

LONDON



CONCERT
CHOIR

HANDEL MESSIAH

London Concert Choir
Counterpoint

Mark Forkgen **Conductor**

Wednesday 14 December, 2011

Programme: £2



Cadogan Hall, 5 Sloane Terrace, London SW1X 9DQ
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Programme designed by Stephen Rickett and edited by Eleanor Cowie



HANDEL MESSIAH

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Erica Eloff Soprano | Christopher Lowrey Counter tenor
James Geer Tenor | Giles Underwood Bass-Baritone

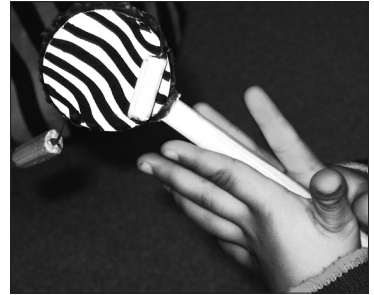
There will be an INTERVAL of 20 minutes after Part One



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GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685-1759)

Born February 23, 1685 in Halle, Germany,
died April 14, 1759 in London



MESSIAH (1741)

*A Sacred Oratorio for Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass
soloists, Chorus and Orchestra*

George Frideric Handel was born in the same year as J.S. Bach and Domenico Scarlatti. His father, the son of a blacksmith and a pastor's daughter, became a distinguished physician and acquired a coat of arms (two boys holding medical flasks), which can be seen today beneath Handel's monument in Westminster Abbey.

Handel's early studies in organ and composition were within his native Lutheran church traditions but he discovered opera on a trip to Hamburg in 1703 to meet a young composer called Mattheson (whose sword missed killing Handel by a button's width during a spat in the pit at a performance of *Cleopatra*). From 1706-10, Handel studied in Rome and then took up a position in the court of the Elector of Hanover (the future King of England, George I). He was granted leave to make a trip to London later that year and once again immersed himself in opera. At that time in London, opera was all the rage and attracting extraordinary talents – including the greatest castrati singers of the day. Handel composed *Rinaldo*, produced to much acclaim in 1711, and it was little wonder that, after a brief trip back to Hanover, Handel asked for further leave – which he happened to extend until his death some forty-eight years later.

Operas such as *Julius Caesar*, *Ariodante* and *Serse* made Handel rich as well as famous, his orchestral music was much performed and he made many personal appearances playing organ and harpsichord, astonishing his audiences with his powers of dexterity and improvisation. Although his fortunes fluctuated wildly, Handel was greatly admired and continued to write and perform even when he lost his sight in the last few years of his life. When he died at the relatively grand age of 74 in 1759, his passing was mourned across the entire country as a truly national loss.

HANDEL THE MAN

In an era when the elite social circles in which he operated were small and gossipy and the London press was even more intrusive and vicious than our modern-day tabloids, it is extraordinary that Handel managed to keep his private life so private. Much has been read into this but little sustained. What is known is that 'Mr. Handel' presented as a large and somewhat broody man who "when he did smile, it was his sire the sun bursting out of a black cloud." He was well known for his love of food and drink and he cut the satirical artist Goupy out of his will for publishing a cartoon, entitled *The Charming Brute*, showing the composer with the face of a pig, sitting weightily astride a barrel while playing the organ, above a caption "I am myself alone". Other records portray a man who was blunt, explosively temperamental and hugely ambitious but a witty and genial presence and a great benefactor and philanthropist.

WRITING MESSIAH

Contemporary correspondence of the time suggests that Handel suffered some kind of crisis (a stroke or acute depression, described as a 'paraletick disorder') in the months leading up to his composition of *Messiah*. For almost thirty years he had enjoyed unrivalled success and fame in London, as a formidable organist and harpsichord player and the foremost composer-producer of Italianate opera. But now that this form of 'foreign' entertainment had lost favour with the press and public alike, he was facing artistic and financial ruin.

