

ENGLISH
CHAMBER
ORCHESTRA



Handel
The Messiah

PATRON HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES

Leader Stephanie Gonley

London Concert Series 2020/21

Cadogan Hall – Sunday, 6th December 2020, 15:00 & 18:00



CADOGAN HALL

Cadogan Hall

6th December 2020
3:00pm Matinee concert
6:00pm Evening concert

English Chamber Orchestra

Handel
Messiah

Carolyn Sampson soprano
Iestyn Davies countertenor
Andrew Staples tenor
Matthew Brook bass
VOCES8 chorus
Stephanie Gonley leader
Nicholas Kraemer director/harpsichord



CADOGAN HALL

The ECO is grateful to the English Chamber Orchestra Charitable Trust for its generous support of this concert.

English Chamber Orchestra reserves the right to substitute artists and to vary programmes if necessary.



Patron HRH Prince of Wales
Leader Stephanie Gonley

Welcome

A very warm welcome to this performance of Handel's *Messiah*, adapted both in length and number of performers to comply with current Government COVID-19 regulations. If you would like to know more about the challenges we faced in organising this performance then please turn to the next page.

We are delighted to welcome back Nicholas Kraemer who will direct the performance from the harpsichord, a renowned line up of international soloists and VOCES8 as the chorus. We hope you enjoy this version of the *Messiah* and that it sends you out into a chilly December evening full of hope and expectation for the challenges ahead.

So as you take your seat in the wonderful Cadogan Hall may I, on behalf of everyone involved with the performances today, wish you a very happy, safe Christmas and a prosperous and healthy New Year.

Paul Wing

General Manager
English Chamber Orchestra

Cadogan Hall Etiquette and Information

Smoking:

All areas of Cadogan Hall are non-smoking areas.

Food and Beverages:

You are kindly requested not to bring food and other refreshments into Cadogan Hall. A small selection of sandwiches, confectionary and snacks is available from the bars. Concert goers may also enjoy a wide selection of champagnes, spirits, red and white wines, beers and soft drinks from the Culford Room bar.

Camera and Electronic Devices:

Video equipment, cameras and tape recorders are not permitted. Please ensure all pagers and mobile phones are switched off before entering the auditorium.

Interval and Timings:

Intervals vary with each performance. Some performances may not have an interval. Latecomers will not be admitted until a suitable break in the performance.

Consideration:

We aim to deliver the highest standards of service. Therefore, we would ask you to treat our staff with courtesy and in a manner in which you would expect to be treated.



CADOGAN HALL

The Challenges

The COVID-19 restrictions have had three major implications on how we present this concert.

Firstly, to adhere to the social distancing rules we are only permitted to have twenty eight performers on stage. To stay within this number we reduced the orchestra to the bare minimum. This left just ten spaces for the chorus, soloists and director. As there are no duets for the soloists they will only be on stage when they are actually singing , entering stage right and then exiting stage left keeping both on and off stage to the two metre distance rule.

Secondly, we are only allowed an audience of under $\frac{1}{3}$ of the hall's capacity. So to make this viable we had to increase the usual number of cuts and perform the entire work without an interval. This allowed us to increase the overall attendance by performing the work twice.

Thirdly, we decided to stream the concert for those who were either unable to attend or wanted to listen at home. This is being done in collaboration with VOCES8 FOUNDATION and we are very grateful for their support.

Click [here](#) to access the online performance which will be available from 7pm on 11th December onwards.

Looking into the future it is with much regret that because the Southbank is remaining closed for the foreseeable future our concert with Pinchas Zukerman on February 3rd has been postponed, as has our tour with him to Germany and Switzerland.

The concert with Pinchas will now take place in March 2022 and we will be touring with him later that year. We have therefore added three extra concerts during February and March which details can be found at the end of the programme.

George Frideric Handel

(1685–1759)

Messiah



'Handel is the greatest composer that ever lived. I would uncover my head and kneel down at his tomb!'

