



Johann Sebastian Bach
St John Passion

Tuesday 8 March 2022, 7.30pm
Cadogan Hall

Programme: £3



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Programme designed by Stephen Rickett
and edited by Eleanor Cowie

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Johann Sebastian Bach
St John Passion

Mark Forkgen *Conductor*

Nicholas Mulroy *tenor* | Colin Campbell *bass*
Jessica Cale *soprano* | Mark Chambers *countertenor*
Timothy Nelson *baritone*

London Concert Choir
Counterpoint

There will be an INTERVAL of 20 minutes after Part One



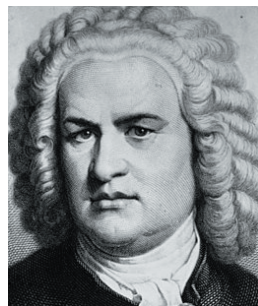
Robert Munns

London Concert Choir members were saddened to hear of the death of Robert Munns, at the age of 88. Robert founded the choir as the Brompton Choral Society 62 years ago and was its Director of Music for 14 years. The choir owes its existence to his inspiration and support. One of the first concerts to be performed by the choir was the St John Passion, in March 1961.

J.S. Bach (1685–1750)

Johannes-Passion
St John Passion

BWV 245



Evangelist	Nicholas Mulroy
Christus	Giles Underwood
Peter, Pilate	Timothy Nelson
Maid	Jessica Cale
Servant	Alexander Ledsham
High Priests, Crowd, Soldiers	London Concert Choir

It is almost 300 years since Bach composed this highly dramatic setting of the Passion story. His complex masterpiece, a mixture of the sacred and the theatrical, is based on Chapters 18 and 19 of the Gospel of St John.

While the tenor Evangelist narrates the story, the other soloists and the choir portray Jesus Christ and the wide variety of characters whose combined actions led inexorably to his death.

Bach intersperses intense and often vicious crowd scenes with devotional arias and chorales encouraging his Lutheran congregation to acknowledge their own responsibility for the death of Jesus, which their sins had made necessary. The work begins and ends with choruses in praise of Christ as risen Lord and Saviour.

Programme Notes

In May 1723 four wagons loaded with household goods trundled into the Saxon town of Leipzig. They were followed, two hours later and in two carriages, by their owner and his family. Johann Sebastian Bach, lately Kapellmeister to Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen, had arrived to take up his post as Cantor at the Thomasschule and music director of the four Leipzig churches. He was to remain there for the rest of his life.

Bach's first years in Leipzig were remarkable for his prodigious production of cantatas for the Sundays and holidays of the Lutheran liturgical cycle. In the 12 months from May 1723 at least 50 works were performed, nearly all of which were newly composed.

The musical highpoint of the year was Vespers on Good Friday, when a Passion oratorio, with a sermon between Parts One and Two, was given. That form had come late to Leipzig, the first performance having taken place in 1717. Bach's predecessor as Cantor wrote a St Mark Passion for the Thomaskirche in 1721. Three years later, on April 7th, 1724, the new man presented his St John Passion.

It was not his first essay in this field. The official Obituary speaks of five Passions, believed to have been written between 1717 and 1731, but only two are known to have survived – the other being the St Matthew Passion of 1727.

For his first Leipzig Passion Bach had booklets printed, saying it would take place in the Thomaskirche. The town council, his employers, reminded him it was the turn of the Nikolaikirche to stage the event. Bach protested that there was not enough room for the musicians. The council stuck to its guns but paid for a flyer announcing the correct venue and provided sufficient performing space. It was the first of many confrontations between Cantor and municipality.

The St John Passion we are to hear tonight is the first version of 1724. Bach subsequently revised it several times, but reversed most of these changes for the final version of 1749. One of the reasons for his repeated revisions may have been the musical limitations of the text.

First, St John's account of the Passion is not as varied scenically as St Matthew's – for example it does not have the Last Supper or the Agony in the Garden. Second, whereas by 1727 the poet Picander had supplied a tailor-made libretto for the arias and reflective choruses of the St Matthew Passion, when Bach composed the St John Passion he had to adapt passages for these from several authors, in particular the poet and Hamburg councillor Brockes.

The first Leipzig Passion has a different balance between Gospel verses and poetic meditation from that of the second; however, whether or not Bach was making a virtue out of necessity, the absence of solo arias during the central trial scene adds considerably to its impact. And, as so often, Bach took an existing genre and raised it immeasurably in terms of dramatic power, orchestral colour and richness of harmony and counterpoint.

PART ONE

The work opens with a Prologue in the form of an awe-inspiring *da capo* chorus which contrasts Christ's majesty (*Herr, unser Herrscher*) with the humiliation of his Passion and death (*in der grössten Niedrigkeit*). Over a relentless pedal bass, the strings rise slowly in tightly-knit semiquavers. Above them the woodwind wail dissonantly, prefiguring the crowd's yell of *Kreuzige!* (Crucify!) in the trial scene. After a triple acclamation of the Lord the voices take up the semiquaver runs. A contrapuntal counter-subject follows, with the semiquavers now transferred to the instrumental bass. The original pattern soon returns and choir and orchestra move to a tremendous climax on a high G minor chord. The counter-subject is heard again, this time a semitone higher (*Zeig' uns durch deine Passion*). The music falls dramatically to illustrate *Niedrigkeit* and gradually gathers strength on the phrase *verherrlicht worden bist*.

CHORUS

Herr, unser Herrscher, dessen Ruhm
In allen Landen herrlich ist!
Zeig uns durch deine Passion,
Dass du, der wahre Gottessohn,
Zu aller Zeit,
Auch in der grössten Niedrigkeit,
Verherrlicht worden bist!

Lord, our ruler, whose glory
is magnificent everywhere!
Show us through your Passion,
that you, the true Son of God,
at all times
even in the most lowly state,
are glorified.

St John goes straight into the arrest of Jesus in the garden. In the first two interventions of the crowd, notice the accompanying instrumental semiquavers, ending with an arpeggio cascade – they will recur in three other numbers; also, the lower pitch of the second intervention, indicating awe of Jesus.

The arrest scene is punctuated by two chorales, the Lutheran hymns which would have been familiar to Bach's congregation and in the St John Passion are set in such a variety of keys and harmonized with such daring. The scene ends with two arias separated by the briefest of recitatives. In themselves they are lovely *Von den Stricken meiner Sünden* (From the bonds of my sins), for countertenor, is accompanied by weaving oboes and a bass which hastens upward, and *Ich folge dir gleichfalls* (I follow you likewise), for soprano and flutes, is Bach at his most trippingly joyous – but they do slacken the momentum of the drama.

RECITATIVE – Evangelist

Jesus ging mit seinen Jüngern über den Bach Kidron, da war ein Garten, darein ging Jesus und seine Jünger.

Judas aber, der ihn verriet, wusste den Ort auch, denn Jesus versammelte sich oft daselbst mit seinen Jüngern.

Da nun Judas zu sich hatte genommen die Schar und der Hohenpriester und Pharisäer Diener, kommt er dahin mit Fackeln, Lampen und mit Waffen.

Als nun Jesus wusste alles, was ihm begegnen sollte, ging er hinaus und sprach zu ihnen:

Jesus - Wen suchet ihr?

Evangelist - Sie antworteten ihm:

Chorus - Jesum von Nazareth!

Evangelist - Jesus spricht zu ihnen:

Jesus - Ich bin's.

Evangelist

Judas aber, der ihn verriet, stund auch bei ihnen. Als nun Jesus ihnen sprach: Ich bin's, wichen sie zurücke und fielen zu Boden.

Da fragte er sie abermal:

Jesus - Wen suchet ihr?

Evangelist - Sie aber sprachen:

Chorus - Jesum von Nazareth!

Evangelist - Jesus antwortete:

Jesus

Ich hab's euch gesagt, dass ich's sei; suchet ihr denn mich, so lasset diese gehen!

CHORALE

O grosse Lieb, O Lieb ohn' alle Masse,
Die dich gebracht auf diese Marterstrassel
Ich lebte mit der Welt in Lust und Freuden,
Und du musst leiden!

Jesus went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.

