



WHITEHALL CHOIR

with

BRANDENBURG SINFONIA



Friday, 31 March 2006, 7.30pm

BRUCKNER

Mass in E Minor

DVOŘÁK

Serenade for Wind

SPICER

The Deciduous Cross

Conductor: **PAUL SPICER**

Programme: £2

ST. JOHN'S, SMITH SQUARE, LONDON SW1

General Manager: Paul Davies

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St. John's, Smith Square



MASS IN E MINOR, WAB 27

by

ANTON BRUCKNER (1824-1896)

Bruckner came to music early in life. His mother and father were involved in musical activities in their home village of Ansfelden, near Linz, in Upper Austria. At the age of four he took organ lessons and went on to study musical theory at the age of eleven. In spite of this early encouragement, Bruckner developed his skill and reputation slowly. Following the death of his father, he became a chorister in a local monastery and then trained to become a teacher. In 1855, he applied to study at the conservatoire in Vienna and then moved to Linz, where he studied with Simon Sechter and later with Otto Kitzler. Although Bruckner is mostly known today for his vast symphonies (his symphonic style being much influenced by his hero, Wagner), his earlier life saw the composition of many small-scale religious works for organ and for chorus. These works are almost like a concentration of the symphonies – using the same chromatic style and development in a fraction of the time. The E minor Mass, Bruckner's first recognised masterpiece (along with the First Symphony), was completed in 1866 and had its first performance outside Linz Cathedral in September of 1869; it is dedicated to Bruckner's friend and patron Bishop Rudiger of Linz. The E minor Mass stands apart from Bruckner's other two masses and, indeed, from almost all other 19th-century liturgical music, by virtue of the forces it employs and its peculiarly expressive harmonic and contrapuntal language. It is scored for eight-part mixed chorus and a wind band of two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets and three trombones. The work illustrates more succinctly than any other Bruckner's unique style – combining the simplicity of expression, devoutness, restraint, poignancy and austere power of Italian Renaissance polyphony with the romantic, fully Brucknerian harmony, bold motivic development and powerful combinations and contrasts of vocal and instrumental texture.

WORDS PROVIDED BY Barry Creasy, Chairman, Collegium Musicum of London

Kyrie

*Kyrie eleison
Christe eleison
Kyrie eleison*

Lord, have mercy on us
Christ, have mercy on us
Lord, have mercy upon us.

Gloria

*Gloria in excelsis Deo
Et in terra pax hominibus
Bonae voluntatis.
Laudamus te,
Benedicimus te,
Adoramus te,
Glorificamus te,
Gratias agimus tibi
Propter magnam gloriam tuam:
Domine Deus, Rex coelestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens,
Domine, Fili Unigenite,
Jesu Christe;
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei,
Filius Patris:
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
Miserere nobis;
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
Suscipe deprecationem nostram;
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,
Miserere nobis.
Quoniam tu solus sanctus,
Tu solus Dominus,
Tu solus Altissimus,
Jesu Christe,
Cum Sancto Spiritu,
In gloria Dei Patris. Amen.*

Glory be to God on high
And on earth peace to men
Of good will.
We praise Thee,
We bless Thee,
We adore Thee,
We glorify Thee,
We give Thee thanks
For Thy great glory:
Lord God, heavenly King,
God the Father almighty,
Lord, the Only-begotten Son,
Jesus Christ;
Lord God, Lamb of God,
Son of the Father:
Who takest away the sins of the world,
Have mercy upon us;
Thou who takest away the sins of the world,
Receive our prayer;
Thou who sittest at the right hand of the Father,
Have mercy upon us.
For Thou alone art the Holy One,
Thou alone art the Lord,
Thou alone art the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
With the Holy Ghost,
In the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Credo

*Credo in unum Deum
Patrem omnipotentem,
Factorem coeli et terrae,
Visibilium omnium et invisibilium.*

*Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum,
Filium Dei unigenitum,
Et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula.
Deum de Deo,
Lumen de lumine,
Deum verum de Deo vero,
Genitum, non factum,
Consumentiam Patri,
Per quem omnia facta sunt.
Qui propter nos homines,
Et propter nostram salutem,
Descendit de coelis,
Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto
Ex Maria Virgine,
Et homo factus est.
Crucifixus etiam pro nobis,
Sub Pontio Pilato.
Passus et sepultus est.
Et resurrexit tertia die
Secundum scripturas,
Et ascendit in coelum,
Sedet ad dexteram Patris:
Et iterum venturus est cum gloria,
Judicare vivos et mortuos,
Cujus regni non erit finis.*

