

Saturday 21 March 2020 at 7.30pm

Open Rehearsal 2.30 – 4pm

All Saints Church

Market Place

Kingston upon Thames

KT1 1JP



70TH
ANNIVERSARY

Handel *Coronation Anthems*

Bach *Magnificat*

Rameau *Suite from Dardanus*

Charlotte Bowden & Stephanie Hershaw Soprano

Emily Sierra Alto

Matthew Keighley Tenor

Edward Jowle Bass

Andrew Griffiths Conductor

with the **Purcell Orchestra**

TICKETS

£8 – £16 from 07770 932912

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or at the door

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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 130 members drawn from southwest London and north Surrey. New members are welcome. The choir performs four concerts a year, usually in All Saints Church, Kingston, and St Andrew's Church, Surbiton. 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 fundraising 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 020 8949 5253 or join@kingstonchoralsociety.org.uk for more information and arrange to come to a rehearsal.

~ ~ NEXT KCS CONCERT ~ ~

27th June 2020 at 7.30 pm

Bernstein *Chichester Psalms*, O'Regan *Dorchester Chronicles & Chilcott Canticles of Light*

**Tenor: Peter Harris; Organ: William Vann;
Harp: Rosanna Rolton; Percussion: Eddy Hackett**

Andrew Griffiths - Conductor

St Andrew's Church, Maple Road, Surbiton KT6 4DS

For further details contact the Box Office on 07770 932912

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~ ~ PROGRAMME ~ ~

Handel *Coronation Anthems*

Zadok the priest

Let thy hand be strengthened

The King shall rejoice

My heart is inditing

~ ~ INTERVAL ~ ~

Rameau Suite from *Dardanus*

Ouverture; Act III Minuets; Act III Tambourins; Chaconne

Bach *Magnificat*

- 1 Chorus
- 2 Aria (Soprano 2)
- 3 Aria (Soprano 1)
- 4 Chorus
- 5 Aria (Bass)
- 6 Duet (Alto, Tenor)
- 7 Chorus
- 8 Aria (Tenor)
- 9 Aria (Alto)
- 10 Trio (Sopranos 1 and 2, Alto)
- 11 Chorus
- 12 Chorus

Con brio

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KINGSTON CHORAL SOCIETY - PLATINUM ANNIVERSARY

This year we are delighted to celebrate the 70th year of Kingston Choral Society. It all began in December 1949 when the Mayor of Surbiton gathered local church choirs to sing Handel's Messiah in March 1950. Some of the singers involved in this event stayed together and became 'Surbiton Oratorio Society'. By 1985 the Society had become more closely involved with the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames and adopted its current name. Kingston Choral Society now has about 150 members and we perform 4 concerts each year, as well as singing at local community events and fundraising for other local charities.

HANDEL (1685-1759)

George Frederick Handel was born in Halle on 23 February 1685, the same year as JS Bach (1685 - 1750) and Domenico Scarlatti (1685 - 1757). Unlike them, he travelled widely outside his native country. He showed his musical aptitude at an early age, but his father felt that a career in law would be more desirable, and forbade him to touch a musical instrument. Handel secreted a clavichord in the attic and practised on this after the family had gone to bed. In 1696 Handel accompanied his father on a visit to the court of Saxe-Weissenfels, where his father held the post of barber-surgeon. Handel gained access to many musical instruments whilst there and his organ playing came to the attention of the Duke who persuaded Handel's father that his son should study music as well as law.

Handel entered the University of Halle in 1702 ostensibly to study civil law but was soon appointed cathedral organist. From this time comes his friendship with the composer Georg Philipp Telemann (1681 - 1767) who was studying law at Leipzig University. They used to correspond frequently and exchange views on musical matters. It was Telemann who introduced Handel to opera, and Handel became an avid convert. Unfortunately, Halle did not have an opera house, so in 1703 Handel decided that he must go to Hamburg and try his luck there. He started off as a violinist in the opera orchestra, and by 1705 he had written and produced his first opera, *Almira*.

In 1706 Handel went to Italy, which was then the centre of the operatic world. Not very much is known of his stay, however he had no trouble finding patrons. An important patron was Cardinal Pietro Ottobini (1667 - 1740), who also employed Arcangelo Corelli (1653 - 1713), the most popular musician of the period, from whom Handel learned a great deal about the Italian style of composition and violin playing. Handel wrote two operas whilst in Italy, *Rodrigo* (1707) and *Agrippina* (1709-10).

Handel's next port of call was England. At that time Italian opera was new to London audiences. They were very enthusiastic for it, and Handel saw his opportunity. The next opera he wrote, *Rinaldo* (1711), was the first Italian opera specifically composed for London. It was a great success, being performed 15 times, and was probably one of the events that convinced him to reside in London. He became a naturalised Englishman in 1727.



Kingston Choral Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Josephine Baker Trust for the soloists in this evening's concert

During the next 15 years Handel produced over 30 Italian operas for London, however from the 1730s the audiences started to dwindle. He shifted his attention to oratorio, introducing *Acis and Galatea* (1718) and *Esther* (1730) into the opera season of 1732. English oratorio did not exist as a form at that time, so Handel was creating it from scratch. By combining elements of French, German and Italian styles he managed to create a radically new form. With a few exceptions, his oratorios were dramatic works, with texts taken mostly from the Old Testament. With one particular oratorio, *Messiah*, Handel created a work against which all other native composers have been measured.

At his death on 14 April 1759, Handel asked permission of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey to be buried there at a private service. He provided £600 for a monument for himself and left a personal fortune of around £20,000. In the event, the service was very public with 3000 people attending. The monument by Louis-François Roubiliac (1702-1762) is set in the wall of the South Transept, and depicts Handel composing the air 'I know that my Redeemer liveth'.

