



ABERDEEN
BACH
CHOIR

Musical Director
Paul Tierney

JS BACH: MASS IN B MINOR



7.30pm, Sunday 28 April 2024
Aberdeen Music Hall

Aberdeen Sinfonietta
Bryan Dargie – Leader

Choir Membership



Aberdeen Bach Choir is always keen to recruit new members.
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Rehearsals for our 2024/5 season commence on Tuesday 20th August.

Anyone interested in joining the ranks of the choir should contact our
Membership Secretary, Sandra Massey, by emailing
info@aberdeenbachchoir.com.



www.aberdeenbachchoir.com

Aberdeen Bach Choir
Musical Director – Dr. Paul Tierney

J.S. Bach Mass in B minor

Sunday 28 April 2024
Aberdeen Music Hall
7:30 p.m.

Elinor Rolfe Johnson – Soprano
Tom Lilburn – Counter-Tenor
Nathan Vale – Tenor
Jerome Knox – Baritone

Aberdeen Sinfonietta
Leader – Bryan Dargie

David Gerrard – Organ and Continuo
Alison MacDonald - Continuo

Please silence all mobile telephones and alerts
and refrain from taking photographs or making recordings.

J.S. Bach Mass in B minor

I Missa

1. Kyrie eleison (Chorus)
2. Christe eleison (Soprano I, II solo)
3. Kyrie eleison (Chorus)
4. Gloria in excelsis Deo (Chorus)
5. Et in terra pax (Chorus)
6. Laudamus te (Soprano II solo)
7. Gratias agimus tibi (Chorus)
8. Domine Deus (Soprano I, Tenor Solo)
9. Qui tollis (Chorus)
10. Qui sedes (Counter-Tenor Solo)
11. Quoniam tu solus sanctus (Bass solo)
12. Cum Sancto Spiritu (Chorus)

Interval

II Symbolum Nicenum (Credo)

1. Credo in unum Deum (Chorus)
2. Patrem omnipotentem (Chorus)
3. Et in unum Dominum (Soprano 1, Counter-Tenor solo)
4. Et incarnatus est (Chorus)
5. Crucifixus (Chorus)
6. Et resurrexit (Chorus)
7. Et in Spiritum Sanctum (Bass solo)
8. Confiteor (Chorus)
9. Et expecto resurrectionem (Chorus)

III Sanctus

Sanctus and Pleni sunt caeli (Chorus)

IV Osanna, Benedictus, Agnus Dei et Dona nobis pacem

1. Osanna in excelsis (Chorus)
2. Benedictus qui venit (Tenor solo)
3. Osanna in excelsis (Chorus)
4. Agnus Dei (Counter-Tenor solo)
5. Dona nobis pacem (Chorus)

"The Mass in B minor is the consecration of a whole life: started in 1733 for "diplomatic" reasons, it was finished in the very last years of Bach's life, when he had already gone blind. This monumental work is a synthesis of every stylistic and technical contribution the Cantor of Leipzig made to music. But it is also the most astounding spiritual encounter between the worlds of Catholic glorification and the Lutheran cult of the cross."

-Alberto Basso ("The 'Great Mass' in B minor"
in the booklet to the recording by Philippe
Herreweghe and Collegium Vocale Gent,
Harmonia Mundi, 1999)

Bach's Mass in B minor stands at the very pinnacle of musical, and perhaps spiritual, achievement in the composition of sacred choral music. It is a work of monumental scale, quite impractical in a liturgical context; yet its sheer vastness is surely a reflection of the depth of both the work and the composer's spiritual devotion.

The B Minor Mass is such an established part of the choral repertoire that the listener may not always realise that it is also somewhat of an enigma. Its history is one of development rather than straightforward composition, and even the most current research has failed to assign a complete series of precise dates to the various stages of its creation. At the heart of the mystery lie two questions: first, at what point did Bach, a Lutheran Protestant, plan to write a full Roman Catholic Mass and second, did he really regard the resulting composition as a performable work at the time of its completion? Speculation on these questions continues to resound now, almost three hundred years after Bach's death.

In attempting a description of the mass and its origins, we take the year 1733 as our starting point. Bach had been in the prosperous Saxon town of Leipzig for ten years, serving as Musical Director of the chief churches of St. Thomas and St. Nicholas and as cantor of St. Thomas's School. His creative genius had already produced many of the great works by which we know and adore him today. That first decade at Leipzig alone had seen the composition of five complete cycles of church cantatas appropriate to all the feasts of the Christian year, his two great Passion settings - the St. John and St. Matthew, as well as instrumental works and orchestral pieces.

