad and joyful ye should be,
Of his wondrous love partaking,
Him your hope and comfort making.*

16. Recitative (Evangelist - Tenor): Und das habt zum Zeichen

And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.

*Within yon gloomy manger lies
The one who reigns above the skies:
Where once the oxen sought their food
The Virgin's child doth lay His head.*

*O haste ye then! ye shepherds, go,
Since you this wonder know,
And seek for God's Almighty Son,
Within a manger lying lowly;
And there, beside that cradle holy,
In sweet harmonious tone,
Sing all with one accord
To soothe your infant Lord.*

*Slumber, beloved, and take Thy repose,
Soon will Thou waken, our joy and Salvation.
O! may Thy breast find gladness and rest
In our heartfelt exultation.*

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying:

*Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, good will toward men.*

*'Tis right that angels thus should sing,
To us this day such joy doth bring;
Come then, our voices let us raise,
And join with them in songs of praise.*

23. Chorale: Wir singen dir in deinem Heer

*Wir singen dir in deinem Heer
Aus aller Kraft, Lob, Preis und Ehr,
Daß du, o lang gewünschter Gast,
Dich nunmehr eingestellt hast.*

Part V: For the Sunday after New Year

43. Chorus: Ehre sei dir, Gott, gesungen

*Ehre sei dir, Gott, gesungen,
Dir sei Lob und Dank bereit.
Dich erhebet alle Welt,
Weil dir unser Wohl gefällt,
Weil anheut
Unser aller Wunsch gelungen,
Weil uns dein Segen so herrlich erfreut.*

23. Chorale: Wir singen dir in deinem Heer

*With all thy hosts, O Lord, we sing,
And thanks and praise to Thee we bring;
For Thee, O long expected Guest,
Hast come at last to make us blest*

*Glory be to God Almighty,
Glory, thanks and praise be given.
All the world doth worship Thee,
Thou that wilt our Father be.
Thou that wilt henceforth grant our utmost longings.
And bring Thy children with joy unto heaven.*

44. Recitative (Evangelist - Tenor): Da Jesus geboren war zu Bethlehem

Da Jesus geboren war zu Bethlehem im jüdischen Lande zur Zeit des Königes Herodis, siehe, da kamen die Weisen vom Morgenlande gen Jerusalem und sprachen.

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, in the land of Judah in the days of Herod the King, behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, who said:

45. Chorus and Recitative (Alto): Wo ist der neugeborne König der Juden?

Chorus

Wo ist der neugeborne König der Juden?

Alto

Sucht ihn in meiner Brust, hier wohnt er, mir und ihm zur Lust!

Chorus

Wir haben seinen Stern gesehen im Morgenlande und sind kommen, ihn anzubeten.

Alto

Wohl euch, die ihr dies Licht gesehen, es ist zu eurem Heil geschehen! Mein Heiland, du, du bist das Licht das auch den Heiden scheinen sollen, und sie, sie kennen dich noch nicht, als sie dich schon verehren wollen. Wie hell, wie klar muß nicht dein Schein, geliebter Jesu, sein!

46. Chorale: Dein Glanz all Finsternis verzehrt

*Dein Glanz all Finsternis verzehrt,
Die trübe Nacht in Licht verkehrt.
Leit uns auf deinen Wegen,
Daß dein Gesicht
Und herrliches Licht
Wir ewig schauen mögen!*

Chorus

Where is the new-born King, the King of the Jews?

Alto

Seek him within my breast, For with me He vouchsafes to rest.

Chorus

For we have seen His star in the East, and are come to worship Him. Rejoice that you this light behold, That doth its kindly beam unfold.

Alto

My Saviour, Thou art the light that shall upon the Gentiles shine: thy beams shall make their darkness bright, and they shall surely hail it Thine, how pure, how clear, that light must be, that shines, O Lord, from Thee.

*All darkness flies before Thy face,
The shades of night to day gives place,
In Thy ways lead us ever,
That from Thy sight,
And glorious light,
Our eyes may wander never.*

47. Aria (Bass): Erleucht auch meine finstre Sinnen

*Erleucht auch meine finstre Sinnen,
Erleuchte mein Herze
Durch der Strahlen klaren Schein!
Dein Wort soll mir die hellste Kerze
In allen meinen Werken sein;
Dies lasset die Seele nichts Böses beginnen.*

O Lord, my darkened heart enlighten, And show to
Thy servant the brightness of Thy face. Thy word
doth shed upon the pathway of life the guiding light-
ness of grace, and suffers not there from my foot-
steps to wander.

48. Recitative (Evangelist – Tenor) Da das der König Herodes hörte

Da das der König Herodes hörte, erschrak er und mit ihm das ganze Jerusalem. And when Herod the King heard it, he was troubled,
and all Jerusalem with him.

