

St. Saviour and St. Peter's Church

Sunday, 9th April 2000



BACH

ST. JOHN PASSION

In support of
ST. WILFRID'S HOSPICE

**Esterházy Chamber Choir
& Orchestra**

Leader Andrew Bernardi

Conducted by Michael Fulcher

St. Wilfrid's has been active in Eastbourne since 1981 but
will it always be there?

It costs over £1 million a year to run St. Wilfrid's.
We have some guaranteed income, but every year we need to
raise £½ million.

So far we have been successful.

£1 million is a lot of money - where does it go?

The biggest part is spent on patients.

Medical and nursing care comes top of the list.

We have our own Consultant in Palliative Care to lead the
medical team.

In-patients see a doctor every day.

There is a high ratio of nursing staff to patients.

We try to provide pleasant grounds to look at or use and we
work hard to provide meals people want to eat.

While these are all expensive

- quality costs money -

a price worth paying.

*Every little helps us to reach this target - donations however
large or small are most welcome*

Please give generously!!

BACH

ST. JOHN PASSION

Esterházy Chamber Choir

Esterházy Chamber Orchestra

Leader Andrew Bernardi

Conducted by Michael Fulcher

Stephen Rooke

Evangelist

John Bernays

Christ

Marie Vassiliou

Soprano

Juliette Pochin

Alto

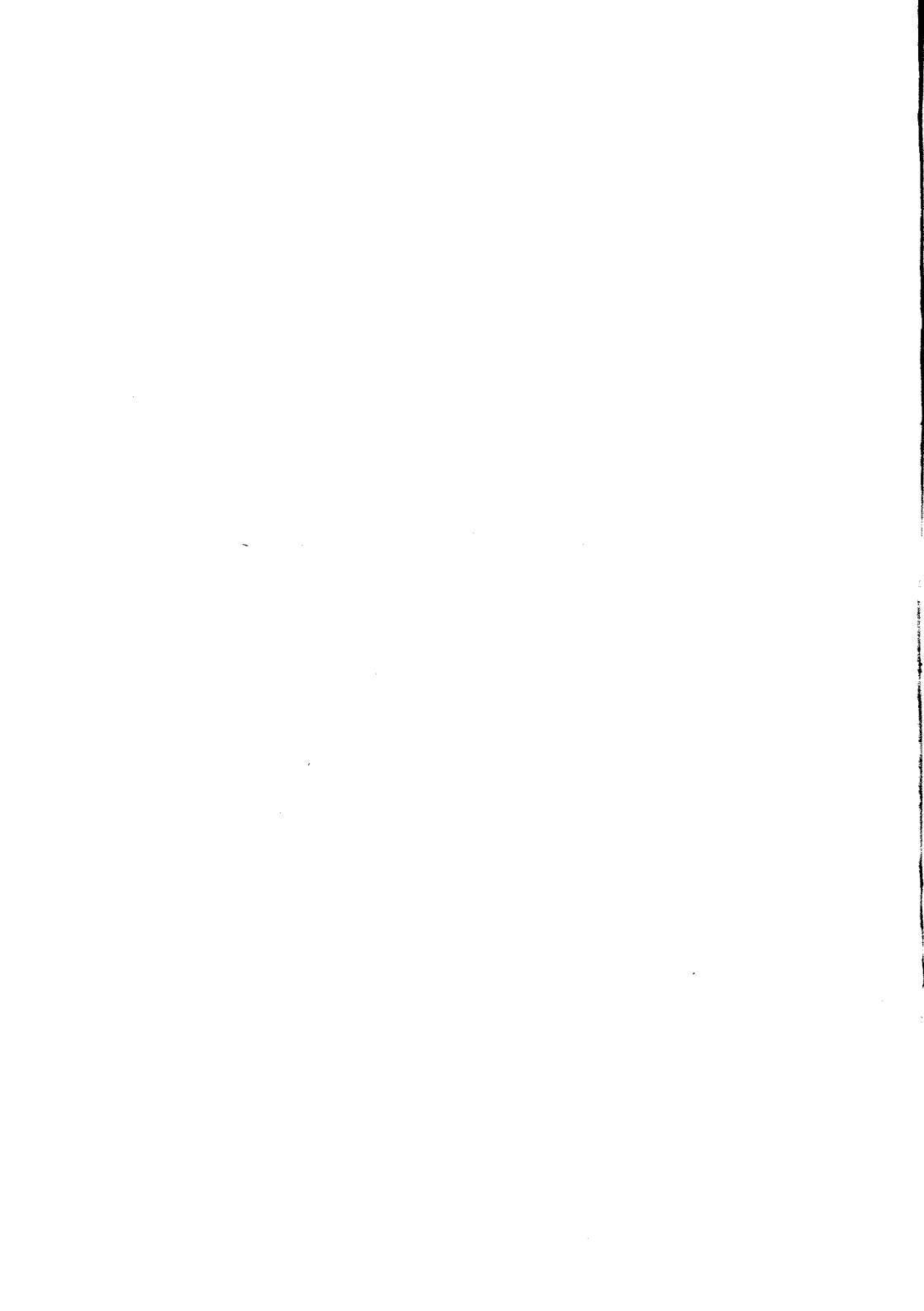
Stephen Brown

Tenor



www.esterhazy.org.uk

Programme notes written by Karen Zeff
Programme designed by Françoise Towler



PROGRAMME

The audience is invited to sing the chorals marked in **bold**

Please stay seated during these

PART ONE

1. Chorus Hail! Lord and Master
2. Recitative Jesus went with His disciples over the brook Cedron
3. Chorus Jesus of Nazareth!
4. Recitative Jesus saith to them
5. Chorus Jesus of Nazareth!
6. Recitative Jesus answered them
7. **Choral** **O mighty love, O love beyond all measure**
8. Recitative So that the saying might be fulfilled
9. **Choral** **Thy will, O God, be always done**
10. Recitative The band then, together with the Captain
11. Alto aria From the bondage of iniquity
12. Recitative Simon Peter followed Jesus afar off
13. Soprano aria I follow Thee gladly, my Lord and my Master
14. Recitative Now that other disciple was known
15. **Choral** **O Lord, who dares to smite Thee?**
16. Recitative Now Annas sent Him bound
17. Chorus Art thou not one of His disciples?
18. Recitative But Peter denied it and said
19. Tenor aria Ah, my soul, where shall I hide my shame?
20. **Choral** **Peter, with his faithless lies**

PART TWO

21. **Choral** **Christ, whose life was as the light**
22. Recitative And then they led forth Jesus
23. Chorus If this man were not a malefactor
24. Recitative And Pilate said unto them
25. Chorus For us it is not lawful to put a man to death
26. Recitative So that the saying might be fulfilled
27. **Choral** **O mighty King, how marvellous Thy glory!**
28. Recitative Then Pilate said unto them
29. Chorus Not this man, no not this
30. Recitative Now this Barrabas was a robber
