

SUNDAY JUNE 6TH 1993 AT 7.30PM

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH
SLOANE STREET, LONDON SW1

LINDEN BAROQUE ORCHESTRA & CHOIR

LEADER NICOLA HAYSTON
CONDUCTOR PAUL GOODWIN

With

LESLEY-JANE ROGERS & FLORA JENKIN (SOPRANOS)
DEBORAH MILES-JOHNSON (MEZZO SOPRANO)
PAUL AGNEW & NEIL MACKENZIE (TENORS)
JEREMY WHITE (BASS)

-Play-

Jean Gilles
Diligam Te, Domine

-Interval-

Jean Gilles
Lamentations of Jeremiah

Handel
Dixit Dominus

This Concert is sponsored by John & Maggie Pollock, Penny Royal Theatre

PROGRAMME NOTES

*My Muse, O Handel, is not so wise
Thus instantly to improvise
Verse worthy of thy Muse's art...*

These opening lines of a poem in praise of **Handel**, written by Cardinal Pamphili (and set to music by Handel), may illustrate the high regard the youthful Handel enjoyed during his stay in Italy from 1705-1710, where despite his Lutheran faith he could count also other leading men of the Church among his patrons, like the Cardinals Colonna and Ottoboni. A fair proportion of works from his Italian years is Latin church music, and the setting of Psalm 110, *Dixit Dominus* a particularly lavish example. It was written in April 1707, and it has been suggested that it would have been part of a set of seven psalm settings for the Vespers Service on the Feast of the Madonna del Carmine on 16 July. The sheer size of this work alone, however, makes this unlikely.

Dixit Dominus shows Handel's easy absorption of the emotionally charged Italian church style in continuation of the expressionism of Stradella and Carissimi as well as Corelli's influence in the writing for the violins. The voices are often used in a rather instrumental fashion, over long stretches sustaining a stratospheric tessitura for the first sopranos or employing figurations that are more readily associated with violins (as in the final "Amen"). In the phrasing the model of Alessandro Scarlatti is perceptible but Handel, initially trained as a Protestant organist, builds his work on a formidably strong harmonic framework and achieves a less delicate, less intimate work of great dramatic splendour.



Jean Gilles was born in 1688 and 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 *Requiem* (Messe des Morts)

and the motet *Diligam te, Domine*. 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 (concerts at the Tuileries Palace during Lent) with 15 performances of the *Requiem* and 49 of the motet.

The *Grand Motet*, for which both *Diligam Te, Domine* (Psalm 17) and the *Lamentations of Jeremiah* are examples, 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.

The text for the *Lamentations* (written in three parts for the use in the liturgy on Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday) lends itself to a setting with vivid and evocative use of dissonance and chromatics and the *Lamentations* are indeed harmonically the richest works in Gilles' known output. One contemporary listener was "shocked" and felt that "the plainchant for these lessons is moving enough...needing a master's hand only to give variety to the metre and cadences". Gilles however goes much further than that with his meticulously attentive setting of the texts. He chooses the unusual, sombre key of f minor, which reflects the despair of the prophet Jeremiah and makes ample use of characteristic and sensitive word painting. For the march of the captives of Jerusalem, for example, he uses the simple idea of an upward progression of the melodic line ("parvuli ejus ducti sunt"), made more poignant still by the initial chromatic steps. "Amaritudine" (bitterness) is described by a drop of a minor seventh in the voice and chromatically enriched harmonies. Throughout the *Lamentations* phrases tend to end with a falling gesture as with a humble (or despairing?) inclination of the head.

In *Diligam te, Domine* Gilles achieves a distinct contrast between the various ensembles and makes again spectacular use of the words as in the evocation of the earthquake. This motet is distinguished by brilliant melodic invention and dancelike elements permeate the whole work.

