



Thomas Tallis Society Choir & Orchestra
Directed by Eamonn Dougan



A Christmas
Concert

Handel's *by candlelight* **Messiah**

Saturday 1 December, 7pm
St Alfege Church, Greenwich

Tickets £18 & £14, online or at the door

www.ticketsource.co.uk/tts



Registered charity number 247258

MESSIAH – HANDEL

Thomas Tallis Society Choir and Baroque Orchestra
directed by Eamonn Dougan

Leader: Oliver Webber

FOREWORD TO THE PERFORMANCE by Eamonn Dougan

Welcome to this evening's performance of Messiah. This will be the fourth year in succession that I have conducted Handel's masterpiece with the Thomas Tallis Society and I am proud of how it has quickly become a feature in the diaries of both local residents and those who come from further afield to appreciate the high standards the choir are now consistently achieving.

We are told that people see it as the beginning of the Christmas period and while our performance this year falls right at the beginning of December, we very much hope that it will usher in a period of peace and goodwill for all – sentiments which have been somewhat lacking in British society of late. The great Handel scholar Donald Burrows has said of Messiah, "*all may appreciate the story and its symbolic interpretation and ponder on the wider related themes of life and death, providence, sacrifice and resurrection*", which may prove to be a healthy reality check in the current, chaotic political climate and provide us with some perspective and a moment of reflection.

Messiah is, without doubt, the piece that I have performed most often throughout my life. I first sang it as a stragulated teenager in my school choir; learnt to appreciate it properly at university in memorable performances with the incomparable Edward Higginbottom and the late, great Christopher Hogwood; struggled through early solo performances when I lacked sufficient technique and stamina to cope with its many demands, through to it becoming a regular part of my professional musical diet.

I have been fortunate to be part of staggering, uplifting performances under some of the very best interpreters of our times. I have recorded it three times, twice in the choir, once as soloist. I've sung it suffering with jet-lag, food poisoning, vertigo; endured unspeakably slow tempi in freezing cold cathedrals and nearly passed out in meltingly hot concert halls. I've taught it to 350 Catalonians, using every trick I know to get them to sing "**G**lory to **G**od" (Spaniards don't do hard Gs). Later this December I will return to Spain to conduct it: a Spanish orchestra, English and Polish soloists, a Dutch professional choir, 300 amateur Spanish singers and an Irish conductor – a truly European occasion. In Japan I shared the stage with a local chorus who all wore face masks during the rehearsal, while singing! I have even had cause to change the text, when, as a soloist with The Sixteen, the airline having lost our luggage, we all went on stage in jeans and T-shirts. It seemed only right and fitting that the final line of *The trumpet shall sound* should be amended to "*We shall GET changed*".

Now I have the privilege to conduct this great work and learn and experience it again from another perspective. Yet in all these many, varied renditions I can honestly say I have never once found myself going through the motions or wishing to be performing another work. As with all great works of art, new discoveries will be made every time you encounter it.



Charles Jennens by
Thomas Hudson, c1740

The essence of *Messiah* lies in Charles Jennens's 'scripture collection', which relates Christ's birth, death and resurrection. Tradition has rendered it a work more often performed at Christmas, but for me the core of the drama is in the second part which relates the Easter story. The sequence of three choruses dealing with the Messiah's intercession for the sins of mankind (*Surely, he hath borne our griefs, And with his stripes* and *All we like sheep*), build a dramatic impetus which brings home with shattering impact the weight of responsibility for the one upon whom "*the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all*".

Jennens emphasises the role of Christ as the suffering Saviour, and Handel displays wonderful empathy in the extended sequence for tenor solo, beginning with *Thy rebuke*, the 'heaviness' enhanced by the stark contrast with the melting sweetness of the string writing.

As a singer I have always relished the challenges of *Messiah*. The vocal writing requires technique, stamina and virtuosity. Is Handel having a joke at the expense of his chorus in *His yoke is easy*? The vocal lines are anything but easy. Likewise the elaborate flourishes of *For unto us* and *All we like sheep* will test the expertise of any choir. For the soloists there is such a wealth of variety, from the florid exuberance of *Rejoice, greatly* and the raging semiquaver runs in *Why do the nations*, through the lilting balm of *He shall feed his flock* and the heartbreaking directness of *He was despised*, to the serene confidence of *I know that my Redeemer liveth* and the emphatic nobility of *The trumpet shall sound*.