His friends were concerned, including Shakespeare scholar and sometime poet Charles Jennens, who had recently collaborated with Handel in his experiments with the new English 'oratorio' form – resulting in *Saul* and *Israel in Egypt* to mixed reviews. Handel turned back to opera but with disastrous box-office results. Jennens wrote in his journal "Handel says he will do nothing next winter but I hope I shall persuade him to set out another Scripture collection I have made for him, and perform it for his own benefit in Passion week... The subject is *Messiah*."

Jennens must, therefore, have been delighted to see his friend inspired to return to old work habits – eschewing food, coffee house, pipe and drink (all of which he was inordinately fond of) and foregoing sleep whilst writing in a 'white heat' of concentration. After only

three weeks he had completed the entire work and was ready to stage a series of concerts in Ireland, where he had been invited by the Lord Lieutenant for the following spring.

An extra 100 people squeezed themselves into Neal's Music Hall in Dublin on 13th April 1742 (by abandoning their hooped skirts and swords) to witness the first performance of *Messiah* – the oratorio that has become a cherished mainstay of the choral repertoire ever since.

MUSIC OF MESSIAH

Jennens provided Handel with a selection of biblical extracts that narrate the promise of Redemption through the Life and Passion of Christ, in three distinct parts: the prophecy of God's plan to redeem mankind through the coming of the Messiah; the suffering and sacrifice of Christ in the face of man's cruelty and rejection, and a hymn of thanksgiving for Christ's eventual victory over Death. Although *Messiah* resembles the great Lutheran Passions of contemporaries such as Schütz and Bach, it does not provide a direct narrative but rather the biblical excerpts offer a more meditative commentary on the redemptive nature of Christ's earthly mission and sacrifice for mankind.

The legendary swiftness with which Handel composed this work can be partially explained by his borrowings from his own earlier compositions – by no means an unusual practice in his day. For example, the melodies used in the two choruses *And He shall purify* and *His yoke is easy* were taken from an Italian chamber duet he had written earlier in 1741. Another secular duet provided material for the famous chorus *For unto us a Child is born*, and *All we like sheep* borrows its wandering phrases, imitating the calls of lost sheep, from the same duet. In each case, however, Handel carefully reworks his themes and the light-heartedness of the secular originals is given new and appropriate depth.

The writing for soloists is, likewise, at once full of dramatic colour and profound emotions – God's shaking of the heavens and the earth, the sudden and surprising appearance of angels to the shepherds, the tenderness with which Christ cares for His 'flock', the sorrow of Christ rejected, the raging of His persecutors and the calm certainty that redemption is secured for us by Christ's sacrifice – all are vividly conveyed in Handel's masterful writing.

The consistent beauty and nobility of the music itself, the high proportion of music provided for the choir, the graceful and relatively simple nature of the arias and the pared-down orchestral scoring (the strings and continuo of the Dublin performance only augmented, though with wonderful effect, by oboes, trumpets and drums for his London performances) have made *Messiah* one of the most frequently performed and beloved of all oratorios.

TO STAND OR NOT TO STAND?

King George II had a well known passion for music and opera but owing to the fractious nature of the King's relationship with his father (George I), he had begun by despising his father's favourite composer. It was not until Handel composed some anthems for George II's own coronation that the King became a patron as well as an admirer. His most famous tribute to the composer, however, is believed by some Handel scholars nowadays to be apocryphal. The tradition in England of standing for the *Hallelujah* chorus is said to have come from the moment when the King was sufficiently moved to rise from his seat and, of course, everyone else had to follow his example.

Please feel free to stand at tonight's performance of the chorus if you wish!

MESSIAH AND CHARITABLE CAUSES

On 16th May 1751, Handel began to put on annual productions of *Messiah* in the chapel of London's Foundling Hospital. This entailed yet more revisions of the work by the composer to suit the performers available at the time and here included the use of the chapel's outstanding boy trebles for some solos as well as for the top line of the chorus. These concerts were also unusual in that the chapel was the only consecrated space that Handel ever used for his own *Messiah* performances. There is very little reportage to support the notion that Handel intended the work to be evangelical but a great deal of evidence that he wanted to enable its audiences to support charitable work for the destitute and needy. In this spirit, London Concert Choir is delighted to be associated tonight with the charity *Chance for Children*.

