

Hailsham Choral Society



Dettingen Te Deum

and

Messiah: Part II

by

George Frideric Handel

7.30pm Saturday 25th March 2017

All Saints' Church,
Eastbourne

Hailsham Choral Society is a
Registered Charity
No: 1100408

www.hailshamchoral.org


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The following notes trace the origins of the two works in this evening's concert, but by date of composition, rather than order of performance.

Messiah (Part II)

Background

The German-born Handel first visited London for a few weeks in 1710-11 to promote his Italian Opera *Rinaldo*, but two years later he was back to stay and the promotion of Italian Opera remained his chief preoccupation for the next thirty years. He wrote forty such works in his lifetime, but by the 1730s fashions were changing and the call for Italian Opera was in decline. Although Handel remained committed to the genre, he also introduced English language oratorios as occasional alternatives. When he finally abandoned Italian



Opera early in 1741, it was amid rumours that he despaired of the London public and had decided to leave the country. If this



was so, he was deflected from leaving by two events: an offer to collaborate on a new work and an invitation to visit Ireland.

In July 1741, Charles Jennens, (pictured left) a wealthy landowner with literary and musical interests, sent Handel a new oratorio wordbook, or libretto. Jennens, who had previously collaborated with Handel, wrote to a friend:

I hope I shall persuade [Handel] to set another Scripture Collection I have made for him... I hope he will lay out his whole Genius & Skill upon it, that the Composition may excel all his former Compositions, as the Subject excels every other subject. The Subject is Messiah.

No matter how attractive the subject, Handel never composed without a performance in mind, and assurance for this came from an unexpected source.

William Cavendish, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, was one of the less memorable Dukes of Devonshire. He would surely be forgotten entirely were it not for his invitation to Handel, on behalf of several local charities, to take part in a season of concerts in Dublin. The prospect of a new public, charitable causes and a whole series of performances, galvanised Handel into planning a number of 'entertainments'. These included several of his recent secular successes, and for a sacred piece, he took up Jennens' new wordbook and set to work.

Handel started composing *Messiah* on 22nd August 1741 and finished 24 days later on 14th September. The turbulent state of the score (259 pages) with its

blots, scratchings-out, alterations, unfilled bars and other uncorrected errors, is evidence of the speed with which he worked. However, the time-scale was not unusual for Handel and much of his output was written at a similar rate.

First Performance

When Handel arrived in Dublin on 18th November 1741, it was experiencing something of a 'golden age' as the second city of the British Isles and a centre for the arts. Right from the first concert on 23rd December, Handel's music played to enthusiastic audiences, but *Messiah* was kept back until the following Spring, being announced in the *Dublin Journal* of 27th March 1742:



For Relief of the Prisoners in the several Gaols, and for the Support of Mercer's Hospital... and of the Charitable Infirmary... on Monday the 12th April, will be performed at the Musick Hall in Fishamble Street [pictured left], Mr. Handel's new Grand Oratorio, call'd the MESSIAH, in which the Gentlemen of the Choirs of Both Cathedrals will assist, with some Concertoes on the Organ, by Mr. Handell.

The performance was actually put off 'At the desire of several Persons of distinction' until 13th April and a further notice appeared in the *Dublin Journal*:

Many Ladies and Gentlemen who are well-wishers to this Noble and Grand Charity for which this Oratorio was composed, request it as a Favour, that the Ladies who honour this Performance with their Presence would be pleased to come without Hoops, and Gentlemen... without their Swords, as it will greatly encrease the Charity, by making room for more company.

The performance was very well received and raised a great deal of money. The *Dublin Journal* again:

Words are wanting to express the exquisite Delight it afforded to the admiring crouded Audience. The Sublime, the Grand, and the Tender, adapted to the most elevated, majestic and moving Words, conspired to transport and charm the ravished Heart and Ear. It is but Justice to Mr. Handel, that the World should know, he generously gave the money arising from this Grand Performance [£400] to be shared equally by... the three great and pious Charities...

Part II of *Messiah* is based on Biblical verses concerned with Christ's crucifixion, resurrection and ascension, and the spreading of the Gospel. Many of the verses are taken from prophetic texts in the Old Testament and contemplate the significance of events, rather than describing them directly. With many choruses and arias reflecting the events of Easter, Part II is particularly appropriate at this time of year.

Dettingen Te Deum

Background

The Battle of Dettingen took place on 17th July 1743. It was an early battle in the War of the Austrian Succession and saw George II (pictured right) lead a British Army and its allies to victory against the French. It is remarkable as the last occasion upon which a British monarch personally led an army and fought alongside his troops.¹ News of the victory soon reached London and prayers of thanksgiving were offered in churches throughout the land.