Ludwig van Beethoven

England's greatest composer was German by birth; Georg Friedrich Händel was born in Halle, Saxony, on 23 February 1685, just a month before J S Bach. He abandoned his law studies to take up a career as an organist and opera composer, travelling in Italy to hear the most significant composers and performers of the day. He was appointed to a court post in Hanover, but took time out to visit London, where he composed *Rinaldo* to satisfy the English taste for Italian opera. Handel obtained leave of absence for a second trip to England in 1712, and never returned to his post; in 1714, his employer, the Elector Georg Ludwig of Hanover, became King George I of England, and was happy to forgive his wandering court musician. As a hugely successful composer of Italian operas in London (over thirty of them, including *Radamisto*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Ariodante*, *Alcina*, *Serse* and *Rodelinda*), Handel anglicised his name, becoming a naturalised English citizen in 1726. When the English enthusiasm for Italian opera began to wane, Handel turned his hand to oratorio in English, beginning with *Esther* in 1732 and culminating in *Messiah* ten years later. Handel never married, but was noted for his sociability, generosity, and occasional outbursts of both caustic wit and ill-temper. His last years were dogged by failing eyesight. Handel died on 14 April 1759, and is buried in Westminster Abbey.

The genre of oratorio had its beginnings in Renaissance Italy; the telling of a biblical or mythological story in concert form, without staging, was a way of getting around the all too-frequent Papal bans on theatres as dens of iniquity. Handel heard Italian oratorios during his trip to Italy in 1706–10, and wrote two himself, *Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* (The Triumph of Time and Truth) and *La Resurrezione* (The Resurrection).

Another musical model for Handel was the German Protestant tradition of Passion settings performed in Holy Week, with intensely dramatic solo narration, powerful choruses, and simple chorales. The highest examples of this form came later, with Bach's magnificent St Matthew and St John Passions, but its influence is evident in Handel's *Messiah*.

English oratorio came about almost by accident, with Handel's *Esther*, written for private performance in a stately home; a revival at the Haymarket Theatre in London proved unexpectedly successful, as well as providing employment for members of the opera company out of season. Later oratorios, including *Deborah*, *Athalia*, *Saul* and *Israel in Egypt*, became much more than simply a way of filling opera houses during Lent, when stage performances were prohibited.

In the autumn of 1741, Handel went to Dublin, probably at the invitation of the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. It is not known whether the Duke actually commissioned *Messiah*, but Handel had certainly composed it before he left England, in an intense burst of activity in August and September 1741; composition of the entire score took only three weeks. Handel was grateful to get away from London; disputes between rival opera companies had meant that his operas were playing to empty houses, and Ireland held the promise of new and enthusiastic audiences. *Messiah* was first performed, to great acclaim, on 13 April 1742, at the 'New Musick-Hall' in Fishamble Street, for the benefit of local charities. The soloists included Susannah Cibber, a celebrated actress with a notoriously colourful past; her rendering of the aria 'He was despised' moved a local worthy to exclaim 'Woman, for this be all thy sins forgiven thee.'

Messiah was heard in London in February 1743, at Covent Garden. Despite some objections to the 'profanity' of performing a sacred work in a theatre, the oratorio gained in popularity, and from 1749 onwards Handel put it on at least once every year, often for the benefit of the Foundling Hospital. For successive revivals, Handel re-composed and updated the music to suit the available soloists, whether opera singers, choirboys, cathedral counter-tenors or even castrati. An immense 'Handel Celebration' in Westminster Abbey in 1784 (intended to mark the centenary of Handel's birth – they got the date wrong) set the fashion for performances of *Messiah* with gigantically enlarged forces; it used massed choirs of over a thousand voices, and an enormously augmented orchestra, with added flutes, horns and trombones, 26 oboes and 26 bassoons. The work's adaptability has been a feature of its survival during the two-and-three-quarter centuries of its existence, in performances by single voices, chamber choirs, or 'monster' choral societies, professional and amateur; *Messiah* has undergone numerous versions, editions and 'improvements', including a fascinating re-orchestration by Mozart.

The text of *Messiah* is by Charles Jennens, a gentleman of independent means who supplied Handel with a number of other oratorio texts, including *Saul* and *Belshazzar*. Jennens was modest about his contribution, referring to it as a 'Scripture Collection' rather than a libretto; all the words are indeed taken from the Old and New Testaments, but Jennens has selected and combined them with subtlety and intelligence, to tell the story of Christ's nativity, passion, resurrection and ascension, prefaced by the voices of the prophets and ending in triumphant fulfilment. Handel rises gloriously to the challenge of Jennens' text, with music that covers a vast range, from great tenderness and delicacy to immense majesty and power.