31. Bass arioso Come ponder, O my soul
32. Tenor aria Behold Him!
33. Recitative And when the soldiers had plaited Him a crown
34. Chorus See! we hail Thee, King of Jews
35. Recitative And they smote Him with their hands
36. Chorus Crucify Him!
37. Recitative Then Pilate saith to them
38. Chorus We have a sacred law
39. Recitative And when Pilate heard that saying
40. **Choral** **Our Lord, in prison cell confined**
41. Recitative But the Jews cried out the more
42. Chorus If thou let this man go
43. Recitative And when Pilate heard that saying
44. Chorus Away with Him, away!
45. Recitative Pilate saith unto them
46. Chorus We have no King but Caesar
47. Recitative And then he delivered Him to them
48. Bass aria + Chorus Haste, all ye whose souls are weary

49. Recitative And there crucified they Him
50. Chorus Write thou not: the King of the Jews
51. Recitative But Pilate answered
52. **Choral** **Thy name, O Lord, is shining**
53. Recitative And then did the soldiers
54. Chorus Let us not divide it
55. Recitative So that the Scripture might be fulfilled
56. Choral See Him, in His agony
57. Recitative And from that hour he took her
58. Alto aria It is fulfilled
59. Recitative And bowing His head, He gave up the ghost
60. Bass aria +
Choral My Lord and Master, let me ask Thee
61. Recitative And then behold, the veil of the Temple
62. Tenor arioso My heart, see how the world
63. Soprano aria O heart, melt in weeping
64. Recitative The Jews therefore, because it was the
Preparation
65. **Choral** **Help us, Christ, God's only Son**
66. Recitative At last after this Joseph of Arimathea
67. Chorus Sleep well, and rest in God's safe-keeping
68. Choral O Jesus, when I come to die

Programme notes

J S Bach is one of several composers to write a *St. John Passion*. Selle and Schütz both set it in the 17th century, as did Telemann a few years after Bach, and in the 20th century (remember that?) Arvo Pärt and Jonathan Harvey followed suit. Bach's version was quite remarkable in its day because of the level of drama and emotion in the music. His passion and devotion to his craft is depicted wonderfully in this description by the Rector of St Thomas', Leipzig, where Bach was Cantor at the time:

...if you could see Bach... running over the keys with both hands, and at the utmost speed with his feet, producing by himself the most various and mutually agreeable combinations of sound...If you could see him, I say, doing what many of your citharists and 600 of your tibia players together could not do, not only singing and playing his own part, but watching over everything and bringing back to the rhythm and the beat, out of thirty or forty musicians, one with a nod, another by tapping his foot, the third with a warning finger, giving the right note to one from the top of his voice, another from the bottom and a third from the middle...in the midst of the greatest din...executing the most difficult parts himself, noticing at once whenever a mistake occur...