*Et in Spiritum Sanctum,
Dominum et vivificantem,
Qui ex Patre Filioque procedit,
Qui cum Patre et Filio
Simul adoratur et conglorificatur,
Qui locutus est per Prophetas.
Et unam sanctam
Catholicam et apostolicam ecclesiam.
Confiteor unum baptisma
In remissionem peccatorum.
Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum,
Et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.*

Sanctus

*Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.*

Agnus Dei

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis
peccata mundi,
Miserere nobis.*

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis
peccata mundi,
Dona nobis pacem.*

I believe in one God,
The Father almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
Of all things, visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
The only-begotten Son of God,
Born of the Father before all worlds.
God of God,
Light of Light,
Very God of very God,
Begotten, not made,
Of one substance with the Father,
By whom all things were made.
Who for us men,
And for our salvation,
Came down from heaven,
And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost
Of the Virgin Mary,
And was made man.
And was crucified also for us,
Under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again
According to the scriptures,
And ascended into heaven,
And sitteth on the right hand of the Father:
And He shall come again in glory,
To judge both the living and the dead,
Whose kingdom shall have no end.

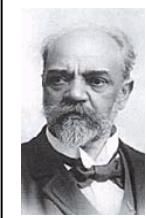
And I believe in the Holy Ghost,
The Lord and Giver of Life,
Who proceeded from the Father and the Son,
Who with the Father and the Son
Together is worshipped and glorified,
Who spake by the Prophets.
And I believe in one holy
Catholic and apostolic church.
I acknowledge one baptism
For the remission of sins.
And I look for the resurrection of the dead,
And the life of the world to come. Amen.

Holy, Holy, Holy,
Lord God of Hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

O Lamb of God, that takest away
the sins of the world,
Have mercy on us.

O Lamb of God, that takest away
the sins of the world,
Grant us peace.

INTERVAL – 20 MINUTESRefreshments available

**SERENADE FOR WIND IN D MINOR, op. 44**
by
ANTONÍN DVORÁK (1841-1904)

In 1875, while Janáček was still trying to find himself, Johannes Brahms discovered the work of another young Czech composer, Antonín Dvořák. Two years later, Brahms wrote to Fritz Simrock, his own publisher, recommending that the businessman would do well to investigate Dvořák's *Moravian Duets*. The intervention of the established composer was a great help, and Simrock soon published the *Duets* with great success. A further boost came from the German critic Max Schütz, who declared: "Only a master writes like this; only a poet by God's grace has such inspiration."

Dvořák's new-found international recognition came during a prolific period in his life. The Wind Serenade was written in only two weeks, early in 1878; it is scored for two clarinets, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, optional double bassoon, three horns, cello, and double-bass. During the course of the same year he wrote the first set of his famous *Slavonic Dances* (for piano duet), several other orchestral works, a set of five folk choruses, two songs, a *Capriccio* for violin and piano, and some minor piano works. He also found time to orchestrate the *Slavonic Dances* when they became wildly popular throughout Europe.

The new Serenade was very well received. The following year, Hermann Krieger wrote, "What fine artistic expression, what compelling melodies and touching harmonic progressions the composer has at his disposal." Brahms (who became a lifelong champion of the younger composer) not only influenced Simrock to publish it, but wrote of it to his violinist friend Joseph Joachim (who had just given the premiere of Brahms' Violin Concerto, and would later introduce Dvořák's), saying: "A more lovely, refreshing impression of real, rich and charming creative talent you can't easily have... I think it must be a pleasure for the wind players!" Brahms was certainly correct, except for one uncharacteristic oversight: he neglected to note that it is equally enjoyable for the listener!

Movements:

1. Moderato, quasi marcia
2. Minuetto. Tempo di minuetto
3. Andante con molto.
4. Finale. Allegro molto.

THE DECIDUOUS CROSS

by

PAUL SPICER (born 1952)

Text: R. S. Thomas (1913-2000)

The Deciduous Cross was commissioned by the Birmingham Bach Choir's Chairman, Nicholas Fisher, with the support of the City of Birmingham Orchestral Endowment Fund, to mark Paul Spicer's tenth year as conductor of the choir (2002-3).