A long-standing tradition

According to legend, at the first London performance of *Messiah* in 1743, the entire audience, 'together with the king (who happened to present)', were so moved by the 'Hallelujah' Chorus that they all spontaneously rose to their feet. Malicious gossip offered an alternative explanation, that King George II was so tone-deaf that he thought the performance had finished and the orchestra was beginning the National Anthem; once the monarch had stood up, everyone else present would have been obliged to follow suit. Whatever the truth of events, for well over 250 years it has been a hallowed tradition in England to stand during the 'Hallelujah' Chorus. It is certainly an appropriate response to the most uplifting and best-loved of all choruses – but please don't feel obliged to get to your feet!

Sinfony (Overture)

Accompagnato (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 pardon'd. 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. (*Isaiah 40: 1-3*)

Air (Tenor)

Ev'ry valley shall be exalted, and ev'ry mountain and hill made low; the crooked straight, and the rough places plain. (*Isaiah 40: 4*)

Chorus

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. (*Isaiah 40: 5*)

Recitative (Alto)

Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his name Emmanuel, GOD WITH US. (*Isaiah 7: 14; Matthew 1: 23*)

Air (Alto) & 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. O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, arise, shine, for thy Light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. (*Isaiah 40: 9; Isaiah 60: 1*)

Accompagnato (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. (*Isaiah 60: 2-3*)

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. (*Isaiah 9: 2*)

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. (*Isaiah 9: 6*)

Pifa (Pastoral Symphony)

Recitative (Soprano)

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. (*Luke 2: 8*)

Accompagnato (Soprano)

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. (*Luke 2: 9*)

Recitative (Soprano)

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. *(Luke 2: 10-11)*

Accompagnato (Soprano)

And suddenly there was with the angel, a multitude of the heav'nly host, praising God, and saying:
(Luke 2: 13)

Chorus

Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will towards men.
(Luke 2: 14)

Air (Soprano)

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion, shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee; He is the righteous Saviour; and He shall speak peace unto the heathen.
(Zechariah 9: 9-10)

Air (Alto)

He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. *(Isaiah 53: 3)*

Accompagnato (Tenor)

All they that see Him laugh Him to scorn; they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying: *(Psalms 22: 7)*

Chorus

He trusted in God that He would deliver Him; let Him deliver Him, if He delight in Him. *(Psalms 22 : 8)*

Accompagnato (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.
(Psalms 69: 20)

Arioso (Tenor)

Behold, and see, if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow!
(Lamentations 1: 12)

Accompagnato (Tenor)

He was cut off out the land of the living: for the transgression of Thy people was He stricken. *(Isaiah 53: 8)*

Air (Tenor)

But Thou didst not leave His soul in hell; nor didst Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption.
(Psalms 16: 10)

Chorus

The Lord gave the word; great was the company of the preachers.
(Psalms 68: 11)

Air (Soprano)

How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.
(Romans 10: 15)

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. *(Psalms 2: 1-2)*

Chorus

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

(Psalms 2: 3)

Recitative (Tenor)

He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh
them to scorn; the Lord shall have them
in derision. *(Psalms 2: 4)*

Thou shalt break them with a rod of
iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like
a potter's vessel. *(Psalms 2: 9)*

Chorus

Hallelujah! for the Lord God
Omnipotent reigneth. *(Revelation 19: 6)*

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

(Revelation 11: 15)

King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

(Revelation 19: 16)

Hallelujah!

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. *(Job 19: 25-26)*

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

(I Corinthians 15: 20)

Chorus

Since by man came death, by man came
also the resurrection of the dead. For as
in Adam all die, even so in Chris shall all
be made alive.

(I Corinthians 15: 21-22)

Accompagnato (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.

(I Corinthians 15: 51-52)

Air (Bass)

The trumpet shall sound, and the dead
shall be rais'd incorruptible, and we shall
be chang'd. For this corruptible must put
on incorruption, and this mortal must
put on immortality.