49. Recitative (Alto): Warum wollt ihr erschrecken?

*Warum wollt ihr erschrecken? Kann meines Jesu
Gegenwart euch solche Furcht erwecken? O! solltet
ihr euch nicht vielmehr darüber freuen, weil er
dadurch verspricht, der Menschen Wohlfahrt zu
verneuen.*

With fear why are ye taken? Why should the presence
of the Lord in you such dread awaken? O! greet with
thankfulness the love He is revealing, He comes that
He may bless our sinful race with perfect healing.

50. Recitative (Evangelist - Tenor): Und ließ versammeln alle Hohepriester

*Und ließ versammeln alle Hohepriester und Schriftge-
lehrten unter dem Volk und erforschte von ihnen, wo
Christus sollte geboren werden. Und sie sagten ihm:
Zu Bethlehem im jüdischen Lande; denn also stehet
geschrieben durch den Propheten: Und du Bethle-
hem im jüdischen Lande, bist mitnichten die kleinst
unter den Fürsten Juda; denn aus dir soll mir kom-
men der Herzog, der über mein Volk Israel ein Herr
sei.*

And gathering together all the chief priests and
scribes of the people, he enquired of them where the
Christ should be born; and they said unto Him: In
Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, for thus it is written
by the Prophet: And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of
Judah, art in no wise the least among the princes of
Judah, for out of thee shall come forth a leader that
shall be Shepherd of my people Israel.

51. Aria (Terzetto - Soprano, Alto, Bass): Ach, wenn wird die Zeit erscheinen

*Ach, wenn wird die Zeit erscheinen?
Ach, wenn kömmt der Trost der Seinen?
Schweigt, er ist schon wirklich hier!
Jesu, ach so komm zu mir.*

Ah! when shall we see salvation?
Ah! when comes our consolation?
Peace, for surely this is He.
Jesus, Ah! then come to me.

52. Recitative (Alto): Mein Liebster herrschet schon

*Mein Liebster herrschet schon. Ein Herz, das seine
Herrschaft liebet und sich ihm ganz zu eigen gibet, ist
meines Jesu Thron*

My Lord is King alone, each heart for His glory liveth,
itself to Him that freely giveth, shall be the Saviour's
throne.

53. Chorale: Zwar ist solche Herzensstube

*Zwar ist solche Herzensstube
Wohl kein schöner Fürstensaal,
Sondern eine finstre Grube;
Doch, sobald dein Gnadenstrahl
In denselben nur wird blinken,
Wird es voller Sonnen dünken.*

This proud heart within us swelling
Is no palace rich and fair,
But a dark and gloomy dwelling,
Till Thou deign to enter there.
When Thy grace within it beameth,
Full of heavenly light it seemeth.

PART VI: For the Feast of the Epiphany

**54. Chorus: Herr, wenn die stolzen Feinde
schnauben**

*Herr, wenn die stolzen Feinde schnauben,
So gib, daß wir im festen Glauben
Nach deiner Macht und Hülfe sehn!
Wir wollen dir allein vertrauen,
So können wir den scharfen Klauen
Des Feindes unverehrt entgehn.*

**54. Chorus: Herr, wenn die stolzen Feinde
schnauben**

Lord when Thy haughty foes assail us,
O! may it for our peace avail us
To rest upon Thy mighty power.
Our only trust, do Thou befriend us,
All needful strength and succour send us,
To keep us safe in danger's hour.

55. Recitative (Evangelist - Tenor; Herod - Bass): Da berief Herodes die Weisen Heimlich

*Evangelista
Da berief Herodes die Weisen heimlich und erlermet
mit Fleiß von ihnen, wenn der Stern erschienen wäre?
Und weiset sie gen Bethlehem und sprach:
Herodus
Ziehet hin und forschet fleißig nach dem Kindlein, und
wenn ihrs findet, sagt mirs wieder, daß ich auch
komme und es anbete.*

*Evangelist
Then Herod called the wise men privily, and learned
of them exactly what time the star appeared. And he
sent them to Bethlehem, and said:
Herod
Go your way, and enquire exactly for the young child,
and when ye have found Him, bring me word, that I
may come and worship Him also.*

56. Recitative (Soprano): Du Falscher, suche nur den Herrn zu fallen

*Du Falscher, suche nur den Herrn zu fällen, nimm alle
falsche List, dem Heiland nachzustellen; der, dessen
Kraft kein Mensch ermißt, bleibt doch in sichrer Hand.
dein Herz, dein falsches Herz ist schon, nebst aller
seiner List, des Höchsten Sohn, den du zu stürzen
suchst, sehr wohl bekannt.*

Thou traitor, thou but seekest the Lord to kill, and
triest every craft to work on Him thy will. But He
whose power no tongue can tell is kept in all his
ways. Even now thy false and wicked heart, in spite
of all its craft, its traitorous part displays, before the
Lord thou seekest to kill.

