

❖ NANTWICH CHORAL SOCIETY ❖

Handel

MESSIAH

Soloists

Soprano

Catherine Benson

Mezzo-Soprano

Johanna Byrne

Tenor

Richard Roddis

Bass

Adrian Blakeley

Organist:

Andrew Mildinhall

MUSICAL DIRECTOR:

Patrick Larley

The Parish Church of St. Mary Nantwich
Saturday 10th November, 2001, at 7.30 p.m



PROGRAMME

Handel's Messiah was composed in twenty-four days in response to an invitation to present a series of concerts in Dublin and has since become one of the best known and popular works of the choral repertoire throughout the whole world. It differs from Handel's other oratorios in that the text is taken exclusively from the Bible and that it does not have a plot in the ordinary sense of the word. The soloists are commentators on the story rather than participants in it whilst the chorus plays an important part.

Messiah is divided into three parts. Part 1 is concerned with prophecy and the Nativity; Part 2 covers a wide range, encompassing the Passion, the Resurrection and the spreading and acceptance of the Gospel, and Part 3 is a straightforward but intense affirmation of faith.

The work made an immediate impression in Dublin - a reviewer of the first public performance said that "The sublime, the grand, the tender, adapted to the most elevated, majestic and moving words, conspired to transport and charm the ravished heart and ear". Messiah is not an act of worship but is a profound expression of Handel's personal faith and of his creative genius.

PART ONE

- | | | |
|-----|--|-----------------|
| 1. | Sinfonia | (Overture) |
| 2. | Comfort ye my people | Recit. |
| 3. | Ev'ry valley shall be exalted | Air |
| 4. | And the glory of the Lord | Chorus |
| 5. | Thus saith the Lord | Recit. |
| 6. | But who may abide the day of his coming | Air for Alto |
| 7. | And he shall purify | Chorus |
| 8. | Behold, a virgin shall conceive | Recit. |
| 9. | O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion | Air and Chorus |
| 10. | For behold, darkness shall cover the earth | Recit. |
| 11. | The people that walked in darkness | Air |
| 12. | For unto us a child is born | Chorus |
| 13. | Pifa ("Pastoral Symphony") | |
| 14. | (a) There were shepherds abiding in the field | Recit. |
| | (b) And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them | Recit. |
| 15. | And the angel said unto them | Recit. |
| 16. | And suddenly there was with the angel | Recit. |
| 17. | Glory to God | Chorus |
| 18. | Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion | Air |
| 19. | Then shall the eyes of the blind | Recit. |
| 20. | He shall feed his flock | Air for A and S |
| 21. | His yoke is easy, and his burthen is light | Chorus |

INTERVAL
of 20 minutes

PART TWO

- | | | |
|-----|---|--------|
| 22. | Behold the Lamb of God | Chorus |
| 23. | He was despised | Air |
| 24. | Surely he hath borne our griefs | Chorus |
| 25. | And with his stripes we are healed | Chorus |
| 26. | All we like sheep have gone astray | Chorus |
| 27. | All they that see him laugh him to scorn | Recit. |
| 28. | He trusted in God | Chorus |
| 29. | Thy rebuke hath broken his heart | Recit. |
| 30. | Behold, and see if there be any sorrow | Air |
| 31. | He was cut off out of the land of the living | Recit. |
| 32. | But thou didst not leave his soul in hell | Air |
| 33. | Lift up your heads, O ye gates | Chorus |
| 34. | Unto which of the angels said he at any time | Recit. |
| 35. | Let all the angels of God worship him | Chorus |
| 36. | The Lord gave the word | Chorus |
| 37. | How beautiful are the feet | Air |
| 38. | Why do the nations so furiously rage together | Air |
| 39. | Let us break their bonds asunder | Chorus |
| 40. | He that dwelleth in heaven | Recit. |
| 41. | Thou shall break them | Air |
| 42. | Hallelujah | Chorus |

PART THREE

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| 43. | I know that my redeemer liveth | Air |
| 44. | Since by man came death | Chorus |
| 45. | Behold, I tell you a mystery | Recit. |
| 46. | The trumpet shall sound | Air |
| 47. | Then shall be brought to pass | Recit. |
| 48. | O death, where is thy sting? | Duet, A. T. |
| 49. | But thanks be to God | Chorus |
| 50. | Worthy is the Lamb that was slain | Chorus |

SOLOISTS

Catherine Benson - Soprano - studied at Chetham's School in Manchester and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. She has worked for Raymond Gubbay singing as soloist in a nationwide tour of Johann Strauss Galas which took her to most of the major concert venues in the country including performances in the Albert Hall. She made her operatic debut for Park Lane Opera in *Fennimore and Gerda*, followed by performances at Holland Park of Britten's *Little Sweep* in which she played the part of Rowan the nursemaid. The production was subsequently taken to Snape Maltings and recorded by EMI.

