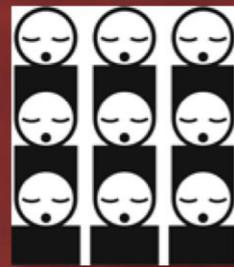


Whitehall Choir

London Baroque Sinfonia



HANDEL Jephtha

Friday 15 November 2013, 7pm

St John's Smith Square

London, SW1P 3HA

Conductor PAUL SPICER

Verity Wingate (soprano)

Anna Harvey (mezzo soprano)

Simon Ponsford (countertenor)

Nicholas Scott (tenor)

Richard Walshe (baritone)

Programme: £2.00

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George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)



Handel is famous for his operas, oratorios, and *concerti grossi*. He was born in Halle in Germany, trained in Italy, and spent most of his life in England, where he settled in 1712. He was strongly influenced by the techniques of the great composers of the Italian Baroque era, as well as by the English composer Henry Purcell.

Like Johann Sebastian Bach and Domenico Scarlatti, Handel was born in 1685. While his mother encouraged his musical aspirations, his father was opposed to his wish to pursue a musical career, preferring him to study law, despite early evidence of his musical talent. Nevertheless, the young Handel was permitted to take lessons from Friedrich Wilhelm Zachow, the organist of the Liebfrauenkirche (Church of Our Lady) in Halle. From him Handel learned about harmony and contemporary styles. He analyzed scores and learned to work fugue subjects and copy music. Sometimes he would take his teacher's place as organist for services.

In 1706-09 Handel was in Italy at the invitation of Gian Gastone de' Medici, who had become acquainted with him during a visit to Hamburg. He found work as a composer of sacred music; the famous *Dixit Dominus* (1707) is from this era. He wrote many cantatas in operatic style for gatherings in the palace of Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni. *Rodrigo*, his first all-Italian opera, was produced in 1707. *Agrippina*, first produced at Venice in 1709, established his reputation as an opera composer. Two oratorios, *La Resurrezione* and *Il Trionfo del Tempo*, were produced in Rome in 1709 and 1710 respectively.

In 1710, Handel became *Kapellmeister* to George, Elector of Hanover (subsequently King George I of Great Britain). He settled in London permanently in 1712. During his early years in London, an important patron was Richard Boyle, 3rd Earl of Burlington, and in 1717-18 he was resident composer to James Brydges, 1st Duke of Chandos, at Cannons, near Edgware. Here he wrote the twelve *Chandos Anthems* and *Acis and Galatea*, which during his lifetime was his most performed composition.

In 1723 Handel moved to 25 Brook Street in Mayfair (now the Handel House Museum), where he lived for the rest of his life. It was here that he composed *Messiah*, *Zadok the Priest* and the *Music for the Royal Fireworks*. Handel was naturalized a British subject in 1727, and in that same year he was commissioned to write four anthems for the coronation of King George II, one of which, *Zadok the Priest*, has been performed at every subsequent coronation.

In the late 1730s, Handel focused on composing oratorios instead of opera. *Messiah* was first performed in the New Musick Hall in Fishamble Street, Dublin, on 13 April 1742. In 1750 Handel arranged a performance of *Messiah* to benefit the Foundling Hospital. The performance was considered a great success and was followed by annual concerts that continued throughout his life.

Handel died in 1759, in London. More than three thousand mourners attended his funeral, and he was buried in Westminster Abbey. He never married. The bulk of his estate worth £20,000 (an enormous amount for the day) was bequeathed to a niece in Germany, along with gifts to his other relations, servants, friends and favourite charities.

Handel's reputation throughout the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century rested largely on his English sacred oratorios. With the rediscovery of his operas and secular oratorios in the 1960s, he is now perceived as being one of opera's great musical dramatists. He has been held in high esteem by fellow composers, many of whom have written works based on or inspired by his music.

Jephtha

Handel once reportedly observed apropos *Judas Maccabæus* that what the English liked was something that “hit them on the drum of the ear”. The ‘victory’ oratorios *Judas* and *Joshua*, prompted by ‘Butcher’ Cumberland’s quelling of the Jacobite rebellion at Culloden in April 1746, had meshed perfectly with the national mood of bellicose triumphalism. But the three oratorios of 1748–9, *Solomon*, *Susanna* and *Theodora*, all of them far richer works, were much less to the public’s taste. Even the vein of sumptuous ceremonial in *Solomon* failed to rouse enthusiasm. *Susanna*’s leanings towards ‘the light operatic style’, as one of Handel’s friends put it, cut right against audience expectations. As for *Theodora*, Handel’s sole religious drama set in Christian times, it was the biggest flop of the composer’s oratorio career, surviving for just three sparsely attended performances in the 1750 Covent Garden Lenten season.

Undeterred, Handel planned a new oratorio for the 1751 season. But whereas he habitually composed one or two oratorios during the light summer months, he only began the new work, *Jephtha*, to a libretto by the Reverend Thomas Morell (librettist of, *inter alia*, *Judas* and *Theodora*) in January 1751, after spending the late summer and autumn in Germany. All we know of this trip, Handel’s last to the Continent, is that he was injured when his coach overturned between The Hague and Haarlem. He seems to have made a full recovery. Indeed, on 16 February his friend the Earl of Shaftesbury reported that “Handel himself is actually better in health and in a higher flow of genius than he has been for several years past. His late journey has helped his constitution vastly.”.

Ironically, three days earlier Handel had noted (in German) on the score of *Jephtha*, after the first section of the chorus ‘How dark, O Lord, are thy decrees’: “reached as far as this on 13 Febr. 1751, unable to continue owing to the weakening of the sight of my left eye”. He returned to the score on 23 February, his 66th birthday, but got only as far as the end of this chorus. The shakiness of his writing betrays the effort involved. He rapidly lost the use of his left eye altogether; and it was not until the middle of June, after seeking spa cures in Bath and Cheltenham, that he resumed work on the oratorio, finally completing it on 30 August. It was to be Handel’s last original major work. By the time he directed its première, at Covent Garden on 26 February 1752, he had been diagnosed with incipient glaucoma. Despite

operations by three separate eye surgeons, in January 1753 a London newspaper informed its readers that “Mr Handel has at length, unhappily, quite lost his sight” – though reports that he was already writing his own funeral anthem proved to be greatly exaggerated.

