

The Scottish Chamber Choir

Directed by Michael Harris

Festival Concert

Sunday 10th August 2008 8.00pm
St Mary's Cathedral, Palmerston Place

The Scottish Chamber Choir

with the St Giles' Chamber Ensemble

Director: Michael Harris

J S BACH
(1685–1750)

MAGNIFICAT IN D

MAGNIFICAT – CHORUS

ET EXSULTAVIT SPIRITUS MEUS – SOPRANO SOLO

QUIA RESPEXIT HUMILITATEM – SOPRANO SOLO

OMNES GENERATIONES – CHORUS

QUIA FECIT MIHI MAGNA – BASS SOLO

ET MISERICORDIA – DUET FOR ALTO AND TENOR

FECIT POTENTIAM – CHORUS

DEPOSUIT POTENTES – TENOR SOLO

ESURIENTES IMPLEVIT BONIS – ALTO SOLO

SUSCEPIT ISRAEL – TRIO FOR TWO SOPRANOS AND ALTO

SICUT LOCUTUS EST – CHORUS

GLORIA PATRI ET FILIO – CHORUS

Soprano 1 Milda Zinkus

Soprano 2 Kate Rigg

Contralto Marjory Lobban

Tenor Ross Wilson

Bass Hugh Hillyard-Parker

I N T E R V A L of 10 minutes

G F HANDEL
(1685–1759)

CORONATION ANTHEMS

LET THY HAND BE STRENGTHENED

ZADOK THE PRIEST

THE KING SHALL REJOICE

MY HEART IS INDITING

Texts and translations

BACH MAGNIFICAT

Programme notes

Johann Sebastian Bach: *Magnificat in D* (BWV 243)

Bach's setting of the *Magnificat* was first heard in Leipzig at Christmas in 1723. In Bach's time the *Magnificat* was one of the main parts of the Lutheran Vespers liturgy, normally sung in German, but on major feast days in Latin. Bach originally composed the work to include additional Christmas texts, but the score was later revised, probably in early 1732, and the work transposed down a semitone from E flat to D major.

Bach's setting of the *Magnificat* is extremely concise, about the same length as one of his cantatas. Unlike the cantatas, however, there is no use of recitative or chorale, with the composer employing a much freer combination of chorus and aria than was normal in his sacred music. The style of writing is clearly governed by the Baroque doctrine of the *Affekt*, with brilliant D major trumpet writing in the opening chorus of praise: this is returned to at the end of the Gloria at the text *Sicut erat in principio* (As it was in the beginning). In addition, in the trio *Suscepit Israel* (He has come to the help of his servant Israel) Bach includes an obbligato oboe reference to the *Tonus Peregrinus* psalm chant that is traditionally thought to derive from the psalms sung by the Israelites in their flight from Egypt.

George Frideric Handel: *Coronation Anthems*

Handel's four *Coronation Anthems* were composed for the Coronation of George II in Westminster Abbey on 11 October 1727. Normally the Organist and Composer of the Chapel Royal would have been entrusted with this task, but William Croft had died on 14 August and, for reasons that are not clear, the recommendation that Maurice Greene should be approached instead came to nothing; by 9 September 1727 it was known that:

"Mr Hendel, the famous Composer to the opera, is appointed by the King to compose the Anthem at the Coronation which is to be sung in Westminster Abbey at the Grand Ceremony."

It is likely that the ill-feeling that occurred between Handel and Greene came about as a result of this. At the Coronation ceremony, *Let thy hand be strengthened* and *My heart is inditing* were first and fourth respectively, but records disagree on the order of *Zadok the priest* and *The King shall rejoice*. Tonight's performance follows the order found in the Chapel Royal Cheque Book as written by the Clerk of the Cheque.

Contemporary accounts indicate that all was not well with the performances at the Coronation, though matters may not have been helped by the fact that there were two running orders in circulation. There were a large number of musicians involved, with considerably more players than singers.

Programme notes by Michael Harris

Chorus

Magnificat anima mea Dominum

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord

Soprano solo

et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo,

and my spirit rejoices in God my saviour.

Soprano solo and chorus

*quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae.
Ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent
omnes generationes.*

For he has looked with favour on his lowly servant. From this day, all generations will call me blessed.

Bass solo

*Quia fecit mihi magna, qui potens est,
et sanctum nomen eius.*

The Almighty has done great things for me and holy is his name.

