



THE LINDEN BAROQUE ORCHESTRA & CHOIR



Present a programme
of Music by
Jean Gilles and Henry Purcell



SATURDAY OCTOBER 3RD 1992 AT 7.30 PM.
HOLY TRINITY CHURCH,
SLOANE STREET, LONDON SW1

THIS CONCERT IS SPONSORED BY
ACTIONSIGHT LIMITED

THE LINDEN BAROQUE ORCHESTRA

(Leader Nicola Hayston)

&

LINDEN BAROQUE CHOIR

(Director Deborah Johnson)

Conducted by Paul Goodwin

With

Lesley-Jane Rogers (soprano)

Vernon Kirk (tenor)

Neil MacKenzie (tenor)

Jeremy White (bass)

- Play -

Henry Purcell

My Heart Is Inditing

Jean Gilles

Diligam te, Domine

Henry Purcell

Praise the Lord

- Interval -

Jean Gilles

Messe des Morts

PURCELL'S *My Heart is Inditing* was written as the last of nine anthems (by Purcell, Blow, Turner and Lawes) performed at the coronation ceremony of King James II, which took place on 23rd April 1685 in Westminster Abbey. It is Purcell's longest and most imposing anthem, and also his most admired. For the occasion, the choirs of Westminster, Windsor and the Chapel Royal combined their forces and were accompanied not only by the organ but also by the royal instruments (an orchestra was only permitted in the Abbey for royal and national occasions), and Purcell's anthem was "performed by the whole consort of voices and instruments".

Purcell starts *My Heart is Inditing* like all his verse anthems, with a *Symphony* (orchestral introduction) following vaguely the pattern of the "French" overture with a slow sustained beginning followed by a fast fugato - a section in triple time, which, however, does not lead back to

the initial slow section as the overture would, but passes directly into the choral entry. The eight-part vocal lines provide the opportunity for resourceful and varied composition. The vocal colour is forever changing as the parts are grouped differently as imitative and homophonic or choir and solo passages alternate. On the whole the orchestra doubles the vocal parts, but occasionally plays short interludes; and the symphony is repeated in the middle, thereby dividing the work into two main sections. The anthem culminates in a song of praise starting with the massive homophonic "Praise the Lord" which leads into the joyful and splendid "Allelujah".

Purcell set the words of this final section again in the opening verse of his later anthem *Praise the Lord* and tonight's concert offers the opportunity to compare the two settings. The composition date of this anthem is not known for certain, nor is the occasion for which it was written, but it probably belongs to the year 1688 and was probably intended for the Chapel Royal, as it is scored for five part chorus, strings and continuo. After the opening *Symphony* - formally a French overture and stylistically close to the first two movements of an Italian church sonata after the model of Corelli - the homophonic choral entry with its majestic dotted rhythm for "Praise the Lord" recalls the earlier work. Again the style changes to an imitative section at "For kings shall be thy nursing fathers". One of the remarkable features in this work is the suggestion of trumpets in "Be Thou exalted", marking both the splendour and exaltation in its quasi fanfare ritornello and rising dotted vocal phrases. Once more the anthem closes with a lively "Allelujah".

JEAN GILLES, born in 1668, was Purcell's junior by nine years and like him died young at only 37 years of age in 1705. He was the son of an illiterate labourer from Tarascon, south of the French town of Avignon, but later he became a choirboy at St. Sauveur in Aix-en-Provence (where he was officially enrolled in 1679). There he studied (like Campra and Blanchard) under the venerable Master Guillaume Poitevin,

becoming his assistant in 1688 and taking full responsibility for the choir-school in 1693. In 1695 he left Aix and took over the direction of the choir-school at Agde Cathedral. In 1697 he was invited to become choirmaster at the Cathedral of St. Etienne in Toulouse, where he remained for the rest of his life despite repeated invitations to Notre-Dame-des-Doms in Avignon.

Gilles' reputation as a masterly composer lived on, thanks mainly to the two works performed in tonight's programme, the *Requiem* (Messe des Morts) and the motet *Diligam te*. These two works in particular were performed frequently until long after Gilles' death; Mattheson mentions a performance of the Requiem in Grenoble in 1726, when one commentator ranked it "among the most beautiful of musical works". From 1749 to 1770 both works became favourites at the Concert Spirituel with 15 performances of the *Requiem* and 49 of the motet. And indeed, "Of all requiem masses, that of Gilles was always considered to be the best [and] there is hardly a musical funeral service today, in which Gilles' *Mass* is not performed... This Mass, the motet *Beatus quem elegisti* ... and the motet *Diligam te* which are left to us, make his death much regretted." (*Sentiment d'un harmoniphile*, 1756). At a memorial service for Rameau in 1764 the *Requiem* was interpolated with parodied excerpts (i.e. with a Latin text) from Rameau's opera *Castor et Pollux*. In 1774 it was performed in services for Louis XV and the latest known historical performance took place at St. Sauveur in Aix in 1805.

