



NEW CAMBRIDGE SINGERS

Linden Baroque Orchestra

Neil Jenkins *Evangelist*

directed by Christopher Brown

BACH

The Passion according
to Saint John BWV 245

St Giles Cripplegate, Barbican, London EC2

Saturday 13 March 1999 : 7.30 pm

Great St Mary's Church, Cambridge

Saturday 20 March 1999 : 7.30 pm



PROGRAMME



New Cambridge Singers

Bach St John Passion

March 13 and March 20, 1999

Part One — numbers 1 - 20

Interval — 15 minutes.

(Please do not applaud between Parts One and Two.)

Part Two — numbers 21 - 68

(For the structure of the work please refer to the Synoptic Guide.)

Bach completed his setting of the *Passion According to Saint John* in 1723, just after his arrival at Leipzig. It was probably written at great speed, as various significant revisions were subsequently made, including the substitution of a new opening movement in place of the chorale (*O Mensch beweine*) which was later incorporated in the Saint Matthew Passion.

Unlike the Saint Matthew Passion, which is notable for the spaciousness of its design, the Saint John is much terser, reflecting the dramatic pace of Saint John's Gospel. Great emphasis is placed on the role of the crowd, and the central section of the oratorio in which the crowd clamours for the release of Barabbas and the death of Jesus has an almost operatic intensity. The non-Biblical texts are taken from the rhymed passion of Brockes, and form the basis of the arias and

chorales which Bach places, with considerable dramatic impact, at appropriate moments in the story.

The musical forces required are less ambitious than in the Saint Matthew, yet are no less effective — the four-part chorus and four soloists, the Evangelist and Christus, are accompanied by a small orchestra of strings and woodwind, with obbligato viola da gamba. The musical variety within the work is remarkable, whether it be the massive richness of the opening chorus, the violence of the 'Crucify' choruses, or the reflective simplicity of the final 'Lie still'. The recitatives, which bind the music together, themselves contain some of the most arresting moments of the entire work, amongst which are the passages in which Christ himself speaks, accompanied each time by the strings, in striking contrast to the harpsichord of the Evangelist.

TCB

Tonight's performers

Neil Jenkins — Evangelist

During his more than 30-year career Neil Jenkins has sung a wide variety of operatic roles in Great Britain, appearing regularly with English National Opera, Opera North, Scottish Opera and Welsh National Opera.

He has sung oratorio and recitals in the USA, Australia, New Zealand, Israel, Iceland, Scandinavia, Finland, Singapore, and Saudi Arabia, as well as throughout Europe. In England he is well-known at the leading Festivals as an interpreter of the baroque composers Bach and Handel, as well as 20th century English composers such as Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Finzi, Tippett and Britten.

He has recorded the Bach *St Matthew Passion* with Sir David Willcocks and the Bach Choir and oratorio and opera under the baton of Benjamin Britten, Sir Neville Marriner, Sir Charles Mackerras, Riccardo Chailly, Kent Nagano, Gary Bertini, Andrew Davis, Bernard Haitink, Georges Prêtre, Sir Roger Norrington, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Richard Hickox, Barry Wordsworth and Andrew Parrott, amongst others.

Neil has edited and translated the *St John* and *St Matthew Passions* of Bach for the New Novello Choral Series and edited other choral works and

song albums for OUP and Kevin Mayhew Ltd.

Christopher Dixon — Christus

Christopher read Modern and Medieval Languages at Clare College, Cambridge where he was a choral scholar under Timothy Brown. He subsequently sang in the chapel choir of St John's College, Cambridge under Christopher Robinson.

Christopher regularly performs a wide range of oratorio roles, and is a regular visitor to Great St Mary's, most recently singing in Cambridge Chorale's *Messiah* there last year. Further concerts include *Elijah* in Crawley and Handel's *Saul* in Haslingfield. He also gives frequent recitals of English and German song, most recently of Vaughan Williams' *Songs of Travel* and Butterworth's *A Shropshire Lad*, and Schumann's *Dichterliebe*.

Opera roles include Escamillo (*Carmen*), Colline (*La Bohème*) and Odoardo (Haydn's *Die Feuerbrunst*).

In addition to his solo work, Christopher also sings regularly with several London-based groups including the BBC Singers and the Monteverdi choir under Sir John Eliot Gardiner.

Christopher studies with Mark Wildman and Anthony Saunders at The Royal Academy of Music, where he holds a top scholarship incorporating the Leverhulme Trust Award and the Stanley Picker Trust Award.