Handel, in his capacity as *Composer of the Musick for the Chapel Royal*, anticipated a grand victory celebration at St Paul's Cathedral and immediately set to work on a large-scale *Te Deum* (*Hymn of Praise*) for the event. Working at his usual pace and composing in a grand ceremonial style, he finished it in 12 days. Expecting the piece to be performed in the vastness of a cathedral, Handel wrote for an orchestra that was large by the standards of the day and included kettle-drums and three trumpets.

However, it was soon obvious that Handel had misjudged the mood prevailing in the country, for George II's involvement in wars on the Continent was not universally popular. To many people it seemed he was using the British military to enhance his position as Elector of Hanover (his German province) rather than prioritising wider British interests. The King's case was not helped by reports that he fought wearing a Hanoverian sash rather than a British uniform; nor by his actions after the battle, when he extended a stay in Hanover to over four months before returning to London. Moreover, Britain was not officially at war with France and the battle led to no political resolution or peace treaty (hostilities were to drag on for another four years).

By the time the King returned to London in mid-November, there was little enthusiasm for a grand celebration, let alone one at St Paul's. But Handel was still hoping for some sort of performance of his new *Te Deum* and held two rehearsals at the Banqueting House Chapel in Whitehall. The first of these was witnessed by Mrs Delaney, a devoted admirer (and not altogether objective critic) who wrote enthusiastically to her sister:

¹ It is also the last occasion on which a soldier was knighted on the battlefield. Private Tom Brown fought in the King's Own Dragoons. During the battle he had two horses killed under him and witnessed the regimental standard being taken by the French. In recovering the standard he was severely wounded, receiving eight sabre cuts to his head, neck and face, losing two fingers and most of his nose. In addition he had two musket balls in his back and three passed through his headgear. Despite being so badly wounded, he returned the standard to his own lines and the cheers of his comrades. In addition to the knighthood, King George gave him a gold-topped walking stick, a silver artificial nose and a pension of 30 crowns a year.

It is excessively fine, I was all rapture... everybody says it is the finest of his compositions; I am not well enough acquainted with it to pronounce that of it, but it is heavenly.

First Performance

The *Te Deum* was eventually performed before the King on 27th November 1743, five months after the Battle of Dettingen. Unfortunately, the occasion and the venue were the opposite of those for which the work had been designed. Instead of a great national celebration in the wide-open spaces of St Paul's, Handel had to make do with a regular Sunday service in the relatively tiny Chapel Royal at St James' Palace (pictured right). The Chapel was designed for intimate worship, not for loud ceremonial. The performers for the occasion were the singers of the Chapel Royal accompanied by His Majesty's Band of Musicians. These were supplemented by 'extraordinary' performers hired-in for the occasion.



The Chapel Royal is considerably smaller than All Saints' Church where we are this evening (smaller even, than the chancel) and the performers would have taken up most of the room, leaving little space for the congregation. The sound they all experienced must have been overwhelming, especially in those 'big' choruses involving full orchestra with trumpets and drums! Yet while the *Te Deum* undoubtedly contains plenty of ceremonial brilliance, there are also quieter moments of subtlety and elegance, and the contrasts between movements show Handel to be a composer of great versatility.

Recycling

Like most composers of his day, Handel was very accomplished at 'recycling' musical ideas both from his own works and those by other composers. Such ideas would be extensively re-worked to suit their new home - a process sometimes called 'transformative imitation'! In the *Dettingen Te Deum*, Handel 'transforms' parts of an earlier *Te Deum* by Francesco Urio (ca. 1700), and while most of us have never heard of that work or its composer, many will be familiar with Handel's own *Messiah* and may well recognise at least two sections that were 'recycled' for use in the new *Te Deum*.

George Frideric Handel

Dettingen Te Deum

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|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. We praise Thee, O God | <i>Contralto
& Chorus</i> |
| 2. All the earth doth worship Thee | <i>Soloists
& Chorus</i> |
| 3. To Thee all angels cry aloud | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 4. To Thee Cherubim and Seraphim | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 5. The glorious company of apostles | <i>Soloists
& Chorus</i> |
| 6. Thine honourable, true & only son | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 7. Thou art the King of Glory | <i>Bass & Chorus</i> |
| 8. When Thou tookest upon Thee | <i>Bass</i> |
| 9. When Thou hadst overcome | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 10. Thou didst open the kingdom | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 11. Thou sittest at the right hand | <i>Soloists</i> |
| 12. We believe that Thou shalt come | <i>Soloists</i> |
| 13. We therefore pray | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 14. Make them to be numbered | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 15. Day by day we magnify Thee | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 16. And we worship Thy name | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 17. Vouchsafe, O Lord | <i>Bass</i> |
| 18. O Lord, in Thee have I trusted | <i>Contralto
& Chorus</i> |