In 1729, he had added to a heavy workload of musical supervision, performance, recital work and teaching by taking over direction of the Collegium Musicum, an orchestra of professional town musicians and university students that gave concerts at a local coffee house.

However, busy musician though he was, Bach was frequently at odds with his colleagues and employers at St. Thomas's School and with the elders of the town council. Often there were disputes concerning fees, which were so vital to Bach, with a large family to support. By 1733, there is some evidence to suggest that he was feeling unappreciated at Leipzig. On 1 February of that year, Augustus II, King of Poland and Elector of Saxony, died, leading to a period of enforced inactivity for Bach during the following five months of mourning, when all public music-making was temporarily suspended.

Relieved of the composition and supervision of music for the Lenten services, Bach found himself with time to devote to personal projects. It is believed that he used the opportunity to work on the composition of a Missa, a portion of the liturgy sung in Latin and common to both the Lutheran and Roman Catholic rites. The Missa comprised settings of the Kyrie and Gloria from the ordinary of the Mass. Its ecumenical qualities undoubtedly stimulated Bach to make a musical setting that he, a Lutheran, could duly dedicate to his new sovereign Augustus III, a Catholic.

In the early months of 1733, Bach's eldest son, Wilhelm Friedemann, had secured the post as organist at St Sophia's Church, Dresden and began work there in June. In July, Johann Sebastian had a good excuse to visit Dresden, to see how Friedemann was settling in. While there, he visited the court of the new Elector Augustus and presented him with a copy of the parts of the Missa, together with a petition dated 27 July 1733 dedicating the work to the Elector and referring to the Missa as "this insignificant example of the skill that I have acquired in Musique".

The petition also included a request to be given a court title that he hoped would improve his standing at Leipzig and give him some measure of security from what he considered to be the insulting treatment meted out to him by the Leipzig authorities. The petition failed, although the Missa may well have received a performance in Dresden that year. Bach did, however, eventually get his title, he was made court composer to Augustus in 1736.

As to when Bach decided to expand the Missa into a full-blown setting of the Catholic Mass is a matter of conjecture. Most modern researchers believe that the "Symbolum Nicenum" (Bach's term for the Credo) was composed between 1742 and 1745, but there are those that think it predates the Missa and was first heard in 1732. The Sanctus, (a reworking of a setting of the same text that was already two decades old), the Benedictus, the Agnus Dei and the Dona Nobis Pacem were added in the late 1740s.

The B Minor Mass did not assume its final form until Bach's last years, perhaps by 1748. This was a period in which Bach was preoccupied with musical projects that he obviously wished to be regarded as monuments of his skill, such as The Art of Fugue and The Musical Offering. It may be that the Mass also belongs to this category, for (as will be seen from the description that follows) it is a work based almost entirely upon earlier music that Bach adapted and refined to meet a lofty sacred purpose.

We may never know why he chose to marry his music to the Roman liturgy. We do know that he admired the Italian masters of sacred music from Palestrina to Pergolesi. Perhaps he hoped, like them, to leave his own musical essay upon the subject of this timeless text. He certainly followed the Italian fashion by using a richly diverse mixture of styles, and in choosing to reuse earlier material he may have felt himself to be selecting his finest work, laying it out for our inspection, and putting it to the service of praising God. In the event, whether he intended it or not, Bach has produced a moving and, notwithstanding its disparate origins and styles, highly unified work transcending religious denominations.

I Missa

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Kyrie eleison | 7. Gratias agimus tibi |
| 2. Christe eleison | 8. Domine Deus |
| 3. Kyrie eleison | 9. Qui tollis |
| 4. Gloria in excelsis Deo | 10. Qui sedes |
| 5. Et in terra pax | 11. Quoniam tu solus sanctus |
| 6. Laudamus te | 12. Cum Sancto Spiritu |

The magnificence of the work is signalled at the very outset with the mighty adagio five-part setting of the words "Kyrie eleison" succeeded by a fugal section of architectural grandeur and complexity. The Christe eleison is a delicious Italianate duet for sopranos with a charming ritornello for strings that would not be out of place in a Handel opera. The second Kyrie, for four-part choir and marked "alla breve", is in the old church style, firm and convincing. The first part of the Gloria, a joyous outpouring, was probably reworked from a now lost instrumental movement. The contrasting beatific and ultimately victorious setting of "Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis" was grafted on to it without a break. The Laudamus te, with its angelic soprano solo balanced by an equally angelic violin obbligato, has all the hallmarks of having originally been a violin duet.