TEXT OF MESSIAH

PART ONE

SINFONIA [OVERTURE]

RECITATIVE (*Tenor*)

Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God.

Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplish'd, that her iniquity is pardoned.

The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

AIR (*Tenor*)

Ev'ry valley shall be exalted, and ev'ry mountain and hill made low, the crooked straight, and the rough places plain.

CHORUS

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

RECITATIVE (*Bass*)

Thus saith the Lord of Hosts: Yet once, a little while and I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land: and I will shake all nations; and the desire of all nations shall come: the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, e'en the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.

AIR (*Alto*)

But who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire.

CHORUS

And He shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

RECITATIVE (*Alto*)

Behold! a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Emmanuel, 'GOD WITH US'.

AIR (*Alto*) AND CHORUS

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain;

O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength;

lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!

Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, good tidings to Jerusalem, arise; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold; the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

RECITATIVE (Bass)

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

AIR (Bass)

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death; upon them hath the light shined.

CHORUS

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given,
and the government shall be upon His shoulder;
and His Name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor,
the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

PASTORAL SYMPHONY

RECITATIVE (Soprano)

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And lo! the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

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

CHORUS

Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, goodwill toward men.

AIR (Soprano)

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!

Behold, thy King cometh unto thee.

He is the righteous Saviour and He shall speak peace unto the heathen.

RECITATIVE (Alto)

Then shall the eyes of the blind be open'd, and the ears of the deaf unstopped.
Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.

AIR (Alto & Soprano)

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, and He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

Come unto Him, all ye that labour. Come unto Him, ye that are heavy laden, and He will give you rest.

Take His yoke upon you, and learn of Him,
for He is meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

CHORUS

His yoke is easy, His burthen is light.

INTERVAL – 20 Minutes

PART TWO

CHORUS

Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.

AIR (Alto)

He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.

He gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair.

He hid not his face from shame and spitting.

CHORUS

Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows!

He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities;

the chastisement of our peace was upon Him.

CHORUS

And with His stripes we are healed.

CHORUS

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned ev'ry one to his own way.

And the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

RECITATIVE (Tenor)

All they that see Him, laugh Him to scorn; they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying:

CHORUS

He trusted in God that He would deliver Him, let Him deliver Him, if He delight in Him.

RECITATIVE (Tenor)

Thy rebuke hath broken His heart; He is full of heaviness.

He looked for some to have pity on him, but there was no man, neither found He any to comfort Him.

AIR (Tenor)

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow.

RECITATIVE (Tenor)

He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of Thy people was He stricken.

AIR (Tenor)

But Thou didst not leave His soul in hell, nor didst Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption.

CHORUS

Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in.

Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and almighty, the Lord mighty in battle.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in.

Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory.

AIR (Soprano)

How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.

CHORUS

Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world.

AIR (Bass)

Why do the nations so furiously rage together, and why do the people imagine a vain thing?

The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His anointed.

CHORUS

Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yokes from us.

RECITATIVE (Tenor)

He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn;
the Lord shall have them in derision.

AIR (Tenor)

Thou shall break them with a rod of iron;

Thou shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

CHORUS

Hallelujah: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

The kingdom of this world is become the Kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ;
and He shall reign for ever and ever.

King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. HALLELUJAH!

PART THREE

AIR (Soprano)

I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth;
and though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.

For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first-fruits of them that sleep.

CHORUS

Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

RECITATIVE (Bass)

Behold! I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep; but we shall all be changed in a
moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.

AIR (Bass)

The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and
we shall be changed.

For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality.

CHORUS

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His blood,
to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour,
and glory, and blessing.

Blessing and honour, glory and pow'r, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne,
and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Mark Forkgen – Conductor

Mark Forkgen has been Music Director of London Concert Choir since 1996. He is also Music Director of Canticum chamber choir and Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor of Kokoro, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra's New Music Group. He has worked with a number of leading orchestras, including the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, City of London Sinfonia, English Chamber Orchestra, English Northern Philharmonia and the Composers' Ensemble, appearing at all the major venues, including the Royal Festival Hall, the Barbican and the Royal Albert Hall.