And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples.

Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.

Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them:

Whom seek ye?

They answered him:

Jesus of Nazareth!

Jesus saith unto them:

I am he.

And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.

Then asked he them again:

Whom seek ye?

And they said:

Jesus of Nazareth!

Jesus answered:

I have told you that I am he; if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way!

O great love, O love without any limits,
that has brought you along this martyr's way!
I lived with the world in pleasure and delight,
And you must suffer!

Evangelist

Auf dass das Wort erfüllet würde, welches er sagte: 'Ich habe der keine verloren, die du mir gegeben hast.'

Da hatte Simon Petrus ein Schwert und zog es aus und schlug nach dem Hohenpriesters Knecht und hieb ihm sein recht' Ohr ab; und der Knecht hieß Malchus.

Da sprach Jesus zu Petro:

Jesus

Stecke dein Schwert in die Scheide! Soll ich den Kelch nicht trinken, den mir mein Vater gegeben hat?

CHORALE

Dein Will gescheh, Herr Gott, zugleich
Auf Erden wie im Himmelreich.
Gib uns Geduld in Leidenszeit,
Gehorsam sein in Lieb und Leid;
Wehr und steur allem Fleisch und Blut,
Das wider deinen Willen tut!

Evangelist

Die Schar aber und der Oberhauptmann und die Diener der Juden nahmen Jesum und bunden ihn und führeten ihn aufs erste zu Hannas, der war Kaiphas' Schwäher, welcher des Jahres Hoherpriester war. Es war aber Kaiphas, der den Juden riet, es wäre gut, dass ein Mensch würde umbracht für das Volk.

ARIA – Countertenor

Von den Stricken meiner Sünden
Mich zu entbinden,
Wird mein Heil gebunden.
Mich von allen Lasterbeulen
Völlig zu heilen,
Lässt er sich verwunden.

Evangelist

Simon Petrus aber folgte Jesu nach und ein ander Jünger.

That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, 'Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.'

Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

Then said Jesus unto Peter:

Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

Your will be done, Lord God, both on earth as in heaven.
Grant us patience in time of sorrow,
obedience in love and sorrow;
Restrain and guide our flesh and blood
that acts against your will!

Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him and led him away to Annas first; for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

From the bonds of my sins
to set me free
my Saviour is bound.
From all infections of vice
to heal me completely
he gives himself to be wounded.

And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple.

ARIA – Soprano

Ich folge dir gleichfalls
mit freudigen Schritten
Und lasse dich nicht,
Mein Leben, mein Licht.
Befördre den Lauf
Und höre nicht auf,
Selbst an mir zu ziehen,
zu schieben, zu bitten.

I follow you likewise
with joyful steps
and do not leave you
my life, my light.
Bring me on my way
and do not cease
to pull, push
and urge me on.

A long recitative *Derselbige Jünger* follows. The Gospel verses are set starkly in the St John – they lack the St Matthew's nimbus of strings around Jesus – but to great imaginative effect (note in this number the contrast between *denn es war kalt* and the shiver on *wärmeten*).

Evangelist

Derselbiger Jünger war dem Hohenpriester bekannt und ging mit Jesu hinein in des Hohenpriesters Palast. Petrus aber stund draussen für der Tür. Da ging der andere Jünger, der dem Hohenpriester bekannt war, hinaus und redete mit der Türhüterin und führte Petrum hinein. Da sprach die Magd, die Türhüterin, zu Petro:

That same disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter:

Maid

Bist du nicht dieses Menschen Jünger einer?

Art not thou one of this man's disciples?

Evangelist - Er sprach:

He saith:

Peter - Ich bin's nicht!

I am not!

Evangelist

Es stunden aber die Knechte und Diener und hatten ein Kohlfew'r gemacht (denn es war kalt), und wärmeten sich. Petrus aber stund bei ihnen und wärmete sich.

And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals (for it was cold) and they warmed themselves. And Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.

Aber die Hohepriester fragte Jesum um seine Jünger und um seine Lehre.

The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.

Jesus antwortete ihm:

Jesus answered him:

Jesus

Ich habe frei, öffentlich geredet für der Welt. Ich habe allezeit gelehret in der Schule und in dem Tempel, da alle Jüden zusammenkommen, und habe nichts im Verborgnen geredt.

I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.

Was fragst du mich darum? Frage die darum, die gehört haben, was ich zu ihnen geredet habe! Siehe, dieselbigen wissen, was ich gesaget habe!

Evangelist

Als er aber solches redete, gab der Diener einer, die dabei stunden, Jesu einen Backenstreich und sprach:

Servant

Solltest du dem Hohenpriester also antworten?

Evangelist - Jesus aber antwortete:

Jesus

Hab ich übel geredt, so beweise es, dass es böse sei; habe ich aber recht geredt, was schlägest du mich?

Why askest thou me? Ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them! Behold, they know what I said.

And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying:

Answerest thou the high priest so?

Jesus answered him:

If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?

CHORALE

Wer hat dich so geschlagen,
Mein Heil, und dich mit Plagen
So übel zugericht'?
Du bist ja nicht ein Sünder
Wie wir und unsre Kinder,
Von Missetaten weisst du nicht.

Ich, ich und meine Sünden,
Die sich wie Körnlein finden
Des Sandes an dem Meer,
Die haben dir erregt
Das Elend, das dich schläget,
Und das betrübte Marterheer.

Who has struck you in this way,
my Saviour, and with torments
treated you so badly?
You are indeed not a sinner
as we and our children are,
of wrongdoing you know nothing.

I, I, and my sins,
that are as many as grains
of sand by the sea
have provoked for you
the misery that has struck you
and the host of troubles and torment.

In the hissing *Bist du nicht seiner Jünger einer?* (Art thou not one of his disciples?) Bach conjures up the nightmare of accusations coming from all sides. Peter's anguished tears (a sentence lifted from St Matthew's Gospel) are conveyed by a lengthy succession of semitones and tritones above a chromatic scale in the continuo. There follows one of the most striking numbers in the work, *Ach, mein Sinn* (Ah, my soul), an impassioned aria in F sharp minor for tenor (one might almost say Heldentenor), characterized by dotted quavers and scurrying semiquavers. It offers no comfort and ends abruptly in a passage marked *forte* by the composer. A chorale reflecting on Peter's betrayal, in which the word *Böses* (evil) is tellingly harmonized, concludes the first part of the Passion.

Evangelist

Und Hannas sandte ihn gebunden zu dem Hohenpriester Kaiphas. Simon Petrus aber stund und wärmete sich; da sprachen sie zu ihm:

Chorus - Bist du nicht seiner Jünger einer?

Evangelist - Er leugnete aber und sprach:

Peter - Ich bin's nicht!

Evangelist

Spricht des Hohenpriesters Knecht' einer, ein Gefreundter des, dem Petrus das Ohr abgehauen hatte:

Servant

Sahe ich dich nicht im Garten bei ihm?

Evangelist

Da verleugnete Petrus abermal, und alsobald krähete der Hahn. Da gedachte Petrus an die Worte Jesu und ging hinaus und weinete bitterlich.

ARIA – Tenor

Ach, mein Sinn, wo willst du endlich hin,
Wo soll ich mich erquicken?
Bleib ich hier, oder wünsch ich mir
Berg und Hügel auf den Rücken?

Bei der Welt ist gar kein Rat,
Und im Herzen stehn die Schmerzen
Meiner Missetat,
Weil der Knecht den Herrn verleugnet hat.

CHORALE

Petrus, der nicht denkt zurück,
Seinen Gott verneinet,
Der doch auf ein' ernsten Blick
Bitterlichen weinet.
Jesu, blicke mich auch an,
Wenn ich nicht will büssen;
Wenn ich Böses hab getan,
Rühre mein Gewissen!

Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest. And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him:

Art not thou one of his disciples?

He denied it, and said:

I am not!

One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith:

Did not I see thee in the garden with him?

Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the words of Jesus and went out, and wept bitterly.

Ah, my soul, where will you at last go,
where shall I find relief?
Should I stay here, or should I wish
that hills and mountains were at my back?

In the world there is no help,
and in my heart are the pains
of my wrongdoing,
since the servant has denied the Lord.