CORONATION ANTHEMS

The Coronation of George II and Queen Caroline took place on 11 October 1727 at Westminster Abbey. It would have been expected that the Composer of the Chapel Royal would compose the anthems for the coronation, however things at the chapel were in a state of flux after the recent death of the composer and organist William Croft (1678 – 1727). His successor Maurice Greene (1696 – 1755) of St Paul's Cathedral was appointed on September 4th, but King George and Queen Caroline both requested that Handel be asked to provide the anthems instead, which may go some way to explaining the animosity that subsequently existed between both men. Legend has it that Handel argued with the Bishop of London over which texts to set, saying that he knew his bible and would select them himself. However, this seems unlikely since those chosen were the same as had been used for the Coronation of Charles I.

Handel had at his disposal 47 singers and a large orchestra of 160 instruments (we cannot afford to be quite so lavish with the players for tonight's performance). There were two public rehearsals in the fortnight before the coronation. *Parker's Penny Post* on the 4th October reported that 'Mr Hendle has composed the Musick for the Abbey at the Coronation, and the Italian Voices, with above a Hundred of the best Musicians will perform; and the Whole is allowed by those Judges in Musick who have already heard it, to exceed any Thing heretofore of the same Kind'. The second rehearsal on 9th October was supposed to have been private, however in the event it was witnessed by 'the greatest Concourse of people that has been known'.

The coronation service itself fared quite badly and according to annotations made on his order of service by the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Wake, the anthems were 'in confusion, all irregular in the music'. One of the anthems at the beginning of the service, *I was glad*, was missed out altogether because the choir was still in the procession waiting to get into the Abbey; *Zadok the Priest* was sung during the Anointing instead of after it; and because the choir was split into two separate bodies singing from opposing galleries, there was so much confusion that at one point two different anthems were begun at the same time by the different choirs.

The first anthem in the autograph score is *Zadok the Priest*. It sets 1 Kings 1: 38-40, words which have been performed during the Anointing of the Sovereign since the coronation of King Edgar in AD 973.

It is scored for seven-part choir, strings, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, 3 trumpets, timpani and basso continuo and is in D major, the key in which natural trumpets sound their most bright and festive. It is written in one section with an orchestral introduction of arpeggiated chords, whose gradual crescendo provides a wonderful air of expectancy. The choir bursts in *forte*, and moves in homophonic chords, declaiming the text clearly. This is justly the most famous anthem of the set and it is easy to see why it has been performed at every coronation since.

Let thy hand be strengthened sets Psalm 89: 13-14 and was the first of the anthems to be sung in the service, after the Recognition. It is in three movements and is calmer and more reflective. The first movement is in G major and is the only anthem not to use trumpets or timpani. The second movement in E minor, *Let justice and judgement*, is marked *Larghetto* and is a quiet, passionate plea. The *Alleluia* third movement brings the anthem to a festive close in G major.

The King shall rejoice was sung during the Crowning. It is in D major and sets the text from Psalm 21: 1-3, 5. It is in four movements opening with a movement for full orchestra and five-part choir. The timpani and dotted rhythms provide the majesty required by the text. The stately dotted rhythm continues in the second movement, *Exceeding glad shall he be*. In A major for four-part choir, it makes effective use of chains of suspensions. The third movement, *Glory, and worship hast thou laid* begins in D major with a brief solemn section in block chords ending with a surprising turn to B minor. This leads to a highly polyphonic section in which the excitement is generated by gradually adding instruments to the texture, starting with strings, then woodwind, and finally the blazing trumpets and timpani. The final movement is another festive *Alleluia* in D major, based around a double fugue. The final utterance of "Alleluia" had to be played exactly as the king was crowned.

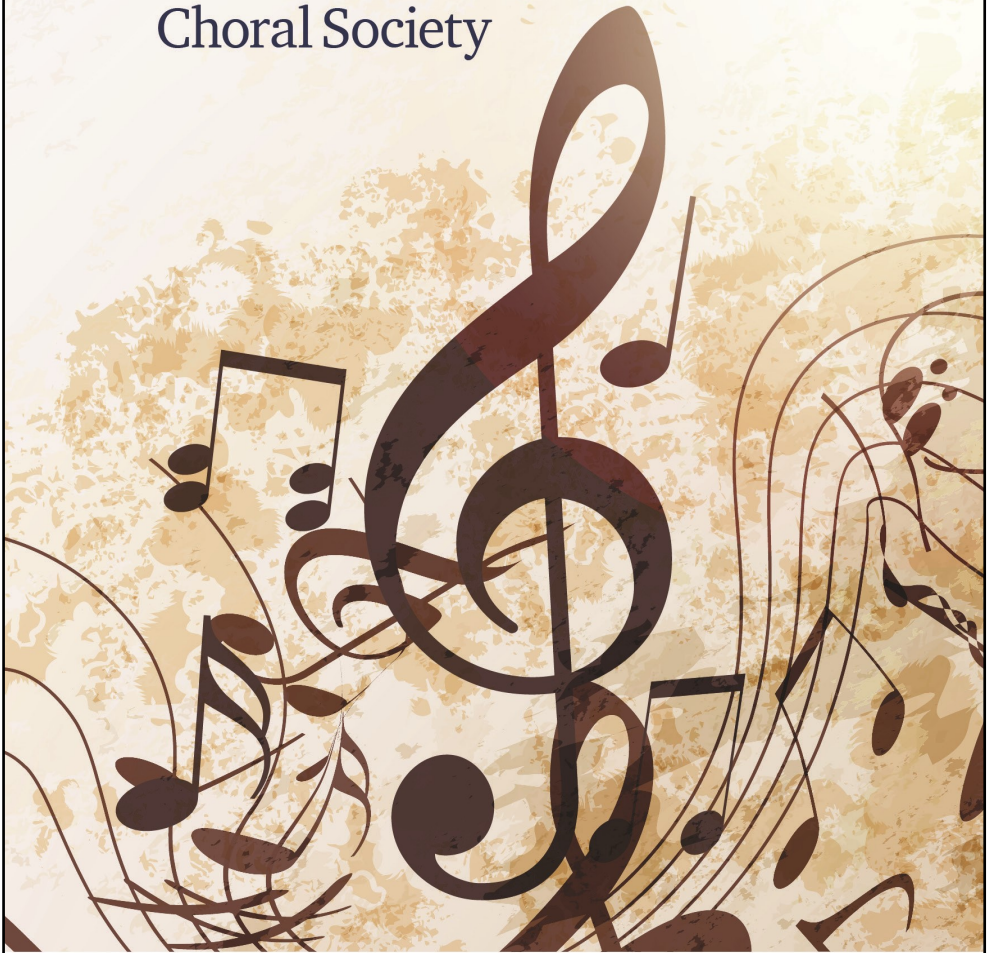
My heart is inditing was sung during the Queen's Crowning and accordingly has a gentler and more refined feel to it. It sets Psalm 45: 1, 10, 12 and the Book of Isaiah 49: 23. It is also in four movements and is the only anthem to use soloists. It opens in D major with a short introduction for strings and woodwind. The voices enter with a duet for solo bass and alto, this section is then repeated by solo tenor and alto before the choir and timpani enter. The second movement in A major, *King's Daughters* is a stately movement for strings and woodwind, starting with solo soprano and alto. The third movement in E major, *Upon thy right hand*, is a serene movement for strings and voices alone with a lovely rocking feeling to the music. The final movement is back in D major as the music becomes more animated and the woodwind and timpani join in for *Kings shall be thy nursing fathers*.