A specialist in the field of choral and contemporary music, Mark has given the first performances of around 100 works. These include 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 Theatre, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. His 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.

Mark 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'. His recordings with Canticum and Kokoro have been highly recommended by BBC Radio 3 as well as both musical and national press. In Europe he has conducted in Spain, France, Belgium, Germany, Holland and the Czech Republic. He has also given performances of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* in Denmark, as well as Handel's *Messiah* and *Israel in Egypt* in Siena and at the Viterbo Early Music Festival in Italy.

Autumn highlights this season include productions of Stephen Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* and Stravinsky's *A Soldier's Tale* in addition to concerts featuring four premieres as part of the BSO's 'Living Tradition' Series and with Sir Peter Maxwell Davies.

A champion of Youth Music, Mark was the Conductor of the Scottish Schools Orchestra for ten years and Music Director of Ealing Youth Orchestra for eight years. He is currently Conductor of Dorset Youth Orchestra and Director of Music at Tonbridge School.

Erica Eloff – Soprano

Erica was born in South Africa. She graduated from the Potchefstroom University with a B.Mus degree and post-graduate Diploma in Performance (Cum Laude), studying voice with Werner Nel. In the UK she has studied with Lillian Watson and continues to study with Sheila Barnes. During her studies Erica was awarded several prizes and scholarships by her university and various national institutions. She is a laureate of several national and international singing competitions, including first prize in the 2008 London Handel Competition.



Her many concert performances in the UK, Germany, Norway and South Africa include the major repertoire by Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Fauré, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Orff, Rutter, Verdi and Vivaldi, as well as lesser-known works by Gounod, Schubert, Vaughan Williams, Dvorak and the South African composer Martin Watt. She has appeared in major concert venues with, amongst others, the Chamber Orchestra of South Africa, London Mozart Players, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Southbank Sinfonia and the New London Sinfonia.

Operatic roles in South Africa include Barbarina in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Despina in *Così fan tutte*, Adèle in *Die Fledermaus*, Adina in *L'elisir d'amore* and the Queen of the Night in *Die Zauberflöte*. Since living in the UK she has sung Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, the Queen of the Night and First Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*), Violetta (*La Traviata*) and Belinda (*Dido and Aeneas*). She joins Opera North for their 2011-12 season as a visiting artist.

As an active chamber musician, Erica has presented world premieres of music by South African and English composers, including works specifically written for her. She has also been extremely fortunate to collaborate with Lawrence Cummings and the London Handel Players on several occasions, including performing *Messiah* in Handel's own church, St George's, Hanover Square. Other highlights include singing Handel's solo cantatas in his London home as well as *Messiah* in the Royal Albert Hall under Sir David Willcocks.

A passionate performer of Lieder, Erica is keen to expand the audience's knowledge and appreciation by including lesser-known pieces in her recitals. She has given recitals at all the major South African Arts Festivals and, following her Wigmore Hall solo debut in their 2008/09 season as a Kirckman Young Artist, was invited to return in their 2009/10 season. In addition to her work as soloist, Erica is keen to help amateur singers develop their skills and, when time allows, helps to develop her children's school choir.

Her previous appearances with Mark Forkgen and LCC include Mozart's *Coronation Mass*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, and, most notably, in the part of Eurydice in Gluck's opera *Orfeo ed Euridice*.

Christopher Lowrey – Counter tenor

Originally from the United States, Christopher Lowrey holds degrees from Brown University, Cambridge University and the Royal College of Music. While at Cambridge, he was a choral scholar at Trinity College and was fully supported by the Keasbey Memorial Scholarship. He is currently on the advanced opera course at the Royal College of Music International Opera School, supported by the Hilary Fabian Award and the Josephine Baker Trust.