Favourer as I am of antiquity, the accomplishments of our Bach appear to me to effect what not many Orpheuses, nor twenty Arions, could achieve.

It is not surprising that this spilled over into his composition and caused a straining against the boundaries which prescribed Baroque compositional form and style. The Councillors of Leipzig, however, were less than impressed by Bach, and would have preferred to appoint an ex-pupil of the St Thomas' School called Graupner, but he turned them down. The Councillors grudgingly took Bach on, saying – “If we cannot have the best, we must make do with what there is.” I wonder what happened to Graupner.

Bach's appointment as Cantor had conditions – on both sides. Bach agreed to it on the understanding that he would not have to teach Latin to the schoolboys; his employers also asked that his music should not be too theatrical, and also he was not to leave town without the consent of the Bürgermeister, a rule which Bach frequently flouted with alacrity. His

relationship with the Council was not a happy one, and he constantly threatened to move on. The boys of the school were the sons of poor families, and the conditions at the school – where Bach and his growing family also lived – were overcrowded and insanitary. The boys had to sing at funerals in all weathers, and each January traditionally sang in the streets to raise funds for the school.

Bach's *St. John Passion* was first performed, on Good Friday, 1724, with the sermon traditionally placed between Parts One and Two, and he gave at least three subsequent performances to our knowledge. It is set for a normal-sized Passion orchestra and a four-part choir. Four soloists comment on the Gospel story and sing minor roles such as Peter, Pilate etc, with Jesus and the Evangelist being sung by a bass and tenor respectively. Heart-rending melody and intense chromatic harmonic progressions heighten the drama of the work. A detailed analysis of the *St. John Passion* will show the arrangement of movements to be palindromic, reflecting Bach's love of symmetry. This was not typical of his time, but more reminiscent of the 15th – and indeed the 20th – centuries. This adds justification to the deep reverence in which he is held by our own contemporary musical academics, while explaining why his own contemporaries thought him old-fashioned.

Chorals are a major feature of the Passion settings. The congregation at Leipzig would have recognized most of them as Bach made a point of using well-known or locally published tunes. They provide an opportunity for participation by the congregation, and are arranged with this in mind. The melody, rhythm and metre are simplified to allow non-musicians to follow easily. If you are not a music reader, you can at least see the notes rise and fall on the staff, and the traditional harmony will help you to 'feel' what is coming next - even if you don't already know the tunes.

Stephen Rooke

Stephen Rooke was born in Newport, Gwent, and studied at the Royal Northern College of Music. During his time at the RNCM Stephen won several prizes and competitions including the Sir Anthony Lewis Memorial Prize, the Webster Booth Award, the Alexander Young Award, and the Curtis Gold Medal for Singing. In 1990 Stephen won the Clonter Singer of the Year Award.

Stephen has been a member of both Glyndebourne Festival and Glyndebourne Touring Opera, and was awarded the Erich Vietheer Prize by Glyndebourne Festival Opera. Operatic roles include Pilade *Ermione* and Chaplitsky *The Queen of Spades* for Glyndebourne Festival Opera, St Brioche *The Merry Widow* for the Royal Opera, Count Elemer *Arabella* for Opera North, Fenton *Falstaff* and Macduff *Macbeth* for City of Birmingham Touring Opera.

Following a masterclass given by Sir Michael Tippett during the 1988 Manchester Tippett/Debussy Festival Stephen was offered a performance of Tippett's *Songs for Dov* with the College Chamber Orchestra, which culminated in an invitation to give a recital at the Tivoli Festival in Copenhagen. Further concert work includes *Messiah* with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra in Symphony Hall Birmingham, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Elgar *The Dream of Gerontius* in St Asaph Cathedral, and *Coronation Ode* in Canterbury Cathedral, Verdi's *Requiem*, Vaughan Williams *On Wenlock Edge*, and *My Fair Lady* with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra .

Recent operatic engagements have included Forsyth and Captain Fonnegra *Friend of the People* for Scottish Opera, and concerts include Saint-Saëns' *Christmas Oratorio* with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields and Sir Neville Marriner in Oporto. Stephen is currently engaged in the role of Tom Rakewell *The Rake's Progress* with English Touring Opera.