The Gratias is an almost straight copy of the opening chorus of Cantata No. 29 (1731), whose words "Wir danken dir, Gott" ("We thank Thee, O God") represent a literal German translation of the Latin text set here with such solemn nobility and assurance. The Domine Deus is a lovely duet for tenor and soprano, whose accompaniment for flute and muted strings has a fairy lightness. It leads directly into the Qui tollis, a revision of part of the opening chorus of Cantata No. 46 (1723), "Schauet doch und sehet" ('Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow'). Note how the flutes weave their heavenly arabesques above long choral lines and heavy, throbbing, earthbound bass crotchets.

In Qui sedes, the vocal alto solo is matched by the instrument of corresponding pitch, the oboe d'amore. The Quoniam, with its dark tones of horn obbligato and well-rounded bassoon duet figurations, provides an impressive vehicle for the baritone soloist, and leads straight into the gloriously jubilant Cum Sancto Spiritu, complete with agile choral fugue, marking the end of Bach's original Missa.

INTERVAL

II Symbolum Nicenum (Credo)

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Credo in unum Deum | 6. Et resurrexit |
| 2. Patrem omnipotentem | 7. Et in Spiritum Sanctum |
| 3. Et in unum Dominum | 8. Confiteor |
| 4. Et incarnatus est | 9. Et expecto |
| 5. Crucifixus | |

The Credo bursts forth with two vibrant fugal choruses. The first, in five parts in antique style, is based upon the plainchant associated with the words "Credo in unum Deum" and symbolises strength of faith; the second, *Patrem omnipotentem* in four parts, is adapted from a chorus of praise from Cantata No. 171 (1729) "Gott, wie dein Name, so ist auch dein Ruhm" ("God, Thy fame is as Thy name").

The duet *Et in unum Dominum* is set for soprano and counter-tenor with oboe and strings. Bach originally also incorporated the *Et incarnatus est* into this duet, but his subsequent version spun out the text by further repetitions so that it stops at "descendit de coelis". The five part chorus *Et incarnatus est*, added in this second version, depicts an intense awe, an emotion that deepens into despair in the four part *Crucifixus*, reworked from a chorus in a youthful Weimar Cantata, no. 12 (1714) "Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen", a profoundly poignant chorus over the remorseless bass of a passacaglia. The Mass springs from the depths of hopelessness with the jubilant five-part chorus *Et resurrexit*, again apparently reworked from a previous instrumental movement. The bass aria, *Et in spiritum*, recalls in tone the earlier duet *Et in unum Dominum*. The fugal *Confiteor*, like the first movement of the Credo, is in five parts and harks back to the older church style, using plainsong to underpin the firmness of the belief it represents. It is linked to the final joyous *Et expecto* by a passage of the strangest, most haunting quality - quite a contrast with the exuberant chorus that ends the Credo.

III Sanctus

Sanctus and Pleni sunt caeli

Bach's magnificent Sanctus was written originally for Christmas day, 1724, scored for a festive orchestra including three trumpets and three oboes. The choir for this piece is divided into six parts with a second alto part as well as the second soprano part found in the earlier five-part choruses. The Sanctus runs without a break into the fugal and triumphal chorus Pleni sunt caeli.

IV Osanna, Benedictus, Agnus Dei et Dona nobis pacem

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Osanna in excelsis | 4. Agnus Dei |
| 2. Benedictus qui venit | 5. Dona nobis pacem |
| 3. Osanna in excelsis | |

For the only time during the work, the sprightly Osanna is set for a double (eight-part) choir. It is based on the opening chorus of the secular Cantata No. 215 (1734) "Preise dein Glucke, gesegnetes Sachsen" ("Praised be your fortunes, ye most blessed Saxons"), a piece performed in honour of the coronation of Augustus III as King of Poland. As one critic has observed, "In a society which regards Kings as divinely appointed by God, he [Bach] would have seen no incongruity in using the same music to praise the King of Poland and the King of Heaven".