It is perhaps difficult to overstate quite what a monumental work *Messiah* is and its importance in the musical canon. Since its premiere in Dublin in 1742, it has never ceased to be performed, and while the nature of those performances has gone through countless permutations over the centuries its appeal has remained constant – a testament to the enduring quality of Handel's achievement.

Jennens called it “*a fine entertainment*”, Handel surely saw it as something of far greater substance. Upon being praised for its favourable reception after one performance, Handel remarked “*I should be sorry if I only entertained them, I wish to make them better.*”

He has made all of us better who have come to know and love this great oratorio. What better way to praise his achievements than in the words of a writer in the Dublin Journal after the first performance:

‘Words are wanting to express the exquisite Delight it afforded to the admiring crowded audience. The Sublime, the Grand and the Tender, adapted to the most elevated, majestick and moving Words, conspired to transport and charm the ravished Heart and Ear.’



G. F. Handel by Francis Kyte, 1742

* * * MESSIAH * * *

Part One

- | | | |
|------|---|------------------|
| 1. | <i>Sinfonia</i> | |
| 2. | <i>Comfort ye</i> | Tenor |
| 3. | <i>Every valley shall be exalted</i> | Tenor |
| 4. | <i>And the glory of the Lord</i> | Chorus |
| 5. | <i>Thus saith the Lord</i> | Bass |
| 6. | <i>But who may abide</i> | Alto |
| 7. | <i>And he shall purify</i> | Chorus |
| 8. | <i>Behold a virgin shall conceive</i> | Alto |
| 9. | <i>O thou that tellest</i> | Alto and Chorus |
| 10. | <i>For behold, darkness shall cover the earth</i> | Bass |
| 11. | <i>The people that walked</i> | Bass |
| 12. | <i>For unto us a child is born</i> | Chorus |
| 13. | <i>Pifa ('Pastoral Symphony')</i> | |
| 14a. | <i>There were shepherds</i> | Soprano |
| 14b. | <i>And lo, the angel of the Lord</i> | Soprano |
| 15. | <i>And the angel said unto them</i> | Soprano |
| 16. | <i>And suddenly there was with the angel</i> | Soprano |
| 17. | <i>Glory to God</i> | Chorus |
| 18. | <i>Rejoice greatly</i> | Soprano |
| 19. | <i>Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened</i> | Alto |
| 20. | <i>He shall feed his flock</i> | Alto and Soprano |
| 21. | <i>His yoke is easy</i> | Chorus |

* * * INTERVAL * * *

(Drinks served in the Church Hall directly opposite the church)

Part Two

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|-----|---|--------|
| 22. | <i>Behold the Lamb of God</i> | Chorus |
| 23. | <i>He was despised</i> | Alto |
| 24. | <i>Surely he hath borne our griefs</i> | Chorus |
| 25. | <i>And with his stripes we are healed</i> | Chorus |

| | | |
|-----|---|---------|
| 26. | <i>All we like sheep</i> | Chorus |
| 27. | <i>All they that see him</i> | Tenor |
| 28. | <i>He trusted in God</i> | Chorus |
| 29. | <i>Thy rebuke hath broken his heart</i> | Tenor |
| 30. | <i>Behold and see if there be any sorrow</i> | Tenor |
| 31. | <i>He was cut off out of the land of the living</i> | Tenor |
| 32. | <i>But thou didst not leave his soul in hell</i> | Tenor |
| 33. | <i>Lift up your heads</i> | Chorus |
| 34. | <i>Unto which of the angels</i> | Tenor |
| 37. | <i>The Lord gave the word</i> | Chorus |
| 38. | <i>How beautiful are the feet</i> | Soprano |
| 39. | <i>Their sound is gone out</i> | Chorus |
| 40. | <i>Why do the nations so furiously rage</i> | Bass |
| 41. | <i>Let us break their bonds asunder</i> | Chorus |
| 42. | <i>He that dwelleth in heaven</i> | Tenor |
| 43. | <i>Thou shalt break them in pieces</i> | Tenor |
| 44. | <i>Hallelujah</i> | Chorus |