(I Corinthians 15: 52-53)

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.

(Revelation 5: 12-13)

Programme note by Jonathan Burton

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Discovering Messiah

There are some works of art that have become so familiar to us that we almost don't question their existence or their appeal. Michelangelo's *David*, the *Mona Lisa*, *Hamlet*, Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, Handel's *Messiah*.

And yet, with the last example, its appeal stems not only from the music, which is undeniably great, but also its subject, Jesus Christ. Most of us are aware that generally speaking, the first part of *Messiah* deals with the prophecies of Christ's arrival on Earth, the second part, his suffering, death and resurrection, and the third, the redemption of mankind through Christ's death.

Charles Jennens, Handel's librettist, has put together words from the scriptures which follow this summary, words which, to an 18th century audience would have been familiar, but in the 21st century have become known mainly through their association with Handel's *Messiah* rather than their Biblical context. In fact among today's audiences, it is likely that some will not know the story of the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Messiah is unlike any other oratorio by Handel in that it has almost no narrative. So what is actually being said in '*Messiah*'? To answer that we need to look at the parts of the Bible that Jennens has chosen. The majority of the verses are from the Old Testament but crucially find echoes in the New Testament. Unlike the works of Bach in the *Passions* and Berlioz in *The Childhood of Christ* which follow specific events, Handel has set a succession of biblical verses which allude to the various stages of Christ's life, death and resurrection but mostly through the lenses of Old Testament Hebrew prophets. So who were these prophets and what were they actually prophesying?

Let us look into the nature of Old Testament prophecy and the prophets themselves. Mary Ellen Chase writes: 'Our English word '*prophet*' comes to us through the Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures.....The Greek word for prophet is *prophetes* and it stems from a Greek verb meaning *to speak in place of or in behalf of*.... In other words, he spoke the words and the messages which, he entirely believed, he had received from God Himself. One of our modern conceptions of a prophet is one who foretells and predicts events in the future and in the case of the Old Testament prophets they sometimes were making predictions or promises, but not seven centuries ahead. As Chase writes: 'This mistaken idea of prediction by the prophets, of foretelling the future, existed early in the Christian Church and is by no means absent from it today. It is seen in the quite erroneous notion that certain of them looked seven centuries beyond their own time and foresaw the coming of Jesus of Nazareth, which they foretold in those prophecies known as Messianic.' In other words, what these prophets were writing

about was specific to their own time and in the case of Isaiah, the most frequently quoted in *Messiah*, this was around the middle of the 8th century BC.

I am sure many listeners to *Messiah* believe that the 'prophecies' are directly connected to the coming of Christ. In the sense that these Old Testament passages were taken up by the Gospel writers among others and used to promote the idea that they were foreseeing the events in Christ's life and death, they are connected. As Ruth Smith writes 'the Old Testament prophecies ...were *seen to be fulfilled* in the New Testament' (my italics). But as we shall see, they are describing events which were taking place around the time that they were written.

Let's take a few excerpts at random. 'He was despised' for instance – how Christ was regarded just before his death perhaps. Or 'Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son' – his birth. And what about the opening words 'Comfort Ye my people'. We could say that Christ's coming will be a spiritual comfort to mankind.

In all three examples I have given, although the idea is that the listener believes in those explanations of Christ's arrival, in reality, the texts were written over 700 years before He lived so they could not actually be referring to Him. Throughout most of *Messiah*, we can find two layers of meaning to the text: the first layer carries the original sense of the words, what situations or events are being referred to at the time they were written. Then there is the sense of how they can be applied to the story of Jesus Christ, the second layer.

So Charles Jennens' choice of text was nearly always prompted by those Old Testament passages which were 'echoed' by the Gospel writers and in the letters of St. Paul who were writing after Jesus' death in the New Testament and which gave those old scriptures an entirely different context. For although Isaiah and the other prophets were in some way foretelling the future, they were dealing with a future much nearer to their own time.

What this means then, is that much of the text of *Messiah* in its first 'layer' is set in Jewish history and it is fascinating to see how the transformation to the story of Jesus Christ, the second 'layer' What this means then, is that much of the text of *Messiah* in its first 'layer' is set in Jewish history and it is fascinating to see how the transformation is made seamlessly and forcefully, breathing new life into the ancient words.