57. Aria (Soprano): Nur ein Wink von seinen Händen

*Nur ein Wink von seinen Händen
Stürzt ohnmächtger Menschen Macht.
Hier wird alle Kraft verlacht!
Spricht der Höchste nur ein Wort,
Seiner Feinde Stolz zu enden,
O, so müssen sich sofort
Sterblicher Gedanken wenden.*

Nought against the power He wieldeth
Can our feeble arm prevail,
Nought doth all our might avail.
When His voice the Almighty shows,
All the earth before Him yieldeth,
Fall at once His haughty foes.
Them no pride from ruin shieldeth.

58. Recitative (Evangelist - Tenor): Als sie nun den König gehöret hatten

*Als sie nun den König gehöret hatten, zogen sie hin.
Und siehe, der Stern, den sie im Morgenlande gese-
hen hatten, ging für ihnen hin, bis daß er kam und
stund oben über, da das Kindlein war. Da sie den
Stern sahen, wurden sie hoch erfreuet und gingen in
das Haus und funden das Kindlein mit Maria, seiner
Mutter, und fielen nieder und beteten es an und taten
ihre Schätze auf und schenkten ihm Gold, Weihrauch
und Myrrhen.*

And they, when they had heard the King, went their
way. And lo, the star which they had seen in the east
went before them, until it came and stood over where
the young child was. When they saw the star, they
rejoiced accordingly, and coming into the house, they
saw the young child with Mary His mother; and falling
down, they worshipped Him, and having opened their
treasures, they offered him gold, frankincense, and
myrrh.

59. Chorale: Ich steh an deiner Krippen hier

*Ich steh an deiner Krippen hier,
O Jesulein, mein Leben;
Ich komme, bring und schenke dir,
Was du mir hast gegeben.
Nimm hin! es ist mein Geist und Sinn,
Herz, Seel und Mut, nimm alles hin,
Und laß dirs wohl gefallen!*

I stand beside Thy cradle here,
Little child my Jesus,
I come to bring and give to Thee
That which you have given to me.
Take it, it is my mind and will,
Heart, soul and strength, do take them all,
And may my gifts please Thee well.

60. Recitative (Evangelist - Tenor): Und Gott befahl ihnen im Traum

*Und Gott befahl ihnen im Traum, daß sie sich nicht
sollten wieder zu Herodes lenken, und zogen durch
einen andern Weg wieder in ihr Land.*

And being warned by God in a dream, that they
should not return to Herod, they departed by another
way to their own land.

61. Recitative (Tenor): So geht! Genug, mein Schatz geht nicht von hier

*So geht! Genug, mein Schatz geht nicht von hier, er
bleibet da bei mir, ich will ihn auch nicht von mir
lassen. Sein Arm wird mich aus Lieb mit sanftmuts-
vollem Trieb und größter Zärtlichkeit umfassen; er
soll mein Bräutigam verbleiben, ich will ihm Brust und
Herz verschreiben. Ich weiß gewiß, er liebet mich,
mein Herz liebt ihn auch inniglich und wird ihn ewig
ehren. Was könnte mich nun für ein Feind bei sol-
chem Glück verkehren! Du, Jesu, bist und bleibst
mein Freund; und werd ich ängstlich zu dir flehn:
Herr, hilf!, so laß mich Hülfe sehn!*

Depart! enough, my treasure I retain, with me He
doth remain, and while I live will not forsake me; He
to His kind embrace, with soft and gentle grace and
sweetest tenderness will take me. Now as my bride-
groom I will receive Him, and all my heart's devotion
give Him; full well I know He loveth me, and I, too,
love him heartily, and for His honour live. What foe
from me this joy can rend that He vouchsafes to
give? Thou, Jesus, art my constant friend, and in
distress I cry to Thee – Lord, help, my shield and
succour be.

62. Aria (Tenor): Nun mögt ihr stolzen Feinde schrecken

*Nun mögt ihr stolzen Feinde schrecken;
Was könnt ihr mir für Furcht erwecken?
Mein Schatz, mein Hort ist hier bei mir;
Ihr mögt euch noch so grimmig stellen,
Droht nur, mich ganz und gar zu fällen,
Doch seht! mein Heiland wohnt hier.*

Ye foes of man, your might is shaken,
Dismay no more in me ye waken,
My strength, my shield is ever near.
What, though with fear ye strive to fill me,
And threaten in your rage to kill me,
Behold! my saviour dwelleth here.

63. Recitative (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass): Was will der Höllen Schrecken nun

*Was will der Höllen Schrecken nun,
Was will uns Welt und Sünde tun,
Da wir in Jesu Händen ruhn?*

O'er us no more shall fears of hell avail,
what can the world and sin do?
Our Saviour, Jesus, will not fail.