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Lesley Jane Rogers studied singing and piano at the Royal Academy of Music, taking both subjects to postgraduate level, and was awarded three Principal's prizes. She now works extensively as a singer, specialising in oratorio and solo cantatas, principally performing works from the baroque and classical era, as well as contemporary music. Perhaps most known for her baroque work, Lesley-Jane has performed in several "authentic instrument" concerts, notably performing and recording the rôle of Asteria in Handel's opera *Tamerlano* for TéléDiffusion de France with Roy Goodman conducting. She also gave the first televised performance (with TDF) of Handel's *Dixit Dominus* conducted by Mark Deller. Lesley-Jane is a member of the Lecosaldi Ensemble, with whom she has performed over 150 solo works including 53 cantatas from Telemann's *Der harmonische Gottesdienst* and other collections. As a founder member of the Wren Baroque Soloists, Lesley-Jane may be heard on their début CD *Caldara Madrigals and Cantatas*. She has also recently recorded the rôle of Ionatha in Scarlatti's *Il David* with the St James's Baroque Players.

Flora Jenkin read music at Durham University, and continued her studies with Mark Wildman, gaining her LRAM in 1990 and is now studying with Valerie Masterson at Trinity College of Music. Flora sings regularly at many central London churches and with various choirs, touring and recording. Recent solo engagements include; Bach's *St Matthew Passion* at the Blackheath Concert Halls; Bach's *B minor Mass* at St Martin-in-the-Fields and Handel's *Dixit Dominus* with the Reading Bach Choir. In January she gave a recital of songs by Brahms, Wolf, Ravel and Fauré at St James's Picadilly. Recent opera rôles include; Europe in Milhaud's *L'Enlèvement d'Europe* and Minnie-Belle in Kurt Weill's *Johnny Johnson*. This week she has been singing Miss Wordsworth in Britten's *Albert Herring* in Wimbledon with Beaufort Opera. In June she will play the Countess in Giles Swayne's *The Marriage of Cherubino* and in July she performs in *The Marriage of Figaro* with the Age of Enlightenment.

Deborah Miles-Johnson was born in London, where after studying at the Royal College of Music, she spent several years as a professional flautist before deciding to pursue a career in singing. After a period of study with Margaret Cable, she joined the BBC singers and with them has taken part in many broadcasts and concerts. She now performs a wide range of music from Brazilian classical music with The Sixteen, the recent Arts Council tour of Jonathan Harvey's *Passion and Resurrection* to Mrs Sedley in *Peter Grimes* at Haddo House, Aberdeenshire. When not singing Deborah enjoys playing the viola and conducting an enthusiastic and successful male voice choir.

Paul Agnew read music at Magdalen College Oxford where he studied singing with Janet Edmonds. As a member of the Consort of Musick he toured throughout Europe, including Poland and East Germany as well as America and Australia and also made his principal Promenade Concert début with them in 1989, and embarked on the complete recording of

Monteverdi Madrigals for Virgin Classics. He maintains a busy solo career and has broadcast with The English Concert, The Hilliard Ensemble and the Tallis Scholars. Future broadcasts include Handel's *Esther* with the London Handel Orchestra, and three programmes of lute songs with Christopher Wilson. Recent opera performances have included Purcell's *Fairy Queen* in Lisbon with The English Concert. Future engagements include this years Proms with The Consort of Musick, recordings and concerts with Collegium Vocale under Philippe Herreweghe, La Chapelle Royal under Sigiswald Kujiken, The Kings Consort with Robert King and Les Arts Florissants with William Christie.

Neil MacKenzie has a solo career ranging from early music to many first performances. He has appeared in many international festivals including the Proms, Aldeburgh, Aix-en-Provence and the September New Music Festival in Warsaw. Born in Glasgow, Neil graduated from Clare College Cambridge, continued his vocal studies with Ian Partridge and David Mason before being invited to join the BBC singers with whom he has broadcast throughout Europe and in North and South America. Recent performances on Radio 3 include Kenneth Leighton's *Columba Mea* with the BBC concert orchestra, Schoenberg's *Drei Satiren* conducted by Pierre Boulez in Paris and the Narrator in Scarlatti's opera *Il David*, conducted by Ivor Bolton. Forthcoming engagements include the Monteverdi *Vespers* in Rome with The Sixteen, with whom he has just completed four concerts of Handel's *Israel in Egypt* at the South Bank and in Spain, and recorded the tenor solos for Collins Classics.