Jephtha is the last and most personal of Handel’s many oratorios set against the background of Israelite oppression, warfare and ultimate triumph, shorn, as usual, of the attendant unsavoury politics and murky ethics. Morell based his libretto on the (to 18th-century audiences) well-known story from *Judges* XI, in which the Israelite leader Jephtha vows to sacrifice the first living thing he encounters if he is successful in battle against the Ammonites. As in other ancient Mediterranean myths, including that of the Cretan King Idomeneus, the victim turns out to be his own flesh and blood, his only child Iphis. (Morell took her name from the 1554 play *Jephthes, sive Votum* by the Scottish author George Buchanan, who had obviously derived it from Iphigenia, another sacrificial victim of a rash paternal vow.) Israelite national triumph becomes personal disaster; and after spending two months in the mountains with her companions to bewail her virginity, Jephtha’s daughter submits to her fate.

This Old Testament outcome was far too brutal for audiences in the Age of Sensibility. Morell accordingly mitigated Iphis’s sentence from death to perpetual virginity, courtesy of an angel as *dea ex machina*. For Morell, the sense of Jephtha’s vow in Act 1 scene 4 (‘what, or whoever shall first salute mine eyes, shall be forever thine, or fall a sacrifice’) is that his daughter will either devote her life to Jehovah or be a sacrificial victim. Logically, one might ask why Jephtha did not recall his exact words, and spare himself and his innocent family their anguish. One possible answer to this awkward question, proposed by several scholars, is that the vow was inspired by ‘the Spirit of God’ and delivered in a trance. This in turn implies that if Jephtha was not fully aware of the words he uttered, the responsibility for their potentially horrifying consequences lies squarely with Jehovah.

Handel was at best ambivalent about Morell’s ending, with its sentimental eulogy of virginity (a state to be bewailed in *Judges*). The penultimate quintet, beginning as a duet for Iphis and Hamor, dips from G major to G minor when the other three protagonists enter near the end: the music here suggests regret for young love that might

have been, rather than Morell's glibly cheerful pæan, 'Joy triumphant crown thy days'. As Winton Dean stresses in his classic study, *Handel's Dramatic Oratorios and Masques* (OUP), the composer was inspired neither by Morell's dubious 'happy' ending, nor by Jephtha's presumptuousness in making his 'impious vow', a scene of potentially intense drama set as perfunctory accompanied recitative. What absorbed the composer was the plight of the innocent victims, and the larger theme of man's reluctant but inevitable submission to a capricious, unfathomable destiny, encapsulated in the oratorio's opening line, "It must be so", intoned by Jephtha's brother Zebul. Immediately after Jephtha has repeated these words at the end of 'Deeper and deeper still', this central theme is explored most searchingly in the monumental closing chorus of Act 2, 'How dark, O Lord, are thy decrees', with its final reiteration of Pope's maxim "Whatever is, is right" (substituted by Handel for Morell's original "What God ordains is right").

Handel characterizes Jephtha, his wife Storge and Iphis with extraordinary insight and compassion. Jephtha – sung in the 1752 première by John Beard, who performed more Handel roles than any other singer – emerges as slightly smug and sententious in his jaunty opening aria 'Virtue my soul shall still embrace'. After his victory the warrior-patriot relives his routing of the enemy in the extravagant coloratura of 'His mighty arm'. But when he is faced with the consequences of his vow, braggadocio yields to inner torment. The almost unhinged panic of 'Open thy marble jaws' initiates the oratorio's great climactic sequence, with one number hurtling into the next: the frenzied outbursts of Storge and Hamor, the magnificent, richly textured quartet in which Storge, Hamor and Zebul vainly plead with an implacable Jephtha, and the entrance of Iphis, whose courage only deepens her father's anguish. Groping through a disorienting labyrinth of remote tonalities, Jephtha's accompanied recitative 'Deeper and deeper still' leaves him mentally and physically broken, prompting the chorus to the gloomy questioning of 'How dark, O Lord, are thy decrees'.

Jephtha partially regains his self-control in the sublime 'Waft her, angels' near the opening of Act 3, where the angular intervals of the vocal line hint at the trauma beneath the serene acceptance. (Sketches reveal how hard-won was the aria's perfection.) Only after the angel's appearance is his equilibrium restored, in the rapt arioso 'Forever blessed be thy holy name': the once

blustering, self-satisfied soldier has here become a man chastened and ennobled by suffering.

Storge (the name, again taken from Buchanan's *Jephthes*, means 'love between parents and children' in Greek) is given an equally memorable characterization: a passionate, highly strung woman, intensely loving, formidable in anger and protest. She grieves for her husband's absence with a touch of morbidity in her chromatically inflected opening aria, coloured by the pastoral melancholy of a solo flute. Her Cassandra-like intimation of imminent disaster inspires the turbulent 'Scenes of horror', whose terse, jagged phrases and ominous ascending scales evoke the terrifying visions "rising from the shades below". The violence of this outburst prepares us for Storge's ferocious denunciation of her husband at the climax of Act 2, in an accompanied recitative ('First perish thou') that tumbles into an aria in which she veers between outrage and aching maternal grief.

Handel portrays Iphis's journey from joyous innocence to courageous yet agonized acceptance of her fate with profound, unsentimental tenderness. In the first half of the oratorio her dance-like arias and her love duet with Hamor, 'These labours past' (another number with a distinct galant flavour), have an easy, melodious grace. She dismisses her mother's 'black illusions of the night' in the skipping bourrée 'The smiling dawn of happy days', comes out to greet her father to the strains of a *siciliano* (akin to the Pastoral Symphony in *Messiah*), and then launches into the blithe gavotte, 'Welcome, as the cheerful light', calculated by Handel for maximum ironic effect. After she learns of Jephtha's vow, she touches spiritual sublimity: in the accompanied recitative 'For joys so vast' and the arioso 'Happy, they', whose mingled stoicism and desolation are quite at odds with the mawkishness of Morell's text. There is a similar disjunction in the first part of Iphis's Act 3 aria 'Farewell, ye limpid springs', an E minor *siciliano* whose valedictory poignancy (with nostalgic repetitions of the word "farewell") belies her apparent dismissal of the world's "short hours of joy, and years of pain". Only with the E major second section, 'Brighter scenes I seek above', does she achieve a resigned, rarefied serenity.

The minor characters, Zebul – one of Handel's sturdy, forthright basses – and Hamor, are less distinctively drawn, though Hamor has two splendid arias: 'Dull delay and piercing anguish' in Act 1, in which the sense of the opening line is expressed with a piquant tritone (E natural to A

sharp); and, in the climactic scene of Act 2, ‘On me let blind mistaken zeal’, where he frantically offers himself as sacrificial victim in Iphis’s stead.

As the 18th century’s greatest musical magpie, Handel drew on a collection of Masses by the Bohemian composer František Habermann for several numbers in *Jephtha*, mainly the choruses of Israelites, though, typically, he transforms and ennobles everything he borrows. One instance is the oratorio’s first chorus, ‘No more to Ammon’s god and king’, where, as Winton Dean has observed, the Israelites take on the uninhibited exuberance of their pagan oppressors. Another is the stupendous chorus evoking the parting of the Red Sea, ‘When his loud voice with thunder spoke’, coloured for the only time in the oratorio by the bright glint of horns (which usually have heathen associations for Handel), and ending in a riot of cosmic fugal laughter.