Christopher won the London Handel Society's Michael Oliver Prize as runner-up in the 2010 Handel Singing Competition. He was a finalist in the 2008 London Bach Society Competition, the 2006 Fulbright Scholarship competition, and in 2005 was awarded first prize at the Rhode Island competition of the National Association of Teachers of Singing. Currently, he is a voice student of Derek Lee Ragin, and has previously studied with Ashley Stafford and Pierre Masse. He holds a full-time singing post at St Peter's, Eaton Square, and performs regularly with professional choral groups, including Polyphony and English Voices.

Christopher made his solo international debut with Bach Collegium Japan under Masaaki Suzuki in Handel's *Messiah* and returned to Japan this season to perform Goffredo in a concert version of *Rinaldo*. Here and abroad his reputation is growing, and this year he will make his debut with various ensembles around the world.

His recent roles include Mirtillo in Handel's *Il Pastor Fido* as part of the 2010 London Handel Festival, Oberon in the RCM's production of Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the title role in Handel's *Alessandro* as part of the 2009 London Handel Festival, and Orpheus in Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*. Concert appearances include a celebration of Handel's music with the Aldeburgh Music Club; Bach's *Magnificat* and Vivaldi's *Gloria* with the Ecclesia Consort of New England; Handel's *Dixit Dominus* with Caius College Music Society; Handel's *Messiah*, Mozart's *Requiem*, and Handel's *Coronation Anthems* with the Trinity Singers; David in Boston University's production of Handel's *Saul*; Purcell's *Jubilate Deo*, J.S. Bach's *Missa Brevis* and *St John Passion*, Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* and Charpentier's *Te Deum* with the Brown University Chamber Choir; and several Bach Cantata concerts with Musica Maris.

Christopher is featured as a soloist on recordings of Handel's *Dettingen Te Deum* and a disc of choral music entitled 'Baltic Exchange', both with Trinity College Choir, on the Hyperion label. He is also involved in a wide range of consort groups. He is the founder and director of The Cambridge Clerkes, a group specializing in sacred music of the English Renaissance, and directs Ensemble Altera, an American-based early music ensemble.

James Geer – Tenor

Hailing from Sussex, James studied at Magdalen College, Oxford, where he sang as an Academical Clerk in the College Choir; at Trinity College of Music and on the Opera Course at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, graduating in 2008. While at college James won numerous scholarships and competitions, including the Morag Noble Award, the Catto Scholarship and the Principal's Award for the outstanding student performance of the year.



After graduating James was invited to become a Britten/Pears Scholar and has appeared in numerous performances at the Snape Maltings, notably as Male Chorus in *The Rape of Lucretia*, conducted by David Parry, and Mathan in *Athalia*, conducted by Richard Egarr. He has also appeared at the Snape Easter Festival in Mozart's Requiem conducted by Bernard Labadie and at the Aldeburgh Festival, where he performed Britten's *Sechs Holderlin Fragmente* with Malcolm Martineau. This concert was recently broadcast on BBC Radio 3.

Concert appearances have included L'Aumonier in *Les Dialogues des Carmelites* with Stephane Deneve and the RSNO, *Dido and Aeneas* with Nicholas McGeegan and the ECO, both at the Edinburgh International Festival. James has performed *Messiah* at the Royal Albert Hall under Sir David Willcocks as well as with numerous choral societies throughout the UK, including Leeds Philharmonic Society, Bristol Choral Society and at the Hexham Music Festival. Most recently, James performed Britten's *Saint Nicolas* with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and Chorus and Handel's *Saul* with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales under Nicolas Kraemer. He also appeared in London Concert Choir's recent semi-staged performance of Lerner and Loewe's *My Fair Lady*.

James' operatic roles performed while at college include Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), Monsieur Triquet (*Eugene Onegin*), Gonzalves (*L'Heure Espagnol*), L'Aumonier (*Les Dialogues des Carmelites*), Duncan (*The Albatross*), The Singer (*Beatrice Cenci*) and Le Berger (*Oedipus Rex*). Roles elsewhere include Male Chorus (*The Rape of Lucretia*) at the Snape Maltings, Acis (*Acis and Galatea*) with Edinburgh Studio Opera and Frederic (*The Pirates of Penzance*) for Haddo House Opera. James has recently been covering roles for Glyndebourne on Tour and Music Theatre Wales.