Messiah Part 2

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|--|------------------|
| 1. Behold the Lamb of God | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 2. He was despised | <i>Contralto</i> |
| 3. Surely he hath borne our griefs | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 4. And with his stripes we are healed | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 5. All we like sheep have gone astray | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 6. All they that see him | <i>Tenor</i> |
| 7. He trusted in God | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 8. Thy rebuke hath broken his heart | <i>Tenor</i> |
| 9. Behold and see if there be any sorrow | <i>Tenor</i> |
| 10. He was cut off out of the land | <i>Soprano</i> |
| 11. But thou didst not leave his soul | <i>Soprano</i> |
| 12. Lift up your heads, O ye gates | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 13. Unto which of the angels said he | <i>Tenor</i> |
| 14. Let all the angels of God | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 15. Thou art gone up on high | <i>Soprano</i> |
| 16. The Lord gave the word | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 17. How beautiful are the feet | <i>Soprano</i> |
| 18. Their sound is gone out | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 19. Why do the nations so furiously rage | <i>Bass</i> |
| 20. Let us break their bonds asunder | <i>Chorus</i> |
| 21. He that dwelleth in heaven | <i>Tenor</i> |
| 22. Thou shalt break them | <i>Tenor</i> |
| 23. Hallelujah | <i>Chorus</i> |

***God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit,
seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles,
believed on in the world, received up into glory.***

(I Timothy 3 vs 16)

These words were selected by Charles Jennens for the preface
of the *Messiah* audience word-book.

Soloists

Catrin Woodruff - Soprano

Catrin is a Welsh soprano now based in Sussex. She trained at the University of York and the Royal Northern College of Music, and continues her studies with Louise Winter.



As a busy freelance artist, she is a regular opera and concert performer in the UK and abroad. Recent highlights include a programme of solo Bach and Handel cantatas at St Martin-in-the-Fields, a touring production of Rossini's *L'Italiana in Algeri* (Elvira) with Pop-up Opera, Helios Collective's reimagined Purcell project *Dido & Belinda* (Second Witch), Stanford's *Much Ado About Nothing* (Beatrice) with the Northern Opera Group, Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Susanna) at Berwick Opera Festival and the Edinburgh Fringe, Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* (Kate Pinkerton & chorus) and Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (chorus) with the Bergen Nasjonale Opera, and the title role in *Dido & Aeneas* with the Brighton Early Music Festival.

In her spare time, Catrin is a voracious reader, foodie and wanderer upon the South Downs. She is also partial to whisky and the National Trust.

Rebecca Anstey – Mezzo Soprano



Rebecca achieved a Degree and Postgraduate Diploma in Vocal Performance and Opera at Birmingham Conservatoire, under the tuition of Christine Cairns. Whilst at the Conservatoire she won a Kathleen Ferrier Trust award and a Music Sound Fund award.

In opera, Rebecca has sung with a number of touring companies, including Grange Park Opera, where she played roles such as Romeo from Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*. As a concert soloist, she has performed in many major works including Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *St John's Passion*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Haydn's *Nelson Mass*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, with a number of choral societies. These include Seaford, Shrewsbury, Hailsham and Norwich, The Royal College of Organists, The Royal Free Singers, Derby Cathedral Choir and the Choir of St John's.

Rebecca now spends most of her time singing, teaching and giving vocal workshops to choral societies.

Stephen Rooke - Tenor

Stephen Rooke was born in Newport, Gwent, and studied at the Royal Northern College of Music, winning several prestigious prizes during his time there.

Stephen has been a member of both Glyndebourne Festival and Touring Opera Companies, and was awarded the Eric Vietheer Prize by the Festival Opera. He has also performed solo roles with The Royal Opera, English National Opera, Opera North, Welsh National Opera, and others. His work has covered a wide repertoire, ranging from 'early music' for Buxton and Covent Garden Festivals, to two world premières with Scottish Opera.



As a concert soloist, Stephen's experience includes Handel's *Messiah* with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Saint-Saëns' *Christmas Oratorio* with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, Mozart's *Requiem* and Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* in St Asaph Cathedral, Elgar's *Coronation Ode* in Canterbury Cathedral, and Verdi's *Requiem*, Vaughan Williams' *On Wenlock Edge* and *My Fair Lady* with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra.

Daniel Jordan – Baritone



Daniel was educated at Wells Cathedral School and as a choral scholar at St John's College, Cambridge. He then won a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music where he was supported by both the Academy and a Star Award from the Countess of Munster Trust.