Part Three

| | | |
|-----|--|---------|
| 45. | <i>I know that my redeemer liveth</i> | Soprano |
| 46. | <i>Since by man came death</i> | Chorus |
| 47. | <i>Behold I tell you a mystery</i> | Bass |
| 48. | <i>The trumpet shall sound</i> | Bass |
| 52. | <i>If God be for us</i> | Soprano |
| 53. | <i>Worthy is the Lamb that was slain</i> | Chorus |
| 54. | <i>Amen</i> | Chorus |

EAMONN DOUGAN



Eamonn Dougan is an inspirational conductor and renowned baritone. He is Associate Conductor of The Sixteen and founding Director of Britten Sinfonia Voices. Informed by his singing, Eamonn is an engaging communicator with a particular passion for Bach, the French Baroque and Sixteenth and Twentieth Century English repertoire.

Forthcoming conducting engagements include a tour of France with renowned ensemble Accentus, *Messiah* in Spain, tours and performances with the Danish VokalEnsemble in both the 2017-18 and 2018-19 seasons, a return visit to Jersey Chamber Orchestra and ORCAM (Spain), and continued work educating choral groups across the world including conducting his own Thomas Tallis Society and Genesis Sixteen. Eamonn's work with Sir James MacMillan and James's Cumnock Tryst Festival continues as he returns to direct a special MacMillan premiere composed for the Tryst's fifth anniversary. He will conduct De Profundis on their next album and will assist Sir Mark Elder on Opera Rara's next recording and performance at Royal Festival Hall.

Eamonn recently conducted *Così fan tutte* at the Ryedale Festival ("*Dougan's baton maintained a steady momentum ... a heart-warming show*" – York Press), Fauré *Requiem* with the newly formed Chiltern Arts Festival Chorus, and Mozart's *La finta giardiniera* with The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment Experience Ensemble ("*he kept them right on the ball*" – York Press). He has directed many orchestras and choirs including Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Irish Baroque Orchestra, Corinthian Chamber Orchestra, Royal Northern Sinfonia, Trondheim Barokk, Opera Rara, BBC Singers, Accentus (Paris), Wrocław Philharmonic Choir (Poland), and Coro de la Comunidad (Madrid). Programming highlights have included curating and conducting 'A Weekend of Excessively Good Taste' (French Baroque) at Kings Place, London.

HELEN NEEVES

Helen Neeves has many years' experience as a solo and consort singer encompassing concert work, recordings and radio broadcasts, particularly in the fields of baroque and classical music. A snapshot of Helen's repertoire is shown in the following list of recent solo engagements – Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, Mozart's *Exultate Jubilate*, Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *St John Passion*, Mozart's *Requiem* in York Minster with the Royal Northern Sinfonia, and Haydn's *Creation* with Bedford Choral Society. Having performed Rutter's *Requiem* and Górecki's *Second Symphony* in Munich last November, Helen returned there this year to perform Dupré's *De Profundis*.



As well as being a member of the BBC Singers, Helen has sung with many other vocal ensembles including the Sixteen, the Clerks Group, I Fagiolini, Britten Sinfonia Voices and Yorkshire Baroque Soloists. Engagements this year have included John Blow's *Venus and Adonis* with The Theatre of the Ayre and a performance of I Fagiolini's 'Amuse Bouche' programme in the Ryedale Festival. In January Helen will be singing with I Fagiolini in Maastricht.

As an admirer of Jane Austen it has been a pleasure to be involved with a recital project put together for last year's bicentenary celebrations; with The Austen Trio, Helen performed music loved and played by Jane Austen and her family. Recitals took place in various locations including Bath Assembly Rooms and Winchester Cathedral, and a CD of the music will be coming out shortly.