RAMEAU (1683 - 1764)

Jean-Philippe Rameau was born in Dijon, Burgundy, on 25 September 1683. His father was the organist at Dijon Cathedral and, although he gave him his first music lessons, he wanted his son to become a lawyer. Rameau was so obsessed with music that he taught himself to play several instruments and by the age of seven he was able to play by sight any piece of music that was placed in front of him. Not very much is known about his early life. We do know that he attended the Jesuit College in Dijon, but was dismissed because he took no interest in anything except music. At 18 he travelled to Italy to study music, but only got as far as Milan, and when he returned home, he joined a troupe of actors and roamed around France.

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From 1702, aged 19, Rameau decided to follow in his father's footsteps as a church organist. His first post was as Master of the Chapel of Avignon, then of the Cathedral in Clermont-Ferrand, a post he abandoned in 1706 to go to Paris to have his *Pièces de clavecin* published. In 1709 he returned to Dijon to succeed his father at the Church of Notre-Dame. From 1713 he was organist at Lyons, before returning to Clermont-Ferrand. Once again, he broke his contract to finally settle in Paris in 1723.

In 1722, aged 41, he published his controversial *Traité de l'harmonie*, in which he explains chords and their inversions, argues the importance of tonic, subdominant and dominant chords, and proposes the concept of chord progression. At the time he came in for considerable criticism from his peers, however his concepts remain fundamental to modern music theory.

During his time in Paris, Rameau mixed in several important circles, and was befriended by one of the richest men in France, Alexandre Jean Joseph Le Riche de La Pouplinière (1693 - 1762). La Pouplinière collected taxes on behalf of the King, taking generous bonuses and fees for himself. La Pouplinière had his own orchestra of about 15 players and made Rameau its director from 1746 to 1752. This allowed Rameau to experiment with new orchestral effects.

From the late 1720s Rameau became obsessed by the theatre and opera, which at that time was still dominated by the music of Jean Baptiste Lully (1632 - 1687). Lully had been the royal composer for Louis XIV for over 30 years, leaving a formidable legacy of 15 operas, 15 *intermèdes* for the theatre and more than 25 ballets de cour. With the influence and backing of his new patron, the 50 year old Rameau's first venture into opera, *Hippolyte et Aricie*, was premiered on 1 October 1733 by the Académie Royale de Musique at its theatre in the Palais Royal. It takes a traditional format, that of the *tragédie en musique*, with an allegorical prologue followed by five acts, and has a libretto by Abbé Simon Joseph Pellegrin based on a tragedy by Racine (1639 - 1699). That said, there was not very much that was conventional about the opera and it quickly split the Parisian audience; the more open-minded Ramoneurs versus the conservative Lullistes.

Hippolyte et Aricie had a mixed reception, and some of the hostile reactions that Rameau faced made him consider giving up composition altogether. The day after attending the premiere, Voltaire (1694 - 1778) said, "The music is by someone called Rameau who has the misfortune to know more about music than Lully. He is a pedant in music, he is meticulous and tedious"; André Campra (1660 - 1744), perhaps the most celebrated composer at the time, remarked "There is enough music in this opera to make ten of them; this man will eclipse us all", whilst Christoph Willibald von Gluck (1714 - 1787) declared that it "stinks of music". Fortunately, Rameau continued composing, and over the next 30 years he wrote 25 full-length operas and a number of shorter pieces, following his first opera with *Les Indes Galantes* (1735), *Castor et Pollux* (1737) and *Dardanus* (1739), which were very successful.

This concert is dedicated to the memory of Michèle Barrons, who was an active and hard-working member of Kingston Choral Society and a good friend to many of us. Michèle joined the choir in 2007 and enjoyed singing with us and participating in all of the choir's activities until her death in 2020. She will be greatly missed.

In 1745 Rameau was appointed composer of his chamber music by Louis XV and awarded an annual pension. The zenith of Rameau's career was from 1748 when he wrote *Pygmalion* in eight days and had six operas staged at the same time, to the mid-1750s, when ill health and old age caught up with him and his output decreased. The priest at his bedside was singing a song which he objected to, saying "what the devil do you mean to sing to me, priest? You are out of tune". Rameau died on 12 September 1764 after suffering from a fever. He was buried in the church of St Eustache, Paris, on the same day he died. After his death it was discovered that he only possessed one dilapidated single-keyboard harpsichord, and yet he had a bag containing 1691 gold louis (each of which was the equivalent of 20 francs).

