

# The Crucifixion: Stainer

## Procession of Palms: Williamson



**Saturday 24th March 2007**

**Conductor:** Richard Jenkinson

**Soloists:** George Clifford  
Mark Ellis  
David Firshman

**Organist:** Alistair Curtis

**ROYAL  
TUNBRIDGE WELLS  
CHORAL  
SOCIETY**

**Two performances:**

**3.30pm St Mary's Church,  
Goudhurst, Kent TN17 1AN**

**7.00pm Vale Royal Church,  
Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 1BX**

**Programme & ticket:  
Adults £7 Children £1**

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# Programme notes

## Malcolm Williamson, *Procession of Palms*



Malcolm Williamson was born in Sydney, Australia, in 1931 and died in Cambridge in 2003. In 1975 he became the first non-Briton to be appointed Master of the Queen's Music – the musical equivalent of Poet Laureate. The previous 20th century holders of this honorary office were Walter Parratt, Edward Elgar, Henry Walford Davies, Arnold Bax and Arthur Bliss.

His works for royal occasions include *Mass of Christ the King* (a large-scale choral work commissioned for the Queen's Silver Jubilee), *Ode for Queen Elizabeth* (dedicated to the Queen Mother on her 80th birthday in 1980) and *Songs for a Royal Baby* (in honour of the birth of Prince Henry of Wales in 1985). Overall, the variety and breadth of Williamson's music is enormous and there is virtually no genre in which he has not been active. His European influences include Pierre Boulez, Olivier Messiaen, Arnold Schoenberg and Igor Stravinsky, and he was also influenced by jazz and popular music.

It has been remarked that there is an ebullience and a directness about Williamson's writing which sets him apart from most British composers (Paul Conway, 'Malcolm Williamson – A 70th Birthday Tribute', April 2001). *Procession of Palms* (1961) has been described as an "extraordinary cantata [that] captures the banal vox populaire of the crowds – one day acclaiming Christ as he enters Jerusalem and a few days later screaming 'Crucify'. The ultimately vacuous cries of 'Hosanna' end the cantata abruptly and plunge us into the drama of Holy Week" (Brian Law, Director of Music at Christ Church Cathedral, New Zealand).

*Programme note by Heather Styles, 2007*

## John Stainer, *The Crucifixion*



Like that of some other distinguished writers of church music, the life of Sir John Stainer centred on the Church and a university – in his case Oxford. He entered Christ Church College, Oxford, in 1859 and during his time there he gained several degrees and became University organist. In addition, he founded the Oxford Philharmonic Society and conducted its inaugural concert in 1866. In 1872, he took over from his old master the post of organist at St Paul's Cathedral, where he remained until failing sight obliged him to retire in 1888.

Stainer was both a musical reformer and a careful scholar and researcher. At St Paul's, he obtained salary increases for the choir and boosted its numbers. He also instituted regular rehearsals and extended the cathedral's musical repertoire. In 1876 he joined the staff of the National Training School as organist, later becoming professor of harmony and principal. A busy teacher, he also found time to conduct research into medieval music.

In addition to a considerable number of hymns and services, Stainer wrote four works on a larger scale. The *Crucifixion* is the last and best-known of these works. It was composed in 1887 and first performed under the composer's direction in the parish church of St Marylebone in London, where it is still sung each Good Friday. Described modestly as a "Meditation on the Passion of the Holy Redeemer", it is a setting for tenor, baritone, choir and organ of a text chosen from the New Testament, interspersed with hymns with which the audience may join. It depends for its effect on comparatively simple but mellifluous and effective harmonic patterns. The *Crucifixion* is often criticised for its Victorian sentimentality and its sub-Mendelssohn style. Yet it is a heartfelt work, whose beauties are many – consider especially the unaccompanied chorus "God so loved the world" – and whose sincerity and restrained nobility cannot be doubted.