The Benedictus, apparently the vestige of a lost tenor aria, is unusual in that Bach wrote an obbligato part but left the instrument unspecified. The part suits best the flute or violin; in this performance it will be played on the flute. With its slow, long, graceful vocal and instrumental lines, this movement is an evocation of serene love and longing.

The Agnus Dei, which follows a straight reprise of the Osanna, is scored for alto solo matched to a low-lying ritornello for strings. It uses almost the same music as "Ach bleibe doch, mein liebstes Leben" ('Oh, stay with me, my dearest life'), from Cantata No. 11 (The Ascension Oratorio). The Dona nobis pacem reprises the Gratias, bringing the B Minor Mass to a triumphant close and linking majestically the concepts of peace, praise and gratitude to the Almighty.

[These notes are based on those written originally by William Gould for a performance by Goldsmiths Choral Union at the Royal Festival Hall, London. Permission to modify and use the notes has been given by Mr Gould to societies which are members of Making Music.]

Elinor Rolfe Johnson — Soprano

London born soprano Elinor Rolfe Johnson possesses a "commanding stage presence and the voice to match" (Seen and Heard International) and has been praised by Tim Ashley (The Guardian) for her "superlative singing". A graduate of Cambridge University and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, she has more recently performed as a finalist in the London Handel competition and the inaugural Sing Finzi competition, as well as a semi-finalist in the Wigmore Song competition.

Elinor has extensive recital and oratorio experience, performing in such venues as the Wigmore Hall, Royal Albert Hall, Barbican, Carnegie

Hall, Concertgebouw and Berlin Philharmonie. Performances include Bach *St John Passion* (Britten Sinfonia, dir. Mark Padmore), *St Matthew Passion* (Israel Camerata), *Finzi Dies Natalis* (Concordia Orchestra), Brahms *Ein Deutsches Requiem* (Kings College Cambridge), Handel *Messiah* (Leeds Town Hall), Strauss *Vier Letzte Lieder*, Haydn *Creation* (St George's Bristol), Vaughan Williams *Serenade to Music* and *Sea Symphony* (Snape Maltings and York Minster), Mendelssohn *Elijah* and Verdi *Requiem*.

Elinor's operatic roles include Contessa *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Rosalinde *Die Fledermaus*, Desdemona *Otello*, Donna Elvira *Don Giovanni* and Ismene *Orpheus* at St George's Hanover Square with the Classical Opera Company, and she has covered at the Aix-en-Provence Festival for their Bach *Trauernacht* project under Raphael Pichon.



Tom Lilburn - Counter-tenor

Tom Lilburn is a 29-year-old English countertenor. In 2022 he graduated with distinction from the Master of Performance course at the Royal College of Music, where he was an Ian Evans Lombe scholar. At RCM Tom sang Unulfo in Handel's *Rodelinda* and Refugee in Jonathan Dove's *Flight*. In 2022 he covered Ottone and Narciso in Handel's *Agrippina* with English Touring Opera, and last autumn he covered Ottone and Amore in Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* with ETO.



Tom is also a Lay Clerk at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, and in April 2021 was one of four singers at the funeral of the Duke of Edinburgh. With the choir of St George's Chapel he has sung at events including the committal service of Queen Elizabeth II and the wedding of Prince Harry.

An experienced oratorio performer, Tom has recently performed in Handel's *Messiah* and *Dixit Dominus*, Bach's *St. John Passion*, *St. Matthew Passion*, *Mass in B Minor* and *Magnificat*, Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*, Vivaldi's *Gloria* and *Beatus Vir*, Astorga's *Stabat Mater* and Telemann's *Magnificat in C*. In November 2022, Tom sang the solos from Handel's *Messiah* in the Royal Albert Hall with The Really Big Chorus.

Tom is a member of vocal sextet The Queen's Six and he has worked with esteemed consorts including Tenebrae, The Sixteen, The Binchois Consort and ORA. He is represented by Ann Ferrier, and studies with Sally Burgess.

Tom grew up in Solihull and attended King Edward's School in Birmingham before studying Natural Sciences as a choral scholar at St John's College, Cambridge. In his spare time he enjoys playing chess, tennis, cricket and golf.

Nathan Vale - Tenor

Nathan Vale studied with Ryland Davies at the Royal College of Music and the Benjamin Britten International Opera School.