Recent recital appearances include Schubert songs and Mozart arias at the Wigmore Hall accompanied by Malcolm Martineau and a series of concerts entitled 'Unexplored Britten' with pianist Ronald Woodley. A recent studio recording of Britten songs with Malcolm will be available on the Onyx label later this year.

Giles Underwood – Bass-Baritone

After reading Biology at Magdalen College, Oxford, Giles attended postgraduate and opera courses at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where he won prizes for English and Contemporary Song and was generously supported by the Foyle Foundation. He studied then, as now, with Susan McCulloch.



On the concert platform, he has sung with most of the country's major orchestras, and is a regular soloist with The Academy of Ancient Music. He has performed in recital at Wigmore Hall and Purcell Room. As a proponent of contemporary music, he has premiered works by James Macmillan, Judith Bingham, Adam Gorb, Richard Peat and Edward Dudley Hughes, in whose opera, *The Birds*, he created the role of Hoopoe at the Buxton Festival. He was also in the original cast of *The Full Monteverdi*, a ground-breaking take on Monteverdi's Fourth Book of Madrigals, which ran for 88 performances and is now a successful feature film. His previous performances with London Concert Choir include Britten's *War Requiem* in Salisbury Cathedral.

His operatic roles include; Don Giovanni, Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*), Conte Almaviva (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Tarquinius (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Marcello (*La Bohème*), Sykos (Martinu's *Comedy on the Bridge*), Claudio (*Béatrice et Bénédicte*), Aeneas & Sorceress (*Dido and Aeneas*), Bruno (James Macmillan's *Parthenogenesis*), Erimante (Cavalli's *L'Erismena*), Adonis (*Venus and Adonis*), Falstaff (*Salieri*).

Recent engagements include appearances at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Wigmore Hall, The Temple Festival, The Oxford Lieder Festival, the Three Choirs Festival and The Royal Albert Hall. He is a regular contributor on the BBC, with most recently, a live broadcast of *Venus and Adonis* at the York Early Music Festival.

Giles is also much in demand as a teacher and vocal coach, with students at both Oxford and Cambridge Universities.

London Concert Choir

London Concert Choir celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2010. Having begun life as Brompton Choral Society, the choir was relaunched under its new name in 1986. Now with around 150 members of a wide range of ages the choir is notable for the conviction and expressiveness of its performances in an unusually broad musical repertoire. It regularly appears at all the major London concert venues, including the Barbican, the Southbank Centre and St Martin-in-the-Fields, as well as Cadogan Hall, and in cathedrals and churches in and around the capital.

The highlight of last season was an exchange with the Augsburg Basilica Choir. This began in March with a joint performance of Verdi's *Requiem* at the Royal Festival Hall, then in July LCC visited Germany to perform Haydn's *Mass in Time of War* and Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem* with the Basilikachor at the Augsburg Peace Festival.

Earlier seasons have included choral music from the 16th to the 21st centuries; and Handel's *Coronation Anthems*, Haydn's oratorio *The Creation* and the London premiere of a reconstruction of Mozart's C minor Mass – all with Counterpoint.

Among large-scale choral works have been Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* with the English Chamber Orchestra and Vaughan Williams' *Sea Symphony* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Two memorable performances of Britten's *War Requiem* – at the Barbican with Southbank Sinfonia, and in Salisbury Cathedral with Dorset Youth Orchestra – marked the choir's anniversary year.

Concert performances of operas and musicals include Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* and Lerner and Loewe's *My Fair Lady*. LCC has also presented Duke Ellington's *Sacred Concert* and Orff's *Carmina Burana*, and appeared in the *Star Wars* concerts at the O2 Arena. The choir often gives concerts for charity and has commissioned a number of new works over the years.