Latin settings of the mass text are rare in France in the 17th and 18th centuries, with the notable exception of Charpentier's eleven masses. Even rarer are settings of the requiem, as Louis XIV (and all France modelled its taste on Versailles and the Sun King) preferred concerted Latin motets with texts generally taken from the psalms, and for the liturgy for the Dead the *De Profundis*, the *Miserere* and similar funereal texts were popular. The reason for the composition of Gilles' *Requiem* is not entirely clear, and he is reputed to have sung in its first performance whereas other sources claim that this first

performance took place at Gilles' own funeral service.

Gilles makes no use of cantus firmus, but uses the tonalities of the Gregorian, setting the opening movements, Introit and Kyrie, on F (major) and Graduel to Post-Communion on G (major and minor). In keeping with other French religious music the dividing line between opera and church music is fine, and Gilles' religious music, including the *Requiem* has its fair share of theatricality. Most important is the affect, the sentiments created by the text and responded to by the music: one weeps the same, be it the *Miserere* at a funeral or an operatic lament. The text is treated sympathetically, which becomes apparent already in the very first sung line of the work, as the tenor soloist after the grave and majestic opening of the orchestra (five-part strings, flutes and continuo) with its dotted rhythms in best French tradition "rests" on a note held for two bars on "aeternam" - eternal. Many more examples can be found for such painting of words, but more interesting is the overall impression of gentleness and the abundance of dance-like movements. These are well balanced with the grand homophonic choruses and elegant and affecting solos in a texture that always remains transparent. This is not a requiem of fear and trepidation (the "Dies irae" is conspicuously missing), there is no desperation but sadness and consolation and a joyful vision of paradise.

The *Grand Motet* is the French equivalent of the English verse anthem making use of soloists, chorus and orchestra. The genre was established though not introduced by Lully at the Chapelle Royale. It developed from an early division in choruses of soloists and full choir to a more concerted form with more independent solo sections. In *Diligam te* Gilles achieves a distinct contrast between the ensembles and makes spectacular use of the words, e.g. in the evocation of the earthquake, brilliant melodic invention and again dance-like elements permeate the whole work.

THE LINDEN BAROQUE ORCHESTRA

VIOLINS

Nicola Hayston (Leader)
Clare Salaman
Ben Constantine
Naomi West
Barbara Grant

Rachel Eyres
Paula Tysall
Linda McDonald
Stephen Patrick
Alan Selwyn

VIOLAS

Rachel Byrt
Rachel Eyres
Ron Porta

CELLOS

Valerie Cullen
Tatty Theo

BASS VIOL

Roy Marks

ORGAN

David Pollock

THEORBO

Kasia Elsner
Lynda Sayce

FLUTES

Andrew Crawford
Nicholas Jackman

THE LINDEN BAROQUE orchestra was formed in 1982 by a group of London musicians who specialize in playing early style instruments. It has given concerts in London, Essex, Norfolk, Kent and Oxford in a wide and varied repertoire from the Baroque and Classical periods. The group has worked with some of London's leading baroque players. At the end of this year they will perform Purcell's King Arthur in Rome with the Coro de Camera Italiano.

Paul Goodwin who has been musical director of Linden Baroque since its formation, is one of the world's leading Baroque oboists. He plays with almost every baroque orchestra, including the English Concert and the Age of Enlightenment, and has recorded extensively. He is professor of Music at the Royal College of Music.

THE LINDEN CHOIR

SOPRANO

Katina Dawe¹
Sally Donegani²
Melissa Eves³
Jo King³
Suzy Robinson²
Jane Trewhella¹

ALTO

Elisabeth Cook¹
Peter Hellyer^{2,3}
Griselda Sherlaw-Johnson²
Jenny Zarek

TENOR

Martin Hurst
Nicholas Jackman
Mark van Ments^{1,2}
Tim Sawers³

BASS

Andrew Haviland
Cedric Lee²
Christopher McGinty³
Tony Purves^{1,2}
Matthew Smith
Mike Smith²

CHORUS DIRECTOR

Deborah Johnson

REHEARSAL ACCOMPANIST

David Pollock

ADMINISTRATOR

Sally Donegani

Soloists in: 1= Gilles, Requiem & Diligam; 2=Purcell, My Heart is Inditing; 3= Purcell, Praise the Lord

THE LINDEN CHOIR, which performs its inaugural concert tonight, is very pleased to be associated with Paul Goodwin and The Linden Baroque Orchestra. It comprises some twenty amateur and semi-professional singers, all of whom sing to an excellent standard. The choir has been trained by Deborah Johnson, a professional singer working regularly with the BBC singers, the Sixteen and other groups. The choir hopes that tonight will be the beginning of a long association with the orchestra. (For more information contact Sally Donegani 081 675 4770)