With the Aarhus Symphony Orchestra, he has sung Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* under Harry Christophers and arias in Bach's *St John Passion* under Paul Goodwin. Other Bach highlights were Evangelist in Bach's *St Matthew Passion* with the London Handel Players under Laurence Cummings and with the Northern Sinfonia conducted by Thomas Zehetmair, and arias in Bach's *St Matthew Passion* with the Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano conducted by Ruben Jais.



A former winner of the AESS English Song competition, Nathan has appeared at the Wigmore Hall, Three Choirs Festival, Temple Recital Series with Julius Drake, Hong Kong Festival, the Housman, Gurney, Warlock and Ireland Societies with Graham Johnson, and Crush Room ROH with Audrey Hyland. He has also recorded *Love's Voice* (Songs by Finzi, Gurney, Ireland and Venables) for SOMM Records.

Operatic roles have included Lurcanio *Ariodante* at the Bolshoi Opera, Belfiore *La finta giardiniera* for Luxembourg Opera and for Opera Baugé, First Priest and First Armed Man *The Magic Flute* for ENO, Oronte *Alcina* and Lurcanio *Ariodante* for English Touring Opera, First Prisoner *Fidelio* for Glyndebourne Festival, Grimoaldo *Rodelinda* for Iford Opera, Evangelist *St John Passion* (fully staged), Teatro Massimo Palermo and Mr Buchanan in The Opera Group's award-winning production of *Street Scene*.

This season will see a return to Snape Maltings in the newly commissioned *To See the Invisible* by Emily Howard, arias in Bach's *St Matthew Passion* with the Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano and Ruben Jais, Evangelist in Bach's *St Matthew Passion* with the Camerata Copenhagen and Martin Nagashima Toft, and for the London Handel Society Orchestra and Laurence Cummings, recitals in Hong Kong and the second in a series of Quilter recordings for Nimbus Records.

Jerome Knox - Baritone

Born in London, Jerome Knox is a graduate of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. He won the prestigious London Handel Festival competition in 2020 and is now much in demand for both concert and opera performances.

Recent appearances include multiple roles in Scottish Opera's *Opera Highlights* tour, as well as *Aeneas Dido* and *Aeneas*, Polyphemus *Acis and Galatea* and Count *Le nozze di Figaro*, all for Waterperry Opera. He also sings regularly with English Touring Opera, with previous appearances including Marcello *La bohème*, Pallante *Agrippina*, Don Prudenizio *Il viaggio a Reims*, Astolfo *Lucrezia Borgia* and Afron *The Golden Cockerel*.



In concert, he has recently appeared at the Wigmore Hall as a soloist singing Bach *Cantatas* with the London Handel Players and has given recitals at the Handel-Festspiele in Halle, also joining baritone Roderick Williams for a joint concert at Music at Paxton, supported by the prestigious Momentum scheme.

Most recently, Jerome returned to the Wigmore Hall with the London Handel Players and Adrian Butterfield, for a programme of Bach *Cantatas* and *Magnificat*, and made his Belgian debut with the Flemish Radio Choir as soloist in Handel's *Messiah*. In 2024 he makes his role debut as Nick Shadow in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* for English Touring Opera, has a first appearance at the Ludlow English Song Festival and will make his Swiss debut as Clodomiro in Handel's *Lotario* in Payerne.

Dr Paul Tierney – Musical Director

Paul was born in Edinburgh in 1984 but grew up in Hawick in the Scottish Borders. He graduated from the University of Aberdeen in 2006 with a first class BMus (Hons.) degree and in 2012 with a PhD in composition, also from the University of Aberdeen. He has taken part in numerous masterclasses with singers such as Donald Maxwell, Raimund Herincx, Cate Hughes, Irene Drummond, Margaret Cable and Stephen Varcoe. In 2005, he was awarded the Ellie Pirie award by Aberdeen Bach Choir and the North East of Scotland Music School. In 2006 Paul was awarded the first Derek Ogston Postgraduate Music Scholarship from the University of Aberdeen. He is also the recipient of the Nora Bentley Award for his services with the University of Aberdeen Chapel Choir.



As a soloist, Paul has performed with many groups including Aberdeen Choral Society, University of Aberdeen Choral Society and Chapel Choir, Concordia String Orchestra, Aberdeen Orpheus Choir, Peterhead Choral Society, Inverurie Choral Society, Roxburgh Singers and the Queens Cross Charity Concert. He has also performed with the Hereford International Summer School Chorus in the role of Aeneas in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. Paul has also performed with the Gustavus Adolphus New Music Ensemble in Minneapolis, USA. He has received rave reviews for his performances of Schubert's *Die Schöne Müllerin* and *Winterreise*: "*Tierney's singing was a revelation!*" Paul has recently recorded *Winterreise* with Roger Williams at the piano.