Thomas' poetry, perhaps more than almost any other writer's, clearly expresses a sense of hope in Christian terms. Many of his poems start with an example of desolation, of all the reasons why secular society is discarding religion, is wasting away, is burning itself out. However, he turns the situation around, often citing the suffering of Christ as the price He paid and goes on paying for the waywardness of His creation. Amongst the five poems set in this cycle, the first, 'Voices', is perhaps the clearest example of this: the linnet offering her glittering song as a desirable worldly 'jewel' set against the mystery of the word of God, shrouded in an imaginary distance and space. Thomas sets the two perfectly apart and then together as he ends the poem "Divided mind, the message is always in two parts. Must it be on a cross it is made one?" The two sides of the "divided mind" are represented musically by the lightly twittering wind music for the linnet and the longer lines of "distance". The two are joined in a briefly contrapuntal passage which underlines the loaded question at the end of the poem.

'The Prayer' (taken from a collection of poems called *Laboratories of the Spirit*) is slow-moving. In it Thomas addresses the problem of prayer with which all those who pray are familiar: what to say which will be meaningful and how to frame the words. The title of the work was taken from this poem, from the lines "Let leaves from the deciduous cross fall on us, turning our autumn to gold by the affluence of their fountain".

'A Blackbird Singing' relates to the linnet in the first poem and conjures bird-like music from the winds which develops into a kind of *moto perpetuo* for the first verse. The second verse brings richly warm music as an image of gentle domestic pleasure in the company of the ubiquitous blackbird. As often with Thomas, however, there is a sadness lurking in the background, and here the third verse gives the blackbird's song a message garnered from time immemorial which is "fresh always with new tears".

The Interlude adds variety to the work and gives the instrumentalists more free rein. The opening music seems to grow out of the 'blackbird' music but develops into a big climax where heavily repeated wind and lower brass chords surround a transformation of the opening theme for trumpets and horns. The opening music returns and the movement ends skittishly.

'Pietà' is the emotional hub of the work. It is set as a funeral march and the imagery is bleak. This is only softened at the end by the image of the body returning to the arms of its mother. The deeply spiritual and emotional music of Kenneth Leighton (*Crucifixus pro nobis; What love is this of thine?*) finds echo here with a powerfully emotional climax on the word "aches" and some trenchantly discordant music which is resolved warmly for the image of the return to the "maid's arms".

After 'Pietà' comes 'The Word', which falls into three sections. The first is a four-part fugue for flute, cor anglais, clarinet and bassoon which ends with a homophonic (chordal) statement of the subject by brass instruments. This gives way to a lively scherzo, at which point the choir enters, inspired by Thomas' image of people "running, loitering, turning aside" – but all moving in different directions towards "the same place, so impossible is it to escape love". This is the climax of the movement, after which the music moves to an Epilogue which brings the work to its quiet conclusion.

PERMISSIONS

Permission to use the poems of RS Thomas in this work has been sought from
Macmillan Publishers Ltd (Voices and the Prayer)

Bloodaxe Books Ltd (The Word)

Orion Books Ltd (A Blackbird Singing and Pietà)

1. Voices

(From *Between Here and Now*, 1981)

Who to believe?
The linnet sings bell-like,
a tinkling music. It says life
is contained here; is a jewel

in a shell casket, lying
among down. There is another
voice, far out in space
whose persuasiveness is the distance

from which it speaks. Divided
mind, the message is always
in two parts. Must it be
on a cross it is made one?

2. The Prayer

(From *Laboratories of the Spirit*, 1975)

He kneeled down
dismissing his orisons
as inappropriate; one by one
they came to his lips and were swallowed
but without bile.
He fell back
on an old prayer: Teach me to know
what to pray for. He
listened; after the weather of
his asking, no still, small
voice, only the parade
of ghosts, casualties
of his past intercessions. He
held out his hands, cupped
as though to receive blood, leaking
from life's side. They
remained dry, as his mouth
did. But the prayer formed:
Deliver me from the long drought
of the mind. Let leaves
from the deciduous Cross
fall on us, washing
us clean, turning our autumn
to gold by the affluence of their fountain.

3. A Blackbird Singing

(From *Poetry for Supper*, 1958)

It seems wrong that out of this bird,
Black, bold, a suggestion of dark
Places about it, there yet should come
Such rich music, as thought the notes'
Ore were changed to a rare metal
At one touch of that bright bill.

You have heard it often, alone at your desk
In a green April, your mind drawn
Away from its work by sweet disturbance
Of the mild evening outside your room.

A slow singer, but loading each phrase
With history's overtones, love, joy
And grief learned by his dark tribe
In other orchards and passed on
Instinctively as they are now,
But fresh always with new tears.

4. Instrumental Interlude

5. Pietà
(From *Pietà*, 1966)

Always the same hills
 Crowd the horizon,
 Remote witnesses
 Of the still scene.

And in the foreground
 The tall Cross,
 Sombre, untenanted,
 Aches for the Body
 That is back in the cradle
 Of a maid's arms.