Morag Atchison — Soprano

Morag Atchison was born in New Zealand in 1974 and attended Epsom Girls' Grammar School, Auckland. In 1995 she graduated from the University of Auckland with a First Class Honours Degree in Music, studying singing with Beatrice Webster MBE. She is currently in her third postgraduate year at the Royal Academy of Music, studying with Alison Pearce and Antony Saunders

Morag's oratorio repertoire includes Bach's *St John Passion*, Haydn's *Nelson Mass*, Fauré's *Requiem*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, and Handel's *Messiah* and she was recently a soloist in the London Bach Festival at the Royal Academy of Music.

In October Morag will be a soloist in Vivaldi's *Gloria* at the Royal Albert Hall conducted by Sir David Willcocks and in October she will return to the RAH to sing the part of Mater Gloriosa in Mahler's 8th Symphony in a fund-raising concert for the British Council for the Prevention of Blindness.

Ruth Massey — Alto

Ruth is currently in her third year reading Law at Clare College, where

she holds a choral Exhibition. In Cambridge she has performed as a soloist with such groups as Cambridge Cantata Consort, the New Cambridge Scholars and Cambridge Opera Group, performing pieces such as Mozart's *Requiem*, Bach's *St John* and *St Matthew Passions*, Haydn's *Harmoniemesse*, and Duruflé's *Requiem*.

Away from Cambridge Ruth has been a member of *Voce* based in London and the Rodolfus Choir, with whom she has performed as a soloist for the Association of British Choral Directors Gala Concert, in the Southern Cathedrals Festival and in a concert commissioned by Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber. She has taken part in masterclasses given by Mark Wildman and Constance Shacklock.

Singing has so far taken her to places as varied as Iceland, Bulgaria and the United States. Ruth features on several CDs, including one of Walton's complete choral music to be released later this year. Future engagements include the rôle of Orindo in Handel's opera *Admeto* with Cambridge Handel Opera Group.

Andrew Hewitt — Tenor

Andrew began his singing career as a Westminster Abbey chorister, and in 1995 won a Choral Scholarship to St John's College, Cambridge, where he read music. He now studies with Adrian Thompson at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Linden Baroque

1st violins: Theresa Caudle (*Leader +viola d'amore*), Barbara Grant,
Liz Kenna, Jocelyn Slocombe, Linda McDonald

2nd violins: Petr Benda, Alan Selwyn, Michael Jenner, Simon Hill

Violas: Katherine McGillivray (*+viola d'amore*), Peter Trevelyan,
Kay Dixon

Cellos: Jennifer Morsches (*continuo*), Valerie Cullen, Louise Holman

Violone: Sarah Grocer (*+Viola da gamba*)

Organ: Richard Walshaw

Flutes: Nicholas Jackman, Andy Crawford/Fiona Ferguson

Oboes/ oboes da caccia: Mike Brain (*+oboe d'amore*), Simon Galton

Bassoon: Maggie Bruce

New Cambridge Singers

Sopranos

Johanna Cornah, Audrey Dean, Chloe Evans, Judy Ferrari, Judith Hall,
Madeleine Holmes, Pamela Lambert, Stephanie Pratt, Fiona Seers, Lydia Smallwood

Altos

Margaret Copestake, Katy Edgcombe, Friederike Jeans, Jenny Oldham,
Claire Parker, Gabriele Reifenberg, Jane Richardson, Allison Toogood, Angela Watts,
Linda Whitebread, Rachel Wroth

Tenors

Michael Antcliff, David Gadd, Ian Priest, David Sheppard, George Smerdon,
Stephen Toogood

Basses

Tim Atkinson, Charles Beresford, Geoff Crome, Ron Ferrari, Martin Gent,
Charles Jones, Andrew Mein, Richard Prince, Alan Rickard, Phil Ridley

The New Cambridge Singers acknowledge with gratitude the sponsorship of Beeson Gregory Ltd, a grant from the National Federation of Music Societies and a donation from Hatty Harris

**NEW CAMBRIDGE SINGERS
FORTHCOMING CONCERTS**

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Twentieth-century Choral Favourites

including Rakhmaninov *Ave Maria*, Pärt *Magnificat*
and Tippett's Spirituals from *A Child of Our Time*

Saturday 19 June 1999 : 7.30 pm

**Jesus College Chapel, Cambridge
and**

Sunday 20 June 1999 : 7.00 pm

St Mary's Church, Halesworth, Suffolk

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A Recital of Choral Music

programme to be announced

Saturday 16 October 1999 : 8.15 pm

Jesus College Chapel, Cambridge

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Welcome in the new Millennium

including world première of
a new piece by Christopher Brown

Saturday 8 January 2000

**The Catholic Church of Our Lady
and the English Martyrs, Cambridge**