64. Chorale: Nun seid ihr wohl gerochen

*Nun seid ihr wohl gerochen
An eurer Feinde Schar,
Denn Christus hat zerbrochen,
Was euch zuwider war.
Tod, Teufel, Sünd und Hölle
Sind ganz und gar geschwächt;
Bei Gott hat seine Stelle
Das menschliche Geschlecht*

Now vengeance hath been taken
On all the foes of man,
And Christ doth end in triumph
The conflict He began.
Death, the devil, sin and hell-fire,
Have all been overcome,
The human race now standing
Beside their Lord God's throne.

CADOGAN HALL HISTORY

First opened in 1907, the New Christian Science Church regularly seated "capacity" congregations of sixteen hundred in its heyday, however, like most other churches; there was a decline in attendances. In the 1980's there was a congregation of barely one hundred and fifty. By 1996 the congregation was no longer able to cope and sold the building which then fell into disuse - languishing in uncertainty, neglect and rapid decline.

It was Cadogan Estate that took the plunge, purchasing the building in 2000 to safeguard its future. Through their connection with Opera Holland Park, Cadogan discovered that the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra was looking for a permanent base in London. Cadogan Hall was an excellent opportunity for the Orchestra to benefit from Cadogan's aim to bring the former church back into useful life in a manner befitting its character and civic presence.

On one level the conversion of this large relatively modern listed building into a performance space seemed straightforward. After all, there was a ready-made auditorium with a raked floor, a stage, a proscenium and a gallery. Unfortunately modern expectations of comfort and facilities let alone the requirements of building and licensing regulations meant extensive and fundamental changes had to be made.

Public safety was a crucial consideration. The existing spaces and stairs now have modern fire-resisting construction backed-up by sophisticated fire detection and alarm systems. These combine with a management regime to ensure safety.

The acoustics of the building were the next big issue both in terms of environmental acoustics, the control of sound break-out from the building and performance acoustics within the Auditorium. Secondary glazing was installed to the large windows in the Auditorium. The ceiling and the roof over the Auditorium had to be re-detailed to provide acoustic insulation. Tuned resonator tubes were installed on the main ceiling and the walls under the gallery and the undersides of the tip-up seats in the stalls also have a pattern of absorption holes to retain the hall's acoustic character.

Modern standards of heating and ventilation would have been undreamed of by the overcoated congregations of the past. Refurbished original radiators in their original locations - supplemented by some new radiators in the offices - complete the heating system through out the building.

The new performance lighting and sound systems in the Auditorium include the computer controlled theatrical lights on the ceiling. These provide lighting for rehearsals but really come into their own when they are programmed to rotate, change light beam colours and patterns and provide other special effects for performances.

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Russell-Cooke Solicitors

Bishop's Palace House, Kingston upon Thames

A large screen for films and visual presentations can be lowered and allows performances elsewhere to be relayed live by satellite or the Internet. We like to think of this working mostly the other way with audiences around the world "tuning in" to performances from Cadogan Hall.

The organ installed in 1911 was carefully dismantled and put into store to await re-installation in its new home in a church in the Midlands. The organ casing, an integral part of the character of the Auditorium along with timber panelling and balustrading from the platform, was also put into store. When the organ screen was re-assembled and nearly a century of dirt was removed it was found that each of the column capitals and each of the carvings around the arching balustrade are unique - a surprise discovery that added to the richness of the building.

Despite the scale of the Auditorium the combined effects of the stage, the steeply raked stalls and the low gallery create a surprisingly intimate venue where the audience experiences a very real feeling of being part of the performance.

The stained glass was designed by a Danish nobleman. Baron Arild Rosenkrantz had learnt the art of stained glass whilst working with Tiffany in New York. The designs for Cadogan Hall were said to exhibit "artistic simplicity of patterning and to provide efficiency of lighting and economy consistent with dignity". There are no allegorical images and only one window has text. All the windows were removed and taken by a specialist to workshops for painstaking restoration. Although the Celtic knot motifs are simple and the use of colour restrained, the dramatic effect of the restored glass was another pleasant surprise during the refurbishment process.

The refurbishment and conversion of such a distinctive listed building for as demanding a new use as a concert hall necessarily involved a high level of commitment from Cadogan Estate, their consultants and contractors. Together as a team with other specialists and the assistance and advice of Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's officers it has been possible to bring about this seemingly effortless renaissance of the building retaining and enhancing its character and integrity whilst respecting and acknowledging its history and original purpose.

A history of the church written in 1931 (to which we are much indebted) expressed the aspiration that the building would be "able to respond to the call of progress". I hope you will agree that Cadogan Estate's vision and investment in the fabric and infrastructure has fulfilled this wish and should ensure that Cadogan Hall will continue to play a major part in the civic and cultural life of Chelsea and London for the next 100 years.

Courtesy of Calvin Bruce of Paul Davis and Partners

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