Peter, who does not think back at all,
denies his God,
but then at a look of reproach
weeps bitterly.
Jesus, look at me also
when I am reluctant to repent;
when I have done evil,
stir up my conscience!

INTERVAL – 20 Minutes

PART TWO

Repeated soprano Es in the opening chorale are a clarion call at the resumption of the action. We immediately enter the most dramatic sequence of the St John Passion, the exchanges between Pilate and the mob. To the procurator's question about the charge against Jesus they launch into the hideous chromaticism of *Wäre dieser nicht ein Übeltäter* (If he were not a malefactor) and the driving dactylic rhythms of *überantwortet* (delivered). Pilate responds and the crowd are off again *Wir dürfen niemand töten* (It is not lawful for us to put any man to death), this time with the urgent, semiquaver accompaniment of violins and flutes first heard in *Jesum von Nazareth*.

CHORALE

Christus, der uns selig macht,
Kein Bö's hat begangen,
Der ward für uns in der Nacht
Als ein Dieb gefangen,
Geführt für gottlose Leut
Und fälschlich verklaget,
Verlacht, verhöhnt und verspeit,
Wie denn die Schrift saget.

Christ, who makes us blessed
and has done no wrong,
was for us in the night
seized like a thief,
led before godless people
and falsely accused,
derided, mocked and spat upon,
as the Scripture says.

Evangelist

Da föhreten sie Jesum von Kaiphas vor
das Richthaus, und es war frühe. Und sie
gingen nicht in das Richthaus, auf dass sie
nicht unrein würden, sondern Ostern essen
möchten.
Da ging Pilatus zu ihnen heraus und sprach:

Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto
the hall of judgment: and it was early.
And they themselves went not into the
judgment hall, lest they should be defiled;
but that they might eat the Passover.
Pilate then went out unto them, and said:

Pilate

Was bringet ihr für Klage
wider diesen Menschen?

What accusation bring ye
against this man?

Evangelist - Sie antworteten und sprachen zu ihm:

They answered and said unto him:

Chorus

Wäre dieser nicht ein Übeltäter,
wir hätten dir ihn nicht überantwortet.

If he were not a malefactor, we would not
have delivered him up unto thee.

Evangelist

Da sprach Pilatus zu ihnen:

Then said Pilate unto them:

Pilate

So nehmet ihn ihr hin und richtet ihn nach
eurem Gesetze!

Take ye him, and judge him according to
your law!

Evangelist - Da sprachen die Jüden zu ihm:

The Jews therefore said unto him:

Chorus - Wir dürfen niemand töten.

It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.

Evangelist

Auf dass erfüllet würde das Wort Jesu,
welches er sagte, da er deutete, welches
Todes er sterben würde.

That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled,
which he spake, signifying what death he
should die.

The ensuing dialogue between the procurator and Jesus is remarkable for the latter's brief melodic flourish on the word 'kämpfen.' The rolling bass quavers in the next chorale *Ach, grösser König* (Ah, great king) emphasize Christ's majesty. Pilate returns to the crowd, who shout for the robber, Barabbas. The Evangelist immediately enters on a top A and describes the scourging of Jesus in an immense, galloping sequence above a jagged bass.

Evangelist

Da ging Pilatus wieder hinein in das
Richthaus und rief Jesu und sprach zu ihm:

Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall
again, and called Jesus, and said unto him:

Pilate - Bist du der Jüden König?

Art thou the King of the Jews?

Evangelist - Jesus antwortete:

Jesus answered him:

Jesus

Redest du das von dir selbst, oder haben's
dir andere von mir gesagt?

Sayest thou this thing of thyself,
or did others tell it thee of me?

Evangelist - Pilatus antwortete:

Pilate answered:

Pilate

Bin ich ein Jude? Dein Volk und die
Hohenpriester haben dich mir überantwortet.
Was hast du getan?

Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the
chief priests have delivered thee unto me.
What hast thou done?

Evangelist - Jesus antwortete:

Jesus answered:

Jesus

Mein Reich ist nicht von dieser Welt. Wäre
mein Reich von dieser Welt, meine Diener
würden darob kämpfen, dass ich den Jüden
nicht überantwortet würde; aber nun ist mein
Reich nicht von dannen.

My kingdom is not of this world. If my
kingdom were of this world, then would
my servants fight, that I should not be
delivered to the Jews; but now is my
kingdom not from hence.

CHORALE

Ach grosser König, gross zu allen Zeiten,
Wie kann ich g'nugsam diese Treu
ausbreiten?
Keins Menschen Herze mag indes aus-
denken, Was dir zu schenken.

Ah, great king, great in all ages,
How can I make my faithfulness
in any way adequate?
No human heart can conceive
what gift is fit to offer you.

Ich kann's mit meinen Sinnen nicht erreichen,
Womit doch dein Erbarmen zu vergleichen.
Wie kann ich dir denn deine Liebestaten
Im Werk erstatten?

My mind cannot imagine
what can be compared to your mercy.
How then can I match your loving deeds
by anything I do ?

Evangelist - Da sprach Pilatus zu ihm:

Pilate - So bist du dennoch ein König?

Evangelist - Jesus antwortete:

Jesus

Du sagst's, ich bin ein König. Ich bin dazu geboren und in die Welt kommen, dass ich die Wahrheit zeugen soll. Wer aus der Wahrheit ist, der höret meine Stimme.

Evangelist - Spricht Pilatus zu ihm:

Pilate - Was ist Wahrheit?

Evangelist

Und da er das gesaget, ging er wieder hinaus zu den Jüden und spricht zu ihnen:

Pilate - Ich finde keine Schuld an ihm. Ihr habt aber eine Gewohnheit, dass ich euch einen [zum Passafest] losgebe; wollt ihr nun, dass ich euch der Jüden König losgebe?

Evangelist - Da schrieen sie wieder allesamt und sprachen:

Chorus - Nicht diesen, sondern Barabbam!

Evangelist

Barabbas aber war ein Mörder. Da nahm Pilatus Jesum und geisselte ihn.

Pilate therefore said unto him:

Art thou a king then?

Jesus answered:

Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

Pilate saith unto him:

What is truth?

And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them:

I find in him no fault at all. But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one [at the Passover]; will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

Then cried they all again, saying:

Not this man, but Barabbas!

Now Barabbas was a robber. Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.

The succeeding bass arioso *Betrachte, meine Seele* (Consider, my soul) is wonderfully scored for two viole d'amore, instruments with sympathetic as well as playing strings, and lute, a combination of surpassing intimacy and sweetness. The viole then accompany the tenor in *Erwäge* (Ponder), an aria in which Christ's blood-stained back is compared with the rainbow which appeared after the Flood.

Arioso – Bass

Betrachte, meine Seel,
mit ängstlichem Vergnügen,
Mit bitterer Lust
und halb beklemmtem Herzen
Dein höchstes Gut in Jesu Schmerzen,
Wie dir auf Dornen, so ihn stechen,
Die Himmelschlüsselblumen blühn!

Consider, my soul,
with anxious delight,
with bitter pleasure
and a heart partly oppressed
that your highest good depends on Jesus' sorrow,
how for you from the thorns that pierce him
heavenly flowers blossom!

Du kannst viel süsse Frucht
von seiner Wermut brechen,
Drum sieh ohn' Unterlass auf ihn!

You can gather so much sweet fruit
from his wormwood,
therefore look unceasingly towards him!

ARIA – Tenor

Erwäge, wie sein blutgefärbter Rücken
In allen Stücken
Dem Himmel gleiche geht,
Daran, nachdem die Wasserwogen
Von unsrer Sündflut sich verzogen,
Der allerschönste Regenbogen
Als Gottes Gnadenzeichen steht!

Ponder well how his back, bloodstained
all over,
is like the sky,
where after the deluge
from our flood of sins has abated
the most beautiful rainbow appears
as a sign of God's mercy!