In extreme contrast are the three minor-key choruses that form the mighty central pillars of the outer acts and the climax of Act 2: ‘O God, behold our sore distress’, ‘How, dark, O Lord’, and the priests’ chorus ‘Doubtful fear’ (the first two again indebted to Habermann), all characterized by their contorted chromaticism and densely woven counterpoint. In ‘How dark, O Lord’ the Israelites become awed commentators on the action, like their counterparts in a Greek tragedy. Its four sections, culminating in the shockingly stark setting of Pope’s maxim “Whatever is, is right”, constitute Handel’s most profound contemplation of human experience in relation to a remote, unknowable deity. It was while at work on this chorus of Aeschylean *terribilità* that Handel broke off owing to failing eyesight. And it is not fanciful of Dean and others to suggest that he was mindful here not only of the appalling predicaments of Jephtha and Iphis, but also of his own affliction and enforced submission to destiny.

Programme note © Richard Wigmore

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Jephtha	Nicholas Scott (tenor)
Iphis , his daughter	Verity Wingate (soprano)
Storge , his wife	Anna Harvey (mezzo-soprano)
Zebul , his half-brother	Richard Walshe (baritone)
Hamor , in love with Iphis	Simon Ponsford (countertenor)
Angel	Joanna Tomlinson (soprano)

Chorus of Israelites
Chorus of Priests
Chorus of Virgins

ACT ONE

1. Overture

SCENE 1

Zebul, with his brethren and Chorus

2. Recitative

Zebul

It must be so, or these vile Ammonites,
Our lordly tyrants now these eighteen years,
Will crush the race of Israel.
Since Heav’n vouchsafes not, with immediate choice,
To point us out a leader, as before,
Ourselves must choose. And who so fit a man
As Gilead’s son, our brother, valiant Jephtha?
True, we have slighted, scorn’d, expell’d him hence
As of a stranger born, but well I know him:
His gen’rous soul disdains a mean revenge
When his distressful country calls his aid.

And perhaps Heav’n may favour our request
If with repentant hearts we sue for mercy.

3. Air

Zebul

Pour forth no more unheeded pray’rs
To idols deaf and vain.

4. Chorus of Israelites

No more to Ammon’s god and king,
Fierce Moloch, shall our cymbals ring,
In dismal dance around the furnace blue.
Chemosh no more
Will we adore
With timbrell’d anthems, to Jehovah due.

SCENE 2

Enter Jephtha and Storge.

5. Recitative

Zebul

But Jephtha comes. Kind Heav'n, assist our plea!
O Jephtha, with an eye of pity look
On thy repentant brethren in distress.
Forgetful of thy wrongs, redress thy sire,
Thy friends, thy country in extreme despair.

Jephtha

I will, so please it Heav'n, and these the terms:
If I command in war, the like command,
Should Heav'n vouchsafe us a victorious peace,
Shall still be mine.

Zebul

Agreed. Be witness, Heav'n.

6. Air

Jephtha

Virtue my soul shall still embrace,
Goodness shall make me great.

7. Recitative

Storge

'Twill be a painful separation, Jephtha,
To see thee harness'd for the bloody field.
But ah, how trivial are a wife's concerns
When a whole nation bleeds, and grov'ling lies,
Panting for liberty and life.

8. Air

Storge

In gentle murmurs will I mourn,
As mourns the mate-forsaken dove,
And sighing wish thy dear return
To liberty and lasting love.

Exeunt.

SCENE 3

Enter Hamor and Iphis

9. Recitative

Hamor

Happy this embassy, my charming Iphis,
Which once more gives thee to my longing eyes,
As Cynthia, breaking from th'involving clouds
On the benighted traveller. The sight
Of thee, my love, drives darkness and despair.
Again I live, in thy sweet smiles I live,
As in thy father's ever-watchful care
Our wretched nation feels new life, new joy.
Oh haste, and make my happiness complete!

10. Air

Hamor

Dull delay, in piercing anguish,
Bids the faithful lover languish,
While he pants for bliss in vain.
Oh, with gentle smiles relieve me.
Let no more false hopes deceive me,
Nor vain fears inflict a pain.

11. Recitative

Iphis

Ill suits the voice of love when glory calls,
And bids thee follow Jephtha to the field.
Act there the hero, and let rival deeds
Proclaim thee worthy to be call'd his son,
And Hamor shall not want his due reward.

12. Air

Iphis

Take the heart you fondly gave,
Lodg'd in your breast with mine.

13. Recitative

Hamor

I go. My soul, inspir'd by thy command,
Thirsts for the battle. I'm already crown'd
With the victorious wreath, and thou, fair prize,
More worth than fame or conquest, thou art mine.

14. Duet

Iphis and Hamor

These labours past, how happy we!
How glorious will they prove!

Exeunt

SCENE 4

Jephtha alone.

15. Recitative

Jephtha

What mean these doubtful fancies of the brain?
Visions of joy rise in my raptur'd soul,
There play awhile, and set in darksome night.
Strange ardour fires my breast; my arms seem strung
With tenfold vigour, and my crested helm
To reach the skies. Be humble still, my soul!
It is the Spirit of God, in whose great name
I offer up my vow.

16. Recitative

Jephtha

If, Lord, sustain'd by Thy almighty pow'r,
Ammon I drive, and his insulting bands,
From these our long-uncultivated lands,
And safe return a glorious conqueror,
What, or whoever shall first salute mine eyes,
Shall be forever Thine, or fall a sacrifice.

17. Recitative

Jephtha

'Tis said.

Enter Israelites.

Attend, ye chiefs, and with united voice
Invoke the holy name of Israel's God.

18. Chorus of Israelites

O God, behold our sore distress,
Omnipotent to plague or bless!
But turn thy wrath, and bless once more
Thy servants, who thy name adore.

Exeunt.

SCENE 5

Storge, alone.

19. Recitative

Storge

Some dire event hangs o'er our heads,
Some woeful song we have to sing
In misery extreme. O never, never
Was my foreboding mind distress before
With such incessant pangs.

20. Air

Storge

Scenes of horror, scenes of woe,
Rising from the shades below,
Add new terror to the night;
While in never-ceasing pain,
That attends the servile chain,
Joyless flow the hours of light.

SCENE 6

Enter Iphis.

21. Recitative

Iphis

Say, my dear mother, whence these piercing cries
That force me, like a frightened bird, to fly
My place of rest?

