

## J S BACH CHRISTMAS ORATORIO

### Part I Christmas Day

1. *Chorus* Shout ye exultant this Day of Salvation
2. *Evangelist* And in those same days there went out a decree from Caesar
3. *Recit Alto* At last, beloved Saviour mine
4. *Alto* Prepare thyself, Zion
5. *Chorale* How can I fitly greet thee?
6. *Evangelist* And there she brought forth her first-born son
7. *Chorale* He came among us meek and poor
8. *Bass* Mighty Lord of all Creation
9. *Chorale* Ah, Jesus Child, my heart's delight!

### Part III Third Day of Christmas

24. *Chorus* Ruler of Heaven, tho' weak be our voices
25. *Evangelist* And as the Angels were gone into Heaven from them
26. *Chorus* Let us even now go unto Bethlehem
27. *Recit Bass* Redeemer of His people
28. *Chorale* That God has blessed His people thus shows His mighty love
29. *Soprano / Bass* Lord, Thy mercy, Thy compassion comfort us
30. *Evangelist* And the shepherds hastened
31. *Alto* Hold thou forever this blessing in wonder
32. *Recit Alto* Ah yea, my heart will ever cherish what it receives
33. *Chorale* Thee, my Master, faithful serving
34. *Evangelist* To their flocks the shepherds then returned
35. *Chorale* Rejoice and sing

## INTERVAL

### Part V Sunday after New Year

43. *Chorus* Glory be to God Almighty
44. *Evangelist* When Jesus our Lord was born in Bethlehem
45. *Chorus / Alto* O where is he that is born King of Judea?
46. *Chorale* Thy splendour drives the night away
47. *Bass* Enlighten Thou my blinded senses
48. *Evangelist* Now when King Herod had heard these things
49. *Recit Alto* And why are you thus shaken?
50. *Evangelist* And when the King had gathered all the scribes
51. *Soprano / Alto / Tenor* Ah, when comes to us salvation?
52. *Recit Alto* Where does my Saviour dwell?
53. *Chorale* In my heart of hearts the chamber

### Part VI Feast of the Epiphany

54. *Chorus* Lord, when our haughty foes assail us
55. *Evangelist / Herod* When the King had privily called the Wise Men
56. *Recit Soprano* Thou Serpent, thou but seek our Lord to slay Him
57. *Soprano* He whom God has not befriended, futile are his efforts
58. *Evangelist* When the Wise Men heard what the King had said
59. *Chorale* I stand beside Thy cradle here
60. *Evangelist* And being warned of God in a dream
61. *Recit Tenor* Begone, enough, my Treasure still is here
62. *Tenor* With fear the braggart foes are shaken
63. *Recit Soprano / Alto / Tenor / Bass* The evil sinful world is past
64. *Chorale* The triumph is completed

The *Christmas Oratorio* (Weihnachts-Oratorium in German, BWV 248) was written for the Christmas season of 1734 for performance in two Leipzig churches. Incorporating music from earlier secular compositions, the work was not performed again until 1857, since when it has become a popular fixture for this time of year, along with Handel's *Messiah*.

The total running time is nearly three hours but the six parts (cantatas in effect) were originally intended for separate performance on the different feast days: Christmas Day, the two days following, New Year's Day, the Sunday following and then Epiphany. Tonight's performance involves just four of the parts.



### Christopher Barton conductor

Christopher Barton was born in London and was, from 1975 to 1978, Organ Scholar of Worcester College, Oxford. He also studied organ with Richard Popplewell and James Dalton, and composition with Edmund Rubbra.