JESSICA GILLINGWATER



London-born mezzo-soprano Jessica Gillingwater studies with David Pollard and is a member of the BBC Singers. Recent concert highlights include Bernstein's *Jeremiah* Symphony with the BBC Symphony Orchestra at Saffron Hall, Duruflé's *Requiem* with Stephen Cleobury and the BBC Concert Orchestra at King's College Cambridge, and Mrs Noye in Britten's *Noye's Fludde* with Martyn Brabbins at Southwark Cathedral. Jessica also has a keen interest in contemporary music and has recently performed Boulez's *Le Marteau sans maître* and Ligeti's *Aventures* and *Nouvelles Aventures* with the Psappha Ensemble at Hallé St Peter's. Jessica's oratorio repertoire includes Handel's *Messiah*, Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, Bach's *Passions* and *B minor Mass*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, and Verdi's *Requiem*. Jessica also performs regularly with ensembles including Exaudi, Solomon's Knot, The Dunedin Consort, The Marian Consort, Alamire and The Choir of the Enlightenment.

Jessica completed ENO's Opera Works Programme in 2015, having previously studied with Louise Winter at the Royal Northern College of Music where she was supported by the D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust. Whilst at the RNCM she was a finalist in the Elizabeth Harwood and Frederic Cox competitions and was awarded the Dame Eva Turner Prize. She was the vocal faculty winner of the concerto competition and performed the *Wesendonck Lieder* in the RNCM Concerto Competition Final. Jessica has participated in masterclasses with Christine Brewer, Mark Shanahan and Catherine Wyn-Rogers. Jessica has performed the roles of Mrs Herring in Britten's *Albert Herring* (Hampstead Garden Opera); Giunone in Monteverdi's *Il Ritorno D'Ulisse in Patria* (RNCM); Miranda in Arnold's *The Dancing Master* (Malcolm Arnold Festival); Mother and Witch in Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* (Didsbury Arts Festival).

TOM RASKIN

Born in Bath, Tom studied at the RNCM in Manchester and New College, Oxford, before going on to become a Britten-Pears Young Artist. In 2000 he was awarded the Anne Ziegler Prize, followed by the Freckleton Prize in 2001, and was the recipient of a major Scholarship from the Peter Moores Foundation which funded study both in Italy and London.

Recent concert work includes the Verdi *Requiem*, Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, Calaf in *Turandot* (concert performance), Stainer's *Crucifixion* in Norway, Rossini's *Stabat Mater* broadcast live on BBC Radio 3 from King's College, Cambridge, and arias in the *St John* and *St Matthew Passions* (Norwich Cathedral).



Tom is one of four tenors in the BBC Singers, and has sung a wide range of solos with them from Streshnev in Mussorgsky's *Khovanshchina*, to the St Matthew Passion arias, to Bernstein's *Hashkiveinu*, to Jason Donovan's half of the duet "*Especially for you*". He is much in demand on the concert platform in Britain and abroad, in places as far-flung as Novosibirsk in Siberia, to St Mark's Basilica, Venice. He has performed with orchestras including the BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, the CBSO, The Sixteen and English Baroque Soloists.

He also has a large operatic repertoire from the baroque to the present day; he recently sang the Cockerel in Stravinsky's *Renard* with the BCMG in one of Oliver Knussen's last appearances on the concert platform, and he recorded the role of Signor Ravioli in Alfred Cellier's *The Mountebanks* with the BBCCO.

He gave the world premiere of Lord Fitztollemache in Weinberg's *Lady Magnesia*, and has sung for Glyndebourne, Garsington, Opera South, Opera East and the Iford Festival. He has made regular appearances with New Chamber Opera.

In 2017 and 2018 Tom gave several recitals with the pianist Christopher Weston; a mini-tour of Schubert's *Winterreise*, and Finzi's *Till Earth Outwears*. More recitals are planned in 2019, including one in Dulwich, of Rachmaninov and Respighi, and a Vaughan Williams celebration in Thaxted. He longs to own a dog, but would settle for a feathered goose.

TIMOTHY DICKINSON



British bass-baritone Timothy Dickinson enjoys a busy and varied career at home and abroad. He is in demand as a concert soloist, on the operatic stage and as an ensemble singer. His work has taken him all over the world, to such venues as the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam; Wigmore Hall, London; Alice Tully Hall, New York; The Royal Albert Hall; the Kremlin and many more.