Paul is active as a conductor and composer and has studied with Alasdair Nicholson, Sally Beamish and Sir Peter Maxwell Davies as part of the first St. Magnus Composers Course. His piece *Threnody* was premiered by the Kreisler ensemble at the St. Magnus Festival. Paul's music has also been performed by the Edinburgh Quartet, members of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Gemini Ensemble and Lontano Ensemble. Paul was featured as principal guest composer at the Dana School of Music New Music Festival XXVII at Youngstown State University, Ohio, USA in May 2011.

Paul has recently presented a paper on the influence that music of the Far East had on the creative output of Benjamin Britten at the conference 'Britten 100: An American Music Centenary' at Illinois State University, Bloomington, USA.

Paul is currently musical director and conductor of the Aberdeen Bach Choir, Haddo House Choral and Operatic Society and was previously musical director of the Inverurie Orchestra from 2007-2019. Performances with Haddo have included Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Haydn's *Nelson Mass*, Dvorak's *Te Deum* and Handel's *Samson* in the presence of the society's patron HRH Prince Edward. Paul was the founding director of the University of Aberdeen New Music Group and has also conducted the University of Aberdeen Chapel Choir, the Learig Orchestra, Aberdeen Sinfonietta and the University of Aberdeen Gilbert and Sullivan Society. He has recently conducted performances of Maxwell Davies' *Eight Songs for a Mad King*, Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, Varese's *Octandre*, Handel's *Messiah* and Mendelssohn's *Third Symphony*. Paul has taken part in numerous choral conducting masterclasses working with conductors such as Stephen Layton (Polyphony), Neil Ferries (BBC SO) and Matthew Hamilton (Hallé). Most recently Paul conducted the Hallé Choir in a masterclass performing Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*.

Alison MacDonald – Cello Continuo

Alison MacDonald studied at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama with Sharon McKinley and Douglas Cummings. She graduated with distinction and was the recipient of the college string prize. Alison appeared as a freelance cellist with the Orchestra of Welsh National Opera, Sinfonia Cymru and the Charlie Barber Band. She was also a member of the Sentica Piano Trio, Junior Fellows in chamber music at RWCMD. The group performed extensively including recitals at St Paul's Covent Garden, St John's College Oxford, Halifax Square Chapel Festival and Highgrove. The trio also undertook concert tours in Colombia, Venezuela and Portugal.



Alison moved to Aberdeen in 2005. She teaches at Aberdeen City Music School, St Margaret's School for Girls and Robert Gordon's College. She is now principal 'cello of Aberdeen Sinfonietta, a member of the Cargill Piano Trio and performs regularly with the Aberdeen Chamber players. In December 2023, Alison was the cello soloist in the Duruflé Requiem with Aberdeen Bach Choir.

David Gerrard – Organ Continuo

Described as 'a musician for all seasons' (RTÉ), David Gerrard performs on the harpsichord, clavichord, fortepiano and organ. In demand as a continuo player, David has performed at home and abroad with both modern and period instrument groups including Dunedin Consort, The English Concert, English Touring Opera, Hebrides Ensemble, Irish Baroque Orchestra, Irish Chamber Orchestra, London Mozart Players, Opera Settecento, Royal Northern Sinfonia, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and The Sixteen.



A skilled choir trainer and conductor, he has held appointments as Organ Scholar at Canterbury Cathedral and Magdalen College, Oxford, and as Assistant Organist at Paisley Abbey. David graduated with double first-class honours in Music from the University of Oxford, followed by a master's degree in Early Keyboard Performance from the University of Edinburgh where he is undertaking doctoral research (generously funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council). With experience working as a harpsichord technician and restorer, he has begun building early keyboard instruments.

Aberdeen Sinfonietta

Aberdeen Sinfonietta was founded in 1987, originally as a small group of strings and harpsichord. In 1997, at a time when the group was beginning to feel the need to expand its musical repertoire, they were given the exciting opportunity to perform as a chamber orchestra in the Music Hall with Roger Williams as conductor, and with the brilliant Russian pianist Mikhail Kazakevich as soloist. Since then, Aberdeen Sinfonietta has established itself as one of the foremost contributors to music-making in the north-east.