Storge

For thee I fear, my child;
Such ghastly dreams last night surpris'd my soul.

Iphis

Heed not these black illusions of the night,
The mocking of unquiet slumbers, heed them not.
My father, touch'd with a diviner fire,
Already seems to triumph in success,
Nor doubt I but Jehovah hears our pray'rs.

22. Air

Iphis

The smiling dawn of happy days
Presents a prospect clear,
And pleasing hope's all-bright'ning rays
Dispel each gloomy fear.

Exeunt.

SCENE 7

Enter Zebul, Jephtha and Chorus.

23. Recitative

Zebul

Such, Jephtha, was the haughty king's reply:
No terms, but ruin, slavery and death.

Jephtha

Sound, then, the last alarm! And to the field,
Ye sons of Israel, with intrepid hearts,
Dependent on the might of Israel's God.

24. Chorus of Israelites

When His loud voice in thunder spoke,
With conscious fear the billows broke,
Observant of his dread command.
In vain they roll their foaming tide,
Confin'd by that great pow'r,
That gave them strength to roar.
They now contract their boist'rous pride,
And lash with idle rage the laughing strand.

ACT TWO

SCENE 1

Enter Hamor, Iphis and Chorus.

25. Recitative

Hamor

Glad tidings of great joy to thee, dear Iphis,
And to the house of Israel I bring.
Thus then, in brief. Both armies in array

Of battle rang'd, our general stept forth
And offer'd haughty Ammon terms of peace,
Most just and righteous; these with scorn refus'd,
He bade the trumpet sound. But scarce a sword
Was ting'd with hostile blood, ere all around
The thund'ring Heavens open'd and pour'd forth
Thousands of armed cherubims, when straight
Our general cried: "This is thy signal, Lord,
I follow Thee, and Thy bright heav'nly host."

Then rushing on proud Ammon, all aghast,
He made a bloody slaughter, and pursu'd
The flying foe till night bade sheathe the sword,
And taste the joys of victory and peace.

26. Chorus of Israelites

Cherub and seraphim, unbodied forms,
The messengers of fate,
His dread command await;
Of swifter flight, and subtler frame
Than lightning's winged flame,
They ride on whirlwinds, directing the storms.

27. Air

Hamor

Up the dreadful steep ascending,
While for fame and love contending,
Sought I thee, my glorious prize.

28. Recitative

Iphis

'Tis well.

Haste, haste, ye maidens, and in richest robes
Adorn me, like a stately bride,
To meet my father in triumphant pomp.
And while around the dancing banners play...

29. Air

Iphis

Tune the soft melodious lute,
Pleasant harp and warbling flute,
To sounds of rapt'rous joy.

Exeunt.

SCENE 2

Enter Zebul, Jephtha, Hamor and Chorus.

30. Recitative

Zebul

Again heav'n smiles on His repentant people,
And victory spreads wide her silver wings
To soothe our sorrows with a peaceful calm.

31. Air: omitted

32. Recitative

Jephtha

Zebul, thy deeds were valiant,
Nor less thine, my Hamor;
But the glory is the Lord's.

33. Air

Jephtha

His mighty arm, with sudden blow,
Dispers'd and quell'd the haughty foe.
They fell before him, as when through the sky
He bids the sweeping winds in vengeance fly.

34. Chorus

In glory high, in might serene,
He sees, moves all, unmov'd, unseen.
His mighty arm, with sudden blow
Dispers'd and quell'd the haughty foe.

INTERVAL

SCENE 3

35. Symphony

Enter Iphis, Storge and Chorus of Virgins.

36. Recitative

Iphis

Hail, glorious conqueror, much lov'd father, hail!
Behold thy daughter, and her virgin train,
Come to salute thee with all duteous love.

37. Air

Iphis

Welcome as the cheerful light,
Driving darkest shades of night,
Welcome as the spring that rains
Peace and plenty o'er the plains.
Not cheerful day,
Nor spring so gay,
Such mighty blessings brings
As peace on her triumphant wings.

38. Chorus of Virgins

Welcome thou, whose deeds conspire
To provoke the warbling lyre,
Welcome thou, whom God ordain'd
Guardian angel of our land!
Thou wert born His glorious name
And great wonders to proclaim.

39. Recitative

Jephtha

Horror, confusion! Harsh this music grates
Upon my tasteless ears. Begone, my child,
Thou hast undone thy father! Fly, begone,
And leave me to the rack of wild despair!

Exit Iphis.

40. Air

Jephtha

Open thy marble jaws, O tomb,
And hide me, earth, in thy dark womb,
Ere I the name of father stain,
And deepest woe from conquest gain.

41. Recitative

Zebul

Why is my brother thus afflicted? Say,
Why didst thou spurn thy daughter's gratulations,
And fling her from thee with unkind disdain?

Jephtha

O Zebul, Hamor and my dearest wife,
Behold a wretched man,
Thrown from the summit of presumptuous joy,
Down to the lowest depth of misery.
Know, then, I vow'd the first I saw should fall
A victim to the living God. My daughter,
Alas, it was my daughter, and she dies.

42. Recitative and Air

Storge

First perish thou, and perish all the world!
Hath Heav'n then bless'd us with this only pledge
Of all our love, this one dear child, for thee
To be her murderer? No, cruel man!

Let other creatures die,
Or Heav'n, earth, seas and sky
In one confusion lie,
Ere in a daughter's blood,
So fair, so chaste, so good,
A father's hand's embrued.

43. Recitative

Hamor

If such thy cruel purpose, lo, your friend
Offers himself a willing sacrifice,
To save the innocent and beautiful maid!

44. Air

Hamor

On me let blind mistaken zeal
Her utmost rage employ.
'Twill be a mercy there to kill
Where life can taste no joy.

45. Quartet

Zebul

Oh, spare your daughter,

Storge

Spare my child,

Hamor

My love!

Jephtha

Recorded stands my vow in Heav'n above.

Storge

Recall the impious vow, ere 'tis too late.

Hamor, Zebul, Storge

And think not Heav'n delights

In Moloch's horrid rites.

Jephtha

I'll hear no more, her doom is fix'd as fate!

SCENE 4

Enter Iphis.

46. Recitative

Iphis

Such news flies swiftly. I've heard the mournful cause
Of all your sorrows. Of my father's vow
Heav'n spoke its approbation by success.
Jephtha has triumph'd, Israel is free.

47. Recitative

Iphis

For joys so vast too little is the price
Of one poor life. But oh, accept it, Heav'n,
A grateful victim, and thy blessing still
Pour on my country, friends, and dearest father!

48. Air

Iphis

Happy they! This vital breath
With content I shall resign,
And not murmur or repine,
Sinking in the arms of death.