Mark Forkgen

Music Director

James Longford

Principal Accompanist

Bill Cook

Chairman

Will Tilden

Concert Manager

Barbara Whent

Treasurer

Stephen Rickett

Design and
Communications

Jennifer Greenway

Membership

Eleanor Cowie

Publicity

Simon Livesey

Company Secretary

www.london-concert-choir.org.uk

Counterpoint

The ensemble 'Counterpoint' was formed in 2000 specifically to work with vocal ensembles. Its membership is drawn from the leading young 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 members of Counterpoint have a great deal of expertise and are therefore comfortable in a wide range of idioms from Monteverdi through to Beethoven. The ensemble uses original instruments or excellent copies made using the latest theories and techniques of historic instrument manufacture.

In the summer of 2004 they opened the prestigious Viterbo Early Music Festival in Italy, performing Handel's *Israel in Egypt* with Canticum and Mark Forkgen. Further highlights have included Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *St John Passion*, *St Matthew Passion* and *Mass in B Minor*. In 2009 they performed Monteverdi's *Vespers* at St Martin-in-the-Fields as well as Haydn's *Creation* in the final concert of the Chichester Festival with Canticum.

Counterpoint have previously joined London Concert Choir in Haydn's *Nelson Mass*, Handel's *Foundling Hospital Anthem*, Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, the London premiere of the completed version of Mozart's *C Minor Mass*, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* and *Mass in C*, Haydn's *The Creation* at Guildhall and a concert performance of Gluck's opera *Orfeo ed Euridice*.

Leader

Catherine Martin

First Violin

Iona Davies

Sarah Bealby-Wright

Ben Sansom

Susan Carpenter-Jacobs

Ann Monnington

Second Violin

Oliver Webber

Kathryn Parry

Fiona Hugget

Felicity Broome-Skelton

Veronique Materaso

Viola

Peter Collyer

Stefanie Heichelheim

Alexis Bennett

Alex Lawrence

Cello

Anna Holmes

Chris Suckling

Emily Robinson

Bass

Timothy Amherst

Kate Aldridge

Oboe

Hannah McLaughlin

Gail Hennessey

Bassoon

Frances Eustace

Trumpet

Richard Fomison

Richard Thomas

Timpani

Robert Kendall

Organ

James Longford

Members of London Concert Choir

Soprano

Hannah Baker
Gillian Bibby
Dagmar Binsted
Sarah Burr
Jane Cameron
Alison Carpenter
Eleanor Cowie
Sally Davis
Gillian Denham
Susan Deville
Nicola Dixon-Brown
Emily Dresner
Rachel Duffield
Serena Ede
Erika Emerson
Sarah French
Lisa Gardner
Johanna Goll
Jennifer Greenway
Emma Heath
Christine Ingram
Lisa Janson
Jane Joyce
Caroline Kameen
Vickie Kelly
Anna Kosicka
Katie Lane
Susan Logan
Susanna Lutman
Megan Maley
Elite Marriott
Nadine Martin
Jessica Metcalfe
Jenny Moran
Stephanie Moussadis
Jeanette Murphy
Carolyn Newman
Fiona Paterson
Jutta Raftery
Rachel Rosenberg
Ella Salter
Rachel Scanlon
Frances Shaw
Martina Steber
Philippa Stroud
Shereen Taylor-Berger

Amy Thomas
Teresa Tilden
Francesca Walsh
Janet Wells
Julie Wilson

Alto

Rachel Armstrong
Helen Beddall-Smith
Venetia Browne
Frances Cave
Carys Cooper
Deborah Curle
Lizzie Davies
Georgina Day
Kathleen Dormer
Alena Faltova
Rebecca Foulkes
Anna Garnier
Netta Geist
Mary Glanville
Nancy Goodchild
Muriel Hall
Joan Herbert
Tina Holderried
Caroline Holloway
Chrina Jarvis
Chris Joseph
Sabine Koellmann
Joanna Kramer
Meghana Kumar
Lorna Lewis
Norma MacMillan
Bridget Maidment
Anna Metcalf
Sophy Miles
Judith Paterson
Rachel Pearson
Gillian Perry
Katja Pluto
Dubravka Polic
Katie Prior
Caroline Rawlence
Annette Riel
Mary Ann Sieghart
Tabitha Strydom
Kate Tranter