Rameau was no stranger to hostility and controversy. Voltaire, who initially appeared to be critical of Rameau's music, quickly became a fan. In November 1733 he suggested collaborating with Rameau on the libretto for what would have been his second opera, *Samson*. It was finished by late summer 1734, but the idea of a religious work written by such a notorious critic of the church as Voltaire caused such great hostility, particularly from the Theological Department of the Sorbonne University, that it was never performed. Then again in October 1737, just before the premiere of *Castor et Pollox*, a vicious satirical poem appeared which, among other things, attacked Rameau's appearance. The poem was by Pierre-Charles Roy (1683 – 1764) and one day the two men met while crossing the courtyard of the Louvre. Rameau threatened to give Roy a good thrashing with his cane and in response Roy drew his sword. Fortunately, Rameau, who had a volatile nature, had already been advised not to carry a sword, so with intervention of friends, no blows were struck.

A photograph of Colin Thackery, a man with glasses, wearing a red British Royal Guard uniform with a black cap and medals on his chest. He is standing in a grand hall with wooden paneling.

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Rameau was chiefly a theorist and when it came to theatrical and operatic works, he was most concerned about the music, as can be seen in some of the comments to his first opera. In one rehearsal for *Les Paladins* (1760), Rameau asked one of the singers to perform an aria much faster. The singer responded that if he sang it any faster the audience would not be able to hear the words, "That doesn't matter," Rameau replied, "I only want them to hear my music".

Rameau's developments of the operatic form included making the overtures more descriptive in order to reflect the style and content of the opera; making each act more of a dramatic unity; reducing the number of *da capo* arias, thereby putting more dramatic burden on the recitative and *arioso*, and increasing the role of the orchestra in illustrating and commenting on the action. It was on some of these innovations that Gluck was to build when he further reformed opera later in the century.

By the time of his death, just ten years after his heyday, Rameau was all but forgotten; musical taste had changed and the classical style had taken over. It was not until Camille Saint-Saëns (1835 - 1921) and Paul Dukas (1865 - 1935) championed his music, and with the revival in harpsichords, both the instruments and their repertoire, that he has been able to take his rightful place in the pantheon of baroque composers.

DARDANUS

Dardanus was Rameau's fifth opera. It was premiered on 19 November 1739 at the Paris Opéra to a mixed reception. It takes the form of a tragédie en musique, with a prologue and five acts. The libretto was by the 23 year old aristocrat Charles-Antoine Leclerc de La Bruère (1716 – 1754) and departs considerably from the classical source material. In the Greek myth, Dardanus was the son of the god Jupiter and Electra, and the founder of the royal house of Troy, having the support of the Phrygian king Teucer, whose daughter he later married. In the opera, however, La Bruère had Dardanus at war with Teucer, but already in love with his daughter; with the help of the gods and a magician named Isménor, Dardanus finally wins the hand of the king's daughter in the midst of war and sea monster attacks.

Dardanus ran for 26 performances, but only had limited success, this despite the support of the Ramistes, a thousand of whom had pledged to attend every night to ensure that it ran for 40 performances. The main problem was perceived to be the inexperience of the librettist and the resultant weakness of the plot, with the sea monsters coming in for particular ridicule. The opera underwent a thorough reworking for its revival in 1744, including a rewrite of the plot for the last three acts. By the time of its second revival in 1760, it had come to be regarded as one of Rameau's finest operas.

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For each revision, Rameau added newly composed music, so much indeed that one contemporary said of it that “it was so laden with music that for three whole hours the orchestral players do not even have time to sneeze”. The orchestral music is especially colourful, with rich and varied instrumentation as well as quirky rhythmic, melodic and harmonic turns of phrase. The opera contains 30 dance movements and Rameau was very happy to excerpt ballet suites from his operas. Tonight we will be performing four movements from the ballet suite he prepared.

We start with the *Ouverture*, a two-part movement in the French manner. It starts with a theme characterised by a heavily dotted rhythm. The oboes are to the fore in the second part, with their contrasting four-note phrases which help to make this one of the finest movements of its kind. This is followed by *Menuet I & II*, and *Tambourin I & II* from Act III. They form part of the second scene of the Prologue in which ‘mortals of all states and ages’ pay homage to Cupid in dance, each of which is beautifully characterized, both musically and metrically. The menuets are delicate, graceful dances which contrast with the boisterous, energetic Tambourins. We end with a *Chaconne* - the customary way of ending a French Baroque opera. A chaconne is a set of variations with a short repetitive bass line which allows for repetition, decoration, and melodic invention. This Chaconne in G major is richly orchestrated, very inventive and demonstrates Rameau’s resourcefulness as a composer.

BACH (1685-1750)

Johann Sebastian Bach was born in Eisenach on 21 March 1685, the eighth child of Johann Ambrosius Bach and Maria Lämmerhirt. Like Martin Lütther (1483 - 1546), the founder of the Protestant movement, Bach was educated at the Lateinschule, which was renowned for its humanist and theological education. Bach’s musical education was begun by his father, a renowned musician and violinist, but when his father died in 1695, Bach, aged 10, went to live with his older brother Johann Christoph, the organist at St. Michael’s Church, Ohrdruf. Although Christoph gave him keyboard lessons, he did not teach Bach composition, indeed it is believed that he actively discouraged it.

Bach had an uncommonly fine soprano voice and in 1700 he went to Lüneberg and joined the choir of the Michaelisschule. Whilst 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 he made several trips to Hamburg, some 30 miles away, to hear Johann Adam Reinken (1623 - 1722) playing at the Katherinekirche. 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 made the organist over the head of 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). He travelled to Lübeck on foot, and did not return for three months. This only worsened the already strained relationship between Bach and the Arnstadt town council. In June 1707 he left to become organist at Mühlhausen and four months later married his cousin Maria Barbara Bach.