49. Recitative

Jephtha

Deeper, and deeper still, thy goodness, child,
Pierceth a father's bleeding heart, and checks
The cruel sentence on my falt'ring tongue.
Oh, let me whisper it to the raging winds,
Or howling deserts; for the ears of men
It is too shocking. Yet have I not vow'd?
And can I think the great Jehovah sleeps,
Like Chemosh and such fabled deities?
Ah no; Heav'n heard my thoughts, and wrote them
down.
It must be so. 'Tis this that racks my brain,
And pours into my breast a thousand pangs
That lash me into madness. Horrid thought!
My only daughter, so dear a child,
Doom'd by a father! Yes, the vow is past,
And Gilead hath triumph'd o'er his foes.
Therefore, tomorrow's dawn... I can no more.

50. Chorus

How dark, O Lord, are Thy decrees,
All hid from mortal sight,
All our joys to sorrow turning,
And our triumphs into mourning,
As the night succeeds the day.
No certain bliss,
No solid peace,
We mortals know
On earth below,
Yet on this maxim still obey:
"Whatever is, is right."

ACT THREE

SCENE 1

Jephtha, Iphis, Priests and Chorus.

51. Recitative

Jephtha

Hide thou thy hated beams, O sun, in clouds
And darkness, deep as is a father's woe;

52. Recitative

Jephtha

A father, off'ring up his only child
In vow'd return for victory and peace.

53. Air

Jephtha

Waft her, angels, through the skies,
Far above yon azure plain,
Glorious there, like you, to rise,
There, like you, for ever reign.

54. Recitative

Iphis

Ye sacred priests, whose hands ne'er yet were stain'd
With human blood, why are ye thus afraid
To execute my father's will? The call of Heav'n
With humble resignation I obey.

55. Air

Iphis

Farewell, ye limpid springs and floods,
Ye flow'ry meads and mazy woods;
Farewell, thou busy world where reign
Short hours of joy and years of pain.
Brighter scenes I seek above
In the realms of peace and love.

56. Chorus of Priests

Doubtful fear and rev'rent awe
Strike us, Lord, while here we bow,
Check'd by Thy all-sacred law,
Yet commanded by the vow.
Hear our pray'r in this distress,
And Thy determin'd will declare.

57. Sinfonia

58. Recitative

Angel

Rise, Jephtha, and ye rev'rend priests, withhold
The slaught'rous hand. No vow can disannul
The law of God, nor such was its intent
When rightly scann'd; yet still shall be fulfill'd.
Thy daughter, Jephtha, thou must dedicate
To God, in pure and virgin state forever,

As not an object meet for sacrifice,
Else had she fall'n an holocaust to God.
The Holy Spirit, that dictated thy vow,
Bade thus explain it, and approves your faith.

59. Air: omitted

60. Song

Jephtha

For ever blessed be Thy holy name,
Lord God of Israel!

61. Chorus of Priests

Theme sublime of endless praise,
Just and righteous are thy ways;
And thy mercies still endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure.

SCENE 2

Enter Zebul, Storge, Hamor and Chorus of Israelites.

62. Recitative: omitted

63. Song: omitted

64. Recitative

Storge

Oh, let me fold thee in a mother's arms,
And with submissive joy, my child,
Receive thy designation to the life of Heav'n.

65. Air: omitted

66. Recitative: omitted

67. Air

Hamor

'Tis Heav'n's all-ruling pow'r
That checks the rising sigh;
Yet let me still adore
And think an angel by.

68. Recitative

Iphis

My faithful Hamor, may that Providence
Which gently claims or forces our submission,
Direct thee to some happier choice.

69. Air: omitted

70. Quintet

Iphis

All that is in Hamor mine,
Freely I to Heav'n resign.
Joys triumphant crown thy days,

And thy name eternal praise.
Great the bliss assign'd to me,
Greater still attend on thee.

Hamor

All that is in Iphis mine
Freely I to Heav'n resign

Iphis

Duteous to the will supreme,
Still my Hamor I'll esteem.

Hamor

Duteous to almighty pow'r,
Still my Iphis I'll adore.

Iphis, Hamor, Storge, Jephtha, Zebul

Joys triumphant crown thy days,
And thy name eternal praise.

71. Chorus of Israelites

Ye house of Gilead, with one voice,
In blessings manifold rejoice.
Freed from war's destructive sword,
Peace her plenty round shall spread,
While in virtue's path you tread;
So are they blest who fear the Lord.
Amen. Hallelujah.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

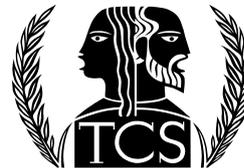
The Choir is very grateful for the support it continues to receive from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).

The Choir would like to thank Philip Pratley, the Concert Manager, and all tonight's volunteer helpers.

*The picture on the front cover is taken from The Return of Jephtha by Giovanni Antonio Pellegrini
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We are grateful to Hertfordshire Libraries' Performing Arts service for the supply of hire music used in this concert.

Haydn and Mahler



Haydn: Harmoniemesse

Haydn's last, longest and grandest mass.

Mahler: Veni Creator Spiritus

Arranged by Iain Farrington

The first movement of Mahler's 8th symphony arranged for double choir, four soloists, standard orchestra and organ.

St John's, Smith Square, SW1P 3HA

Wednesday, 11th December, 7:30pm

Tickets: £22, £16, £10; concessions: 20% off for under 18s and full-time students. Booking now open : by telephone: 020 7222 1061; online: www.sjss.org.uk; by post: please enclose SAE. Debit/credit cards: MasterCard and Visa accepted. Booking fees per transaction £2 by telephone / £1.50 online. Advance booking: the Box Office is open for advance bookings from 10am to 5pm weekdays.

Twickenham Choral Society

Katherine Broderick, soprano

Patricia Orr, mezzo-soprano

Peter Auty, tenor

Dawid Kimberg, bass

Brandenburg Sinfonia

Christopher Herrick, conductor

Paul Spicer



Paul Spicer, musical director of the Whitehall Choir, 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 top organ award (the Walford Davies Prize) in his final year. Paul is best known as a choral conductor, partly through the many CDs he made with the Finzi Singers for Chandos Records. He conducted Bach Choirs in Chester and Leicester before moving to conduct the Bach Choir in Birmingham in 1992. He taught at the Royal College of Music between 1995 and 2008, and now teaches choral conducting at the Birmingham Conservatoire, where he also directs both chamber choirs, and at Oxford University. Until July 2001 Paul Spicer was Artistic Director of the Lichfield International Arts Festival and the Abbotsholme Arts Society. He was Senior Producer for BBC Radio 3 in the Midlands until 1990, and today is in considerable demand as a composer and as a recording producer.