Duet for alto and tenor

*Et misericordia eius a progenie in progenies
timentibus eum.*

He has mercy on those that fear him in every generation.

Chorus

*Fecit potentiam brachio suo, dispersit superbos
mente cordis sui.*

He has shown the strength of his arm: he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

Tenor solo

Deposuit potentes de sede et exaltavit humiles.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones and has lifted up the lowly.

Alto solo

Esurientes implevit bonis et divites dimisit inanes.

He has filled the hungry with good things and the rich he has sent away empty.

Trio for two sopranos and alto

*Suscepit Israel puerum suum, recordatus
misericordiae suae.*

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, for he has remembered his promise of mercy,

Chorus

*Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros, Abraham et
semini eius in saecula.*

the promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children for ever.

Chorus

*Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto! Sicut erat
in principio et nunc et semper et in saecula
saeculorum. Amen.*

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and shall be for ever. Amen.

HANDEL CORONATION ANTHEMS

LET THY HAND BE STRENGTHENED

Let thy hand be strengthened and thy right hand be exalted.
Let justice and judgement be the preparation of thy seat! Let mercy and truth go before thy face.
Alleluia.

from Psalm 89

ZADOK THE PRIEST

Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anointed Solomon king. And all the people rejoiced, and said:

God save the king, long live the king!
May the king live for ever, amen, alleluia.

from I Kings 1

THE KING SHALL REJOICE

The King shall rejoice in thy strength, O Lord.
Exceeding glad shall he be of thy salvation.
Glory and great worship hast thou laid upon him.
Thou hast prevented him with the blessings of goodness and hast set a crown of pure gold upon his head.

Alleluia.

from Psalm 21

MY HEART IS INDITING

My heart is inditing of a good matter; I speak of the things which I have made unto the King.
Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women.
Upon thy right hand did stand the Queen in vesture of gold; and the King shall have pleasure in thy beauty.
Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers.

from Psalm 45 and Isaiah 49

Keep in touch with the Scottish Chamber Choir – visit our web site at:

www.scottishchamberchoir.org.uk

You will find there our plans for the season, details of forthcoming concerts and useful links, plus an archive of our programmes back to 1993.

Acknowledgements

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SUPPORTING &
CHAMPIONING
VOLUNTARY MUSIC

The chamber organ used in this concert is the property of the Dunedin Concerts Trust, purchased with the aid of a Scottish Arts Council National Lottery award.

We are grateful to St Mary's Music School for allowing us to use their timpani.

Awards for All – Lottery grant

The Scottish Chamber Choir has been successful in being awarded a Lottery grant of £5,000 from the Scottish Arts Council via Awards for All to support the commission of a new work to celebrate our 40th anniversary during the 2008–2009 season.

The new work is being composed by Kenneth Dempster, a Scottish composer who, in addition to being Composer in Residence at Napier University, has also recently composed works for the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Edinburgh Quartet, Mr McFall's Chamber and the St Magnus Festival. The piece, for choir and organ, entitled *Father and son* and a setting of Dylan Thomas's *Do not go gentle into that good night*, will be premiered in our concert on 22nd November 2008 at St Giles' Cathedral.

In addition to the premiere of the work, the choir will also be involved in two workshops with primary schools in Linlithgow and Peebles, led by Kenneth Dempster. This will involve the children creating music around the new work, and then participating in a short performance alongside the Scottish Chamber Choir for the rest of the school.

We are delighted to be given this opportunity to create new music and look forward to our rehearsals, the schools' workshops and the premiere of the work in November.

The Scottish Chamber Choir is registered with OSCR, the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, as Scottish Charity No. SC013058 (details at <http://www.oscr.org.uk/>)

The Scottish Chamber Choir

Since its formation in 1968, the **Scottish Chamber Choir** has performed throughout Scotland and Northern England to great acclaim. Each season the choir presents four concerts in Edinburgh, climaxing with an appearance at the Festival Fringe. These are usually supplemented by a Christmas concert and guest appearances at local Music Societies and Festivals throughout the year, keeping members quite busy!

The choir sings both shorter items from the chamber choir repertoire and more extended works, such as the Bach *St John Passion* at our Festival Fringe concert in 2004. Whilst some concerts are given a *cappella*, at others we are joined by a variety of instrumental forces, making possible an exceptional freedom of programming and great interest for both participants and audience.