The soldiers hail Jesus mockingly (*Sei gegrüßet*) and the woodwind add their falling semiquavers of obeisance. He is presented to the crowd, who yell 'Kreuzige!' in a terrifying sequence of interwoven motifs – drawn-out, dissonant major sevenths and semitones, and drumming quavers followed by two semiquavers. Pilate says he can find no fault with the accused. The chief priests, in a pompous fugue, remind him that Jesus is guilty of blasphemy under their law: *Wir haben ein Gesetz* (We have a law). Pilate's desire to release (*losliesse*) the prisoner is touchingly portrayed at the end of the next recitative.

Evangelist

Und die Kriegsknechte flochten eine Krone
aus Dornen und setzten sie auf sein Haupt und
legten ihm ein Purpurkleid an und sprachen:

And the soldiers platted a crown of
thorns, and put it on his head, and they
put on him a purple robe, and said:

Chorus - Sei gegrüßet, lieber Jüden König!

Hail, dear King of the Jews!

Evangelist - Und gaben ihm Backenstreiche.
Da ging Pilatus wieder heraus
und sprach zu ihnen:

And they smote him with their hands.
Pilate therefore went forth again,
and saith unto them:

Pilate - Sehet, ich führe ihn heraus zu euch,
dass ihr erkennet, dass ich keine Schuld an
ihm finde.

Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye
may know that I find no fault in him.

Evangelist - Also ging Jesus heraus und trug
eine Dornenkrone und Purpurkleid. Und er
sprach zu ihnen:

Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown
of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate
saith unto them:

Pilate - Seht, welch ein Mensch!

Behold the man!

Evangelist

Da ihn die Hohenpriester und die Diener
sahen, schrien sie un sprachen:

When the chief priests therefore and
officers saw him, they cried out, saying:

Chorus - Kreuzige, kreuzige!

Crucify him, crucify him!

Evangelist - Pilatus sprach zu ihnen:

Pilate

Nehmet ihr ihn hin und kreuziget ihn,
denn ich finde keine Schuld an ihm!

Evangelist - Die Jüden antworteten ihm:

Chorus

Wir haben ein Gesetz, und nach dem
Gesetz soll er sterben, denn er hat sich
selbst zu Gottes Sohn gemacht.

Evangelist

Da Pilatus das Wort hörte, fürchtet' er sich
noch mehr und ging wieder hinein in das
Richthaus und spricht zu Jesu:

Pilate - Von wannen bist du?

Evangelist

Aber Jesus gab ihm keine Antwort.
Da sprach Pilatus zu ihm:

Pilate - Redest du nicht mit mir?

Weissest du nicht, dass ich Macht habe,
dich zu kreuzigen, und Macht habe, dich
loszugeben?

Evangelist - Jesus antwortete:

Jesus

Du hättest keine Macht über mich, wenn sie
dir nicht wäre von oben herab gegeben;
darum, der mich dir überantwortet hat, der
hat's gröss're Sünde.

Evangelist - Von dem an trachtete Pilatus,
wie er ihn losliesse.

Pilate saith unto them:

Take ye him, and crucify him:
for I find no fault in him.

The Jews answered him:

We have a law, and by our law he ought
to die, because he made
himself the Son of God.

When Pilate therefore heard that saying,
he was the more afraid and went again into
the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus:

Whence art thou?

But Jesus gave him no answer.
Then saith Pilate unto him:

Speakest thou not unto me?
Knowest thou not that I have power to
crucify thee, and have power to release
thee?

Jesus answered:

Thou couldest have no power at all
against me, except it were given thee
from above; therefore he that delivered
me unto thee hath the greater sin.

And from thenceforth Pilate sought to
release him.

We have reached the core of the work, a radiant E major chorale *Durch dein Gefängnis* in which the slavery (*Knechtschaft*) of sin is chromatically illustrated. It is the centre of a gigantic musical palindrome stretching over 26 numbers and linking movements which are musically very similar, and in some cases almost identical. The listener will get an inkling of it from the subsequent chorus, *Lässest du diesen los* (If thou let this man go), whose counterpart is *Wir haben ein Gesetz* (We have a law).

CHORALE

Durch dein Gefängnis, Gottes Sohn,
Ist uns die Freiheit kommen;
Dein Kerker ist der Gnadenthron,
Die Freistatt aller Frommen;
Denn gingst du nicht die Knechtschaft ein,
Müsst unsre Knechtschaft ewig sein.

Evangelist

Die Juden aber schrieen und sprachen:

Chorus

Lässest du diesen los, so bist du des Kaisers
Freund nicht; denn wer sich zum Könige
machtet, der ist wider den Kaiser.

Evangelist

Da Pilatus das Wort hörete, führete er Jesum
heraus und satzte sich auf den Richtsstuhl an
der Stätte, die da heisset Hochpflaster,
auf ebräisch aber: Gabbatha.

Es war aber der Rüsttag in Ostern, um die
sechste Stunde,
und er spricht zu den Juden:

Pilate - Sehet, das ist euer König!

Evangelist - Sie schrieen aber:

Chorus - Weg, weg mit dem! Kreuzige ihn!

Evangelist - Spricht Pilatus zu ihnen:

Pilate - Soll ich euren König kreuzigen?

Evangelist - Die Hohenpriester antworteten:

Chorus - Wir haben keinen König denn
den Kaiser.

Evangelist

Da überantwortete er ihn, dass er gekreuziget
würde. Sie nahmen aber Jesum und führeten
ihn hin. Und er trug sein Kreuz und ging
hinaus zur Stätte, die da heisset Schädelstätt,
welche heisset auf ebräisch Golgotha.

Through your imprisonment, Son of God,
has our freedom come.
Your prison is the throne of grace,
the refuge of all believers.
If you had not accepted slavery,
our slavery would have been eternal.

But the Jews cried out, saying:

If thou let this man go, thou art not
Caesar's friend; for whosoever maketh
himself a king is against Caesar.

When Pilate therefore heard that saying,
he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the
judgment seat in a place that is called the
Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.

And it was the Preparation of the
Passover, and about the sixth hour;
and he saith unto the Jews:

Behold your King!

But they cried out:

Away with him, away with him! Crucify him!

Pilate saith unto them:

Shall I crucify your King?

The chief priests answered:

We have no king but Caesar.

Then delivered he him to be crucified.

And they took Jesus, and led him away.

And he bearing his cross went forth into a
place called the place of a skull, which is
called in the Hebrew Golgotha.

After Jesus is led away to be crucified, *Eilt, ihr angefocht'nen Seelen* (Hurry, you tormented souls), an aria for bass with string accompaniment, opens with a powerful rising, unison scale in the top three parts and, when the continuo

takes up the same figure, offbeat entries for violins and violas create the effect of duple over triple time. The rhythm becomes even more complex with the choral interjections of *Wohin?*, to which the soloist replies, *nach Golgatha!*

ARIA – Bass and Chorus

Eilt, ihr angefochtenen Seelen,
Geht aus euren Marterhöhlen,
Eilt—*Wohin?*—nach Golgatha!
Nehmet an des Glaubens Flügel,
Flieht—*Wohin?*—zum Kreuzeshügel,
Eure Wohlfahrt blüht allda!

Hurry, you tormented souls,
leave your dens of torment,
Hurry—*Where?*—to Golgotha!
Take the wings of faith,
Fly—*Where?*—to the hill of the cross,
there your salvation flourishes!

Evangelist

Allda kreuzigten sie ihn und mit ihm zween
andere zu beiden Seiten, Jesum
aber mitten inne.

Where they crucified him, and two other
with him, on either side one, and Jesus
in the midst.

Pilatus aber schrieb eine Überschrift
und satzte sie auf das Kreuz; und war
geschrieben: 'Jesus von Nazareth,
der Jüden König.'

And Pilate wrote a title,
and put it on the cross. And the writing
was 'Jesus of Nazareth,
the King of the Jews.'

Diese Überschrift lasen viele Jüden, denn
die Stätte war nahe bei der Stadt da Jesus
gekreuziget ist. Und es war geschrieben
auf ebräischer, griechischer und lateinischer
Sprache.

This title then read many of the Jews: for
the place where Jesus was crucified was
nigh to the city: and it was written in
Hebrew, Greek and Latin.

Da sprachen die Hohenpriester der
Jüden zu Pilato:

Then said the chief priests of the
Jews to Pilate:

Chorus - Schreibe nicht: Der Jüden König,
sondern, dass er gesagt habe: Ich bin der
Jüden König.