The first complete recording of Paul Spicer's large-scale *Easter Oratorio* was released in 2005 to critical acclaim, the work being recognized by Gramophone magazine as "the best of its kind to have appeared ... since Howells's *Hymnus Paradisi*". *The Deciduous Cross*, for choir and winds, which is based on poems by R S Thomas and was premiered in 2003, was commissioned for Paul's tenth anniversary as conductor of the Birmingham Bach Choir, and was recorded by the Whitehall Choir. Robert Sharpe, when Director of Music at Truro Cathedral, recorded his complete works for organ. A recording of his shorter choral works was made by the choir of Selwyn College, Cambridge, in 2008.

Paul Spicer's biography of his composition teacher, Herbert Howells, was published in August 1998 and has been reprinted twice, and he has recently completed a full-scale biography and study of works of the composer Sir George Dyson, which will be published in the spring of 2014 by Boydell & Brewer. He has written articles for many periodicals and is a contributor to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Paul's *Advent Oratorio*, setting a libretto by the New Testament scholar Dr. Tom Wright, formerly Bishop of Durham, who had also written the text for the *Easter Oratorio*, was first performed in Lichfield Cathedral on 5 December 2009.

Paul Spicer is in great demand for his choral workshops, which take him all over the world. He runs three annual choral courses under the umbrella of his foundation, The English Choral Experience, two at Dore Abbey in Herefordshire (a large choir/arts festival in July and Camerata chamber choir weekend in May) and one in the south of France after Easter (www.englishchoralexperience.co.uk). He is a broadcaster, lecturer and popular speaker. 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, an Honorary Fellow of University College, Durham, an Honorary Fellow of Birmingham Conservatoire, a Trustee of the Finzi Trust, Chairman of the Finzi Friends, Vice-President of the Herbert Howells Society, and Advisor to the Sir George Dyson Trust.

Verity Wingate (soprano)



Hampshire-born soprano Verity Wingate began her vocal career as a specialist singer at Wells Cathedral School. Verity studied at Wells for five years with King's Singer Nigel Perrin and soprano Isobel Buchanan. During her time at Wells, Verity was given a solo tour with a pianist to Hong Kong for a week, a Gala Recital awarded to two sixth-formers in each year, and several solos in the yearly oratorio concert, including the Rutter Requiem and Haydn *Nelson Mass*. In those five years, Verity performed at venues such as the Bath Pump Rooms, the Bath Theatre Royal, Bath Abbey, Wells Cathedral and Exeter Cathedral.

Verity is now in her third year as an undergraduate at the Royal Academy of Music, where she studies with soprano Julie Kennard and tenor Ian Partridge. Since starting at the Academy, Verity has been awarded three end-of-year awards, including the award for highest vocal achiever in her year. At the end of her first year she was awarded the Bennett of Lincoln Scholarship on top of her annual scholarship awarded to her upon acceptance to the Royal Academy and she is generously supported by the Josephine Baker Trust. In the period leading up to Christmas, Verity will be performing in several Oratorio works including the Fauré Requiem, the Mozart Requiem, Haydn's *St. Nicholas Mass* and Finzi's *In Terra Pax*. Recently Verity sang a recital of Strauss and Mozart in Salisbury and performed in the Oxford Chamber Music Festival with Julius Drake.

Anna Harvey (mezzo-soprano)



Sheffield-born mezzo-soprano Anna Harvey is the Dame Kiri Te Kanawa Scholar on the Opera Course at the Royal Academy of Music, studying under Elizabeth Ritchie and Iain Ledingham. A recent graduate in Music of Jesus College, Cambridge, Anna's highlights on the concert platform include Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* at St John's Smith Square, Mozart's Requiem at St Martin-in-the-Fields, the UK première of Loewe's *Passion Oratorio*, arias with the London Mozart Players at Fairfield Halls, and recording Handel's *Messiah* with the Bach Choir and BBC Concert Orchestra under David Hill for the 2013 Radio 2 Good Friday broadcast. Anna is a regular soloist in the Royal Academy of Music/Kohn Foundation Bach Cantata Series, and as a recitalist she has performed at Kettle's Yard, Southwark Cathedral and Wigmore Hall, and with Academy Song Circle.

Anna is equally at home on the operatic stage, with recent roles including cover Hänsel in *Hänsel und Gretel* (Garsington Opera), Mrs Herring in *Albert Herring* (Opera Holland Park Etcetera), Fairy Queen in *Iolanthe* (Buxton Opera House), and Larina in *Eugene Onegin* and Flosshilde in *Das Rheingold* (Royal Academy Opera). Upcoming roles include the title role in *Ariodante* (Royal Academy Opera) in March 2014.

Masterclasses include those with Ann Murray, Anne Howells, Susan McCulloch, Gerald Finley, Helmut Deutsch, Anthony Legge and, as part of a Lieder mastercourse at the Schubertiade festival in Austria, Thomas Quasthoff. Anna is extremely grateful for the support of the Fulwood Educational Endowment, the Lucille Graham Trust, the Simon Fletcher Charitable Trust and the Josephine Baker Trust, and for awards including the Patricia Kris Wolfe Award, the Andrew S Sykes Award, the Verdun Davies Award and a Sybil Tutton Award administered by the Musicians Benevolent Fund.

Anna is really pleased to be returning to sing with the Whitehall Choir, having previously performed the Bach B Minor Mass, Verdi Requiem and Rossini *Petite Messe Solennelle* with the choir.

Simon Ponsford (countertenor)



Simon recently graduated with an MA Distinction from the Royal Academy of Music, where he was also awarded the S & M Eyres Wilson Scholarship and a Diploma of the Royal Academy of Music for outstanding performance. He is generously supported by the Josephine Baker Trust. At the RAM he studied with Michael Chance and Ian Partridge, and took part in masterclasses given by Ann Murray and Helmut Deutsch. He is also a Lay Vicar in the choir of Westminster Abbey, alongside which he regularly appears as a recitalist and soloist. Simon began his musical training as a chorister in Gloucester Cathedral Choir, before returning to Gloucester as a choral scholar. In 2008, he graduated from King's College, Cambridge, with a BA in English Literature following two years as a member of King's College Choir. Simon has sung with many professional choirs including Polyphony, English Voices and Tenebrae, was an Apprentice in the Monteverdi Choir, and is a founder member of the Platinum Consort.

Recent solo engagements include Handel's *Saul* (Oxford Harmonic Society), Bach's *Matthäus Passion* (St. George's, Windsor) and Handel's *Dixit Dominus* (Harpenden Music Makers). Simon has recently given recitals of Schubert's *Winterreise* with pianist Nick Fletcher in Gloucester, Windsor and Edinburgh, and recitals of early English songs across the UK and in France. He has also just recorded a CD of lute songs to be released in November.