Nicholas Kraemer

Bibliography:

Chase, M.E. 1963 *The Prophets for the Common Reader* WWNorton & Co, New York

Smith, R. 2012 *'Charles Jennens, The Man behind Handel's Messiah'* Handel House Trust, London

Carolyn Sampson

Soprano



Carolyn Sampson has enjoyed notable successes worldwide in repertoire ranging from early baroque to the present day.

On the opera stage she has appeared with English National Opera, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Scottish Opera, Opéra de Paris, Opéra de Lille, Opéra de Montpellier and Opéra National du Rhin.

Carolyn performs regularly at the BBC Proms and with orchestras including the Bach Collegium Japan, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Freiburg Baroque Orchestra, Orchestra dell'Accade-

mia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Vienna Symphony Orchestra and with numerous orchestras in the USA. She has worked with conductors such as Sir Mark Elder, Harry Bicket, Ivor Bolton, Riccardo Chailly, Harry Christophers, Philippe Herreweghe, Andris Nelsons, Yannick Nezet-Seguin, Louis Langrée, Trevor Pinnock, and Donald Runnicles.

A consummate recitalist, Carolyn appears regularly at the Wigmore Hall where she was a "featured artist" in the 14/15 season. She has given recitals at the Leeds Lieder, Saintes and Aldeburgh Festivals as well as at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Barcelona, Freiburg, Oper Frankfurt, Vienna Konzerthaus, and recently her debut recital tour of Japan.

Carolyn has an extensive discography appearing on the Harmonia Mundi, BIS, Hyperion, Virgin Classics, DG Archiv, Linn Records, BIS and Vivat labels, earning awards including a Diapason D'or, two Gramophone Awards, and a nomination for Artist of the Year in the 2017 Gramophone Awards.

Her debut song recital disc 'Fleurs', with Joseph Middleton, was released in 2015 and nominated in the solo vocal category of the Gramophone Awards. She has since released 'A Verlaine Songbook', exploring settings of the poetry of Paul Verlaine, 'Lost is my Quiet', a duet disc with the countertenor Iestyn Davies, 'A Soprano's Schubertiade', 'Reason in Madness' and most recently 'The Contrast - English Poetry in Song', all for the BIS label.

Iestyn Davies

Countertenor



After graduating from St John's College, Cambridge, Iestyn Davies studied at the Royal Academy of Music, London. In 2017 Iestyn received an Olivier Award nomination for singing the role of Farinelli in *Farinelli and the King* with Mark Rylance, a Globe Theatre production which was revived in the West End and on Broadway.

On the opera stage he has appeared at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, English National Opera, La Scala, Milan, the Metropolitan Opera, New York, the Chicago Lyric Opera and in Munich, Vienna and Zurich. Recent highlights include returns to the Bayerische Staatsoper, Royal Opera House and at the Metropolitan Opera for *Ottone/Agrippina*,

Terry/Marnie at the Metropolitan Opera and *Polinesso/Ariodante* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. In the 2020/21 season Iestyn makes his debut at Santa Fe opera as Oberon in Britten's *Midsummer Night's Dream* with Harry Bicket.

Celebrated on the concert platform, he has performed at La Scala Milan, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Tonhalle in Zurich, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, at the Barbican in London and Lincoln Centre New York. This season he joins an all-star cast for concert performances at the Royal Opera House as *Polinesso* in Handel's *Ariodante*, the Wiener Symphoniker/Andrea Marcon & the Academy of Ancient Music/Ricard Egarr for Handel's *Messiah* and the Sächsischen Staatskapelle/Philippe Herreweghe at the Osterfestspiele Salzburg for Bach's *B Minor Mass*.

A committed recitalist, with repertoire ranging from Dowland to Clapton, he is a regular guest at Carnegie Hall, New York and has curated residencies at both the Wigmore Hall and Saffron Hall. Iestyn has twice been awarded the Gramophone Recital Award, and in 2017 won the Gramophone Baroque Vocal Award for his Bach Cantatas disc with Arcangelo and Jonathan Cohen. In 2017 he was awarded an MBE for his to music.