*This note was supplied through the Programme Note Bank of Making Music, the National Federation of Music Societies.*

# Words

## *Procession of Palms, Malcolm Williamson*

Ride on! Ride on in majesty!  
Hark, all the tribes Hosanna cry;  
Thine humble beast pursues his road  
With palms and scatter'd garments  
strowed.

Ride on! Ride on in majesty!  
In lowly pomp ride on to die:  
O Christ thy triumph now begin  
O'er captive death and conquer'd sin.

Ride on! Ride on in majesty!  
The winged squadrons of the sky  
Look down with sad and wond'ring eyes  
To see th'approaching sacrifice.

Ride on! Ride on in majesty!  
The last and fearful strife is nigh;  
Thy father, on his sapphire throne,  
Expects his own anointed Son.

Ride on! Ride on in majesty!  
In lowly pomp ride on to die;  
Bow thy meek head to mortal pain,  
Then take, O God, Thy power, and reign.

All glory, laud, and honour  
To thee, Redeemer, King,  
To whom the lips of children  
Made sweet hosannas ring.

Thou art the King of Israel,  
Thou David's royal son,  
Who in the Lord's name comest,  
The King and blessed one.

The company of angels  
Are praising thee on high,  
And mortal men and all things  
Created make reply.  
All glory ...

The people of the Hebrews  
With palms before thee went;  
Our praise and prayer and anthems  
Before thee we present.  
All glory ....

To thee before thy passion  
They sang their hymns of praise;  
To thee now high exalted  
Our melody we raise.  
All glory ....

Thou didst accept their praises,  
Accept the prayers we bring,  
Who in all good delightest,  
Thou good and gracious king.  
All glory ....

O Saviour of the world,  
Who by thy cross and precious blood hast  
redeem'd us,  
Save us and help us, we humbly beseech  
thee,  
O Lord.

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.  
Hosanna in excelsis.

## **The Crucifixion, John Stainer**

**1. Recitative: And they came to a place named Gethsemane.**

**2. The Agony.**

**3. Processional to Calvary.**

**4. Recitative: And when they were come.**

**5. The Mystery of the Divine Humiliation.**

*To be sung by the choir and audience (please remain seated). Verses 3 and 6 choir only.*

1. *All*

Cross of Jesus, Cross of Sorrow,  
Where the Blood of Christ was shed,  
Perfect man on thee was tortured,  
Perfect God on thee has bled.

5. *All*

*Ladies:* Up in Heaven, sublimest glory  
Circled round Him from the first;  
*Men:* But the earth finds none to serve Him  
None to quench His raging thirst.

2. *All*

O mysterious condescending!  
O abandonment sublime!  
Very God Himself is bearing  
All the sufferings of time!

6. *Choir only*

Who shall fathom that descending,  
From the rainbow-circled throne,  
Down to earth's most base profaning,  
Dying desolate alone.

3. *Choir only*

This – all human thought surpassing –  
This is earth's most awful hour,  
God has taken mortal weakness!  
God has laid aside His Power!

7. *All*

From the "Holy, Holy, Holy,  
We adore Thee, O most High,"  
Down to earth's blaspheming voices  
And the Shout of "Crucify."

4. *All*

*Ladies:* Once the Lord of brilliant seraphs,  
Winged with Love to do His Will,  
*Men:* Now the scorn of all His creatures,  
And the aim of every ill.

8. *All*

Cross of Jesus, Cross of Sorrow,  
Where the Blood of Christ was shed  
Perfect man on thee was tortured,  
Perfect God on thee has bled.