In 1979 he was appointed to his present post of Organist and Master of the Choristers at Newport Cathedral, one of the six cathedrals of the Church-in-Wales. Here he is able to indulge to the full his passionate love of choir training, and under his direction the choir of boys and men has broadcast frequently and toured widely both inland and overseas (Netherlands, Ireland, Germany, Belgium and Canada), as well as fulfilling its prime responsibility of providing choral worship at the cathedral. Many new works have been written for the cathedral choir, by such eminent composers as William Mathias, Herbert Sumson, Philip Moore, Richard Shephard, Robert Ashfield, Elis Pehkonen and John Sanders, amongst many others. In 1996 he was also appointed Assistant Regional Director with responsibility for South Wales for the Royal School of Church Music; in 2000 he received the honorary award of Associate of the Royal School of Church Music, in 2001 the Archbishop of Wales' Award in Church Music, and in 2006 an honorary Fellowship of the Guild of Church Musicians, all in recognition of his outstanding contributions to church and cathedral music in and beyond Wales.

From 1985 to 1998 he was also Music Director of the Dyfed Choir, and with that choir and many nationally and internationally renowned soloists and orchestras he has conducted many major choral works including Bach's *Mass in B minor*, *Christmas Oratorio* and *St John Passion* and Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*. Their final concert together, in October 1998 was a performance of Dvorak's *Stabat Mater* in the Smetana Hall in Prague with soloists and orchestra from the Czech National Opera; he has since returned to the choir to guest conduct a performance of Bach's *Mass in B minor* in St David's Cathedral, as well as conducting their 2007 Christmas concert.

The magnificent rebuild of Newport Cathedral organ in 1997 by Nicholsons has led to a renewed interest in playing the organ, and recent recitals have included Brecon, Bristol, Carlisle, Chester, Clifton, Dunblane, Hereford, Leicester, Newport, St Asaph, St David's, St Giles (Edinburgh), St Machar's (Aberdeen), St. Pauls, Wakefield, and Wells Cathedrals, St Mary Redcliffe, Carmel Priory, Tewkesbury Abbey, Bath Abbey, Grimsby Parish Church, St. Anne's, Alderney, Leominster Priory (two for the Leominster Festival), Ludlow Parish Church, Malvern Priory and the National Museum of Wales, Leeds Town Hall, the Caird Hall, Dundee, and the magnificent Hradetsky organ of St Salvator's Chapel at the University of St Andrews, as well many other churches and also concerts in Germany. Forthcoming engagements include recitals at Christchurch Priory and Westminster Abbey. Christopher Barton is also active as a teacher; he founded the South East Wales Organ School, and also has many students at Monmouth School and Rougemont School, as well as private pupils; what little spare time is available is spent walking, reading and enjoying the theatre.

### Natalie Clifton-Griffith soprano

Natalie Clifton-Griffith was born in Cornwall and studied at The Birmingham Conservatoire and The Royal College of Music. She was a prize winner at Great Elm and The First London Handel Festival Singing Competition (2002)

Highlights of her solo career include Bach's *Magnificat* (Barbican Hall, ECO), *St John Passion* and *Cantata 82a* (Hanover Band), *Mass in B Minor* (Lyon Early Music Festival), *Cantata 209 Non sa che sia dolore* (Purcell Room and CBSO centre), and Handel's *Messiah* at most major cathedrals in England, *Apollo e Dafne* and *Alexander Balus* (London Handel Festival) and *Laudate Pueri* (Welsh Baroque Orchestra). Classical repertoire includes Haydn's *Creation* (Bath Abbey), *Nelson Mass* (Lichfield Cathedral), *Missa Sancti Nicolai*, *Salve Regina* and Mozart's *Exsultate Jubilate* (CBSO Symphony Hall and English Haydn Festival) and *Mass in C Minor* (ECO).

Natalie appears regularly as a soloist with The English Concert (Biber *Missa Christi Resurgentis*, Handel's *Dixit Dominus* QEH, Bath Festival and Vivaldi's *Gloria*) and Ex Cathedra on CD and concerts including Lalande's *Dies Irae* (BBC Proms), Handel's *Solomon* and Purcell's *Fairy Queen* (Symphony Hall);



and also with CBSO Baroque Ensemble, Armonico Tributo, and Capilla Cyrasco (Madrid and The Canary Islands)

Other concert engagements have included Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* (CBSO), Canteloube's *Chants D'Auvergne*, Villa Lobos *Bachianas Brazilieras V*, Paul Spicer's *Easter Oratorio* (ESO) and *Advent Oratorio*, John Joubert's *Wings of Faith* (CBSO), Orff's *Carmina Burana* (Birmingham Royal Ballet, English Symphony Orchestra), Patrick Hawes *Song of songs* and *Mater Gloriosa* in Mahler's *Symphony No.8* (Symphony Hall). Natalie also performs regularly with consort vocal groups such as Ex Cathedra, Tenebrae, I Faggiolini, The Sixteen and The BBC Singers.