Operatic roles have included Masetto (*Don Giovanni*) at Glyndebourne; Dr Grenvil (*La traviata*) for Longborough and Glyndebourne Tour, and Zuniga (*Carmen*) for Scottish Opera. Timothy has also made regular appearances with the innovative company, Silent Opera, in London, Helsinki and Beijing. He has also been a regular guest at the St Endellion Festivals, performing with such luminaries as Sir John Tomlinson, Philip Langridge, Alan Opie and the Festival's director, Mark Padmore.

On the concert platform, Timothy has made regular appearances with baroque specialists, La Nuova Musica, in Operas by Cesti and Handel; oratorios by Charpentier and Carissimi and in choral works by Schütz, Purcell, Blow and Britten. He took the role of Aristobolo in Handel's *Berenice* with the same group at the Handel Festivals of London and Göttingen, where his "rich bass endowed Aristobolo with gravitas" (theoperacritic.com). Other ensembles with whom Timothy has performed include The Sixteen, Ensemble Plus Ultra, Solomon's Knot and Sonoro.

Notable appearances on the oratorio stage have included Bach's *St John Passion* with Mark Padmore and Britten Sinfonia ("a gravely noble Christ" – The Independent); Handel's *Messiah* with La Nuova Musica ("hi well-supported bass shook heavens and earth" – The Times); Duruflé's *Requiem*, conducted by James MacMillan at the St Endellion Easter Festival, and Verdi's *Requiem* in the Chapel of King's College, Cambridge.

In recital, Timothy has recently begun an exciting collaboration with pianist Anyssa Neumann. Their inaugural programme takes Don Quixote as its theme, and features music by Ravel, Ibert, Massenet and Delannoy, as well as poetry and dramatic readings. In early 2018, the pair gave a well-received performance at a packed-out St Martin-in-the-Fields, London.

THOMAS TALLIS SOCIETY CHOIR

Sopranos Phoebe Clapham, Imogen Clark, Julia Corfe Press, Imogen Faris, **Emily Jennings**, Claire Jones, Philippa Kent, Rachel Lethbridge, Anna Moreton, Romy Nuttall, Ley Spicer, Jenny Standage, Kathryn Strachan

Altos Caitlin Brooks, Rosemary Burch, Miriam Coe, Susan Dean, Emma Humphries, Sophy Miles, Cathy Norbury, Katherine Pile, **Angharad Rowlands**, Alice Shelton

Tenors Andrew Greene, **Chris Huggon**, Alan Jolly, Nathan Killen, John Parsons, Paul Renney, **Will Wright**

Basses Dermot Agnew, Rob Barker, Rick Brooks, Cyril Cleary, Quentin Evans, **Jonathan Eyers**, Simon Gallie, Andrew Harper, David Houghton, Daniel Jaffé, Jonathan Louth, Peter Lunzer, Nigel Press

Bold denotes TTS Choral Ambassadors.

THOMAS TALLIS SOCIETY BAROQUE ORCHESTRA

Violin 1

Oliver Webber (Leader)
Laura Rickard
Hazel Brooks
Emma Lake

Violin 2

Henrietta Wayne
Oakki Lau
Wendi Webber

Viola

Martin Kelly
Emma Alter

Cello

Gavin Kibble
Tom Wraith

Double Bass

Hannah Turnbull

Trumpet

Paul Sharpe
Tamsin Cowell

Timpani

James Bower

Organ / Harpsichord

Joe Waggott

THOMAS TALLIS SOCIETY

The Thomas Tallis Society, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in the 2015-16 season, takes its name from the 16th century composer who worked in the Royal Court in Greenwich and is buried in the crypt of the Parish Church of St Alfege.

The choir was founded by Philip Simms, who was organist and choirmaster at the church from 1964 to 2000, and our links with the church continue to the present.

Philip was succeeded by Stephen Dagg, Director of the Centre for Young Musicians at Morley College, London and organist at St Alfege Church, in 2006. During our 50th anniversary year we were delighted to appoint Eamonn Dougan as our new Musical Director.