6. The Word
(From *Mass for Hard Times*, 1992)

Enough that we are on our way;
 never ask of us where.

Some of us run, some loiter,
 some of us turn aside

to erect the Calvary
 that is our signpost, arms

pointing in opposite directions
 to bring us in the end

to the same place, so impossible
 is it to escape love. Imperishable

scarecrow, recipient of our casts-off
 shame us until what is a swear-

word only becomes at last
 the word that was in the beginning.

WHITEHALL CHOIR – FUTURE PROGRAMMES

FAURÉ *Requiem; Cantique de Jean Racine*

****Thursday, 6 April 2006, 7.30pm**
St Martin-in-the-Fields

HANDEL *Dixit Dominus*

HAYDN *Nelson Mass*

****Thursday, 6 July 2006, 7.30pm**
St John's, Smith Square



Paul Spicer

Paul Spicer began his musical training as a chorister at New College, Oxford. He studied with Herbert Howells and Richard Popplewell (organ) at the Royal College of Music in London, winning the Walford Davies Organ Prize in his final year.

He is best known as a choral conductor, particularly of the acclaimed Finzi Singers with whom he has made 15 CDs for Chandos records. He has conducted Bach Choirs in Chester and Leicester, and moved to conduct the Bach Choir in Birmingham in 1992. Recently described as being “among the premier division of the country’s choirs”, the Birmingham Bach Choir performs with major orchestras including the English Chamber Orchestra and Florilegium and as part of a wide-ranging programme gives the annual Bach St Matthew Passion performance in Symphony Hall, Birmingham. Paul Spicer conducts the Chamber Choirs at the Royal College of Music in London, and the Birmingham Conservatoire, and is Professor of Choral Conducting at both institutions. He also conducts the Whitehall Choir in London and gives Choral Workshops all over the UK, in Europe, frequently in the USA and memorably in South Korea, conducting a week’s workshops, lecturing and giving concerts in Seoul.

Until July 2001 Paul Spicer was Artistic Director of the Lichfield International Arts Festival and the Abbotsholme Arts Society, posts he relinquished in order to pursue a completely freelance musical career. Earlier in his career he spent time as a teacher of music at Uppingham School and Ellesmere College, before moving on to become a recording producer. He was Senior Producer for BBC Radio 3 in the Midlands until 1990, and today is in great demand as a recording producer and as a composer.

His large-scale *Easter Oratorio*, commissioned for performance in Lichfield Cathedral in July 2000, was described by *The Independent* as “almost operatic in its inherent drama” and as being “a major contribution to the choral society repertoire”. It has recently been recorded for CD and is one of the Editor’s Choices in *Gramophone* magazine’s April 2006 issue, in which John Steane proclaimed: “The *Easter Oratorio* is a major work and the best of its kind to have appeared, certainly since the death of Howells, probably since Howells’s *Hymnus Paradisi*.” Recent commissions have included anthems for the enthronement of the new Bishop of Durham in October 2003, a Choral Festival in Long Island, USA, in May 2004, and the centenary of the Birmingham Diocese in 2005. A recording of his complete works for organ will be made in Truro Cathedral later this year.

Paul Spicer’s highly acclaimed biography of his composition teacher, Herbert Howells, which was published in August 1998, went into its second edition exactly a year later and is progressing to its third edition later this year. He is a contributor to the new *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and has recently begun work on a full-scale biography of Sir George Dyson, commissioned by the Dyson Trust.

Paul Spicer is a member of the Council of Lichfield Cathedral, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, an Honorary Research Fellow of Birmingham University and an Honorary Fellow of the Birmingham Conservatoire.



THE WHITEHALL CHOIR

President: Sir Brian Bender, KCB

Conductor: Paul Spicer

Accompanist: Paul Plummer

Sopranos

Gill Carruthers
Hilary Davies
Imogen Davies
Ruth Eastman
Jacky Erwteman
Kate Goulden
Fiona Graph
Katherine Herzberg *Claire Johnston
Nicola Kirkup
Margaret Lauder
Simone Nauerth
Jean Quinn
Lesley Raymond
Katy Robinson
Rachel Salisbury
Yvette Street
Vicky Sweetman
Sue Vincent

Altos

Liz Anastasi
Helen Audaer
Jen Brzozowska
Rose Chandler
Tamsin Cousins
Monica Darnbrough
Miranda Douce
Samantha Foley
Katharina Gnath
Katherine Howes
Ruth Lee
Kate Mole
Becky Moore
Jean Orr
Helen Parnham
Marion Paul
Caroline Price
Penny Prior
Moira Purkiss *
Jean Robinson
Margaret Small
Liz Walton
Lis Warren