Catherine joined Glyndebourne opera as a member of the chorus and after two seasons was awarded the Glyndebourne Touring Opera Singer's award which enabled her to study the role of Zerlina with Martin Isepp and perform the role with the Touring Opera. She sang the role of Clorinda in *La Cenerentola* with Glyndebourne Opera and has also worked for ENO, Royal Opera House, Bloomsbury Opera and Bel Canto Opera with many leading conductors including Bernard Haitink and Jon Vickers.

Catherine's concert work has taken her all over the UK performing all the major oratorios and choral works, and concert performances *Il Seraglio*, *Nabucco* and *Cavaliere Rusticana*.

Catherine now enjoys a varied professional career combining performance and teaching and is in demand as an adjudicator. She also plays the French Horn in quintet and takes great delight in looking after her family of three children, one husband and one cat called Mimi!

Johanna Byrne - Mezzo-Soprano - born in Ireland, Johanna Byrne graduated with a first class honours science degree and subsequently moved to London to work in medical research. She then returned to full-time study at the Royal Northern College of Music, with the aid of the Peter Moores's Foundation. Awards have included the Guinness Scholarship, the 1995 Sony Award in the Veronica Dunne Competition (televised live from the National Concert Hall, Dublin), and the Elizabeth Harwood Award. She completed her formal studies in 1997 at the National Opera Studio and currently studies with Margaret Hyde.

Operatic roles have included Tisbe *La Cenerentola* and Fenna *Nabucco* for Abbey Opera, Rosina *Il Barbiere de Siviglia* for Scottish Opera Go Round, *Dream* for the Aldeburgh Festival, Madama Rosa *Il Campanello de Notte* at the Buxton Festival and covering Dorabella *Così Fan Tutte* and Pauline *The Queen of Spades* for Scottish Opera and Fraate *Radamisto* for Opera North. She is also well known on the concert platform where recital venues have included St Martin's in the Field, St James' Picadilly, The Pump Rooms - Bath, Peterborough Cathedral, The Grand Theatre Leeds and Manchester University. In addition, Johanna has a wide oratorio repertoire including Handel *Messiah*, Haydn *Nelson Mass* and *Harmony Mass*, Bach *Christmas Oratorio*, *Magnificat*, *St John Passion* and *St Matthew Passion*, Durufle *Requiem*, Mendelssohn *Elijah*, Mozart *Requiem* and Rossini *Petite Messe Solennelle*.

Johanna has performed at The Wigmore Hall, Sadler's Wells, The Rossini Festival at Pesaro in Italy and The Gaiety Theatre Dublin with The Anna Livia Opera Festival.

Richard Roddis - Tenor - is well known across the country for his oratorio solo work, having sung for numerous Choral Societies nationwide. Recent and forthcoming concert engagements include both Bach's *Passions* (Evangelist), Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* and major works by Mozart, Haydn, Schubert and Mendelssohn.

As a recitalist, Richard has been working with Clive Pollard since 1997. Their first project was performing Schubert's song-cycle *Die Schöne Müllerin* as part of the composer's bicentenary celebrations and he has recently made a recording of Patrick Larley's songs for solo voice, including the Thomas Hardy song-cycle *On a Fine Morning*.

Richard has made CD recordings and BBC broadcasts with several professional choirs including the BBC Northern Singers, the Britten Singers and several cathedral choirs and has toured world-wide.

Richard is also a choral conductor, having broadcast on radio and television with his own chamber choir- The Richard Roddis Singers. He is Musical Director of the Sterndale Singers in Sheffield, The Sinfonia Chorale of Nottingham and the Derby Bach Choir.