With around 45 auditioned voices TTS presents four or five concerts a year in the beautiful setting of St Alfege Church. Although many of the choir members live locally in Greenwich, TTS attracts musicians from all over London owing to the high standards it maintains. All singers are required to have very good sight-reading abilities as the choir works on a few concentrated rehearsals before each concert.

We are always keen to recruit new voices. If you are interested, please contact our membership secretary Kathryn Strachan strac157@ntlworld.com.

Follow us on:  @TTSoc. Look out for updates on [facebook.com/ThomasTallisSociety](https://www.facebook.com/ThomasTallisSociety).

FRIENDS AND PATRONS



We are very grateful to our faithful group of Patrons and Friends that have been loyally supporting us for a number of years. Their generosity and support have really helped the Society to keep going. A reliable yearly income is a huge benefit in planning programmes and means we can budget more accurately.

We are very keen to increase the number of Patrons and Friends to help us go forward in a sustainable manner and we would love your support as either a Patron or Friend.

A Friend contributes £30 per year and this special relationship with the choir is recognised by:

- A newsletter with early notification of concerts
- An invitation to the annual Friends and Patrons party
- Recognition of support in TTS programmes.

As a Patron of the Society you receive additional benefits in recognition of an annual donation of £150:

- A complimentary top price ticket to all concerts
- Free concert programmes
- Separate interval or pre-concert complimentary drinks table
- Acknowledgment of support of the Society in the programme
- An invitation to the annual Friends and Patrons party.

Please consider whether you could support TTS by becoming a Patron or a Friend of the Society. Speak to Carole tonight or contact her at carolelowe@rocketmail.com.

We would like to recognise the important contribution of the following TTS Patrons: Mrs Daphne Barnett, Mr and Mrs T Dannatt, Ms Susan Doering, Prof Nigel Duncan, Mrs Sue Edwards, Ms Jacqueline Flurschein, Mr Simon Gallie, Revd and Mrs M Hatcher, Dr and Mrs E Hurst, Mr Robert John, Mr Peter Kinnison, Mr Graham Lane, Mrs Natalie Miles, Mr John O'Neill, Dr Mary-Clare Parker, Mr Adam Pollock, Mr Nigel Press, Mrs Julia Press, Mr David Quarmby, Mr and Mrs T Shelton, Mrs Jenny Standage, Mr Simon Standage, Ms Siobhan Smyth, Mr Richard Williams, Mrs Virginia Williams and Mr Robert Williams.

TTS Friends are Mrs Rita Berry, Mrs Stella Booth, Mrs Eve Clark, Mrs Faith Clarke, Ms Caroline Cooper, Dr C P Hanson-Abbott, Mr Richard Haydon, Mrs Linda Haydon, Ms Alison Leggatt, Mrs Leilia McKee, Ms Melissa Reid, Mr and Mrs P Sankey-Barker, Mr and Mrs A Seymour and Dr T C Stokes.

With thanks to Chris Moody and the Churchwardens of St Alfege for their unremitting and enthusiastic support. And also to John Mander who build and maintains the chamber organ played tonight.



Wishing you a very Happy Christmas

FOR YOUR DIARY – All in St Alfege Church, Greenwich

Saturday 23 March 2019 – Darkness to Light

A musical journey from the day's end into the promise a new day brings.

Repertoire by Tallis, Whyte, Byrd, Rheinberger, Arvo Pärt, Eric Whitacre and Alec Roth.

Sunday 16 June 2019 – Magnificat

A summer concert including Bach Magnificat, followed by a reception and party.



Christmas Services 2018

Sunday 2 December

6.30pm Service of Readings and Music for Advent

Sunday 16 December

10am Family Eucharist and Nativity Play

6.30pm Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

Monday 24 December Christmas Eve

5pm Christingle Service

10.45pm Carol Concert by St Alfege Church Choir

11.30pm Midnight Mass (candlelit)

Tuesday 25 December

8am Holy Communion

11am Parish Eucharist with Carols

Sunday 30 December

10am Parish Eucharist

Follow the opening of Advent Windows around Greenwich Town Centre from 1 to 24 December. Visit www.adventwindows.com for more information.