Operatic roles include *Timea* (*La Liberta Contenta*), *Venus* (*Venus and Adonis*), *Despina* (*Così fan Tutte*), *Queen of Night* (*Magic Flute*) and *Princesse* (*L'Entant et les Sorillleges*).

Natalie has recorded for EMI Classics (Rodrigo), Hyperion (De Lalande, Charpentier and three discs of South American Baroque music), Archiv (Biber), Signum records (Poulenc) and Lammas (Karg-Elert with the Gough Duo) She also appears on Ex Cathedra's live recording of Bach's *St Matthew Passion* and featured in *Early Music News*' 'Rising Stars'.

Forthcoming engagements include Bach's *St John Passion* (Three Choirs Festival Hereford 2012) and Schutz *Christmas Story* (Angel with The English Concert) and Mozart's *The Magic Flute* (Queen of Night).



### Alexandra Gibson mezzo-soprano

Alexandra Gibson studied at the Royal College of Music. She is in great demand throughout Europe and enjoys a busy career combining concerts, opera, broadcasts and recordings. She is particularly renowned for her interpretation of Baroque music and has collaborated with many well known international orchestras and conductors including Harry Christophers and the Symphony of Harmony and Invention, Laurence Cummings and The London Handel Players, Emmanuelle Haim and Concert D'astree, Roger Norrington and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Christian Curnyn and The Early Opera Company, Paul McCreesh and the Gabrieli Consort, The Norwegian Chamber Orchestra, Trevor Pinnock and the English Consort, The Scottish Chamber Orchestra, The Halle, The Berlin Philharmonic, The Bardi Orchestra, The Academy of Ancient Music and The London Mozart Players.

Recent appearances have included: Handel's *Joshua* for the London Handel Festival, Mozart's *Requiem* for the Concertgebouw (Amsterdam) with Harry Christophers and the Radio Kamer Filharmonie, Bach's *St Matthew Passion*, Bridgewater Hall, Mozart's *Requiem* at the Auditorio Nacional de Música (Madrid), Irene in Handel's *Theodora*, Barber Institute, and Maxwell Davies's *Missa super l'homme armé*, BBC Radio 3.

She has sung Bach's *B minor Mass* in Pamplona/Cuenca (Spain), the title role in *Dido and Aeneas*, Mozart's *Coronation Mass* and Mendelssohn's *Symphony No 2 'Lobgesang'* with The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the Barbican (London), Mahler's *2nd Symphony*, Diana in Carissimi's *La Calisto*, (London), Polinesso in Handel's *Ariadante* (Early Opera Company) and Cephise in Rameau's *Pygmalion*.

Alexandra also enjoys her work with contemporary composers and was recently involved in the staged premiere of Gavin Bryar's new commission, *The Paper Nautilus* (Theatre Cryptic/Paragon Ensemble) in Scotland and at the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival. She has also toured and been sole vocalist with the Birmingham Royal Ballet in their production of *'Still life'* at the Penguin Café.



### Mark Dobell tenor

Originally from Tunbridge Wells in Kent, Mark Dobell was a choral scholar of Clare College, Cambridge, where he read Classics. He later studied as a postgraduate at the Royal Academy of Music, and was awarded the Clifton Prize for the best final recital.