**6. Recitative: He made Himself of no Reputation.**

**7. The Majesty of the Divine Humiliation.**

**8. Recitative: And as Moses lifted up the Serpent.**

**9. God so Loved the World.**

# Words (continued)

## 10. Litany of the Passion.

*To be sung by the choir and audience (please remain seated). Verse 3 choir only.*

1. Holy Jesu, by Thy passion,  
By the woes which none can share,  
Borne in more than kingly fashion,  
By Thy love beyond compare:  
Crucified, I turn to Thee,  
Son of Mary, plead for me.
2. By the treachery and trial,  
By the blows and sore distress,  
By desertion and denial,  
By Thine awful loneliness:  
Crucified, I turn to Thee,  
Son of Mary, plead for me.
3. *Choir only*  
By the path of sorrows dreary,  
By the Cross, Thy dreadful load,  
By the pain, when, faint and weary,  
Thou didst sink upon the road:  
Crucified, I turn to Thee,  
Son of Mary, plead for me.
4. By the Spirit which could render  
Love for hate and good for ill,  
By the mercy, sweet and tender,  
Poured upon Thy murderers still:  
Crucified, I turn to Thee,  
Son of Mary, plead for me.

## 11. Recitative: Jesus Said "Father Forgive Them."

## 12 Duet. So Thou Lifest Thy Divine Petition.

## 13. The Mystery of Intercession.

*To be sung by the choir and audience (please remain seated).*

1. Jesus, the Crucified, pleads for me,  
While He is nailed to the shameful tree,  
Scorned and forsaken, derided and curst,  
See how His enemies do their worst!  
Yet, in the midst of the torture and shame,  
Jesus, the Crucified, breathes my name!  
Wonder of wonders, oh! how can it be?  
Jesus, the Crucified, pleads for me!
2. Lord, I have left Thee, I have denied,  
Followed the world in my selfish pride;  
Lord, I have joined in the hateful cry,  
Slay Him, away with Him, crucify!  
Lord, I have done it, oh! ask me not how;  
Woven the thorns for Thy tortured Brow:  
Yet in His pity so boundless and free,  
Jesus, the Crucified, pleads for me!
3. Jesus is dying, in agony sore,  
Jesus is suffering more and more,  
Jesus is bowed with the weight of His woe  
Jesus is faint with each bitter throe.  
Jesus is bearing it all in my stead,  
Pity Incarnate for me has bled;  
Wonder of wonders it ever must be  
Jesus, the Crucified, pleads for me!

## 14. Recitative: And one of the Malefactors.

## 15. The Adoration of the Crucified.

*To be sung by the choir and audience (please remain seated).*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. I adore Thee, I adore Thee!<br>Glorious ere the world began;<br>Yet more wonderful Thou shinest<br>Though divine, yet still divinest<br>In Thy dying love for man. | 2. I adore Thee, I adore Thee!<br>Thankful at Thy feet to be;<br>I have heard Thy accent thrilling,<br>Lo! I come, for Thou art willing<br>Me to pardon, even me. |
| 3. I adore Thee, I adore Thee:<br>Born of woman yet Divine:<br>Stained with sins I kneel before Thee<br>Sweetest Jesu, I implore Thee<br>Make me ever only Thine.     |   |

## 16. Recitative: When Jesus therefore saw His Mother.

## 17. Recitative: Is it Nothing to You?

## 18. The Appeal of the Crucified.

## 19. Recitative and chorus. After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished

## 20. Hymn: For the Love of Jesus.

*To be sung by the choir and audience (please remain seated). Verse 3 choir only.*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. All for Jesus – all for Jesus,<br>This our song shall ever be;<br>For we have no hope, nor Saviour,<br>If we have not hope in Thee.                     | 3. <i>Choir only</i><br>All for Jesus – at Thine altar<br>Thou wilt give us sweet content;<br>There, dear Lord, we shall receive Thee<br>In the solemn Sacrament. |
| 2. All for Jesus – Thou wilt give us<br>Strength to serve Thee, hour by hour;<br>None can move us from Thy presence,<br>While we trust Thy love and power. | 4. All for Jesus – Thou hast loved us<br>All for Jesus – Thou hast died;<br>All for Jesus – Thou art with us;<br>All for Jesus Crucified.                         |
| 5. All for Jesus – all for Jesus<br>This the Church's song must be;<br>Till, at last, her sons are gathered<br>One in love and one in Thee                 |   |

Amen. (*Sevenfold Amen – Stainer: choir only*).