Andrew Staples

Tenor



Andrew Staples is considered one of the most versatile tenors of his generation, appearing regularly with conductors such as Rattle, Harding, Davis and Nézet-Séguin, and orchestras such as the Berliner Philharmoniker, Wiener Philharmoniker, Swedish Radio Orchestra, Bayerischer Rundfunk Sinfonieorchester, Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, the Orchestre de Paris, the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, and the London Symphony Orchestra.

Andrew made his debut at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden as Jacquino *Fidelio*, returning for Flamand *Capriccio*, Tamino *Die Zauberflöte*, Artabenes *Artaxerxes* and Narraboth

Salome. He sang Belfiore *La Finta Giardiniera* for the National Theatre, Prague and La Monnaie, Don Ottavio *Don Giovanni* for the Salzburger Festspiele, and Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* for the Lucerne Festival, Drottningholm with Daniel Harding and the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

Recent engagements include his Metropolitan Opera debut as Andres *Wozzeck*, Don Ottavio and directing *Don Giovanni* and *Dream of Gerontius* with the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and Daniel Harding, Nicias *Thais* with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and *Das Lied von der Erde* with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin and Simon Rattle and with the Budapest Festival Orchestra and Ivan Fischer. Other engagements include Idomeneo at the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin, Bach's *Mass in in b minor* and Golo *Genoveva* with the Helsinki Baroque Orchestra and Britten's *Serenade for tenor*, horn and strings with the Budapest Festival Orchestra and the Danish National Symphony Orchestra.

His discography includes *Billy Budd* with Daniel Harding and the London Symphony Orchestra, Schumann *Das Paradies und die Peri* with the London Symphony Orchestra and Sir Simon Rattle (LSO Live); Handel *Messiah* with Le Concert d'Astrée and Emmanuelle Haim (Erato/Warner Classics); Schumann *Szenen aus Goethes Faust* with the Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks and Daniel Harding; Stravinsky's *Persephone* with Esa-Pekka Salonen (Pentatone); the Grammy-nominated *Dr Atomic* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and John Adams; and *The Dream of Gerontius* With Barenboim and the Berlin Staatskapelle (Deutsche Grammophon).

Matthew Brook

Bass



Matthew Brook has appeared widely as a soloist, and has worked extensively with conductors such as Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Richard Hickox, Sir Charles Mackerras, Harry Christophers, Christophe Rousset, Paul McCreesh and Sir Mark Elder.

Recent and future highlights include Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* and *Dido and Aeneas* with the Handel and Haydn Society, Bach's *St John Passion* with the St Paul Chamber Orchestra, Haydn's *Creation* and Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Il Re di Scozia *Ariodante* with the Staatstheater Stuttgart, Argante *Rinaldo* with Ópera de

Oviedo, Claudio *Agrippina* at Teatro de la Maestranza, Handel's *Messiah* with Les Violons du Roy in Québec, a tour of Bach cantatas with the Monteverdi Choir, Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Tippett's *A Child of Our Time* at Festival St Denis, and the roles of Herod and Father in Berlioz's *L'Enfance du Christ* with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Sir Andrew Davis.

On the concert platform, notable performances include Brahms' *Requiem* with the St Petersburg Philharmonic; Bach's *B Minor Mass* and Haydn's *Harmoniemesse* with the Dresden Staatskapelle; Nielsen's *Symphony no. 3* with the Hallé Orchestra; Bach's *Mass in B minor* and *St Matthew Passion* with Collegium Vocale Gent; Bach's *St John Passion* with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra; Bach Cantatas with Marcus Creed and the Tonhalle-Orchester, Zurich; *Elijah* at the Three Choirs Festival with the Philharmonia Orchestra.

VOCES8

Chorus



The British vocal ensemble VOCES8 is proud to inspire people through music and share the joy of singing. Touring globally, the group performs an extensive repertory both in its a cappella concerts and in collaborations with leading orchestras, conductors, composers and soloists.

VOCES8 has performed at many notable venues in its 15-year career, including the Wigmore Hall, Elbphilharmonie, Cité de la Musique, Vienna Konzerthaus, Tokyo Opera City, NCPA Beijing, Sydney Opera House, Mariinsky Theatre Concert Hall, Palacio de Bellas Artes Mexico City.