In 1708 he was appointed organist and chamber musician to the Duke of Saxe-Weimar. He spent nine years in this post, extending his reputation as a virtuoso organist, and writing his most famous works for the instrument.

In 1717, aged 32, Bach started to look for another post, and was offered the position of Kapellmeister to Prince Leopold of Cöthen. He was at first refused permission to leave Weimar, even being imprisoned for a month before being dismissed in disgrace. Prince Leopold was a talented musician and a Calvinist, and the new position allowed Bach the freedom from having to compose church music, so he could thus concentrate on instrumental composition. During this period he composed his violin concertos, the *Brandenburg Concertos*, BWV 1046-1051, and numerous sonatas, suites and keyboard works. In 1720 Maria Barbara died while Bach was visiting Karlsbad. In December 1721 Bach married Anna Magdalena Wilcke, the daughter of a court trumpeter at Weissenfels.

A week after Bach's wedding, the Prince also married, and, as his wife showed little interest in the arts, Bach's duties at Cöthen were greatly curtailed. When the position of Kantor of the Thomaskirche in Leipzig became free, Bach applied. The first choices of the Leipzig council for the post were Georg Philipp Telemann (1681 - 1767) and then Christoph Graupner (1683 - 1760), however they both declined. Bach became responsible for the music in the four principal churches of the town, and composed five cycles of cantatas for the church year, each comprising about 40 cantatas, a *Magnificat*, BWV 243, and several Passion settings. He was, by now, renowned as a virtuoso organist and in demand as a teacher and an expert in organ design and construction. His reputation was beginning to spread with the publication of many of his works.

From 1729 Bach composed less church music, writing instead works intended either for instruction or as a testimonial to his skills. From this period date the *B minor Mass*, BWV 232, the *Christmas Oratorio*, BWV 248, the *Musical Offering*, BWV 1079 and *The Art of Fugue*, BWV 1080. 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, by whom he was granted the courtesy title of Hofcompositeur in 1736.

In 1749, the 64-year-old Bach's eyesight deteriorated until 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) but it was only partially successful and although the operation was repeated, Bach spent the last months of his life in total darkness. The operation and the treatments Bach received probably hastened his death from a stroke on 28th July 1750.

After his death, Bach's music was much neglected, being known only to a small circle of pupils and devotees. In Berlin, Bach's most famous son, Carl Philip Emanuel (1714 - 1788), preserved the memory of his father along with the majority of the scores that have come down to us. Baron Gottfried van Swieten (1733 - 1803) took the tradition from Berlin to Vienna, and introduced it to Mozart (1756 - 1791) and, to a lesser extent, Haydn (1732 - 1809). Beethoven (1770 - 1827) was also familiar with Bach's music, being required to learn the *48 Preludes and Fugues*, BWV 846-893 to the satisfaction of his teacher Christian Gottlob Neeffe (1748 - 1798). It was not until the end of the 18th century, however, that the simultaneous rise in musical historicism in England and Germany saw the general revival of interest in Bach's music and the legitimate restoration of his position to the pantheon of the great composers. The turning point came in 1829, with the performance of the *St Matthew Passion*, BWV 244 by the Berlin Singakademie conducted by Felix Mendelssohn (1809 -1847).

MAGNIFICAT

The original version of Bach's *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, however, the Latin text was used. This first version was in E flat major and included interpolated texts for the Christmas celebrations. Between 1728 and 1731 Bach revised the score, making significant changes, transposing it 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 was changed (flutes replacing recorders) and the work was significantly edited with changes to melodies and rhythms. It is this last version which has entered the standard repertoire and is being performed tonight.

The *Magnificat* is scored for five soloists (SSATB), five-part choir, three trumpets, timpani, two oboes, strings and continuo. The work contains many of the Baroque musical common-places, but set in a new way, and has come to be one of the most popular works 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, the 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 obbligato oboe over bassoon and continuo. This is interrupted by the sudden entry of the full choir at *Omnes generationes*.

Quia fecit mihi magna is a dignified bass aria with obbligato bass and continuo. The duet for alto and tenor, *Et misericordia*, has a wonderfully plangent tone. It is in the minor mode, with obbligato 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 is 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 Patri* with its tremendous (and tricky to sing) rising and falling melismas on the word "Gloria". Finally, *Sicut erat in principio* provides the customary repeat of the music from the first movement and ends the work with a satisfying unity.

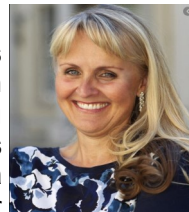
Programme notes courtesy of Paul Chambers

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Kingston Choral Society first performed JS Bach's *Magnificat* at their 111th concert held on 30 March 1985 St Andrew's Church, Surbiton. Three of the five soloists on that occasion are still very much active performers today:

Helen Astrid - Soprano

After a career as a professional opera singer performing at the major venues including English National Opera and Garsington Opera - and appearing in *Phantom of the Opera* - Helen more recently founded the Helen Astrid Singing Academy based in Twickenham, where she trains non-professionals, as well as established singers. She is author of *Singing Tips at your Fingertips* (2008), a book described by Gary Lachman (The Guardian) as "the place to find the singer within".



Natanya Hadda - Contralto

Natanya studied music at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester and at the Royal Academy of Music in London. Since performing with us in 1985, she has been a member of several renowned vocal ensembles, including the Cambridge Singers (John Rutter), The King's Consort (Robert King), Monteverdi Choir (John Eliot Gardiner), and The Sixteen (Harry Christophers).