# Performers



## **Richard Jenkinson – Conductor**

Richard received his early musical training through the Sussex County Music Service. He won a scholarship to continue his studies at the Royal College of Music, where - among many inspirational characters - Sir David Willcocks was a great influence and source of inspiration. During this time, Richard won major prizes, and was awarded the medal of the Worshipful Company of Musicians.

Richard now has a busy and vibrant career as a freelance musician, specialising in choral music of all kinds, as conductor, accompanist and composer, working regularly with major choirs and choral societies in and around London and Southern England.

This Season promises to be as busy as ever: conducting a wide variety of works, including Haydn's *Stabat Mater*, Bach's *Missa Brevis in G minor*, Vivaldi's *Gloria* and, of course, RTWCS's eagerly anticipated performance of *The Kingdom* during the Elgar anniversary. He is also much in demand as concert organist, and is looking forward to various Concert Tours abroad.

The son of a Freechurch Minister, Richard began playing the organ for services as a boy, going on to hold various Organist/Director of Music posts in a wide variety of places, including the parish churches of Croydon, Ewell and most recently, East Grinstead. However, he is now concentrating on all the other aspects of his professional life.



## **Alistair Curtis – organist**

Alastair was born in 1984. He sang in the choir of Wadhurst church, and started organ lessons from the age of 12. His organ teacher is Mr Peter Collins, who studied under Ralph Downs and Nicholas Danby.

Alistair graduated from the University of Surrey in Guildford in 2005, where he was organ scholar at the cathedral in his first year, and senior organ scholar in the following two years.

Since then he has become organist and choir master at Goudhurst church and is currently studying for a PGCE in secondary music at Canterbury Christ Church University.



## **George Clifford**

George is twenty and a Scholarship student at the Royal Academy of Music, studying violin with Igor Petrushevski, one of the UK's top violin teachers, and singing with Glenville Hargreaves. He particularly enjoys this aspect of music-making, singing regularly with East Grinstead Choral Society, increasingly taking solo parts, and other choirs including Sussex Cantorum and Prodigal Singers.

George was a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, with whom he played in prestigious venues all across the country, including the Royal Albert Hall in the BBC Proms. In his 1st year at the RAM, George was leader of the String Orchestra, and was highly commended in the Waterhouse Prize for BMus violin students. This year he has been leader of the Modern Instrument Baroque Orchestra, and a member of the Concert Orchestra, recently performing Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 under the baton of Sir Colin Davis. George is also an accomplished church musician, currently Music Scholar at East Grinstead Parish Church where he sings in the choir, plays the organ, arranges music and occasionally directs.

## **Mark Ellis**

A keen choir member for many years, despite the competing attention of a chemistry and IT career, Mark has sung with St Catharine's College Chapel Choir, The English Concert Chorus and RTWCS. This has given him the opportunity to sing in Finland, Estonia, Russia, Germany, France and the US as well as sing on two CDs. He studied under Nigel Wickens at university and has performed recitals of Schumann's *Dichterliebe* as well as solos in Chartres and Wells cathedrals.

He hopes a move to Ipswich will not inhibit his singing aspirations!

## **David Firshman**

David was born in London's East End in 1948. He has led a busy and varied musical life since singing Messiah at age 9. While at Cambridge University he sang under David Willcocks. His subsequent career as a computer consultant has often taken second place to his musical activities. He has been a member of London Symphony Chorus and major choirs in New York and Bratislava as well as singing with many choirs and operatic groups in the South East.

His many solo roles have included Messiah, Mozart's Requiem, Elijah, Vaughan Williams' Mystical Songs, Faure's Requiem, Acis and Galatea, and masses, oratorios and other works by Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Pergolesi and Purcell. These were performed for numerous choirs including East Grinstead, Thurrock, Buxted, Edenbridge, Northwood, Purley, Coulsdon and Hurstpierpoint.

