

DARTFORD CHORAL SOCIETY

Spring Concert

JOHN STAINER

THE CRUCIFIXION

Malcolm Williamson

Procession of Palms

Handel

Messiah (Choruses & Solos from Pt.3)



Saturday 25th March 2023

St. Michael's Church

Wilmington

Conductor: Michael Bell

Organ Accompanist: Raymond Lewis



Affiliated to Making Music

www.dartfordchoral.org.uk

Registered charity No.1042096

PROGRAMME

1. Malcolm Williamson – *Procession of Palms*

Ride on! ride on in majesty!...

All glory, laud and honour...

O Saviour of the world...

Benedictus qui venit...

Hosanna in excelsis.

Sir Malcolm Benjamin Graham Christopher Williamson (1931-2003) was Master of the Queen's Musick from 1975 until his death. His short choral piece, *Procession of Palms*, sprang to a certain popularity in the early 1960s. He also produced many other, rather more serious and challenging works in his lifetime, including much for organ, of which he was himself an executant. He treats the two hymns heard here to tunes with a jaunty, contemporary flavour. The *Hosanna* - "blink and you miss it"- packs a punch despite its brevity.

2. G.F.Handel – *Messiah* [from Part 3]

Aria I know that my Redeemer liveth... (solo: Rachel Miles)

Chorus Since by Man came death...

Recit Behold, I tell you a mystery... (solo: Kevin Grafton)

& *Aria* The Trumpet shall sound...

Choruses Worthy is the Lamb that was slain...

Blessing and honour, glory and pow'r be unto Him...

Amen.

George Frederick Handel (1685-1759) also specialised in speedy composition, completing his (lengthy) oratorio in an unbelievably short space of time, Part Three begins with one of Handel's most celebrated arias. *Since by Man* alternates two unaccompanied subdued passages with two joyful outbursts focusing on the Resurrection. Kevin Grafton sings just the first section of a lengthy aria, possibly as much renowned for its trumpet solo accompaniment. The final chorus is the powerful conclusion of the oratorio. Its three sections end, if there were to be any doubt, with fugal *Amens* on a grand scale.

3. John Stainer – *The Crucifixion*

And they came to a place named Gethsemane...
The Agony
Procession to Calvary
And when they were come...
The Mystery of the divine humiliation (Hymn: Cross of Jesus)
He made Himself of no reputation...
The Majesty of the divine humiliation
And as Moses lifted up the serpent...
God so loved the world...
Litany of the Passion (Hymn: Holy Jesu, by Thy passion)
Jesus said: Father, forgive them...
So Thou liftest Thy divine petition...
The Mystery of Intercession (Hymn: Jesus, the Crucified)
And one of the malefactors...
The Adoration of the Crucified (Hymn: I adore Thee)
When Jesus therefore saw His Mother...
Is it nothing to you?...
The Appeal of the Crucified
After this, Jesus saith, “I thirst”...
For the love of Jesus (Hymn: All for Jesus)

Aeron Preston (Tenor),
Kevin Grafton (Bass),
Raymond Lewis (Organ)
Michael Bell (Conductor)

Sir John Stainer (1840-1901) was, as a composer, really only well-known for *The Crucifixion*. However, as (eventually) organist of St Paul’s Cathedral, he also wrote much for the organ, many of the pieces deserving more frequent performance than they earned before something of a revival in the middle of the twentieth century onwards. Stainer was distinguished in many other aspects (hence the knighthood in 1888).

At regular intervals throughout *The Crucifixion* appear some of Stainer’s own very Victorian hymns for congregation. Perhaps apart from the first

and last of these they are not otherwise widely used nowadays. A number of them are very lengthy, For tonight some of the longer ones have been ‘trimmed’.

Hymn words have been reproduced on a separate sheet and, possibly after hearing the first verse of each, you are invited to stand and join in as was always intended. ©MBell 2023

DARTFORD CHORAL SOCIETY

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Elaine Clark
Pat Everington (*Chairman*)
Angela Grant
Pamela Hunt
Margaret Martin
Rachel Miles
Diane Moorman
Rosemary Peel
Barbara Toft

Altos

Rachael Anderson
Katie Bell
Marilyn Davey
Nicky Garland
Louise Peterken
Gwen Rumble
Chris Settle
Mary Webb

Tenors

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*Dartford Choral Society is dependent upon financial assistance to continue giving public concerts with soloists of standing. If you would like to support us by becoming a Patron, please leave your name and address with a Choir member or Steward. Alternatively, contact the Patrons Secretary,
Andrew Dey – Tel.01322 555406.*

The Dartford Choral Society greatly appreciates the financial assistance kindly given to us by our Patrons.