Rachel Vroom
Gabriel West
Barbara Whent
Belinda Whittingham
June Williams

Tenor

Richard Black
Andrew Bolan
Deborah Bono
Christopher Boustred
David Broad
Adam Csatadi
James Ede
Fabyan Evans
John Galt
Nicholas Hall
Sam Hansford
Richard Holmes
Carolyn Knight
Eli Konvitz
Ben Martin
Stephen Rickett
Tim Steer
Tim Thirlway

Bass

Colin Allies
Peter Banks
Graeme Biggar
Richard Burbury
Jim Cameron
Daniel Cockayne
Bill Cook
Henry Cook
Andrew Cullen
Albert Edwards
Richard Gillard
Nigel Grieve
Nigel Hartnell
Martin Harvey
Graham Hick
Julian Hofmann
David Ireland
Ian Judson
Robert Kealey
Stephen Kingston

Stefan Klaazen
Vilem Kriz
Simon Livesey
Angus Macdonald
Alan Machacek
Ian Mackintosh
Asher Murphy
Christopher Powell-Smith
Dai Prichard
Simon Retallack
Morgan Roberts
Anthony Sharp
Ryszard Stepaniuk
William Tilden
Tony Trowles
Dai Whittingham

Mailing List

If you would like to receive advance information about our concerts, why not join London Concert Choir's FREE mailing list?

You can send an email to: [**mailinglist@london-concert-choir.org.uk**](mailto:mailinglist@london-concert-choir.org.uk)

Alternatively you can write to:

Jenny Moran

16 Odin House, 127 Flaxman Road, Camberwell SE5 9DP

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Supporting London Concert Choir

London Concert Choir is a lively and friendly choir that welcomes the active involvement of its supporters. We are committed to high standards and constantly strive to raise the level of our performances by holding extra workshops and other special events. We could not afford to do all this without the generosity of our supporters and their contribution is gratefully acknowledged.

If you would like to help us maintain our position as one of the leading amateur choirs in London by joining us as a Friend, Companion or Patron, please write to:

Robert Kealey

50 Denton Road, Twickenham, TW1 2HQ

Life Friends

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

Peter Barley, Tim and Patricia Barnes, Anne Clayton, Mr and Mrs Michael Hunt, Sue McFadyen, Gregory and Helen Rose, Nicholas Spence

Patrons and Companions of LCC

John Armstrong, Deborah and Girome Bono, Howard and Deirdre Coates, Deborah Cullen, James Davis, Geoffrey Deville, Karen Evans, Tim Ingram, Mark and Liza Loveday, Jennifer Powell Smith, Michael Shipley, Sybil and Nicholas Spence, Alison Stone

Friends of LCC

Sue Blyth, Simon Cave, Bronwen Cook, Dianne Denham, John and Judith Greenway, Jeremy Groom, Nicholas and Maureen Halton, Miriam Kramer, Anthony Smith, Ruth Steinholtz, Jill Tilden, Will and Teresa Tilden, Susan Wheatley

[**www.london-concert-choir.org.uk**](http://www.london-concert-choir.org.uk)



Conductor: **Mark Forkgen**

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS

Wednesday 7 March 2012, 7.30pm

Royal Festival Hall, Southbank Centre, SE1

ELGAR: THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS

Adrian Thompson, Jennifer Johnston, Brindley Sherratt
with **Canticum** and **Southbank Sinfonia**

Sunday 20 May 2012, 8.15pm

The Chapel of St Augustine, Tonbridge School

MUSIC FOR CORONATIONS

Saturday 14 July 2012, 7.30pm

HMV Forum, Kentish Town, NW5

STEPHEN MCNEFF: THE CHALK LEGENDS

London Premiere

with members of *Kokoro, Dorset Youth Orchestra*
Ealing Youth Orchestra, Dance South West
and youth choirs from London and Dorset