With regular orchestral concerts in Aberdeen's Music Hall, often with internationally recognised soloists and conductors, the Sinfonietta also works with prominent choral societies. Involving itself in a wide range of musical activities, the group endeavours to bring a great variety of high calibre musical events to an ever-widening audience.

Violin

Bryan Dargie
(Leader)
Sarah Beattie
Teresa Boag
Richard Clark
Ryen Crabb
Guera Crockett
Alexandria Grant
Andy Leadbetter
Rachel Mackison
Jenna Main
Clara Jane Maunder
Aden Mazur
David Murray
Jennifer Piggott
Coralie Usmani

Viola

Sandra Thomson
Ewa Bartmann
Megan Cormack
Yendy De Adbreu
Iona Hassan
Robert Milne

Cello

Alison MacDonald
Louise Cooper
Hilary Cromar
Mary Dargie
Sarah Matthews

Double Bass

Scott Matheson
Callum Young

Flute

Margaret Preston
Kathryn Gammie

Oboe/Oboe d'Amore

Geoffrey Bridge
Fiona Gordon

Oboe

Jo Price

Bassoon

Kate Friday
Hannah Hilton

French Horn

Rachel Brady

Trumpet

Alan Haggart
Gerry Dawson
Kevin Haggart

Timpani

Isabel John

Continuo

David Gerrard
(Organ/Harpsichord)
Alison MacDonald
(Cello)

Aberdeen Bach Choir Singers

Soprano 1

Ruth Ahmed
Lucy Bailey
Hanne Gadegaard
Yvonne Gray
Cathy Guthrie
Veronica Hansmann
Kathleen Haw
Pamela Hoy
Clare Johnson
Nina MacDonald-Lewis
Mairi McHattie
Isla Maitland
Margaret Nicholson
Alice Ronsberg
Marta Visocchi
Hazel Wilkins
Catherine Wilkinson

Soprano 2

Gill Bishop
Molly Brown
Clare Carden
Kate Graham
Anne Henderson
Julia House
Ruth Howarth
Jane Jones
Fiona Leslie
Margaret Macaulay
Elaine Miller
Alison Purvis
Angela Slater
Alyson Smith
Dawn Smith
Janet Wendes

Alto 1

Alison Cook
Christian Cooper
Barbara Crane
Althea Dickens
Becky Docea
Isobel Ford
Alison Gathercole
Jean Gulston
Isabella Hanna
Lorna Herbert
Jessica Lindsay
Janet MacDonald
Kate Mason
Jo McPherson
Frances Milne
Lindsey Mountford
Lesley Mowat
Adele Perry
Sheila Robertson
Jane Shanks
Margaret Spence
Doreen Taylor

Alto 2

Kate Anderson
Kiran Angadi
Libby Brand
Ailsa Cantlay
Rosemary Feilden
Helaena Fine
Helen Goodyear
Muriel Knox
Isobel Malcolm
Louise Page
Tracey Robinson
Sarah Stevens
Val Thomas

Tenor 1

Mercedes Acevedo
Paul Davison
Alison Garnett
Bruce Irvine
Janet Ogilvie

Tenor 2

Alan Maitland
James Millar
Alan Scott
Leofric Studd

Bass 1

George Cameron
John Cook
Ian Downie
David Goodban
Mel Gulston
Stefan Horsman
Jim Hunter
George Lawrence
Aaron McGill
Graham Mountford
Mike Radcliffe
Finlay Smith
John Woodhead
David Way

Bass 2

Mark Edwards
Jim Hardy
Roger Hessing
Jason Hobbs
Mike Longhurst
Alastair McKinlay
Mark Rodgers
John Watson
Brian Wilkins

Rehearsal Pianist

Ben Marsden

Aberdeen Bach Choir

Founded as the Aberdeen Bach Society by Charles Sanford Terry in 1913, and reconstituted as the Aberdeen Bach Choir in 1956, the choir usually performs two main concerts a year, in April and December. The repertoire of the choir is comprehensive and drawn from a wide variety of cultures, styles and periods. Past concerts have included the following works:

J.S. Bach	Christmas Oratorio; Easter Oratorio; St Matthew Passion; St John Passion; Magnificat in D; Mass in B Minor
Beethoven	Mass in C
Bernstein	Chichester Psalms
Britten	Hymn to St Cecilia; Saint Nicolas; A Ceremony of Carols
Bruckner	Mass in F; Motets (various)
Buxtehude	Nimm von uns Herr du treuer Gott; Jesu, meines Lebens Leben; Der Herr ist mit mir
Duruflé	Requiem; Quatre motets sur des thèmes grégoriens, Op 10
G. Gabrieli	Hodie Christus Natus Est; O Magnum Mysterium; Salvator Noster
Handel	Dixit Dominus; Israel in Egypt; The King shall rejoice; Zadok the Priest
M. Haydn	Missa Trinitatis; Missa Sanctae Theresiae
Jenkins	The Armed Man
Langlais	Messe Solennelle
Lassus	Missa Bell'Amfitrit Altera; Domine Exaudi
Liszt	Missa Choralis
Monteverdi	Vespro della Beata Vergine; Dixit Dominus; Confiteor; Beatus Vir
McLeod	The Chronicle of St Machar (Aberdeen Bach Choir commission)
Mozart	Missa Brevis in D & F; Requiem; Vesperae solennes de confessore
Poulenc	Gloria; O Magnum Mysterium; Quem Vidistis; Videntes Stellam
Praetorius	Magnificat Quinti Toni
Purcell	Te Deum; Ode to St Cecilia
Rutter	Magnificat; Gloria; Requiem
Schubert	Mass in E Flat
Tavener	Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis; The Lamb; God is With Us
Vierne	Messe Solennelle in C Sharp Minor; Mass in G; Mass in E Flat
Vivaldi	Beatus Vir; Domine ad adiuvandum me Festina; Gloria
Walton	Te Deum; The Twelve

Charitable Support

Aberdeen Bach Choir supports musical education in Aberdeen through its ongoing donations to the following organisations:

North East of Scotland Music School

The Ellie Pirie Scholarship



In 1988 a fund was established in memory of Elizabeth Pirie LRAM ARCM ARCO, who was a long-standing accompanist for the choir. The resulting Ellie Pirie Scholarship is still awarded annually on merit to a full-time student of secondary age or above, covering the cost of monthly music lessons over an academic year. This scholarship is kindly administered by the North East of Scotland Music School (NESMS).

University of Aberdeen Department of Music

Final Year Undergraduate Prize

The James Lobban Prize for Musicology



The James Lobban Prize for Musicology, instituted in 2012, is awarded annually to the student of the University of Aberdeen who achieves the highest mark in the Honours dissertation on Music. James Lobban, a graduate of the University of Aberdeen, was Conductor of Aberdeen Bach Choir from 1969 until 2005, shortly before his death. He was a keen music scholar and took a great interest in the work of the Music Department of his alma mater. The James Lobban Prize for Musicology is funded by a legacy left by James to Aberdeen Bach Choir.

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**Sistema Scotland
Big Noise Torry**



The charity Sistema Scotland helps children and young people living in disadvantaged communities realise their full potential through music. They currently work with over 800 children and young people in Torry, from babies to around 14 years old. They provide Little Noise for babies and toddlers, in-school Big Noise sessions for children at nursery and Walker Road and Tullos primary schools, and after-school and holiday clubs for young people aged around 7 to 15 who attend school or live in Torry. All Big Noise sessions are engaging, age-appropriate and free, including tuition, healthy snacks and instruments.

Key to the success of Big Noise are the trusting relationships built by consistent regular contact between the staff musicians and the children. In Torry, the 21 staff musicians are not only highly skilled educators, but also compassionate mentors and inspiring role models who work in partnership with teachers, social workers, health visitors and community workers to ensure children and young people are fully supported and nurtured to fulfil their potential.



Musical Director
Paul Tierney



MUSIC FROM EASTERN EUROPE

GÓRECKI, JANÁČEK, PÄRT, LUKASZEWSKI, DVOŘÁK



7.30pm, Saturday 30 November 2024
St Machar's Cathedral, Aberdeen

Original Photo: Charles Bridge, Prague, by Pierre Blache on www.pexels.com



ABERDEEN
BACH
CHOIR

Aberdeen Bach Choir
is a proud supporter of
Big Noise Torry



Proud members of



WHEELCHAIR ACCESS

THIS CONCERT IS MADE POSSIBLE BY
THE JAMES LOBBAN LEGACY

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