Our Musical Director - Michael Bell

Michael Bell has been Musical Director of Dartford Choral Society since 1984 taking over the baton from David Atkinson. A graduate of Bristol University, he trained additionally as a music teacher at the London Institute of Education. He is a fellow of the Royal College of Organists.

He was Director of Music at Dartford Grammar School from 1975 to 1992 and has served as Rochester Diocesan Organ Adviser. First prizewinner of the 1983 West of England Organ Festival, he has subsequently given recitals at St. Paul's, Southwark and Rochester Cathedrals, and in many churches in London and the provinces (not to mention Scotland).

A former organist of Dartford Parish Church, Michael is currently Organist and Choirmaster of St. Nicholas Church, Chislehurst, Kent.

Our Organ Accompanist – Raymond Lewis

He was for many years Director of Music at St Stephen's Rochester Row in Westminster, and of Crown Court Church of Scotland (originally, the chapel of the Scottish Embassy) in Covent Garden. He has played at most of the major cathedrals of the UK and has given solo recitals in the cathedrals of Southwark, Rochester, St David's and Chichester, St Alban's Abbey and Central Hall Westminster.

As a composer, his output includes much church music (RSCM and Encore Publications), some music for strings, and a setting of the *Gloria* for baritone solo, choir and large orchestra. His anthem *It came even to pass* was described in the press as 'outstanding'. His compositions have been performed at the Barbican Centre, The Royal Festival Hall, St Alban's Abbey, Rochester Cathedral and Liverpool Cathedral.

Raymond was Director of Music at All Saints' Orpington from 1989 until 2018, conductor of All Saints' Festival Choir and Orchestra from

1992 until 2022, and conductor of Orpington Symphony Orchestra from 2003 until 2018.

Tenor – Aaron Preston

Welsh pianist Aaron Preston read Music at St John's College, Cambridge, and worked as a secondary Music teacher for a number of years. He also accompanied a number of choirs in Mid Wales, including Montgomery County Music Festival Choir, Kington Choral Society, and Brecon Singers. In 2013 he attended the Wales International Academy of Voice in Cardiff to train as a répétiteur, gaining a PGDip with Distinction. He continued his training the following year at the National Opera Studio in London. He now works as a freelance accompanist and répétiteur, working with choral societies, opera companies and schools: recently he has worked with Harlow Chorus, Beckenham Chorale, Kingston Choral Society, Mid Wales Opera, Garsington Opera and Streatham and Clapham High School.

Bass – Kevin Grafton

Kevin Grafton was born in London, but soon realised his mistake and moved to Kent. Too late, however, as at the age of six, he had already been inveigled into a church choir in Kensington, and thus began a lifelong obsession with choirs, churches and organs. He has sung in many choirs over the years, in London, Cambridge and Dartford, most notably having sung for 48 years with The Bach Choir. He has been organist and choirmaster at St Bartholomew's, Otford, for 42 years. Past involvement with Dartford Choral Society has varied from singing Pilate in Bach's St John Passion to providing piano accompaniment for Orff's Carmina Burana. A retired Chartered Accountant in real life, Kevin's activities and interests include Kent County Organists' Association, art, architecture, poetry, Mensa, the Anglo-Saxons, Austria, local history, Jack the Ripper and real ale.

The Dartford Choral Society rehearses on Monday evenings, from 7:30pm to 9:30pm, (except July & August) at the Mick Jagger Centre, Shepherds Lane, Dartford. New members are always welcome. Please contact the Hon. Secretary, Paul Grimmer 01342 833911 (Daytime) 01322 227994 (Evenings). Email: secretary@dartfordchoral.org.uk

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Dartford Choral Society's next concert will be on Saturday 17th June at St Michael's Church, Wilmington at 7.30pm. Entitled 'Coronation Concert', music performed will include Coronation Anthems and also a performance of tonight's accompanist's *Gloria*. Raymond Lewis will be at the organ and bass soloist will be Crispin Lewis.