The choir's hallmark has always been its breadth of repertoire, encompassing a wide range of music from the 16th century to the present day, with music by living composers featuring in programmes during most seasons. Often there is a thread linking a series of concerts, encouraging regular attendance. The highly successful and critically praised Silver Jubilee season, for example, concentrated on 20th century British music, and was recognised by an Enterprise Award from the Performing Rights Society – one of only three such awards in Scotland.

From time to time, vacancies occur in all sections of the choir. Any singer interested in obtaining further details should contact Michael Harris, our Musical Director, by phone on 0131 556 1759 or by email at info@scottishchamberchoir.org.uk. Rehearsals are held on Monday evenings in the Ian Tomlin School of Music at Napier University's Craighouse campus.

Michael Harris received his earliest musical education as a chorister of Gloucester Cathedral. He was Organ Scholar of St Peter's College, Oxford, and continued his studies at the Royal College of Music.

Michael has been Organist and Master of the Music of St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh, since November 1996; he is also a Lecturer at the Ian Tomlin School of Music in Napier University, Edinburgh. Prior to moving to Edinburgh he held posts as Sub-Organist of Leeds Parish Church and Assistant Organist of Canterbury Cathedral.

As Organist of St Giles' Cathedral he hosts many organ concerts on the famous Rieger organ (built in 1992) and his work has involved him in numerous recordings and broadcasts, both for Television and Radio. Under his direction the Cathedral Choir has visited the USA and Greece, and most recently, in October 2006, they undertook a short tour of southern France.

His solo recordings include *The Organ at St Giles'*, and he has directed the Cathedral Choir in a number of CD recordings, including *An Edinburgh Celebration* to mark their first tour of the USA in Autumn 2004. A recording for the Priory label, of a 1724 organ in Thüringen by Johann Schröter, is due for release in Summer 2008.

Elsewhere Michael has given recitals at many venues in Germany, Belgium, Italy and the USA, as well as in the UK, where he has played in many of the major venues. In August and September 2008 he will be giving concerts in Australia and New Zealand. Since 1998 he has been Musical Director of the Scottish Chamber Choir.

He is also much involved in organ and choral education. He has led a number of study tours to Germany, with a special interest in the organs of Thüringen and Saxony, and is Director of the Edinburgh Organ Academy, an international annual Spring-time organ course founded in 1998. His Napier University duties include supervision of final year performance students, and directing the University Chamber Choir.

The Scottish Chamber Choir

Sopranos	Harriet Atkinson	Julie Morrice
	Rachel Bucknall	Kate Rigg
	Adrienne Burgess	Sasha Salinasova
	Lorraine Fraser	Sue Shoosmith
	Jenny Mackenzie	Adriana Skaraas
Contraltos	Pauline McClellan	Milda Zinkus
	Anne Barker	Janet Macdonald
	Bridget Beagan	Alison McCleery
	Myra Brown	Susan White
Tenors	Marjory Lobban	
	Stuart Mitchell	James Verge
	Andrew Polson	Ross Wilson
Basses	Mike Arthur	Wilf Krause
	George Burgess	James Mcdonald
	Hugh Hillyard-Parker	Martin Tarr
	Peter Innes	

The St Giles' Chamber Ensemble

Violin 1	Alex Laing (leader)	
	Gill Akhtar	Lawrence Dunn
Violin 2	Ian Laing	
	Peter Dayan	Salyen Latter
Viola	Tom Prentice	Paula Midgley
Cello	Mary Stabler	Heather Coates
Double Bass	Catherine Frew	
Flute	Gwen Kelso	Sarah Miller
Oboe	Morven Bell	Morag Watson
	Alistair Douglas	Paul Michael
Trumpet	Ceri Heaney	
	Stuart Haigh	
Timpani		
Organ continuo	Peter Backhouse	

Bill Wood

It is with deep regret that we record the death on 19 July 2008 of our President, Bill Wood. The choir was at the heart of his music-making, and he gave unstintingly of his time over many years.

We extend to his widow Carol, and to his children and grandchildren, our sincere condolences on their loss.

A Memorial Service has been arranged for Sunday 19 October at 3.30pm in St Mary's Cathedral. The music to be sung by the Scottish Chamber Choir at the service will include Benjamin Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb*.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory