



Royal
Tunbridge Wells
Choral
Society

CENTENARY

1904-2004

J S BACH
**CHRISTMAS
ORATORIO**

(Parts 1, 2, 5 and 6)

Assembly Hall, Tunbridge Wells

Sunday 30th November 2003

Programme £1


**Making
Music**
THE NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF MUSIC SOCIETIES



*This concert is given in memory of
Mary Standen
a long-serving and dedicated member of the
Choral Society for over 50 years until
a short while before her death in March 2002.
She is remembered with great affection and gratitude*

BIOGRAPHIES

Steven Devine (conductor)

Steven received his early musical training at Chetham's School of Music, Manchester, where he studied harpsichord, organ, piano and conducting. He continued his education at Oxford University studying music, and now divides his time between professional performances on the harpsichord, piano and conducting, and as Assistant Curator at the Finchcocks Collection of historical keyboard instruments in Kent.

As a harpsichordist, since he won first prize in the inaugural Broadwood Harpsichord competition in 1993, he has performed extensively in Britain and Europe and has made recordings for Radio 3, Classic FM, WDR, Radio France and Channel 4. Steven is Associate Music Director of Opera Restor'd.

Steven conducted Handel's Orlando with the Dartington Festival Baroque Orchestra, Athalia with the Academie d'Ambronay and, for Raymond Gubbay Productions, Handel's Messiah and the Vivaldi by Candlelight, Mozart by Candlelight and Carols by Candlelight series throughout the UK and Ireland with performances at the Royal Albert Hall, Royal Festival Hall and Barbican in London, St David's Hall, Cardiff, Bridgewater Hall, Manchester and many others. His editions of 17th and 18th century repertoire, used by a widening circle of artists, include John Eccles' Semele, John Gay's Beggar's Opera, Claudio Monteverdi's Poppea and the complete musical settings of the poetry of John Wilmot, the 2nd Earl of Rochester.

Steven's first solo CD entitled Bellows, Jacks and Tangents, features the early instruments of the Finchcocks Collection and was described as "superb, wholeheartedly recommended" by Early Music Review. His second solo disc features the works of the German composer JCF Fischer and will be released later this year. Steven has made over thirty discs with other artists and orchestras.

We are delighted to welcome him as our guest conductor today.

Faye Newton (soprano)

Faye read music at the University of Nottingham before joining the postgraduate early music course at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in 1996. She performs regularly with the New London Consort, directed by Philip Pickett, with whom she has given solo recitals in the Spitalfields Festival, Purcell Room and York Early Music Festival. She has also appeared as a soloist with other acclaimed early music ensembles including the Musicians of the Globe, Circa 1500, the Boston Camerata and the Feinstein Ensemble. Faye has a diverse repertoire ranging from the twelfth to the eighteenth centuries. She is a founder member of the award-winning ensemble Concanentes (finalists in the York International Young Artists' competition 1999), who specialise in medieval and renaissance repertoire. She formed the duo Trobairitz (finalists in the Antwerp International Early Music Competition 2000), with vielle player Hazel Brooks to specialise in the courtly song repertory of the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries. In July 2003, Faye appeared in the finals of the York International Young Artists' Competition with the ensemble Il Vero Modo, performing songs of Monteverdi and his contemporaries. Later in the year she will be singing a series of Bach solo cantatas with the Feinstein Ensemble at the Purcell Room, London.

David Clegg (alto)

David Clegg began his career by being Choirboy of the Year of Great Britain and America in 1983. A former choral scholar at New College, Oxford and graduate of the opera course at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama he runs a busy concert career both in the UK and abroad, appearing as a soloist with orchestras such as the City of London Sinfonia, the English Chamber Orchestra, the Orchestra of the Birmingham Royal Ballet, the Academy of Ancient Music and ensembles such as the Gabrieli Consort, the Sixteen and the Monteverdi Choir.

On the opera stage he has appeared at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, Sadlers Wells (Almeida Opera) and recently he completed a two month tour of Europe singing Handel with Paul McCreech. He currently studies with David Pollard and Michael Chance.