Mark has worked as a soloist throughout Europe and North America with world-renowned conductors including Harry Christophers, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Sir Roger Norrington and James MacMillan. His extensive concert and oratorio repertoire includes many of the major works of Handel, Bach and Mozart, as well as pieces by composers as varied as

Monteverdi, Haydn, Mendelssohn, Britten and Karl Jenkins. Recent highlights include performances of Monteverdi's *Vespers* in Birmingham Town Hall and London's Cadogan Hall, Britten's *St Nicolas* in St Albans Abbey, Schutz's *Christmas Story* at St John's Smith Square in London, Bach's *B Minor Mass* in Cuenca, Pamplona and Santiago, Handel's *Messiah* at the Palace of Versailles, Mozart's *Requiem* at the Auditorio Nacional in Madrid, and Bach's *St John Passion* at the Barbican and Westminster Abbey.

In 2012 Mark is looking forward to performing Bach's *St Mark Passion* in Derby Cathedral, Vivaldi's *Dixit Dominus* in Amsterdam and Purcell's *King Arthur* in the Usher Hall, Edinburgh.

Equally established as a consort singer, Mark enjoys performing both at home and abroad with many leading choirs and consort groups, such as The Cardinal's Musick, I Fagiolini and The King's Consort. He is proud to be a member of The Sixteen, The Tallis Scholars and The Orlando Consort, and since September 2006 he has sung in the choir of Westminster Abbey.



**Philip Tebb** baritone

Philip Tebb studied Music at Durham University, where he was a Choral Scholar at the Cathedral, and at the Royal College of Music on the Benjamin Britten International Opera School with Russell Smythe. His studies at RCM were generously supported by the Anne Clayton Award, Stanley Picker Trust Award, the Audrey Sacher Award and the Josephine Baker Trust. Professional stage work includes covering the role of Peter Quince in Britten *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Garsington Opera, singing the role of Schauand in

Puccini *La Boheme* with Wedmore Opera and appearing in a production of Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* at the Royal Theatre, Northampton.

Philip is in great demand as an oratorio soloist. Appearances last year included: Bach *St John Passion* with the Dyfed Choir in St David's Cathedral; Handel *Messiah* with the Thomas Tallis Society, the Belmont Ensemble, Taunton Choral Society and Barts Chamber Choir; Handel *Acis & Galatea* with the Belmont Ensemble, Haydn *Creation* with St Ives Choral Society; Haydn *The Seasons* with Thornbury Choral Society; Haydn *Stabat Mater* with the London Pro Arte Choir; Monteverdi *Vespers* with Lewisham Choral Society and in Coventry Cathedral; and Mozart *Requiem* with the Belmont Ensemble, Henley Choral Society and the New London Singers. Philip also made his Wigmore Hall debut last year singing as soloist in Bach's *G Minor Mass* with the King's Consort, conducted by Robert King.

**Charivari Agréable Simfonie**

With a chronological remit spanning epochs from the Renaissance to the early classical, this 'idea-based' ensemble appears in many guises, from a Tudor-Restoration domestic devotional vocal group, or an Elizabethan mixed consort, to a baroque orchestra, and many other surprising – yet historical – combinations.

Charivari Agréable (translation 'pleasant tumult', from Saint-Lambert's 1707 treatise on accompaniment) was formed at the University of Oxford, and very soon after became a prize-winner of the Early Music Network Competition, made its debut at the Wigmore Hall, and recorded the first of many subsequent live concerts for the BBC. Charivari Agréable has since recorded for New York's WNYC, and many other European radio stations, including the European Broadcasting Union. Their discography of 20 discs have garnered such accolades as the Diapason d'Or, Gramophone Editor's Choice, International Record Review's 'Best CD of the Year', Classic FM's Christmas Choice, BBC *Music Magazine's* 'Outstanding CD', and MusicWeb International's 'Recording of the Year 2007'.

Apart from hosting an annual summer festival of early music in Oxford, the ensemble regularly expands into Oxford's resident period-instrument orchestra, Charivari Agréable Simfonie. The orchestra has on-going collaborations with over forty vocal groups – choral societies and professional choirs alike – all over the UK, and has been conducted by many musicians of renown, including Sir Charles Mackerras and Edward Higginbottom. The ensemble has appeared at all prominent venues in London, even in Buckingham Palace; recent and forthcoming engagements include major festivals in the UK, and tours to Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Hungary, The Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, South East Asia, Turkey, and the USA.