Future plans include Don Ottavio *Don Giovanni* for Glyndebourne Touring Opera, and Jenik *The Makropoulos Case* for Glyndebourne Festival Opera at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York.

John Bernays

John Bernays was born and educated in Queensland, Australia, before winning a post-graduate research scholarship to New College, Oxford in 1986. He completed a M. Phil. degree and sang for four years in New College Choir.

Recent concert engagements include *Carmina Burana* and Fauré's *Requiem* (Barbican), *St. John Passion* (tour with Australian Chamber Orchestra), Bach's *Magnificat* (English Chamber Choir), *St. Matthew Passion* (T.V. recording and European Tour), Britten's *War Requiem* (St. Albans' Abbey), *The Creation* (Lichfield Cathedral and Harrow), *The Pilgrim's Progress* (with Richard Hickox).

Opera rôles include: The Count *Marriage of Figaro*, Marcello *Rigoletto* with English Touring Opera, Don Alfonso *Così fan tutte* with Garden Opera and New Chamber Opera, Papageno *The Magic Flute* with Surrey Opera. John has also toured with Kent Opera and Scottish Go Round.

Recently, John sang the rôle of Adonis in John Blow's Opera *Venus and Adonis* at the Globe Theatre, and performed in Rameau's *Les Boréades* at the Salzburg Festival under Sir Simon Rattle.

Marie Vassiliou

Marie Vassiliou - a National Federation of Music Recommended Artist in 1997 - studied at the Royal College of Music with Heather Harper. She received a considerable number of awards and scholarships including the Countess of Munter Trust Award, Wolfson Singing Award, John Ireland Prize, Constant and Kit Lambert Fellowship and the Tagore Gold Medal. At the Britten Theatre, she appeared as Flora *The Knot Garden*, Miss Jessel *The Turn of the Screw* and Emira *Siroe* (Handel).

Her operatic engagements include Tatyana *Eugene Onegin* in Russia; and the title role *La Calisto* in Batignano, Italy. Of Handel's operas, she has performed *Poppea Aggripina* in New York and the title roles in *Theodora* and *Il pastor Fido*; the latter at Halle Opernhaus.

She gave the premiere of the orchestral version of Michael Tippett's *The Heart's Assurance* at the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival. In the field of oratorio and concert, she has appeared at St. John's, Smith Square, The Barbican, The Royal Festival Hall, The Royal Albert Hall and the Purcell Room. She has also completed a series of recordings of rediscovered Baroque arias.

Juliette Pochin

Juliette Pochin initially trained as a violinist, reading music at Trinity College, Cambridge, before studying singing at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and graduating with distinction.

Juliette regularly appears as a soloist on the concert platform with repertoire ranging from Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* with Sir Colin Davis to a Lutoslawski song cycle for Polish Radio (soon to be released). As a recitalist, she has sung in the Sir Adrian Boult Hall and in July appeared in a series of recitals with Graham Johnson at the Klavier Festival Ruhr in Germany. A keen exponent of contemporary music, she performed Jonathan Harvey's *Passion and Resurrection* at the Brighton Festival and was the alto soloist in Sofia Gubaidulina's *Canticle of the Sun* at the Barbican (UK premiere - recorded for EMI). She was awarded a scholarship by Darlington International Summer School to perform Judith Weir's solo opera *King Harald's Saga* last summer working with the composer.

Future plans include Olga for Pimlico Opera this summer.

Stephen Brown

Stephen Brown studied singing at Trinity College of Music and then with Neil Mackie in the opera school of the Royal College of Music where he was supported by the Weinberger scholarship, the Alfred Alexander award, the Total award and the Sir John Caird Travelling Scholarship. As a tenor, Stephen Brown has great interest in comic opera and has performed numerous Gilbert and Sullivan rôles. His operatic rôles include Troufaldino *The Love of Three Oranges*; the Mayor *Albert Herring*; Tamino *The Magic Flute*. Recent performances have included the French premieres of *Cox & Box* and *Trial by Jury* in Paris; *Le nozze di Figaro* with Sir Colin Davis.

A prize winning interpreter of English song, Stephen regularly gives recitals all over Britain. In oratorio, his repertoire ranges from Monteverdi to Berio. International engagements include a televised *Messiah* in Romania, Rossini's *Stabat Mater* in Norway, and concerts in India and Austria. He regularly sings the Evangelist in Bach's passions and most recently sang the arias in *St. Matthew Passion* in Iceland and in London with Peter Schreier.