Joseph Cornwell (tenor)

Joseph studied at York University and at the Guildhall School of Music. He made his debut at the Proms in the Albert Hall with the Monteverdi Vespers. With Andrew Parrott he later recorded this for EMI. He has performed the title role of Monteverdi's Orfeo for the Boston Early Music Festival, at the Oslo Summer Opera and in Brazil. His recordings include the Evangelist in St Matthew Passion, Acis and Galatea, Messiah (with Andrew Parrott), Mozart C Minor Mass with Les Arts Florissants under William Christie. He is going to France to make a recording of King Arthur by Purcell for Concert Spirituel and will be on tour with Acis and Galatea with William Christie in Europe. He will be performing the Haydn Mass and Finzi's Dies Natalis in St John's Smith Square

Simon Grant (bass)

Simon's rich bass-baritone voice is much in demand in the field of Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque music, his busy concert schedule taking him to Europe for much of the year, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and the USA. His many solo recordings include the Monteverdi Vespers (with Philip Pickett), Bach Magnificat (Andrew Parrott) and Charpentier's Te Deum and Missa Assumpta est Maria (St James's Baroque Players). He has recorded roles in John Blow's Venus and Adonis, Locke's Psyche (Envy and Bacchus) and Monteverdi's Orfeo (Caronte). He played Caronte in a staged production of Peri's Orfeo at the Drottningholms Slottsteater, Stockholm and appeared in Purcell's Dido and Aeneas (Sorceress) on the South Bank (celebrating 50 years of the RFH). In November 2003 he will again sing the role of Caronte in a semi-staged production of Monteverdi's Orfeo at the Royal Festival Hall, directed by Jonathan Miller.

Simon Grant's involvement in contemporary music has led to appearances with the Matrix Ensemble, Electric Phoenix, Ensemble Moderne and Synergy. He has sung Kurt Weill's Seven Deadly Sins several times, including performances with Ute Lemper and Maria Ewing. He played Pitkin in Bernstein's On the Town (Michael Tilson Thomas / LSO) and was a soloist in Candide (BBC Radio 3). He played the Stationmaster in the world premiere of Howard Blake's opera The Station and created the role of Parson Snakepiece in Kate and Mike Westbrook's opera Good Friday 1663 (Channel 4 TV). Simon is a soloist on several film sound tracks, including the soon-to-be released film Simon: An English Legionnaire and the forthcoming blockbuster Troy. He can whistle and hum at the same time, an unusual talent he has demonstrated on numerous television and radio programmes worldwide! His whistling is featured in the films Shrek and Shiner.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Christmas Oratorio BWV 248*

Bach's Christmas Oratorio is, in fact, a collection of six separate cantatas, assembled in 1734-5. Unlike many of Bach's other works, much is known about the first performance of the work; the cantatas were performed on separate days over the Christmas period: the four performed tonight were given on Christmas Day, St Stephen (Boxing Day), the Sunday after New Year and Epiphany.

The time of the composition of Christmas Oratorio seems to have been one of contrast for Bach. He was living in Leipzig and working at the two principal churches there, and in 1729 he assumed the directorship of the *Collegium Musicum*, which was based at the coffeehouse of Gottfried Zimmerman. This was in fact a mansion with a room big enough to seat a large baroque ensemble and accommodate 150 audience members. It was for this institution Bach wrote much of his instrumental music including the harpsichord concertos. Certainly the appointment represented a major commitment in addition to his regular church work; he was expected to organise a weekly series of concerts throughout the year. However, working at the *Collegium* had its benefits to the composer as the resident ensemble could contribute players of a very high standard for Bach's performances in church and frequently did. The success of Bach's work there is well documented, yet he himself was not entirely settled – mostly for financial reasons. In 1733 he sent the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* of the B Minor Mass to Frederick Augustus II with the following letter:

To your royal Highness I submit in deepest devotion the present slight labour...For some years up to the present moment I have had the *Directorium* of the Music ...but have innocently had to suffer one injury or another, and on occasion also a diminution of fees accruing to me in this office; but these injuries would disappear altogether if Your Royal Highness would grant me the favour of conferring upon me a title of Your Royal Highness's *Court Capelle*, and would let Your High Command for the issuing of such a document go forth to the proper place.

Frederick offered the title to Bach and yet never acknowledged the music included with the request.

Almost all the music of the Christmas Oratorio was assembled from earlier music – much of which survives, yet the (specially written) libretto creates a sense of coherence between the parts, as does the similarity of musical language – there are no large shifts of stylistic writing as there are, for

example, in the B Minor Mass. It was Bach himself who designated the cycle an "oratorio"; clearly he saw the unity of the work as being important, despite the splitting up of the story over the twelve nights of the feast period.