Following the success of their recent orchestral disc entitled *The Original Brandenburg Concertos* by Torelli, the ensemble released in 2010 two *Vespers* discs: *The Pachelbel Vespers* with The King's Singers, which was Classic FM's CD of the Month, and the Monteverdi *Vespers* with the Choir of New College Oxford. These, together with their latest disc *Concerti Curiosi*, are available for sale during the interval and after the concert; do please visit [www.charivari.co.uk](http://www.charivari.co.uk)

*Violins* Naomi Burrell, George Clifford, Viola John Crockatt  
*Violoncello* Jennifer Bullock, *Double bass* Elizabeth Harré  
*Flutes* Lesley Holliday, Dan Watts, *Oboes* Geoffrey Coates, Sharon Reading  
*Bassoon* Martin Clark  
*Trumpets* Simon Desbruslais, William Russell, Matthew Manchester  
*Kettledrums* Steffan Jones  
*Chamber organ and Harpsichord* Kah-Ming Ng



Dyfed Choir in rehearsal with Charivari Agréable in 2005 for a performance of Bach's Christmas Oratorio, conducted by Timothy Noon

**Côr Dyfed**, Chorus Master Stuart Evans

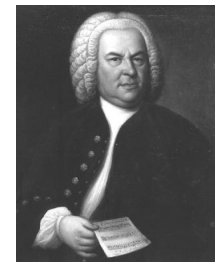
The Dyfed Choir has provided great musical experiences for audiences and performers alike since it was founded in 1967 by John S Davies. The Choir performs many of the major works in the choral repertoire, often in St Davids Cathedral as well as other local venues and abroad. In recent years it has presented Bach's *St John Passion*, Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, Handel's *Dettingen Te Deum*, *Chandos Anthems* and *Messiah*, as well as Haydn's *Nelson Mass* and *St Nicholas Mass*. It has also collaborated with St Petersburg choir Voskreseniye for Rachmaninov's *Vespers* in 2009 and more recently for two rarely performed Mussorgsky cantatas.

**Forthcoming concert** Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2012, 7.30pm  
 SPRING CONCERT in St Martin's Church, Haverfordwest

**New singers** If you are interested in singing with Côr Dyfed, please contact the Secretary on 01348 891206.

**Patrons** Mr J E Addison, Mrs J Barton, Mr B Body, Mrs E Booth, Mr J Bowen, Dr & Mrs A Care, Mrs L Childs, Mr R Darwin, Mrs J Dewes, Mr J Docherty, Mr D R Evans, Mrs K Finch, Mr & Mrs L Gallon, Mrs L George, Mr P George, Dr & Mrs P Gillam, Miss A Greenhalgh, Mrs C Hare, Mr & Mrs M Hughes-Gage, Mr A Lansdown, Mrs C Lewis, Wg Cdr D J Liggitt, Mrs L Long, Mr & Mrs D Pennington, Mr D Rees, Mrs J Roach, Miss J Russell, Dr R Russell, Mr J E Sleigh, Mrs C Smith, Mrs D Tabraham, Mrs L Taverner, Mr M Thomas, Miss T Thomas, Mrs S Watkins, Mr & Mrs R Wilcox, Mrs F G Williams, Mr J Williams; two patrons who wish to remain anonymous.

**New Patrons** It would be greatly appreciated if you could support us by becoming a Patron with a minimum annual donation of £25. This ensures early notice of forthcoming concerts and invitations to Choir social events. Please contact the Patrons Secretary on 01348 840312.



J S Bach

Christmas Oratorio

Côr Dyfed Choir

Christopher Barton conductor

Charivari Agréable Simfonie

Kah-Ming Ng director

Natalie Clifton-Griffith soprano

Alexandra Gibson contralto

Mark Dobell tenor Philip Tebb bass

St Davids Cathedral

7.30pm, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2011

[www.dyfedchoir.org.uk](http://www.dyfedchoir.org.uk)

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