Write not, The King of the Jews, but that
he said, I am King of the Jews.

Evangelist - Pilatus antwortet:

Pilate answered:

Pilate

Was ich geschrieben habe,
das habe ich geschrieben.

What I have written I have written.

CHORALE

In meines Herzens Grunde
Dein Nam und Kreuz allein
Funkelt all Zeit und Stunde,
Drauf kann ich fröhlich sein.
Erschein mir in dem Bilde
Zu Trost in meiner Not,
Wie du, Herr Christ, so milde
Dich hast geblut' zu Tod!

In the depths of my heart
your Name and Cross alone
shine at every moment
making me able to rejoice.
Let me see the image
to console me in my distress
of how you, Lord Christ, so patiently
shed your blood in death!

Jesus having been crucified, the soldiers cast lots for his robe in a lengthy fugal chorus, *Lasset uns den nicht zerteilen* (Let us not rend it), in which the rattling of dice is suggested by the ceaseless semiquavers of the cello continuo.

Evangelist

Die Kriegsknechte aber, da sie Jesum gekreuziget hatten, nahmen seine Kleider und machten vier Teile, einem jeglichen Kriegsknecht sein Teil, dazu auch den Rock. Der Rock aber war ungenähet, von oben an gewürket durch und durch. Da sprachen sie untereinander:

Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat. Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves:

Chorus

Lasset uns den nicht zerteilen, sondern darum losen, wes er sein soll.

Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be.

Evangelist

Auf dass erfüllet würde die Schrift, die da saget: 'Sie haben meine Kleider unter sich geteilet und haben über meinen Rock das Los geworfen.' Solches taten die Kriegsknechte.

That the Scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, 'They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots.' These things therefore the soldiers did.

Es stund aber bei dem Kreuze Jesu seine Mutter und seiner Mutter Schwester, Maria, Kleophas Weib, und Maria Magdalena.

Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

Da nun Jesus seine Mutter sahe und den Jünger dabei stehen, den er lieb hatte, spricht er zu seiner Mutter:

When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother:

Jesus - Weib, siehe, das ist dein Sohn!

Woman, behold thy son!

Evangelist - Danach spricht er zu dem Jünger:

Then saith he to the disciple:

Jesus - Siehe, das ist deine Mutter!

Behold thy mother!

CHORALE

Er nahm alles wohl in acht
In der letzten Stunde,
Seine Mutter noch bedacht,
Setzt ihr ein' Vormunde.
O Mensch, mache Richtigkeit,
Gott und Menschen liebe,
Stirb darauf ohn alles Leid,
Und dich nicht betrübe!

He thought carefully of everything
in his last hour,
he was concerned for his mother,
chose someone to look after her.
O man, act justly,
love God and mankind,
then you can die without sorrow,
and need not grieve!

Evangelist

Und von Stund an nahm sie der Jünger zu sich.

And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

Darnach, als Jesus wusste, dass schon alles vollbracht war, dass die Schrift erfüllet würde, spricht er:

Jesus - Mich dürstet.

Evangelist

Da stund ein Gefässe voll Essigs. Sie fülleten aber einen Schwamm mit Essig und legten ihn auf einen Isopen und hielten es ihm dar zum Munde. Da nun Jesus den Essig genommen hatte, sprach er:

Jesus - Es ist vollbracht!

After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith:

I thirst.

Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar. They filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said:

It is accomplished!

The phrase *Es ist vollbracht* forms the basis for the ensuing countertenor aria of the same name. At this key point Bach introduces a viola da gamba to heighten the pathos. But he also reminds us of the meaning of Christ's suffering by inserting a D major fanfare accompanied by strings, *Der Held aus Juda* (The hero from Judah).

ARIA – Countertenor

Es ist vollbracht!

O Trost vor die gekränkten Seelen!

Die Trauernacht

Lässt nun die letzte Stunde zählen.

Der Held aus Juda siegt mit Macht

Und schliesst den Kampf.

Es ist vollbracht!

Evangelist - Und neiget das Haupt und verschied.

It is accomplished!

What comfort for all suffering souls!

The night of sorrow

now reaches its final hours.

The hero from Judah triumphs in his might and brings the strife to an end.

It is accomplished!

And he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

The death of Jesus is followed by a serene, warm, sinuous chorale fantasia for bass and chorus, *Mein teurer Heiland*, in which the soloist answers his own questions about the redemptive power of the Cross with the word 'Ja!', while the chorus prays for the sinner's own redemption at death.

ARIA AND CHORALE – Bass and Chorus

Mein teurer Heiland, lass dich fragen,

Da du nunmehr ans Kreuz geschlagen

Und selbst gesagt:

Es ist vollbracht,

Bin ich vom Sterben frei gemacht?

My beloved Saviour, let me ask you, since you have now been nailed to the cross and you yourself have said:

It is accomplished,

have I been set free from death?

Kann ich durch deine Pein und Sterben
Das Himmelreich ererben?
Ist aller Welt Erlösung da?
Du kannst vor Schmerzen zwar nichts sagen;
Doch neigest du das Haupt
Und sprichst stillschweigend: ja.

*Jesus, der du warest tot,
Lebest nun ohn Ende,
In der letzten Todesnot
Nirgend mich hinwende.
Als zu dir, der mich versühnt,
O du lieber Herre!
Gib mir nur, was du verdienst,
Mehr ich nicht begehre!*

Through your pain and death can I
inherit the kingdom of heaven?
Is this the redemption of the whole world?
You can indeed not speak for anguish;
but you bow your head
and silently say: yes.

*Jesus, you were dead,
and now live for ever,
in my final agony of death
may I turn nowhere else
but to you, who have redeemed me,
O my dear Lord,
give me only what you have won,
for more I could not wish!*

Bach takes two more verses from St Matthew's Gospel for the rending of the temple veil and the earthquake. The strings tremble on demisemiquavers in the succeeding tenor arioso, *Mein Herz* (My heart), which at the end modulates deliciously from D minor to C major. In this and the accompanying aria, *Zerfliesse, mein Herz* (Dissolve, my heart), Bach broadens his orchestral palette again, this time with oboes da caccia. In the second piece they weave wonderfully intricate patterns with flutes, soprano solo and continuo.

Evangelist:

Und siehe da, der Vorhang im Tempel zerriss
in zwei Stück von oben an bis unten aus.
Und die Erde erbebete, und die Felsen
zerrissen, und die Gräber täten sich auf,
und stunden auf viel Leiber der Heiligen.

And, behold, the veil of the temple was
rent in twain from the top to the bottom;
and the earth did quake, and the rocks
rent; and the graves were opened;
and many bodies of the saints which slept
arose.

ARIOSO – Tenor

Mein Herz, in dem die ganze Welt
Bei Jesu Leiden gleichfalls leidet,
Die Sonne sich in Trauer kleidet,
Der Vorhang reisst, der Fels zerfällt,
Die Erde beb't, die Gräber spalten,
Weil sie den Schöpfer sehn erkalten,

My heart, while the whole world
suffers as Jesus suffers,
the sun is clothed in mourning,
the veil is torn, the rocks split,
the earth quakes, graves gape open,
because they behold the Creator grow
cold in death,
for your part, what will you do?

Was willst du deines Ortes tun?

ARIA – Soprano

Zerfliesse, mein Herze, in Fluten der Zähren
Dem Höchsten zu Ehren!
Erzähle der Welt und dem Himmel die Not:
Dein Jesus ist tot!

Dissolve, my heart, in floods of tears
to honour the Almighty!
Tell the world and heaven your distress:
your Jesus is dead!

The composer sets the remaining 12 verses of the Gospel text in two long passages of recitative separated by a chorale, *O hilf, Christe, Gottes Sohn* (Oh help us, Christ, God's Son) to the same melody as that at the start of Part Two.

Evangelist

Die Jüden aber, dieweil es der Rüsttag war, dass nicht die Leichname am Kreuze blieben den Sabbath über (denn desselbigen Sabbaths Tag war sehr gross), baten sie Pilatum, dass ihre Beine gebrochen und sie abgenommen würden. Da kamen die Kriegsknechte und brachen dem ersten die Beine und dem andern, der mit ihm gekreuziget war.

Als sie aber zu Jesu kamen, da sie sahen, dass er schon gestorben war, brachen sie ihm die Beine nicht; sondern der Kriegsknechte einer eröffnete seine Seite mit einem Speer, und alsobald ging Blut und Wasser heraus.

Und der das gesehen hat, der hat es bezeuget, und sein Zeugnis ist wahr, und derselbige weiss, dass er die Wahrheit saget, auf dass ihr gläubet.

Denn solches ist geschehen, auf dass die Schrift erfüllet würde: 'Ihr sollet ihm kein Bein zerbrechen.'

Und abermal spricht ein andere Schrift: 'Sie werden sehen, in welchen sie gestochen haben.'

CHORALE

O hilf, Christe, Gottes Sohn,
Durch dein bitter Leiden,
Dass wir dir stets untertan
All Untugend meiden,
Deinen Tod und sein Ursach
Fruchtbarlich bedenken,
Dafür, wiewohl arm
und schwach,
Dir Dankopfer schenken!

The Jews therefore, because it was the Preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was an high day) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.

But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs. But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

For these things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled, 'A bone of him shall not be broken.'

And again another Scripture saith, 'They shall look on him whom they pierced.'

Oh help us, Christ, God's Son,
through your bitter suffering,
so that always obedient to you
we may shun all wrongdoing,
and thinking of your death and its cause
we may profit from our reflections
and in this way, however poor
and weak it may be,
give you an offering of thanks!

Evangelist

Darnach bat Pilatum Josef von Arimathia, der ein Jünger Jesu war (doch heimlich, aus Furcht vor den Jüden), dass er möchte abnehmen den Leichnam Jesu. Und Pilatus erlaubete es. Derwegen kam er und nahm den Leichnam Jesu herab.

Es kam aber auch Nikodemus, der vormals bei der Nacht zu Jesu kommen war, und brachte Myrrhen und Aloen untereinander, bei hundert Pfunden. Da nahmen sie den Leichnam Jesu, und bunden ihn in leinen Tücher mit Spezereien, wie die Jüden pflegen zu begraben.

Es war aber an der Stätte, da er gekreuziget ward, ein Garte und im Garten ein neu Grab, in welches niemand je geleet war. Dasselbst hin legten sie Jesum, um des Rüsttags willen der Jüden, dieweil das Grab nahe war.

And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus (but secretly for fear of the Jews), besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.

And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' Preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

The final chorus, *Ruht wohl*, is a great sarabande in rondo form (A, B1, A, B2, A). The laying to rest is conveyed by falling instrumental arpeggios and a vertiginous soprano descent over nearly two octaves. In the first of the 'B' sections, the upper instruments play the arpeggios above repeated notes in the bass; in the second, the roles are reversed and only the top three voices of the chorus sing.

CHORUS

Ruht wohl, ihr heiligen Gebeine,
Die ich nun weiter nicht beweine,
Ruht wohl und bringt auch mich zur Ruh!
Das Grab, so euch bestimmt ist
Und ferner keine Not umschliesst,
Macht mir den Himmel auf und schliesst die
Hölle zu.

Rest well, you sacred limbs,
I shall weep for you no more;
rest well, and bring me also to rest.
The grave that is allotted to you
and contains no further suffering,
opens heaven for me and shuts off hell.

After such a lullaby, what more can be said? Bach looks to the bedrock of Lutheran music, the chorale, for the answer. Switching from C minor to the relative major of E flat, he sets the third verse of Martin Schalling's hymn for the dying. The first part is a tender depiction of the dead Christian's waiting in hope for the Last Trump. The second is the soul's fervent plea to see the Saviour face to face and praise Him eternally. Bach concludes his first Leipzig Passion with a ringing affirmation of Christ's victory over death.

CHORALE

Ach Herr, lass dein lieb Engelein
Am letzten End die Seele mein
In Abrahams Schoss tragen,
Den Leib in sein'm Schlafkämmerlein
Gar sanft ohn ein'ge Qual und Pein
Ruhn bis am Jüngsten Tage!
Alsdenn vom Tod erwecke mich,
Dass meine Augen sehen dich
In aller Freud, O Gottes Sohn,
Mein Heiland und Genadenthron!
Herr Jesu Christ, erhöre mich,
Ich will dich preisen ewiglich!

Ah Lord, let your dear angels
at my final hour carry my soul
to Abraham's bosom,
while my body in its narrow chamber
gently without pain or torment
rests until the last day.
Wake me then from death,
so that my eyes see you
in all joy, O God's Son,
my Saviour and throne of mercy!
Lord Jesus Christ, hear me,
I shall praise you eternally!

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Nikolaikirche, Leipzig

Mark Forkgen

conductor



This season Mark Forkgen is celebrating 25 years as the Music Director of London Concert Choir. He is also Music Director of Canticum chamber choir, Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor of Kokoro (the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra's New Music Group) and Director of Music at Tonbridge School. Mark was Organ Scholar of Queens' College, Cambridge, before winning a scholarship to study conducting at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Since then he has conducted major UK orchestras, including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, City of London Sinfonia, English Chamber Orchestra, English Northern Philharmonia and Manchester Camerata, appearing at major venues, including Royal Festival Hall and the Royal Albert Hall and the Barbican.

A specialist in the field of choral and contemporary music, Mark has given the first performances of more than 150 works. He has also conducted stage works with the Trestle Theatre Company and Britten Sinfonia, and contemporary opera with the Unicorn Theatre Company and an ensemble from the Philharmonia, at the Linbury Studio, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

Mark's wide range of conducting also includes performances with Deep Purple for the Henley Festival and recreating Pink Floyd's *Atom Heart Mother* in the Chelsea Festival. He also enjoys an active life as a pianist, focusing on twentieth-century and contemporary music.

He has been Conductor and Artistic Advisor for highly acclaimed festivals including Sir Peter Maxwell Davies' 70th Birthday, Stravinsky, 'A Festival of Britten', 'Music of the Americas', 'Britain since Britten' and 'East meets West'. Outside the UK he has conducted in Denmark, Spain, France, Belgium, Germany, Holland, Eire, the Czech Republic and Italy (including Handel's *Messiah* in Siena and *Israel in Egypt* at the Viterbo Early Music Festival), Bulgaria (concerts broadcast for National TV and Radio) and Hong Kong.

During lockdown, Mark presented a series of streamed recitals and lectures to the choir. Highlights since lockdown have included *Some Call it Home*, a multi-media music drama by Jonathan Dawe and Jane O'Leary commemorating the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower, and a concert series, 'Play on', inspired by Shakespeare. Further highlights this March include Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony and Schönberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*.

Nicholas Mulroy

tenor



Born in Liverpool, Nicholas Mulroy read Modern Languages at Clare College Cambridge and then studied at the Royal Academy of Music. He has since sung at many of the world's great concert halls and festivals, including the Sydney Opera House, Boston Symphony Hall, Carnegie Hall, the Royal Albert Hall, Berlin Philharmonie, the BBC Proms, and the Salzburg Festival. In November 2020, he was also appointed Associate Director of the Dunedin Consort, the first in the group's history.

Described as "an outstandingly sensitive narrator" (The Star Tribune), he has sung J.S. Bach's Evangelist with many of today's leading conductors, including Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Marc Minkowski, Hans-Christoph Rademann, Lars Ulrik Mortensen, and Laurence Cummings.

On the concert platform he has also performed with ensembles including the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the Brussels, Copenhagen, BBC, Wroclaw and Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestras, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the Hallé, Royal Northern Sinfonia, the OAE, Les Concert des Nations, Staatskapelle Dresden, Netherlands Chamber Choir, Handel and Haydn Society, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Auckland Philharmonic, and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. He has sung under conductors including Sir Colin Davis, Nicholas McGegan, John Butt, Paul McCreech, Harry Christophers, Jordi Savall, and Sir Mark Elder.

On stage he has worked with Glyndebourne Festival Opera and on Tour, Royal Danish Opera, Opéra Comique Paris, Théâtre Capitole de Toulouse, Opéra de Dijon, and at the Opéra de Lille.

