

Choir:	Amy Albudri Neal Barnes Rachel Collins Emma Dawber John Hammond Claire Holdich Fiona Mayer-Jones Matthew Moore Steve Pearce Kerrin Tatman Ross Tomlinson	Chris Bates Peter Bolton Colin Crammer Alistair Fisher Janet Hayton Mervyn King Sarah Maynard Julian Neaum Janice Summers Susan Tatman Pam Waddington Muse	Lucy Bates Evie Brown Robin Datta Maddy Fisher Sarah Hess Lily Mathieson Angela Meltham Marjorie Neaum Colm Talbot Clare Todd Kevin Wheeldon
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Strings:	Chris Ashmead Angie Berlotti Katy Harston Helen Prior Louise Turner (leader)	Eileen Ashmead Madeleine Cross Julie Jenkins Trish Ringrose Andrew Ward-Campbell	Stephanie Beer Jack Gillett Edwin Mowthorpe Sue Sidwell Alice Wilders
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Oboes:	Sally Bolton	Emily Meltham
Bassoon:	Penny Carpenter	
Trumpets:	Colin Crammer	David Morrison
Harpsichord:	Robert Poyser	

This performance is the latest in a series of events by *Invitatione* which involve both school-aged and adult performers in exciting and innovative programming and music-making. A third of our group are drawn from five different schools in the region and from Hull University, many of these taking solo roles this evening; for some of them this is their first experience of singing with an orchestra. Around a quarter of our members have jobs relating to music, but most work in other fields. In the context of *Invitatione*, all give freely of their time and talent to contribute to high quality music-making which raises funds for good causes – in this case, Holy Trinity Church itself.

We are grateful to Beverley Minster and Hull Collegiate School for providing their rehearsal facilities free of charge; and The Kings Bar and ADI Plumbing for sponsoring our concert.



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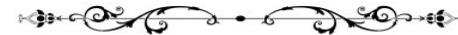
INVITATIONE

present

Messiah

by G. F. Handel

conducted by Rachel Poyser
directed by Sandra King



The “Hallelujah Chorus” from Handel’s oratorio, ‘Messiah’, surely comprises four of the most famous minutes of classical music known to Western ears. King George II famously stood up in approval on hearing it, a tradition which has continued to this day. Thus has ‘Messiah’ passed into our cultural heritage, and is performed regularly by choral societies across the country year after year.

‘Messiah’ was originally conceived to be performed in London in Passion Week, but was actually first performed in Dublin at Neal’s Music Hall on 13th April, 1742. It was well received there, where performances were given in aid of local charities. Back in London, there were objections to the work, on account of its being performed in theatres by singers associated with the stage, but also because of its specifically doctrinal content and scriptural text. Handel therefore confined it mainly to the end of Lent.

Tonight’s presentation of this most ubiquitous and almost taken-for-granted work is different from the usual concert performance. Listening afresh to the work, I became fascinated by the drama inherent in the music and the biblical texts, selected by Charles Jennens. Handel was, of course, a very fine opera composer. The appeal of composing oratorios alongside operas was both musical and practical. Opera had to reflect contemporary cultural and artistic taste and highlighted virtuosic solo vocal display; oratorio, in contrast, incorporated traditional compositional styles more particular to church music, especially in relation to the inclusion of large-scale choruses; could encompass both dramatic and non-dramatic work, and - significantly - both secular and sacred subject matter. In Handel’s society, sacred subject matter precluded staging. Nevertheless, Handel was probably wise enough to see that, in fact, unstaged presentation opened up greater possibilities of musical expression on a grand scale which could not be accommodated within an operatic context.

Handel's skill in weaving a beautiful melody, creating unified and overarching coherence in long sweeps of dramatic development, and drawing memorable characters who express human emotions with profound insight, are facets of his operatic genius which are also present in abundance in 'Messiah'. Inspired to experiment with ways of maximising their impact, in a way Handel could never have done because of the oratorio's sacred subject matter, we have incorporated some simple ideas into tonight's performance which we hope will allow the audience to see what the writer Anthony Hicks described as "a living drama played out in the ideal theatre of the mind". I have tried to enhance dramatic flow, by not employing many delayed cadences and by not slowing down at the ends of movements; I have elected to use a variety of soloists to represent different characters or symbolise different parts of the story, and have transposed arias where necessary; and, perhaps most adventurously, the chorus are used both in the role typical in Greek dramas, commentating on and punctuating the action, and in the role which Handel first exploited in 'Deborah' (1732) and developed thereafter, portraying different people. Tonight they also move about in the performing space; their role is particularly vivid during the Passion episode. *Rachel Poyser*

Although Handel's great love was opera, after some financial disasters in this endeavour, he turned to oratorio to please the English taste for this genre. His oratorios are, nevertheless, operas without the movement and other visual delights that have made operas popular to this day. Tonight, we treat you to an oratorio performed with some of the visual impact of opera to highlight the drama of the story and engage you, our modern audience, with an approach that we hope Handel would have enjoyed.

When Rachel first had the concept for this performance of 'Messiah' I was immediately enthusiastic to see if we could enhance the narrative of the work in a more visually symbolic way by moving the performers and using a variety of spaces within the Chancel of Holy Trinity Church with its vast dimensions and sympathetic acoustic. Handel's operatic skills become apparent once we began to treat the work in this way. Some of the movement challenges normal expectations of how a choir should "be" – this is not simply a gimmick - the intention is that, even for audience members who are very familiar with the piece, it will re-focus and help you to listen anew. By using symbolic positioning we've endeavoured to reinforce the power of the Biblical message e.g. the concept of being "despised and rejected" which is essentially a very physical one.

I must thank the singers themselves for the open minded, cooperative way that they have responded to all that we have asked of them. It has involved them in extra rehearsal and we have been delighted by how positively they have risen to the challenge. We hope both performers and audience will find this interpretation of this great work a refreshing and powerfully engaging experience. *Sandra King*

	<u>soloist(s)</u>
<i>Part I</i>	
Overture	
Comfort ye my people; Ev'ry valley	Ross Tomlinson
And the Glory of the Lord	
Thus saith the Lord	Julian Purdy
But who may abide	Pam Waddington-Muse
And he shall purify	
Behold a virgin shall conceive	Julian Purdy
O thou that tellest	Pam Waddington-Muse
For behold; The people that walked in darkness	Julian Purdy
For unto us a child is born	
Pastoral symphony	
There were shepherds; And lo! the angel; And	
the angel said unto them; And suddenly	Lucy Bates/Lily Mathieson
Glory to God	
Rejoice greatly	Lucy Bates
----- 20 minute interval with refreshments -----	
<i>Part II</i>	
Behold the lamb of God	
He was despised	Ross Tomlinson
Surely he hath borne our griefs	
And with his stripes	
All we like sheep	
All they that see him	Peter Bolton
He trusted in God	
Thy rebuke; Behold and see	Ross Tomlinson
He was cut off; But thou didst not leave	Susan Tatman
Thou art gone up on high	Rachel Poyser
Lift up your heads	
----- 10 minute break -----	
How beautiful are the feet	Penny Carpenter
Their sound is gone out	
Why do the nations	Julian Purdy
Let us break their bonds	
He that dwelleth; Thou shalt break them	Robin Datta
Hallelujah	
<i>Part III</i>	
I know that my redeemer liveth	Janet Hayton
Since by man	Clare Todd/Fiona Mayer-Jones/Mervyn King/Julian Neaum
Behold I tell you; The trumpet shall sound	Pam Waddington-Muse
If God be for us	Rachel Poyser
Worthy is the lamb; Amen	