Andrew Mayor - Baritone

Andrew Mayor studied law and qualified as a solicitor before going on to win a postgraduate scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music. Since then he has enjoyed oratorio and concert appearances with choral societies and groups around the UK (and still lists *Magnificat* in his repertoire). He combines singing with over 25 years experience as a practising lawyer, dealing with a wide range of commercial property matters.



By a strange quirk of history, at their very next (112th) concert, held on 15th June 1985, the Society performed Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* - which is exactly what we shall be singing at our very next concert (255th) on 27 June 2020 at St Andrew's Church, Surbiton. Don't miss it - it might be another 35 years before we do it again!

SPONSORSHIP

Kingston Choral Society welcomes enquiries from individuals, families or businesses who would like to help the choir by sponsoring a soloist or orchestral instrument for a particular concert or season.

Sponsors will be acknowledged by name, or anonymously if preferred, in concert programmes and will be helping us to maintain a high standard of performance with professional soloists and musicians, whilst keeping ticket prices affordable for all.

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CORONATION ANTHEMS

Zadok the Priest

[after 1 Kings (1:38–40)]

Zadok, the Priest, and Nathan, the Prophet,
anointed Solomon King;
and all the people rejoic'd, and said:
God save the King, long live the King,
may the King live for ever!
Amen! Alleluja!

The King shall rejoice

[Psalm 21:1-3, 5]

The King shall rejoice in thy strength, O Lord.
Exceeding glad shall he be of thy salvation.
Glory and great worship hast thou laid upon
him.
Thou hast prevented him with the blessings of
goodness
and hast set a crown of pure gold upon his
head.
Allelujah.

Let thy hand be strengthened

[Psalm 89:13-14]

Let thy hand be strengthened and thy right hand
be exalted.
Let justice and judgment be the preparation of
thy seat!
Let mercy and truth go before thy face.
Let justice, judgment, mercy and truth go before
thy face.
Allelujah.

My heart is inditing

[after Psalm 45:1,10,12 and Isaiah 49:23]

My heart is inditing of a good matter:
I speak of the things which I have made unto
the King.
Kings daughters were among thy honourable
women
Upon thy right hand did stand the Queen in
vesture of gold
and the King shall have pleasure in thy beauty.
Kings shall be thy nursing fathers
and queens thy nursing mothers.

MAGNIFICAT

1 Chorus

Magnificat anima mea Dominum.

1 Chorus

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord.

2 Aria (Soprano II)

Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo.

2 Aria (Soprano II)

And my spirit has exulted in God my saviour.

3 Aria (Soprano I)

Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae;

ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent

3 Aria (Soprano I)

Because he has regarded the lowly state of his
slavegirl;
for look! from now on [they] will say that I am
blessed

4 Chorus

Omnes generationes.

5 Aria (Bass)

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

6 Duet (Alto, Tenor)

Et misericordia a progenie in progenies
timentibus eum.

7 Chorus

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

8 Aria (Tenor)

Deposuit potentes de sede et exaltavit humiles.

9 Aria (Alto)

Esurientes implevit bonis
et divites dimisit inanes.

10 Trio (Sopranos I and II, Alto)

Suscepit Israel puerum suum recordatus
misericordiae suae.

11 Chorus

Sicut locutus est ad Patres nostros,
Abraham et semini eius in saecula.

12 Chorus

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

4 Chorus

Every generation.

5 Aria (Bass)

Because he who is mighty has done great
things for me, and holy is his name.

6 Duet (Alto, Tenor)

And his mercy [continues] from generation to
generation for those who fear him.

7 Chorus

He has made known the power of his arm,
scattered those who are arrogant in the
thoughts of their heart.

8 Aria (Tenor)

He has put down the mighty from their seats [of
power] and raised up those who are lowly.

9 Aria (Alto)

The hungry he has filled with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.

10 Trio (Sopranos I and II, Alto)

He has taken under his protection Israel his
boy, and remembered his mercy.

11 Chorus

In accordance with what he said to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his seed for ever.

12 Chorus

Glory to the Father, glory to the Son,
glory also to the Holy Spirit!
As it was in the beginning and [is] now and
always and throughout ages of ages.
Amen.

ANDREW GRIFFITHS – Musical Director



Andrew Griffiths enjoys an enviable reputation as a dynamic and versatile young conductor with a particular flair for opera and choral music.

He has conducted productions for The Royal Opera, Welsh National Opera, Opera North, Opera Theatre Company, Early Opera Company, Mid Wales Opera, Bampton Classical Opera and Iford Festival Opera. In concert he has appeared with the Royal Northern Sinfonia, Orchestra of the Swan, Southbank Sinfonia and the Orpheus Sinfonia, and he is regularly engaged to broadcast and record with the BBC Singers.

Andrew has worked at Glyndebourne, ENO, Scottish Opera, Chicago Opera Theatre, Opera Collective Ireland, and with the BBC Symphony and Scottish Symphony Orchestras, as well as on numerous Royal Opera productions (including *The Ring* and the world première of *The Minotaur*), under such conductors as Pappano, Bychkov, Elder, Gardiner and Mackerras. He is often engaged for projects outside the standard operatic canon, and is particularly experienced in Baroque repertoire and the music of the last 50 years. Much sought-after as a vocal coach, he works frequently with the singers at the National Opera Studio and The Royal Opera.

In constant demand as a choral conductor, Andrew's engagements for the BBC Singers have included the world première of John Pickard's *Mass in troubled times*, recordings of 20th century American repertoire, and broadcasts of Howells, Parry and MacMillan. He regularly directs the choirs at Dartington International Summer School, and has appeared in concert with the BBC Symphony Chorus, New London Chamber Choir, and Hong Kong's *Tallis Vocalis*. He is Musical Director of Kingston Choral Society and chamber choir Londinium, whose debut recording, *The Gluepot Connection*, was recently released to widespread critical acclaim.