# Members of the choir

## Sopranos

Glynis Avis  
Diana Blower  
Elizabeth Bower  
Heather Champion  
Susan Chandler  
Patsy Dale  
Diana Dann  
Suzie Duke  
Jill Dunstall

Joyce Eckett  
Ann Greenfield  
Andrea Holt  
Ann Huggett  
Rosemary Hughes  
Eve Johnson  
Sheila Jones  
Helen MacNab  
Mary Marshall

Barbara Maw  
Moira McMillan  
Louise Packham  
Michéle Palmer  
Jane Potter  
Patricia Prior  
Jill Rogers  
Lesley Rye  
Ann Spillman

Jane Tatum  
Johanna Thorpe  
Linda Turbett  
Audrey Wallin  
Elizabeth Warren  
Catherine Whitlock  
Gaenor Wright

## Altos

Margaret Butcher  
Marion Chase  
Mair Davies  
Kay Dunlop  
Pat Felix  
Jean Finch  
Joanna Finlay

Ruth Gray  
Annette Grey  
Heather Herrin  
Helen Holcroft  
Carolyn Horobin  
Victoria Joyce

Shirley Nott  
Sylvia Parsons  
Rosalyn Robertson  
Olivia Seaman  
Yvonne Spencer  
Audrey Stuart-Black

Heather Styles  
Celia Sumner  
Alison Syers  
Muriel Thatcher  
Hilary Weston  
Felicity Wilkin

## Tenors

Alan Clarkson  
George Clifford  
James Day

David Firshman  
Donald Haley

John Holt  
Guy Huntrods

Gareth Looker  
Alan Spencer

## Basses

Clive Brock  
Gerald Chew  
Patrick Connelly  
Roy Dunstall  
Mark Ellis

Richard Gosling  
Gavin Grant  
David Ham  
Trevor Harrison

Michael Holcroft  
Trevor Hurrell  
David Miller  
John Moffat

Cyril Rogers  
Eric Scott  
Michael Selway  
Clive Steward

# Forthcoming concerts to be given by the choir

**Sunday 27th May 2007, 7.30pm**

Rochester Cathedral

Edward Elgar *The Kingdom*.

With the Bach Choir of the Lutherkirche, Wiesbaden.



**Saturday 7th July 2007, 7.30pm**

Vale Royal Methodist Church, Tunbridge Wells, TN1 1BX

Summer Sing – a Tour de France!

**Sunday 18th November 2007, 3.00pm**

The Assembly Hall, Tunbridge Wells TN1 2LU

Joseph Haydn *The Creation* – to celebrate the 100th Birthday of our President, Mr Roy Douglas.



**Saturday 24th November 2007, 7.30pm**

Wiesbaden, Germany

Edward Elgar *The Kingdom*.

With the Bach Choir of the Lutherkirche, Wiesbaden.

## Other local concerts

**East Grinstead Choral Society**

*Saturday 31st March 2007 at 7.30pm; Ardingly College Chapel*

Bach: *Missa Brevis in G minor*

Haydn: *Stabat Mater*

*Saturday 23rd June 2007 at 7.30pm; Imberhorne Lower School, East Grinstead*

Supper Concert: *Highlights from Handel*

**Box Office: 01342 328774**

**The Royal Tunbridge Wells Symphony Orchestra**

*Sunday 1st April 2007 at 3.00pm; The Assembly Hall, Tunbridge Wells*

Wagner: Overture: *Tannhauser*

Mozart: *Violin Concerto in A K219*

Franck: *Symphony in D minor*

**Box Office: 01892 530613**

**Tonbridge Music Club**

*Saturday 12th May at 8.00pm; Weald of Kent Grammar School for Girls, Tonbridge*

Steven Isserlis & Connie Shih

Saint-Saëns: *Sonata No 1 for cello and piano, Op 32*

Schumann: *5 Stücke im Volkston, Op 102*

Kodaly: *Sonatina*

Prokofiev: *Sonata for cello and piano in C major, Op 119*

**Box Office: 01732 838698**



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