Recordings include a Gramophone Award-winning *Messiah*, Evangelist in *St Matthew Passion*, Evangelist and arias in *St John Passion*, and *Acis* in *Acis and Galatea* for John Butt and Dunedin Consort (Linn), *St John Passion* for Stephen Layton and Polyphony (Hyperion), Monteverdi *Vespers 1610* for Robert King and The King's Consort on Hyperion, Monteverdi *Vespers 1610* with Edward Higginbottom, a series of Monteverdi with I Fagiolini (Chandos), and projects with Theatre of the Ayre, English Baroque Soloists, and Mr McFall's Chamber (Delphian).

Colin Campbell

bass



Colin Campbell is an established concert soloist who has appeared throughout the UK, in Europe, the USA and the Far East, in repertoire ranging from Monteverdi to Tavener. International concert performances include the arias in Bach's *St John* and *St Matthew Passions*; Christus in the *St Matthew Passion* in Finland and Beijing (Chinese Premiere); Bach's *B Minor Mass* in Japan and Korea; Beethoven's *Leonore* in New York, Salzburg and Amsterdam; Brahms *Ein Deutsches Requiem* in Shanghai; Marcel Dupré's cantata *De Profundis* in Munich; Handel's *Atalanta* at the Halle Festival, *Messiah* in China, Israel and Poland, *Judas Maccabaeus* in Vilnius, Lithuania and Oslo; Mendelssohn's *Elijah* at the Trondheim Festival; Mozart's *Requiem* in Santiago de Compostela; and Telemann's *Die Grossmut* in Magdeburg, Germany.

In the UK he has appeared at the Royal Albert Hall with the Philharmonia Orchestra and the Choir of King's College Cambridge in Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* and with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in Mahler's Eighth Symphony. At the Queen Elizabeth Hall Colin has performed with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* and the City of London Sinfonia in Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem*, which he also sang with London Concert Choir in Augsburg and London. At Westminster Cathedral he has appeared with the Bach Choir and the English Chamber Orchestra in Fauré's *Requiem* and has performed Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem* at Symphony Hall, Birmingham. Colin also performed Stravinsky's *Renard* with Birmingham Contemporary Music Group and Oliver Knussen. He has appeared as an oratorio soloist in most British cathedrals, including the Three Choirs Festival in Mozart's *Requiem* and Handel's *Israel in Egypt*.

Colin's operatic repertoire is extensive and he has performed with Kent Opera, English Touring Opera, Welsh National Opera, Aix-en-Provence Festival, Bermuda Festival and the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Roles include Don Giovanni, Escamillo, Germont Père, Marcello, Renato, Sharpless and Tarquinius.

Colin created the role of Herod in Nigel Short's opera *The Dream of Herod*, subsequently performing the work in Switzerland, Bermuda and the UK to critical acclaim.

Jessica Cale

soprano



Welsh soprano Jessica Cale is the 2020 First Prize winner of the Kathleen Ferrier Awards and joint Audience Prize winner at the London Handel Festival International Singing Competition. Jessica is a graduate of the Royal College of Music International Opera Studio with an Artist Diploma in Opera and a Master of Performance with Distinction.

Whilst at the RCM, Jessica's operatic roles included Rodelinda (Handel); Flaminia (Haydn's *Il mondo della luna*), Susan (Berkeley's *A Dinner Engagement*) and Second Bridesmaid (Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*). Jessica has also performed Despina (Mozart's *Così fan tutte*) and Serpette (Mozart's *The Garden of Disguises*) for Ryedale Festival Opera. Jessica's Royal College of Music opera scenes included Blanche (*Dialogues des Carmélites*, Poulenc); Juliette (*Romeo et Juliette*, Gounod); Tina (*Flight*, Dove); Poppea (*L'incoronazione de Poppea*, Monteverdi); Musetta (*La Bohème*, Puccini), and Melisande (*Pelléas et Mélisande*, Debussy). Jessica has also participated in Masterclasses at the RCM with Dame Ann Murray, Gerald Finley, Edith Wiens and Roger Vignoles.

In addition to her operatic endeavours, Jessica enjoys a successful career on the concert platform. Recent notable engagements have included her debuts at the Wigmore Hall and Cadogan Hall with The Mozartists, Handel's *Apollo e Dafne* at the London Handel Festival, and Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Schumann's *Manfred* for Sir John Eliot Gardiner at the Salzburg Festival. Jessica has performed with many of today's leading ensembles including the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, the Monteverdi Choir and the Gabrieli Consort.

Recent successes include being made an Associate Artist of The Mozartists and gaining Second Prize in the Bampton Classical Opera Singing Competition. In the summer of 2022 Jessica is hugely looking forward to making her international operatic debut at Teatro La Fenice playing Second Niece in Britten's *Peter Grimes*, before returning to the UK to make her role debut as Susanna in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* for Waterperry Opera Festival.

Mark Chambers

countertenor



Since leaving the Royal Northern College of Music in 1992 Mark has performed all over the world with many leading groups and conductors. Solo work has included Bach *St Matthew Passion* and Mass in B Minor with Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Monteverdi *Vespers of 1610* with Paul McCreech and a recording with Nederlandse Bachvereniging of *Beloved and Beautiful* conducted by Jos van Veldhoven. He has been invited to sing the *St Matthew Passion* for the last 10 years with Nieuwe Philharmonie Utrecht, directed by Johannes Leertouwer.

Operatic work has included many roles in Handel operas: *Xerxes* (Arsamenes), *Agrippina* (Narciso), *Amadigi* (Dardano), *Tamerlano* (Andronico), *Il Pastor fido* (Silvio) and Monteverdi *Orfeo* (Speranza) in a Jonathan Miller production. He sang the soprano role of Pilpatoe in Carl Heinrich Graun's *Montezuma* in the Sclosstheater in Sanssoucci Palace for Musikfestspiele Potsdam,

Mark works regularly with many of the world's leading choirs and ensembles including Tenebrae, Gallicantus, The Monteverdi Choir, The Gabrieli Consort, the National Chamber Choir of Ireland and Gramophone award-winning Binchois Consort. He has made many recordings, including a solo recital of songs by Rubbra and Vaughan Williams with David Mason (piano), and a series of discs with The English Cornett and Sackbut Ensemble.

In the commercial world Mark has created the Voice of the Ood for the *Dr Who* series for BBC Television with music by Murray Gold and has been featured as a soloist in the electro-acoustic score for *Genus* – a commission by Paris Opera Ballet by Joby Talbot. Other film work includes *The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy* and *Elizabeth: The Golden Age*.

Mark currently lives in Buncrana, Co. Donegal and combines his singing career with a post as part-time lecturer in Voice at the University of Birmingham and as musical director of the young ensemble Sestina, who will release their debut CD 'Master and Pupil' in April 2022.

www.sestinamusic.com

Timothy Nelson

baritone



Timothy Nelson gained a degree in Physiology from Cardiff University before studying with Peter Savidge at the Royal College of Music International Opera School, where he was awarded the McCulloch Prize for Opera and won the Bruce Millar Gulliver Prize, the Joan Chissell Schumann Competition and the Gerald Moore Award Singers Prize.

Operatic experience includes Marcello in *La Bohème* and Lieutenant Gordon in *Silent Night* for Opera North; Nathan in the World Premiere of *Pleasure* for Opera North/Aldeburgh/Royal Opera House; Sid in *Albert Herring* at the Grange Festival; Anténor in *Dardanus* for English Touring Opera, and Falke in *Die Fledermaus* and Escamillo in *Carmen* for Diva Opera. Roles at the RCM International Opera School included the Title Role in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte*, Ramiro in *L'Heure Espagnole* and Don Pomponio in Rossini's *La Gazzetta* and multiple roles at the London Handel Festival.

Recent solo performances include Karl Jenkins *The Armed Man* at the Royal Albert Hall; Handel *Messiah* livestreamed for the London Handel Festival and at the Royal Festival Hall; Rossini *Petite Messe Solennelle* at The Three Choirs Festival; Haydn *The Creation* with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and the English Haydn Festival; Bach *St John Passion* at Cadogan Hall and the world premiere of *Some Call it Home* with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra.