The four cantatas presented tonight represent four contrasting elements of the Christmas story: part one deals with the birth of Jesus – music of a triumphant nature with its unique timpani opening and featuring a bass aria in praise of God. The exquisite *sinfonia* that begins the second part is in the form of a *pastorale*, setting the mood perfectly for the story of the shepherds. The opening chorus of the fifth part, with its bustling accompaniment, hints at the turmoil of Herod as he hears the news of the birth. Finally, the sixth part features the summoning and journey of the wise men and their joy in finding the saviour of mankind.

©Steven Devine 2003

Part I - For Christmas Day

Part II - On the Second Day of Christmas

INTERVAL

Part V - For Sunday after New Year

Part VI - For the Feast of Epiphany

Finchcocks Baroque was formed in 1996 as the in-house collective of musicians for the world-famous Finchcocks Collection of historical keyboard instruments. From the start the players were chosen for their versatility – accompanying 18th Century Dances on many occasions and entertaining private groups and other visitors on others. True "occasional" music in the eighteenth century mould.

Over the last few years, the group has begun to appear on concert platforms and on recordings, marking a new stage in its development. At the core of the group is the typical trio sonata combination of flute and violin and bass continuo although it regularly expands to accompany opera (Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, September 2000), oratorio (Handel's *Messiah*, November 2001) and perform orchestral concerts, often accompanying the Finchcocks Baroque Singers.

The director and principal keyboard player of Finchcocks Baroque is Steven Devine, also the Assistant Curator of the Museum.

MEMBERS OF THE CHOIR

Sopranos

Angela Bell
Diana Blower
Deborah Bruce
Susan Chandler
Catherine Callow
Aileen Cunningham
Patsy Dale
Sara Di Marzio
Jill Dunstall
Joyce Eckett

Sue Ellman
Ann Greenfield
Barbara Hazelden
Audrey Hodges
Andrea Holt
Jenny Jessop
Sheila Jones
Alison Kain
Helen MacNab
Mary Marshall
Barbara Maw

Miriam Penn
Eileen Phillips
Kathy Phillips
Winnie Roszak
Esme Sanger
Karen Simpson
Margaret Smith
Muriel Thatcher
Audrey Wallin
Elizabeth Webb

Altos

Audrey Bigot
Claire Bigwood
Margaret Butcher
Claire Cooper
Pauline Coxshall
Diane Dale
Moirra Davidson
Sheila Day
Barbara Diamond
Patricia Felix
Jean Finch
Joanna Finlay

Peggy Flood
Eileen Gall
Enid Gayler
Alice Gill
Ruth Gray
Jean Heritage
Jane Lewis
Pat Maxwell
Caroline McCann
Shirley Nankivell
Mavis Oakley

Sylvia Parsons
Gillian Penny
Fiona Reynolds
Olivia Seaman
Yvonne Spencer
Audrey Stuart-Black
Heather Styles
Barbara Tattersall
Sue Taylor
June Wheeler

Tenors

Malcolm Beresford
Elisabeth Carr
Peter Davidson
Derek Day

John Harding
John Holt
Guy Huntruds
Aidan Lee

Frances Lee
Len Lee
Derek Oakley
Alan Spencer

Basses

Clive Brock
Gerald Chew
Roy Dunstall
Richard Gosling
Tony Greener
Gavin Grant

David Ham
Michael Holcroft
Robin Howden
Mark Hudson
Vernon Jolly
Michael Meade

John Moffat
David Penn
Cyril Rogers
Eric Scott
John Spary
Clive Steward

Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society

President

Roy Douglas

Vice President

Geoff Stredder

Musical Director and Conductor

Derek Watmough MBE

Accompanist

Wilmarc Ellman

Honorary Life Members

Joyce Stredder

Len Lee

Patrons

Miss B Benson

Mr R R Douglas

Miss D Goodwin

Mrs H MacNab

Lt Col B A & Mrs E Phillips

Mr I Short

Mr R W Page

Mr and Mrs G D Stredder

Mr M Webb

Mr W Yates

We are very grateful to our Patrons for their valuable support.
If you think you would like to become a Patron and support the
Society in this way please contact:

The Treasurer: Roy Dunstall 01580 211814

The General Secretary: Olivia Seaman 01892 863760

The Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society is a member of the **NFMS**
("Making Music") and is a Registered Charity No. 273310.

OUR NEXT CONCERT

Our Centenary Concert on **30th May 2004** will be given by the combined forces of the Lutherkirche Bach Choir of Wiesbaden and our own choir in performances of **Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast*** and **Poulenc's *Gloria***. We are fortunate to have the international baritone **Anthony Michaels-Moore**, who lives in Tunbridge Wells and has sung with the Society on a number of occasions in the past, and **Charlotte Ellett** (soprano). The piano soloist in **Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*** will be **Klaus Uwe-Ludwig**, director of the Bach Choir of Wiesbaden. The choir will be accompanied by the English Festival Orchestra, under the bâton of **Derek Watmough**.