Jeremy White fulfils a busy schedule of concert engagements throughout Europe, and from Rio to Jerusalem, in repertoire ranging from the Renaissance to contemporary, embracing this season Aretino's *St John Passion* for Swiss TV and Webern's *Second Cantata* with Boulez and the CBSO. Since his début at the Aix Festival in *Der Rosenkavalier*, his operatic rôles have similarly ranged from Lully through Mozart, Rossini and Donizetti, to Blazes in Maxwell Davies' *The Lighthouse* and the title rôle in Walton's *The Bear*. He made his Royal Opera House début in 1991 as Thoré in *Les Huguenots*, returning in 1992 as Don Prudenzio in *Il Viaggio à Reims*. He is currently appearing there as Benoit in *La Bohème*.

Paul Goodwin who has been musical director of Linden Baroque since its formation, is one of the world's leading Baroque oboists. He has played with most of the leading period instrument orchestras, including the English Concert and the Age of Enlightenment. He has recorded extensively as a soloist, his most recent being the Mozart, LeBrun and CPE Bach concertos with the English Concert, and a disc of solo sonatas by Vivaldi. He is professor of Music at the Royal College of Music. As a conductor he has recently collaborated with Jonathan Miller in a highly successful semi-staged production of Bach's *St Matthew Passion*. He is soon to be the director of the Academy of Ancient Music in a series of concerts.

LINDEN BAROQUE CHOIR

Sopranos

Sally Donegani
 Clare Galton
 Cecile Kelly
 Ursina Kobi
 Marie McCaffrey
 Wendy Norman
 Philippa Ormerod
 Julia Raeburn
 Lucilla Rodinò
 Jane Trehwella

Altos

Lis Cook
 Loulla Gorman
 Peter Hellyer
 Lorna Youngs

Tenors

David Francis
 Martin Hurst
 Tim Sawers
 Paul Zimmermann

Basses

Robin Cockett
 John Edwards
 David Harris
 Chris McGinty
 Tony Purves
 Simon Purves

Director

Deborah Miles-Johnson

Rehearsal accompanist

Wendy Norman

Administrator

Sally Donegani

The Linden Baroque Choir was formed in the autumn of 1992, when it performed Jean Gilles' Messe des Morts with the Linden Baroque Orchestra, under the direction of Paul Goodwin. The choir comprises some twenty amateur and semi-professional singers, all of whom sing to high standards. The choir was prepared for this concert by Deborah Miles-Johnson, a professional singer working regularly with the BBC Singers, the Sixteen and other groups. The choir is pleased to be performing once again with the Linden Baroque Orchestra and looks forward to further ventures! For more information contact Sally Donegani: 081 675 4770

LINDEN BAROQUE ORCHESTRA

Violins

Nicola Hayston (Leader)
 Robin Boothby
 Ben Constantine
 Gertrude Evans
 Barbara Grant
 Brooke Green
 Linda McDonald

Stephen Patrick
 Hannah Patrick
 Alan Selwyn
 Christoph Timpe

Violas

Jonathan Burgess
 Debbie Johnson

Andrew Giles
 Ron Porta

Cellos

Tatty Theo
 Valerie Warner

Bass Viol
 Roy Marks

Bassoon

Maggie Bruce

Organ

Momoyo Kokubu

Theorbo

Jessica Gordon

The Linden Baroque Orchestra was formed in 1982 by a group of London musicians who specialise 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 last year they performed Purcell's King Arthur in Rome with the Coro da Camera Italiano. This is the second concert that Linden Baroque have done featuring the music of Jean Gilles. Last October they gave the first modern performance on period instruments of his Messe des Morts, which aroused considerable interest. Future engagements include a Vauxhall Gardens Entertainment at Finchcocks in Kent and a Charity concert in Luton Hoo house, Bedfordshire sponsored by the Chocolate Society. For more information contact Alan Selwyn 071 586 0553

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