Join us at the concert, contact the Chairman, Mrs M.J. Weatherill, Tel. 01279 260024 for further information.

Adrian Blakeley - Bass - studied singing at Huddersfield University and for many years has been in great demand as a soloist in oratorio throughout the country. For ten years he was senior Bass Lay-Clerk in Manchester Cathedral and is currently a member of the BBC Radio 4 Daily Service Singers where he often performs as a soloist.

Over the years Adrian has been involved in concerts with the organist Nigel Ogden (presenter of BBC Radio 2's The Organist Entertains) affording him the opportunity to gain a repertoire of lighter music. He has made a number of CD recordings and broadcasts with Nigel Ogden and appeared in concert with him on numerous occasions.

When not involved in musical activities, Adrian is a company Director in the family business of Engineers' Merchants in Manchester.

Patrick Larley - Conductor - composer and keyboard player, is Music Director of Nantwich Choral Society and Ludlow Choral Society. He is also founder and director of the ensemble Voice (eight professional singers and a reader), the chamber choir - Chudleigh's Cumpanie and The Gallery Players - an early music group. He regularly directs from the harpsichord, recently working with the English Haydn Orchestra and the Orchestra of the Golden Age in performances of Bach and Handel on period instruments, and gives solo recitals on his own two-manual chamber organ, harpsichord and spinet.

Patrick's compositions include *Appearing, Shining, Distant or Near* - the great Egyptian 14th century Hymn to Aten - recently recorded on a new CD Praise for Creation; *Stone Circles*, written to celebrate Stone Choral Society's 30th anniversary; *Sinfonia Nativitie* which received its first performance, by Manchester Camerata, in December 1999 and *This Man of April* which was premiered by the Chantry Quire in Chichester in March 2000. *A Mass of a Thousand Ages* was commissioned by Nantwich Choral Society to celebrate the new Millennium and was first performed in St Mary's Church, Nantwich, on April 8th 2000; *A Girl for the Blue*, featured in the ABCD gala concert in Chester Cathedral in August 2000 and was recently performed in the Bridgewater Hall by the Manchester Chamber Choir, Canzonetta, as part of the concert with Anthony Rolfe Johnson. This work was recorded and broadcast on BBC Radio 3 in April 2001.

NANTWICH CHORAL SOCIETY MEMBERS

SOPRANOS- 1ST

Anne Barnard
Jo Butchart
Megan Clark
Joyce Clegg
Glenda Colemere
Gail Corfield
Rita Davies
Kathryn Denning
Anne Ferguson
Louise Fordham
Cynthia Gorton
Frances Hughes
Liz Kirby
Sheila Luke
Sue Munks
Maire Pedder
Rachel Pentecost
Jacquie Weatherill
Sue Wells

BASSES

Roger Boulton
Christopher Findlay
David Foster
Nick Green
Ron Kelley
Jock Knight
Bob Pugh
John Saunders
David Walker

SOPRANOS - 2ND

Sue Briscoe
Christine English
Joyce Foster
Karen Grimwood
Gill Handford
Toni Mathie
Glenis Newton
Janet Platt
Eileen Robertson
Barbara Shone
Sally Sissons
Mary Sturdy
Christine Thomas

TENORS

Mark Bloor
Martyn Colley
Philip Jackson
Wal Kaye
Mike Moores
Peter Pedder
Ian Robertson
Jeremy Rogers
Nick Smith
Philip Trinder
Joe Watson

ALTOS - 1ST

Jean Atkin
Alison Hendricken
Norma Hollingsworth
Isobel Hope
Karen Kilcourse
Linda Lewis
Jane Lincoln
Anne Nicol
Sue Sherwood
Margaret Smith
Gillian Wakeley
Diane Wheatley

ALTOS - 2ND

Caroline Brewin
Shirley Burton
Jacquie Davies
Rita Donnelly
Angela Greaves
Joy Guest
Clare Hoy
Nancy Kellett
Anne McKay
Brenda Midgley
Brenda Morris
Jean Nurse
Sheila Pemberton
Gwyneth Rollins
Joan Shaddick

The Choral Society currently has vacancies for Tenors and Basses. If you would care to join Nantwich Choral Society, please contact the Chairman, Mrs M.J. Weatherill Tel.01270 569551 for further information.