This year the Society will not be giving a Carol Concert in Goudhurst Church, since today's performance of **Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*** celebrates the beginning of the Christmas Season. We shall, however, as usual send a group of singers to sing carols at Rosset Holt and Halliwell Nursing Homes.

OTHER LOCAL CONCERTS

Tonbridge Music Club

**Saturday 6th December at 8 pm at West Kent College,
Tonbridge**

Mark Padmore and Roger Vignoles

Schubert 6 Lieder

Schubert Die schöne Müllerin

Tickets £12.50 Students £5

Box Office 01732 838698

Tonbridge Philharmonic Society

Saturday 13th December

at 3 pm and 7.30 pm in Tonbridge School Chapel

Traditional Family Carols

**Tickets £4 (3pm) and £6 (7.30pm) from John Adams Bookshop,
Country Gardens, Christian Resource Centre; Camden Classics
(Tunbridge Wells); Hadlow Pharmacy.**

Green Room Music Club

Both concerts 3 pm at Trinity Theatre & Arts Centre

Sunday 18th January

The Yehudi Menuhin Orchestra

Panufnik Violin Concerto

Mendelssohn Violin Concerto in D Minor

Mozart Violin Concerto in A Major

Tickets £15 Students £7.50

Sunday 15th February

The Saxel Piano Duo: Richard Saxel and Faith Leadbetter

Making Music Young Concert Artists, in association with the
Worshipful Company of Musicians.

Mozart, Brahms, Debussy, Barber, Saint-Saëns

Tickets £13 Students £6.50

Royal Tunbridge Wells Symphony Orchestra

Both concerts 3pm at the Assembly Hall, Tunbridge Wells

Sunday 7th December - a Christmas Cracker

Capriccio Espagnol Rimsky-Korsakov

Clarinet Concerto Mozart

Suite: Peer Gynt Grieg

Suite: Sleeping Beauty Tchaikovsky

Andrew Marriner (clarinet)

Conductor: Roderick Dunk

Sunday 1st February 2004 - String Showcase

Overture: La Dame Blanche Boieldieu

Harp Concerto Glière

Danses sacrées et profanes Debussy

Symphony No 3 'Organ' Saint-Saëns

Sally Pryce (harp) Christopher Harris (Organ)

Conductor: Derek Watmough

CROSSROADS promotes, offers, supports and delivers high quality services for Carers and people with care needs.

We offer help and support to:

- * Carers of all ages including Young Carers
- * Carers of people with disabilities
- * Carers of the elderly or frail
- * Carers of people with terminal illness
- * Carers of children with disabilities

WEALD OF KENT

CROSSROADS

Practical help at home



We offer regular breaks of 2-4 hours and occasional night care to Caring families, supplying a Carer Support Worker who will give personal care to their relative or friend, including, washing, toileting, feeding and preparing a simple meal, or spending time with someone who cannot be left alone.

CROSSROADS is a registered charity No. 1075220 supported by Kent County Council Social Services and the fund-raising activities of the members. No charge is made for the basic service and donations are always gratefully received. Our service is available throughout the Weald of Kent. Please contact the Manager (details below).

GIFT AID DECLARATION

I (name).....would like to support and assist Weald of Kent **CROSSROADS** and make a donation of £

I want the charity to treat the donation as a Gift Aid donation. I am a taxpayer.

Signed

Address

Date



If you require further information or need some assistance please tick the box

52 High Street
Tunbridge Wells
Kent TN1 1XF

Phone: 01892 532701 (Answerphone out of hours)

Email: crossroadsforcarers@virgin.net

**EXCLUSIVE RETIREMENT APARTMENTS
NOW AVAILABLE FOR VIEWING**



PEGASUS COURT

Park Road Tunbridge Wells

With a choice of stylish one and two bedroom apartments, Pegasus Court offers a new standard in independent retirement living.

Each maintenance free apartment is designed with comfort and security in mind and is complemented by beautifully furnished Owners' facilities, maintained gardens and the support of our friendly management team. Call us now for details.

Show complex open daily 10.30am to 4.30pm

For an appointment to view please call quoting re. CS03B

01892 519936

or visit www.pegasus-homes.co.uk



Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society wishes to express its appreciation to Pegasus Homes for sponsorship towards the cost of this concert.