A pianist, viola player and singer by training, Andrew began his musical education as a Quirister and Scholar at Winchester College, and read music at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, where he held a Choral Exhibition. He studied conducting under Martyn Brabbins in Glasgow, and trained as a répétiteur at the National Opera Studio and at Scottish Opera, before joining the Royal Opera's Jette Parker Young Artist programme. He is a former principal viola of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, and a founder member of vocal consort Stile Antico. In 2008 he was chosen to receive the Wagner Society's Bayreuth Bursary.

Andrew's recent and forthcoming engagements include his debuts conducting for The Royal Ballet (*Medusa*, music by Purcell) and the Royal Northern Sinfonia (*B Minor Mass*), a return to the Orchestra of the Swan (Beethoven/Thea Musgrave), Assistant Conductor for *Agrippina* at The Royal Opera, and a programme of Flemish polyphony with the BBC Singers at the Barbican Hall.

CHARLOETTE BOWDEN - Soprano



Charlotte is currently studying at the Royal College of Music with Rosa Mannion and Simon Lepper. She is an Huffner Scholar, an Harriet Cohen Memorial Music Award holder and is grateful for the support of the Josephine Baker Trust. Charlotte is also a Philip and Dorothy Green Making Music Young Artist, a Britten-Pears Young Artist having studied the role of Theodora with Sarah Connolly and Christian Curnyn in 2018 and was invited to study at the Verbier Festival Atelier Lyrique in July 2019.

She was awarded Second Prize and the Audience Prize in the 2018 Maureen Lehane Vocal Awards and First Prizes in the Marjorie Thomas Art of Song Prize and the Michael Head Prize. She has performed at such venues as Cadogan Hall, Snape Maltings, Aldeburgh Festival and will make her Wigmore Hall debut as Orfeo in Handel *Parnasso in festa* in March 2020.

Charlotte's operatic repertoire includes the title roles in *Acis and Galatea*, *Semele*, and *Theodora*. She has also appeared as Bridesmaid in *Der Freischütz* with Sir Mark Elder and the OAE and recently covered roles including Second Woman in ETO's triple bill production of *Dido and Aeneas / Jonas / I Will Not Speak*. In November 2019 Charlotte appeared as Flaminia in Haydn *Il mondo della luna* for the RCM Opera Studio. In concert she has performed a wide variety of repertoire, including Mahler's second and fourth symphonies, Beethoven's ninth symphony, Strauss *Vier Letzte Lieder*, Rossini *Petite messe solennelle* and *Stabat Mater*, Handel *Messiah*, Haydn *The Creation*, Bach *St John Passion*, *St Matthew Passion*, *B minor mass*, Mozart *Requiem* and *Mass in C minor*, and Tippett *A Child of Our Time*.

Future performances include Mozart *Requiem* in March at San Giusto Cathedral in Trieste, and in April, Mozart *Mass in C minor* for the Leith Hill Music Festival, and Fauré *Requiem* at St Martin in the Fields for the Brandenburg Choral Festival.

STEPHANIE HERSHAW - Soprano



Stephanie is currently in her final year of her Masters in Opera at the Royal College of Music, under the tuition of Rosa Mannion, Simon Lepper and Gary Matthewman. Prior to this, she graduated with a First Class Honours Degree from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. During her third year, Stephanie had the privilege of gaining a place to study in Leipzig, Germany, at the renowned Hochschule für Musik und Theatre "Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy".

Stephanie has performed various roles including Molly Braden in *The Beggar's Opera* (Opera'r Ddraig), Mrs Ham in *Noye's Fludde* (Newport Cathedral), The Flying Cow in *Dirty Beasts* (RWCMD School's Opera Tour), second Niece in *Peter Grimes* (Opera'r Ddraig Scenes), Tiny in *Paul Bunyan* (Opera'r Ddraig Scenes), Aminta in *Il re pastore* (RCM Opera Scenes) and a chorus member in *The Rake's Progress* (British Youth Opera), *Die Fledermaus* (Opera'r Ddraig), *Falstaff* (RWCMD Opera School) and *Street Scene* (RWCMD Opera School).

Recent engagements involved performing the role of Papagena in Waterperry Opera Festival's production of *The Magic Flute* and the roles of Virtue in Handel's *The Choice of Hercules* and Thomas Linley's *The Song of Moses* with Benslow Music. In addition, Stephanie recently worked closely with Roger Vignoles in a two-day Mahler dedicated programme. She is a Leeds Lieder Young Artist 2019 and a London Handel Competition and Corneille Concours semi-finalist.

In terms of choral music, Stephanie performed as a scholar in the BBC National Chorus of Wales for four years on multiple occasions. A highlight is performing at the BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall annually, as well as being involved in regular performances at St David's Hall, Cardiff. Stephanie also enjoys singing as a soloist, recent performances have been with Lincoln Sinfonia's *Messiah* and Burgess Hill Symphony Orchestra's Vaughan Williams *Pastoral Symphony*. Upcoming performances as a soprano soloist include Reigate and Redhill Choral Society's *Exsultate Jubilate* and Mozart *Requiem* and Leith Hill Musical Festival's Mozart *Mass in C Minor*.

Stephanie has been fortunate enough to have sung in masterclasses with international artists such as Elizabeth Watts, Joseph Middleton, Simon Lepper, John Fisher, Donald Maxwell, Louise Alder and Kathryn Harries. As part of the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World 2017 Fringe Events, Stephanie was delighted to sing in a masterclass with Ailish Tynan and Llŷr Williams.

Stephanie is the Midori Nishiura Scholar, an RCM Award Holder and is also generously supported by the Mario Lanza Foundation, The Munster Trust Star Award, The Boas Charitable Trust, The Kathleen Trust, The Clemence Charitable Trust and the Josephine Baker Trust.