Graduating with distinction from the opera course he worked with conductors such as Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Trevor Pinnock, Edward Gardiner, Daniel Harding and Kurt Masur, singing as a soloist with the English Concert, Monteverdi Choir and Florilegium. He was a member of the Choir of St Bride's, Fleet Street, from 1999 until 2014 and has performed as a member of Pro Cantione Antiqua, the Clerk's Group and the King's Consort. On the operatic stage he has worked with English National Opera, Scottish Opera, Grange Park Opera, English Touring Opera, the Opera Group, Opera North and the Festival D'Aix-en-Provence.

Daniel has been Director of Music at Eastbourne College since September 2015.

Jozik Kotz **Conductor and Musical Director**

Jozik was born in Oxford of Polish-Australian parents. After reading music at the University of York and singing as a lay-clerk at York Minster, he won a postgraduate scholarship to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where he was a finalist in the Kathleen Ferrier, Royal Overseas League and Richard Tauber competitions. In 1993 he was winner of the South East Arts competition, which led to his debut at the Wigmore Hall.



Jozik subsequently performed operatic roles with English National Opera, Royal Opera, Glyndebourne, Opera Factory, Garsington and Grange Park; and in Paris, Vienna, Zurich, Madrid, Aix-en-Provence and Lisbon. He has appeared as a soloist at the Proms and with the BBC Symphony, London Philharmonic, Philharmonia and English Chamber orchestras. His CD recordings include baroque cantatas for Hyperion, Turnage's *The Silver Tassie* and Gavin Bryar's *Dr Ox's Experiment* for Deutsche Grammophon, and Paray's *Mass* with the Scottish National Orchestra, which was nominated for a Grammy award.

We are very pleased that Jozik has been musical director of Hailsham Choral Society since 2006.

Colin Hughes **Rehearsal & Concert Accompanist**

Colin trained at Trinity College of Music, London, where he studied Violin and Piano. He has played in venues such as The Royal Albert Hall, The Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Glyndebourne. Whilst living in North London he held positions as Choirmaster and Organist at a number of churches, as well as playing in orchestras and chamber groups, giving solo recitals and drumming for a rock band.



Colin subsequently moved to Eastbourne where he has become well known and respected as a teacher, accompanist and performer. We are delighted that since 2012 he has been Hailsham Choral Society's regular rehearsal and concert accompanist. He will be playing keyboard continuo in this evening's concert.

Hailsham Choral Society

Sopranos

Jane Allen
Christine Baelz
Trish Brown
Kathy Castell
Rachel Chilton
Milly Clark
Jenny Clay
Pat Collingwood
Janet Cox
Carol Deschamps
Liz Furlong
Christina Lynn
Hilary Hartley
Val Macintosh
Fiona Mansfield
Jennie Mansfield
Lynn Petit
Pam Powell
Sue Simpson
Sally White

Altos

Jan Boyes
Helen Campbell
Fiona Dundas
Charlotte Ffoord
Barbara Fry
Liz Hews
Helen Leeds
Pam Mayhew
Wendy Pengelly
Pam Russell
Liza Stewart

Tenors

Nigel Baelz
Mick Bridges
Nick Gosman
Marcus Haddow
David Johnson
Geoff Rowe

Basses

Alec Boniface
Shaun Clay
Stan Gater
Peter Gilbert
Robin Hooper
Graham Keeley
Simon Marsden
Brian Maskell
Ken Mayhew
Chris Taylor

Orchestra Leader

Brian Knights

Staging

David Semmens and team

*We also wish to thank All Saints' Church Administrator,
Andy Anderson, for his help with arrangements for this concert.*

Hailsham Choral Society online: www.hailshamchoral.org



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Hailsham Choral Society

If you are interested in singing with the choir, or perhaps 'just looking', please contact our Membership Secretary, Jan Boyes: tel. 01323 870515, or email:

info@hailshamchoral.org

We rehearse on Thursday evenings from 7.30 – 9.30pm in the
Community Hall, Hailsham.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

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GOOD FRIDAY

The Crucifixion by John Stainer

Friday 14th April 2017 - 7.00pm

Hailsham Parish Church

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SUMMER CONCERT

Programme to include:

Magnificat by John Rutter

Saturday 1st July 2017 - 7.30pm

Civic Community Hall, Hailsham

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HAILSHAM TWIN TOWN

Visit to France in conjunction with
Les Choeurs du Pays-de-Bray

JOINT CONCERT

Saturday 7th October 2017

L'Eglise Saint Hildevert
De Gournay-en-Bray