Away from singing, Timothy is an avid rugby and cricket fan and a keen golfer. He can often be found on the golf course trying to lower his handicap.



London Concert Choir

This is London Concert Choir's first public concert since its 60th anniversary in 2020. Notable for the commitment and musicality of its performances in an unusually varied repertoire, LCC regularly appears with Mark Forkgen at London's premier concert venues, while tours abroad have included visits to France, Germany, Italy, Poland and Spain.

The choir's 50th anniversary saw two performances of Britten's *War Requiem*. Among other major works in recent seasons have been Mozart's Requiem with the London Mozart Players, Rachmaninov's choral symphony *The Bells* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Brahms' *German Requiem* and Vaughan Williams' *Sea Symphony*, all with Southbank Sinfonia.

Performances with the Counterpoint ensemble include Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *St Matthew Passion* and *Christmas Oratorio*, Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610* and Schubert's rarely-heard Mass in E flat. Operas in concert performance have ranged from Purcell's *King Arthur* to the London premiere of *The Chalk Legend* by Stephen McNeff. LCC has also performed Ellington's *Sacred Concert*, Will Todd's *Mass in Blue* and a concert to mark Leonard Bernstein's centenary.

The choir often gives concerts for charity and continues to commission new works, including *A Light not yet Ready to Go Out* by Alison Willis, in aid of Breast Cancer Now, and *Per Ardua ad Astra*, a major work by Roderick Williams to commemorate the centenary of the RAF.

Roderick Williams OBE
President

Mark Forkgen
Music Director

Laurence Williams
*Assistant Conductor and
Accompanist*

James Finlay
Chairman

Martin Goodwin
Concert Manager

Chris Finch
Treasurer

Stephen Rickett
Design and Communications

Jennifer Greenway
Membership

Eleanor Cowie
Publicity

Simon Livesey
Company Secretary

www.londonconcertchoir.org

London Concert Choir Members

Soprano

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Dagmar Binsted
Eleanor Blackman
Alison Carpenter
Eleanor Cowie
Polly Creed
Emma Davidson
Christine Dencer
Gillian Denham
Emma Dixon
Emily Dresner
Sarah French
Sonja Gray
Jennifer Greenway
Dalia Gurari
Jennifer Hadley
Emma Heath
Emily Hunka
Eva Ignatuschtschenko
Christine Ingram
Danielle Johnstone
Jane Joyce
Vickie Kelly
Anna Kosicka
Joanna Kramer
Susanna Lutman
Hannah Mason
Annie Meston
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Adrienne Morgan
Stephanie Moussadis
Margaret Perkins
Jutta Raftery

Ines Schlenker
Frances Shaw
Caroline Sheppard
Tara Springate
Aisling Turner
Francesca Wareing
Janet Wells
Belinda Whittingham
Julie Wilson

Alto

Kate Britten
Carys Cooper
Deborah Curle
Rosie de Saram
Kathleen Dormer
Rebecca Foulkes
Anna Garnier
Sarah Gasquoine
Mary Glanville
Muriel Hall
Penny Hatfield
Denise Howell
Chrina Jarvis
Chris Joseph
Margaret Kalaugher
Sharon Kipfer
Sarah Knight
Sabine Koellmann
Carol Lane
Lorna Lewis
Liz Lowther
Norma MacMillan
Bridget Maidment

Adrienne Mathews
Catherine McCarter
Neetu Menon
Sophy Miles
Rosie Norris
Cathy Packe
Barbara Paterson
Judith Paterson
Rachel Pearson
Gillian Perry
Dubravka Polic
Jessica Rosethorn
Pamela Slatter
Gabriel West
June Williams

Tenor

David Broad
William Durant
Fabyan Evans
Miguel Fernandez
Sam Hansford
Graham Hick
Richard Holmes
Carolyn Knight
Alex Ledsham
Ian Leslie
Frances Liew
Andrew Lyburn
Ben Martin
Stephen Rickett
Christopher Seaden
Tim Steer
Ruth Yeo

Bass

Colin Allies
John Ancock
Miles Armstrong
Richard Burbury
Andrew Cullen
David Elkan
Chris Finch
James Finlay
Martin Goodwin
Nigel Grieve
Nigel Hartnell
Keith Holmes
Ian Judson
Robert Kealey
Stefan Klaazen
Simon Livesey
Hamish Naismith
Morgan Roberts
Jonathan Rogers
Tom Roles
Anthony Sharp
John Somerville
Ryszard Stepaniuk
Wilson To
Tony Trowles
Dai Whittingham

Counterpoint

The Counterpoint ensemble was formed in 2000 specifically to work with vocal ensembles. Its membership is drawn from the leading period instrument specialists living and working in London, players who have performed and recorded with many of the leading British early music ensembles, such as the English Baroque Soloists, the Parley of Instruments, Florilegium, The Academy of Ancient Music and The English Concert. The ensemble uses original instruments or excellent copies made using the latest theories and techniques of historic instrument manufacture. Its members have a great deal of expertise and are therefore comfortable in a wide range of idioms from Monteverdi through to Beethoven.

Highlights of previous seasons include opening the prestigious Viterbo Early Music Festival in Italy, performing Handel's *Israel in Egypt* with Canticum and Mark Forkgen; Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *St John Passion*, *St Matthew Passion*, Mass in B Minor and *Magnificat*. They have performed Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610* at St Martin-in-the-Fields as well as Haydn's *The Creation* at the Chichester Festival with Canticum. Concerts with London Concert Choir include Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, Gluck's opera *Orfeo*, Bach's *St Matthew Passion* and *Christmas Oratorio*, Monteverdi's *Vespers* and Haydn's *Nelson Mass*.

Members of Counterpoint

Leader/Viola d'amore

Catherine Martin

First Violin

Alice Poppleton

Ellen O'Dell

Abel Balzas

Marguerite Wasserman

Second Violin/Viola d'amore

Oliver Webber

Second Violin

Polly Smith

Karin Bjork

Ben Sansom

Viola

Stefanie Heichelheim

Joanne Miller

Geoff Irwin

Cello

Chris Suckling

Anna Holmes

Bass

Timothy Amherst

Viola da Gamba

Ibrahim Aziz

Flute

Eva Caballero

Amelia Shakespeare

Oboe/D'amore/Da caccia

Gail Henessy

Bethan White

Bassoon

Hayley Pullen

Lute

Robin Jeffrey

Organ

James Johnstone

London Concert Choir

Supporting the Choir

London Concert Choir greatly appreciates the financial contribution of its regular supporters in helping the choir to maintain its position as one of London's leading amateur choirs. However, we cannot promote our concerts at major venues with professional performers of the required calibre unless we receive income from sources other than ticket sales. The choir runs a Supporters' Scheme and also offers opportunities to sponsor soloists or orchestral players and to advertise in our concert programmes.

To find out more, please email treasurer@londonconcertchoir.org

Joining the Choir

London Concert Choir welcomes new members, who are invited to attend a few rehearsals before an informal audition. Rehearsals are on Monday nights at Bloomsbury Baptist Church near Tottenham Court Road station. If you are interested in joining the choir, please fill in your details online at www.londonconcertchoir.org

Mailing List

If you would like to receive advance information about our concerts, you can join the choir's free mailing list by clicking on the link on the home page of the website.

www.londonconcertchoir.org

The information you provide is subject to data protection regulations (GDPR) and as such will be used exclusively by London Concert Choir.

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LCC is delighted to acknowledge the invaluable contribution made by the following individuals:

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Nicholas Spence
Rachel Vroom



President: **Roderick Williams OBE**

Music Director: **Mark Forkgen**

FUTURE CONCERTS

Thursday 7 July 2022, 7.30PM

Barbican Hall, Silk Street, EC2

Gershwin: Porgy and Bess

Concert version by Andrew Litton

Gershwin: Overture to Girl Crazy

Copland: Five Old American Songs

with Soloists and Southbank Sinfonia

Monday 17 October 2022, 7.30PM

Cadogan Hall, Sloane Terrace, SW1

Mozart:

Ave Verum Corpus

Mass in C minor

www.londonconcertchoir.org