Simon's opera roles include David in Samuel Hogarth's *David and Goliath* (CUOS), Athamas in Handel's *Semele* (Benslow Baroque Opera), the countertenor roles in Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* (Benslow Baroque Opera), Narciso in Handel's *Agrippina*, Eustazio in Handel's *Rinaldo*, Ruggiero in Handel's *Alcina* and the Refugee in Jonathan Dove's *Flight* (RAM Opera Scenes).

Follow Simon on Twitter on @sjhponsford.

Nicholas Scott (tenor)



Nicholas was awarded a Sir Elton John Scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music, from where he graduated as an undergraduate, studying with Mark Wildman and Iain Ledingham. Whilst an undergraduate, Nicholas enjoyed a busy solo career on the concert platform, highlights of which include the leading role in New Chamber Opera's production of Arne's *The Judgement of Paris*, Britten's *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings* with the St Cecilia Orchestra in Ripon, and Bach's Cantata BWV 61 in Canterbury Cathedral. He has performed Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*.

Nicholas is a product of the Royal Academy of Music/Kohn Foundation Bach Cantata Series with whom he continues to perform. He has performed Haydn's *Creation* in Guildford Cathedral and Haydn's *Missa Cellensis* and Handel's *Foundling Hospital Anthem* at Lichfield Cathedral. More recently, he has performed in the Victoria International Music Festival in Malta with the Maltese Philharmonic Orchestra and has sung Mozart's Requiem in St Martin-in-the-Fields with the Brandenburg Sinfonia.

Nicholas' operatic roles include: Castor, in Rameau's *Castor et Pollux* with the Yorke Trust, and as the eponymous Wandering Scholar by Holst and Don Basilio in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* under Iain Ledingham. He recently covered a role in Glyndebourne Festival Opera's production of Rameau's *Hippolyte et Aricie* under William Christie. Other notable performances include an orchestrated version of Ralph Vaughan Williams' *On Wenlock Edge* at the Cheltenham Festival, and the role of Richard Dauntless in Gilbert and Sullivan's *Ruddigore* at the Buxton Festival, as well as *Messiah* at the Linder Auditorium, Johannesburg, with the Johannesburg Festival Orchestra under Richard Cock.

Forthcoming projects include *Messiah* at Southwell Minster and Haydn's *Creation* with the Cambridge Philharmonic Society. Nicholas will be recording the role of St Pierre in Marc-Antoine Charpentier's *Le reniement de St. Pierre* and the role of Isaac in *Le sacrifice d'Abraham* for La Nuova Musica and Harmonia Mundi USA in January.

Nicholas has been awarded a Kathleen Ferrier Bursary for Young Singers, and at the Royal Academy of Music, the Arthur Burcher Memorial Prize, and the Henry Cummings Prize. He is generously supported by the Josephine Baker Trust and is the recipient of an ABRSM Scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music.

Richard Walshe (baritone)



Richard was educated at the King's School, Gloucester, after which he became a choral scholar at Portsmouth Cathedral in 2008/2009 and then went on to become a lay-clerk at Gloucester Cathedral in 2009/2010. During his time at Gloucester Cathedral, Richard had many solo opportunities, including the bass solos in Walton's *The Twelve*, during the BBC Radio 3 'Choral Evensong' broadcast live from the Gloucester Three Choirs Festival in 2010.

Richard was awarded a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music in 2010, where he is generously supported by the Josephine Baker Trust. He currently studies undergraduate singing with Mark Wildman and Iain Ledingham. During his time at the Royal Academy, Richard has enjoyed the chance to sing in the Kohn Foundation Bach Cantata chorus. He has also enjoyed solo performances on the recital platform, performing Schumann's *Dichterliebe* and Finzi's song cycle *Let us Garlands bring*, as well as on the operatic stage, performing the part of Antonio in a production of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* at the Amersham Music Festival. Richard has recently taken part in master classes with English song and German Lieder experts, Roderick Williams, Florian Boesch and Wolfgang Holzmair. In October 2011, during his second year at the Royal Academy of Music, Richard reached the final of the Kathleen Ferrier Young Singers Bursary Prize.

As a baritone soloist, Richard has had a variety of performance opportunities, including: Fauré's Requiem at Gloucester Cathedral and the Bristol Colston Hall with the conductor Adrian Partington and the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Handel's *Messiah* at Portsmouth Cathedral, Pilate and arias in Bach's *St John Passion*, recitative parts in Bach's *St Matthew Passion* in the Amersham Music Festival, Zebul in Handel's *Jephtha* (the part he performs tonight), and the Brahms Requiem.

In the future, Richard plans to finish his undergraduate studies at the Royal Academy of Music, whilst expanding his oratorio and song repertoire, before continuing to train for a career in opera.



THE WHITEHALL CHOIR
PRESIDENT: Martin Donnelly CMG

Conductor: Paul Spicer

Accompanist: Ian Tindale

The Whitehall Choir achieves singing of a high quality in a wide range of repertoire, and we are looking to recruit in all voices. Amongst our current members we count civil servants, lawyers, teachers, consultants, engineers and many others, with an age range of fifty years between youngest and oldest members. The choir meets every Tuesday evening near St James's Park tube station for a two-and-a-half-hour rehearsal. We are conducted by Paul Spicer – a conductor, composer and academic of international repute – and perform four concerts a year in a range of venues across London. Besides tonight's venue, St John's Smith Square, our concert locations in recent years have included Holy Trinity Sloane Square, St Alban's Holborn, St Margaret's Westminster Abbey, St Peter's, Eaton Square, and the Banqueting House in Whitehall. Our programmes, which are rich and varied, cater for a broad spectrum of musical tastes, and we feel privileged to be able to give concerts in such great venues. Members' commitment to music-making is such that the weekly rehearsals go well with the busy day-jobs that many of them have, and provide a clear and friendly space in the middle of the week. We would love to hear from any singers who are interested in joining us. Short, informal auditions take place after a few weeks of singing with us on a trial basis.

Some details of forthcoming events can be found in this programme. For more information, please visit the Choir's website www.whitehallchoir.org.uk (Charity no. 280478).