EMILY SIERRA - Alto



Emily Sierra is a mezzo-soprano at the Royal College of Music in London under the tutelage of Sally Burgess and Caroline Dowdle. She is supported by a Stephen Catto Memorial Scholarship and is a member of the Josephine Baker Trust. She will complete her undergraduate degree with a Bachelor of Music (Hons) in 2020.

Emily has travelled globally to study voice and opera at the Boston University Tanglewood Institute, the Sherrill Milnes VOICE Program in Georgia, and Si Parla Si Canta in Italy. She is a native Chicagoan and has worked with various musical organisations in the city including Chicago Opera Theatre.

Emily has also performed in a range of international venues predominantly in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Italy including Symphony Hall in Boston, Curtiss Hall in Chicago, Cadogan Hall in London, and Castello Brancaleoni in Italy. She recently made her debut with English National Opera as a Gossip in the Lyndsey Turner production of *Noye's Fludde* by Benjamin Britten and debuted at the Royal Albert Hall as the alto soloist in Handel's *Messiah*. She looks forward to singing Cloride in *Parnasso in festa* at the Wigmore Hall and working with Nevill Holt Opera as Flora in *La traviata* and as part of the chorus in *Don Giovanni*.

MATTHEW KEIGHLEY - Tenor



Matthew Keighley is currently a master's student at the Royal College of Music. He is a Soirée d'Or Scholar and working under the tutelage of Tim Evans-Jones. He is also generously supported The Josephine Baker Trust and The Kathleen Trust. Prior to his studies at the RCM, Matthew was a Lay Clerk at Gloucester Cathedral.

Matthew's opera repertoire continues to grow. Highlights in the last year have included performing the roles of Cecco in Haydn's *Il mondo della luna* (RCM Opera Studio), Errand Boy in Lennox Berkeley's *A Dinner Engagement* (RCM Opera Studio) and Eurimaco/Giove in Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse*

in patria (Suffolk Early Music festival).

Matthew regularly performs as a concert soloist across the UK and Ireland. Recent highlights include Handel's *Messiah* at Lincoln Cathedral with Lincoln Cathedral Choir, Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610* at Llandaff Cathedral with Royal Welsh College of Music and Ethel Smyth's *Mass in D* in Southwark Cathedral with London Oriana. He has also performed in public masterclasses with Ann Murray DBE and Sir Thomas Allen. In recital, he has collaborated with David Owen Norris and Iain Burnside. Matthew is also an experienced ensemble singer and a graduate of Genesis Sixteen, a training program run by internationally renowned choir The Sixteen and its director, Harry Christophers.

DAFFYD ALLEN - Bass



Dafydd Allen is an undergraduate student at the Royal College of Music, studying under the guidance of Roderick Earle. He was a finalist in the Kathleen Ferrier Bursary for young singers (2017) representing the Royal College of Music.

Dafydd is a frequent prize winner in the Urdd Eisteddfod and National Eisteddfod of Wales, recently receiving second prize in the Baritone Solo (2018 & 2019), second prize in the Welsh Solo (2018) and third prize in the prestigious W Towyn Roberts scholarship competition.

Dafydd was the bass soloist in Bach cantatas *Gott Föhret auf mit Jauchzen* BWV 43 and Cantata BWV 214 at the RCM (2018), performed with a baroque orchestra.

Dafydd participated in the chorus of the RCMusic International Opera Studio's production of *Le Nozze di Figaro* directed by Sir Thomas Allen (2018). He was a cast member in Welsh National Youth Opera's production of *Kommilitonen*, with Peter Maxwell Davies, singing in the chorus and playing the role of Janitor (2016). He recently played the role of Masetto in *Don Giovanni* for Opra Cymru, directed by Patrick Young (2019). He was one of the Apostles in Elgar's *Apostles* at the Royal Festival Hall with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Martyn Brabbins (2019).

Dafydd has been fortunate to participate in masterclasses with Amand Hekkers, Michael Chance and Brindley Sherratt at the RCM. He has worked on Mahler songs with acclaimed musician Roger Vignoles culminating in a performance in RCM's Britten Theatre (2019).

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 created by Robin Page and Richard Wistreich at the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London.

The orchestra is run by a collective of four of its principal players, who together form the Purcell Players - a flexible ensemble performing baroque and classical chamber music. The musicians are all regular London period-instrument players, working with such orchestras and ensembles as the Hanover Band, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, the Academy of Ancient Music and the London Handel Orchestra.

As well as devising appealing and innovative programmes, frequently tailor-made for specific venues or events, the orchestra regularly collaborates with choirs to perform major works of the baroque and classical repertoire. In addition to works such as JS Bach's *B Minor Mass*, *St Matthew* and *St John Passion*, *Magnificat* and *Christmas Oratorio*, Handel's *Messiah* and Mozart's *Requiem*, the orchestra has played a wealth of less familiar repertoire including Telemann's *Tageszeiten*, CPE Bach's *Magnificat* and Locke's *Audi Domine*.

A special project at St Martin-in-the-Fields saw the orchestra taking the audience on a musical guided tour of Eighteenth Century London, led by Robin Page in the role of 'Mr Handel'.

Since 2005, the orchestra has given annual performances of Handel's *Messiah* and Bach's *St John Passion* at the Church of St Mary Abbot, Kensington, where it is now delighted to be ensemble in residence.

Leader: Diane Moore

First Violin

Hazel Brooks
Benjamin Sansom
Kirsten Klingels

Second Violin

Bill Thorp
Catherine Weiss
Alexandria Lawrence
Sarah Plummer

Viola

David Brooker
Wendi Kelly
Geoffrey Irwin

Cello

Helen Verney
Elizabeth Andrews

Violone

Jan Spencer

Flute

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Oboe/Oboe d'Amore

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Christopher Hartland

Bassoon

Ian Cuthill
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Any donations or legacies would be used to purchase and hire music, to rent performance facilities or to pay the day-to-day operational expenses of the organisation.

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