Tenors

Colin Altman
Ken Holmes
Andrew Hunt
David Pite *
Philip Pratley
Paul Tayler
Jonathan Williams
Basses
James Calthrop
James Chute
Chris Gotto
Laurence Grace
Richard Grafen
Michael Growcott
Michael Hope
Martin Humphreys
Andrew Hyde *
Michel Kallipetis
Simon Lawson
Keith Long
William Longland
Lee Taylor
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The Whitehall Choir

After its wartime origins in 1941 as a lunchtime madrigal group in the Board of Trade, the Whitehall Choir has grown and become a permanent and thriving choir, performing regularly at major London venues, and more widely in the UK. Its repertoire ranges from the Renaissance to the 21st century, and includes challenging unaccompanied pieces as well as larger choral works performed alongside professional soloists and orchestral musicians. Memorable concerts of recent years have included Claudio Monteverdi's *1610 Vespers* at St James's, Piccadilly, Verdi's *Requiem* at Queen Elizabeth Hall, Bach's *Mass in B minor* at St John's, Smith Square, and visits to France for performances in the 16th-century church of St Rémy in Dieppe. In 2001 Paul Spicer was appointed as Conductor and Musical Director, and has continued and enhanced the Choir's regular contribution to the London music scene. In 2002-03 the Choir celebrated its Diamond Jubilee, which was marked by a tour to Riga, Latvia, and a gala concert of works by Elgar, Holst and Vaughan Williams at the Royal College of Music in London. Most recently our programme has included Handel's *Samson* at St John's, Smith Square, the Rachmaninov *Vespers* at St Paul's, Knightsbridge, and Dvořák's *Stabat Mater* at the Cadogan Hall.

If you would like to sing with the Whitehall Choir please contact Jen Brzozowska (020-7215 5138) for details. Membership is subject to a short audition. Please visit us at: whitehallchoir.org.uk. Registered Charity no. 280478.

The Choir is very grateful for the support that it continues to receive from the Department of Trade and Industry.



Artistic Director – Robert Porter

Associate Music Director – Sarah Tenant-Flowers

The **Brandenburg Sinfonia** is one of the most dynamically versatile musical organisations in the country. It is renowned for its special quality of sound and poised vivacity in performance. The orchestra performs regularly in most of the major venues across the country, and in London at the Barbican Hall, Royal Albert Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Fairfield Halls and St John's, Smith Square.

The Brandenburg Sinfonia is also in great demand abroad and has in recent years visited France, USA, Bermuda, the Channel Islands, Barbados, Cyprus, Malta and St Petersburg. In 1999 the orchestra established major concert series at both St Martin-in-the-Fields and Crystal Palace Bowl. In autumn 2001 the orchestra undertook a major Classical Music cruise on the QE2. One of the many highlights of 2002 was an International Opera Gala conducted by Richard Bonynge in the presence of HRH The Prince of Wales.

The orchestra has recently established a number of residencies including Hever Lakeside Theatre, McKinlay Theatre, Kettering, and St John's School, Leatherhead.

A large number of artists of international standing have worked with the orchestra, including Richard Bonynge, Yvonne Kenny, Emmanuel Hurwitz, Lesley Garrett, John Georgiadis, John Wallace and Gordon Hunt. Its repertoire ranges from Bach to Lloyd Webber and its members give over one hundred performances of orchestral, chamber choral and operatic music during the year.

The orchestras for a number of touring companies are formed from members of the Brandenburg Sinfonia, including Central Festival Opera, First Act Opera, London City Opera, and English Pocket Opera.

Cello	Horn
Adrian Bradbury	David Lee
Bass	Terry Shew
Stacey Watson	Neil Shewan
Oboe	Christopher Lund
Emily Pailthorpe	
Clarinet	Christopher Deacon
Anthony Pike	Gillian Hicks
Juliet Bucknell	
Bassoon	Trumpet
Graham Hobbs	Katy Pryce
Robert Porter	Susan Cordiner
	Andrew Lester

“What made it actually rather enjoyable was the playing of the chamber orchestra which was consistently well shaded and nuanced”

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

“Some of the most stylish Mozart playing for some time”
THE TIMES

“An ensemble of distinguished players...”
THE INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

“Played with a verve and sparkle”
THE TIMES

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**HARRIET JENKINS, whose illustration appears on the cover of this programme,
is an A-level Art student at James Allen's Girls' School in Dulwich. Her inspiration
was 'A Blackbird Singing' from the third movement of *The Deciduous Cross***