Sopranos

Anu Bala
Joanna Bradley
Gill Carruthers
Hilary Davies
Imogen Davies
Deb Dowdall
Ruth Eastman
Jacky Erwtaman
Maya Freedman
Kate Goulden
Fiona Graph
Kate Hand
Katherine Herzberg
Claire Hunter
Lesley Kirby
Rachel Nixon
Lucilla Poston
Lesley Raymond
Katherine Rowley-Conwy
Christina Scharff
Janet Simpson
Joanna Tomlinson
Janet Winstanley

Altos

Helen Audaer
Frances Bowen
Rose Chandler
Jackie Cheng
Monica Darnbrough
Miranda Douce
Julie Dyg
Tilly Flaux
Sam Foley
Polly Fortune
Mary Anne Francis
Madeleine Grundy
Penny James
Jane Mackay
Paula Nobes
Jean Orr
Penny Prior
Jean Robinson
Rachel Tedd
Liz Walton
Alison Williams

Tenors

Emmanuel Boukandoura
James Chapman
Patrick Haighton
Graham Hand
Ken Holmes
Philip Pratley
David Rawlins
Alastair Tolley
Jonathan Williams
Philip Worley

Basses

James Gourlay
Laurence Grace
Richard Grafen
Mark Graver
Martin Humphreys
Andrew Kenningham
Alastair King-Smith
Daniel Lambauer
William Longland
Brendan O'Keefe
Malcolm Todd
Ian Williamson

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PATRONS AND FRIENDS OF WHITEHALL CHOIR

Friends and Patrons of the Choir are a vital part of our future. They help fund not only our regular concerts but also additional activities such as workshops, sing-through days, and tours. For an up-front payment at the start of the season, Friends receive one top-price ticket for all Whitehall Choir-promoted concerts, plus 10% discount on any further tickets they require. Also included is advance notification of all concerts/events and a free programme – perfect for regular concert attenders, who will save overall on the whole season. For further details about how to become a Patron or Friend, please see the ‘Support Us’ page of the website www.whitehallchoir.org.uk.

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Lady Teresa Carter; Mr Michael Growcott; Ms Frances Morris-Jones; Mr John Purkiss; Captain B. V. Woodford CBE, RN; and others who wish to remain anonymous

Friends:

Miss Elsie Broadbent; Mrs E. Gotto; Mrs Gillian Holmes; Mr Michael Pickersgill; Mr Paul Roach; Mr John Warren; Mrs Lis Warren; and others who wish to remain anonymous

WHITEHALL CHOIR - FORTHCOMING EVENTS (2013-2014 season)

(For further details visit www.whitehallchoir.org.uk.)

Monday, 9 December,

**Le Manoir aux Quat’ Saisons: Christmas Carols Evening
with BBC Radio 4 broadcaster Jenni Murray**

St Mary’s, Great Milton, Oxfordshire

(For details contact manoir.com/web/olem/calendar_of_events.jsp)

Tuesday, 10 December, 7.30 pm,

London Christmas Concert

St Stephen’s, Rochester Row, London SW1P 1LE

Friday 4 April 2014

Passiontide to Ascension Day Concert

Church of St Alban the Martyr, 8 Brooke Street, London EC1N 7RD

Friday, 4 July 2014, 7.30 pm

Elgar, Stanford, Kodály, Brahms, Rheinberger

Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Street, London SW1X 9BZ



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If you’re ordering anything from Amazon.co.uk, why not click on the Amazon link on the Choir’s website, www.whitehallchoir.org.uk? For every sale, a contribution goes to Choir funds.

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THE LONDON BAROQUE SINFONIA

General Manager Peter McCarthy Concert Manager Louise Jameson

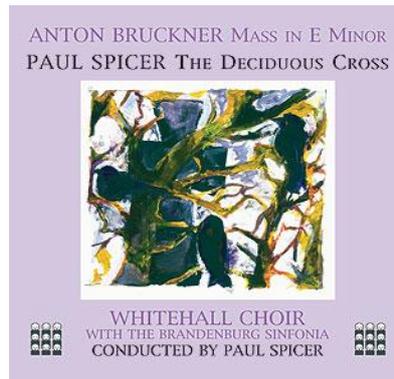
The London Baroque Sinfonia has worked with the Whitehall Choir for many years in programmes of baroque and early classical, and is delighted to do so again this evening. The Sinfonia is made up of experienced professional players who specialise in period instrument performance and who perform regularly in the UK and abroad with St. James's Baroque, the English Baroque Soloists, the Orchestra of the Age of the Enlightenment, the Academy of Ancient Music, the Gabrieli Consort and the English Concert.

Collaborations with Paul Spicer and the Whitehall Choir have included Handel's *Alexander's Feast*, the *Christmas Oratorio* and B minor Mass by Johann Sebastian Bach, and Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610*.

The orchestra has also performed with the Twickenham Choral Society, the Choir of Christ Church Cathedral and the Birmingham Bach Choir, with whom it also performed Bach's B minor mass under the baton of Paul Spicer at the Lichfield Festival 2012.

<i>1st violins</i>	Catherine Martin Iona Davies Elizabeth MacCarthy Julia Black
<i>2nd violins</i>	Jane Norman Ben Sansom Karin Björk Hazel Brooks
<i>violas</i>	Annette Isserlis Joanne Miller Aliye Cornish
<i>violoncellos</i>	Natasha Kaemer Anna Holmes
<i>double bass</i>	Peter McCarthy
<i>flute</i>	Christine Garratt
<i>oboes</i>	Gail Hennessy Sarah Humphrys
<i>bassoons</i>	Sally Holman Mike Brain
<i>horns</i>	Gavin Edwards Martin Lawrence
<i>trumpets</i>	Simon Munday Matt Wells
<i>keyboard continuo</i>	Ian Tindale

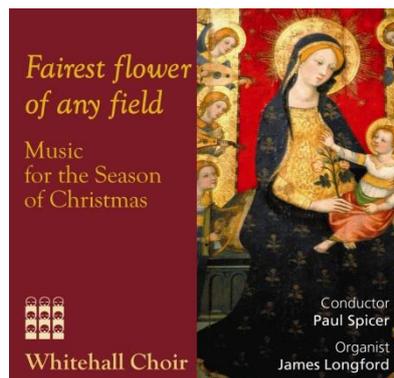
During 2007 the Whitehall Choir produced a CD featuring the first recorded performance of Paul Spicer's *The Deciduous Cross*. On it the Choir also recorded Bruckner's Mass in E minor.



"instrumental writing which is assured, inventive and colourful ... a performance which is committed and compelling"
Organists' Review, October 2007

"...Definitely recommended!" Bruckner Journal, November 2007

In 2009 the Choir recorded its second CD, which is a selection of music for the season of Christmas, at St Alban's Church, Holborn. This disc, 'Fairest flower of any field', is recommended as a best buy in *Gramophone's* 2009 Christmas edition, while the December 2009 edition of *Classical Music* magazine highlights "...[the Choir's] fine balance and floating lines ensuring this is a satisfying selection".



Both CDs are on sale at this evening's concert, or they may be purchased on eBay or via the Choir's website www.whitehallchoir.org.uk.