This season they are scheduled to perform around the world but begin online with the global autumn festival Live From London, followed by the Live From London Christmas festival. 2020-2021 also sees the launch of the VOCES8 Digital Academy, an online choral programme featuring live interaction and video resources for choirs around the world. During the season they will release a major new album with Decca Classics, as well as continue to release sheet music with Edition Peters.

VOCES8 is passionate about music education and is the flagship ensemble of its music charity the VOCES8 Foundation. Engaging in a broad range of outreach work that reaches up to 40,000 people a year, the group runs an annual programme of workshops and concerts at the VOCES8 Centre at St Anne & St Agnes Church, London. Dedicated to supporting young singers, eight annual VOCES8 Scholarships are awarded which are linked to the annual Milton Abbey Summer School at which amateur singers of all ages work and perform with VOCES8. Through the VOCES8 USA Foundation another octet of talented Scholars exists.

Nicholas Kraemer

Director/Harpsichord



Nicholas Kraemer began his career as a harpsichordist, quickly moving from playing continuo at the back of the orchestra to directing from the harpsichord at the front. In the 1970s, his repertoire widened, taking in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as well as the baroque and in 1978 he formed Raglan Baroque Players.

Kraemer is currently Principal Guest Conductor of Music of the Baroque, Chicago. During his long and distinguished career he has held the positions of Artistic Director of the Irish Chamber Orchestra, the London Bach Orchestra and the Bath Festival music programme; Permanent Guest Conductor of the Manchester Camerata; Principal Guest Conductor of the Kristiansand Symphony Orchestra and Musikkollegium Winterthur and Associate Conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. He was the first Music Director of Opera 80, now English Touring Opera.

Appearing worldwide with many prestigious ensembles Nicholas Kraemer has conducted the Berlin Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Bergen Philharmonic, English Chamber Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, The Hallé, Gothenburg, City of Birmingham, Detroit, Houston, Toronto, West Australia and Colorado Symphony Orchestras and the Minnesota Orchestra. In addition, he has directed specialist ensembles such as the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Philharmonia Baroque and Birmingham Contemporary Music Group. He has conducted

Ensemble Kanazawa in Japan, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, the London Mozart Players and is regularly invited to perform with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Northern Sinfonia and Musikcollegium Winterthur.

Kraemer first worked with the English Chamber Orchestra in 1978 and few years later conducted his performance of Handel's *Messiah*. We were also delighted to perform at his 70th birthday concert.

Kraemer's Opera engagements have taken him to Paris, Lisbon, Amsterdam, Geneva and Marseilles with repertoire ranging from Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* and *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* to nineteenth- and twentieth-century works including Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos*; Britten's *Albert Herring*, *Noye's Fludde*, and *Paul Bunyan* and Stephen Oliver's *Tom Jones*. He has conducted many Handel operas including *Arianna in Creta*, *Lotario*, *Tolomeo*, *Arminio*, *Ariodante*, *Il Pastor Fido*, *Rinaldo*, and *Orlando*, as well as the major Mozart operas. Elsewhere he has conducted *The Magic Flute* and Handel's *Jeptha* at English National Opera, *Agrippina* for Theater Aachen, *Le Nozze di Figaro* for Den Nye Opera, Bergen, *Idomeneo* for Grange Park Opera, *La Finta Giardiniera* at the Buxton Festival and *Ariodante* for Scottish Opera.

Nicholas Kraemer's recordings include several discs of Vivaldi concertos with City of London Sinfonia for Naxos; Locatelli *Concerto Grossi*, Tartini *violin concertos*, and concertos by Durante, Pergolesi, and Leo with Elizabeth Wallfisch and Raglan Baroque Players for Hyperion; Handel's *Rodelinda* for Virgin Classics; Handel *Oratorio Duets* with Carolyn Sampson, Robin Blaze and the OAE for BIS and works by Thea Musgrave with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra for Collins Classics. He has contributed to several feature films, most notably as Baroque music director for *The Madness of King George*.



ENGLISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA



Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales

Leader: Stephanie Gonley

The English Chamber Orchestra, now in its 60th anniversary year, is the most recorded chamber orchestra in the world, with a discography containing nearly 900 recordings.

The American radio network CPRN said of the ECO:

'one of the world's greatest 'living' orchestras'.

The illustrious history of the orchestra features many major musical figures. Benjamin Britten was the orchestra's first Patron and a significant musical influence. Following Britten's untimely death in 1976, His Royal Highness Prince Charles became the orchestra's patron. The ECO's long relationship with such great musicians as Slava Rostropovich, Pinchas Zukerman, and also with Daniel Barenboim led to an acclaimed complete cycle of Mozart piano concertos as live performances and recordings, followed later by two further recordings of the complete cycle, with Murray Perahia and Mitsuko Uchida.

Recent tours have included Bermuda, China, Mexico, Finland, France, Turkey, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Slovenia and Austria, as well as concerts across the UK and at London's Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Kings Place and Cadogan Hall. In the 2020-2021 Season, the ECO will be working with artists including Joseph Wolfe, Nadi-

ne Benjamin, Natalie Clein, Richard Boyne, Rosemary Tuck, Federico Colli and Kit Armstrong.

In common with all arts organisations, COVID-19 has had a devastating effect on our orchestra with many concerts and tours either cancelled or postponed including our gala concert scheduled for next February at the RFH and the subsequent tour to Germany and Switzerland, with Pinchas Zukerman. The orchestra remains optimistic about the future.

The Orchestra has recorded many successful film soundtracks including Dario Marianelli's prizewinning scores for *Atonement* and *Pride and Prejudice*, and several James Bond soundtracks, and has taken part in a variety of other film and television projects.

The ECO is proud of its outreach programme, *Close Encounters*, which takes music into communities and schools around the UK and abroad. Last year the ECO became the *Professional Orchestra in Partnership* at Christ's Hospital School in West Sussex, a collaboration involving side-by-side performance and one-to-one tuition. Many new projects are already being planned for Close Encounters for next year.

The orchestra successfully applied for a grant from the Cultural Recovery Fund which we are most appreciative has been of enormous help to us and enables the orchestra to keep going through these very difficult times.

Stay in touch with the ECO by subscribing to our monthly e-newsletter at www.englishchamberorchestra.co.uk

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First violins

Stephanie Gonley
John Mills
Lucy Jeal

Second violins

Michael Gurevich
Natalia Bonner
Daniel Meszoly

Violas

Roger Chase
Lydia Lowndes-Northcott

Cellos

Caroline Dale
Alexandra Mackenzie

Bass

Paul Sherman

Oboe

John Roberts
Phil Harmer

Bassoon

Claire Webster

Trumpet

Neil Brough
Paul Sharp

Timpani

David Corkhill

Organ

Alistair Young

Management

Quintin Ballardie OBE FRAM - Managing Director
Paul Wing - General Manager
Hayley Pullen - Development
Nerea Alonso - Orchestra Administrator
Nick Constantine - Marketing Co-ordinator
Paul Sherman - Close Encounters Co-ordinator
Harry Winstanley - Marketing Support
Phil Normand - Intern

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS:

2nd February 2021, Cadogan Hall

Conducted by Joseph Wolfe

Federico Colli (Leeds Piano Competition winner 2012) *piano*

Nadine Benjamin *Soprano* (tbc)

Programme to include:

Mozart Piano Concerto K488

Ch'io mi scordi di te

Tickets now on sale

4th March 2021, Cadogan Hall

Programme to include Fauré's Requiem

Tickets now on sale

18th March 2021, Cadogan Hall

Directed by Stephanie Gonley

Programme will include Bartok Divertimento, Dvorak String Serenade and excerpts from the ECO's latest CD of popular string music which will be released that evening.

Tickets now on sale

Join us for the journey

Now more than ever, we need the support of our listeners to help us continue making music. There are many ways you can help the English Chamber Orchestra during this trialling time; whether you join us as a Friend or Patron, sponsor one of our orchestral chairs, leave a legacy gift in your will or simply buy a ticket to our concerts or online streams - this crucial support allows us to keep the music alive. To find out more about supporting the ECO visit englishchamberorchestra.co.uk/support-eco.
