MESSIAH
HANDEL'S SACRED MASTERPIECE
SAT 7 DEC 2019
CONCERT HALL, QPAC
WELCOME

I’m delighted to welcome you to this year’s Messiah, and I hope you are again impressed with the splendour of Handel—or, perhaps, amazed hearing this work for the first time!

It seems few composers can approach Handel’s grandeur, as in the rousing choruses, and not many are his equal for pathos either. I am always moved performing this masterpiece, and grateful to be in ‘pole position’ as leader to appreciate the efforts of the orchestra, conductor, choir, and soloists.

And tonight we will enjoy the almost electric enthusiasm of Stephen Layton’s direction, with the miraculous beauty of Sara Macliver’s voice, and the excellence of the other soloists. Stephen’s approach is intense and luminescent; you may remember his Messiah interpretation from 2015 or his Bach Mass in B minor from 2017. It is a remarkable (and strenuous!) experience to work with him.

In my career I’ve played certain works, this Messiah, the Four Seasons, Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, etc. scores of times, and my appreciation, far from palling, deepens. So many convincing interpretations are possible in my experience, partly because the imagination and craft in composing them is undoubtedly great, and partly because each musical leader can arrive in front of the orchestra with an integrated, informed, and personal touch that is distinct and always deeply human.

With every good wish for your listening tonight.

Warwick Adeney
Concertmaster

IN THIS CONCERT

Program

Handel Messiah, HWV 56 2 hrs, 40 min (including 20’ interval after Part 1).

Conductor Stephen Layton
Chorus Brisbane Chamber Choir
Soprano Sara Macliver
Mezzo-soprano Helen Charlston
Tenor Gwilym Bowen
Bass-baritone Laurence Williams

Relive this concert on ABC Classic on 23 December 2019 at 7pm (AEDT).

Queensland Symphony Orchestra acknowledges the traditional custodians of Australia. We acknowledge the cultural diversity of Elders, both past and recent, and the significant contributions that Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples have made to Queensland and Australia.

To ensure an enjoyable concert experience for everyone, please remember to turn off your mobile phones and all other electronic devices. Please muffle coughs and refrain from talking during the performance.
IF YOU'RE NEW TO THE ORCHESTRA

WHO SITS WHERE

Orchestras sit in sections based on types of instruments. There are four main sections in the symphony orchestra (strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion) and sometimes a keyboard section.

STRINGS
These instruments produce sound by bowing or plucking stretched strings.
- First and Second Violin
- Viola
- Cello
- Double Bass

WOODWIND
Wind instruments produce sound by being blown into.
- Oboe
- Bassoon

BRASS
Brass players create sound by vibrating their lips. When this vibration is pushed through large brass tubes, it can create significant noise.
- Trumpet

PERCUSSION
These instruments create sound by being struck or, for the harp, plucked or strummed. Some instruments just make a sound; others play particular notes.
- Timpani

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms appear in bold the first time they appear.

Accompagnato indicates when a recitative is accompanied by the orchestra.

Aria an extended, accompanied song for one voice which usually appears in an opera or oratorio.

Chamber music music performed by a small ensemble of instruments.

Chorus refers to either a group of singers or the music sung by them.

Libretto the text of a vocal work.

Opera refers to both a genre of classical music and a dramatic work in multiple acts (sections) set to music for singers and instrumentalists.

Oratorio a vocal work based on a sacred or secular text, usually religious in nature.

Passion music Passion music refers to music that is based on text (usually biblical) about the suffering and crucifixion of Christ.

Recitative a type of vocal work which mimics the inflections and rhythms of speech, usually written for one voice and often appearing in operas and oratorios.
His yoke is easy  
He shall feed his flock 
Then shall the eyes of the blind  
Rejoice Greatly  
Glory to God  
And suddenly, there was with the angel  
And the angel said unto them  
And lo, the angel  
There were shepherds  
Pastoral Symphony  
For unto us a child is born  
The people that walked in darkness  
For behold, darkness  
Their sound is gone out  
How beautiful are the feet  
The Lord gave the word  
But Thou didst not leave  
The Lord gave the word  
How beautiful are the feet  
Their sound is gone out  
Why do the Nations  
Let us break their bonds  
He that dwelleth in heaven  
Thou shalt break them  
Hallelujah
PART THE FIRST  
Prophecy of Christ’s appearance on earth; the nativity.

Sinfonia  
Comfort ye (Isaiah 40:1-3)  
Accompagnato: Tenor  
Ev’ry valley (Isaiah 40:4)  
Song: Tenor  
Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplish’d, that her iniquity is pardon’d. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Ev’ry valley shall be exalted, and ev’ry mountain and hill made low, the crooked straight, and the rough places plain.

And the glory of the Lord (Isaiah 40:5)  
Chorus  
And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

Thus saith the Lord (Haggai 2:6-7; Malachi 3:1)  
Accompagnato: Bass  
Thus saith the Lord, the Lord of Hosts; Yet once a little while, and I will shake the hea’rn’ and the earth; the sea and the dry land; And I will shake all nations; and the desire of all nations shall come. The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, and shall call His name Emmanuel, ‘God with us.’

And the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

For unto us a child is born (Isaiah 9:6)  
Chorus  
For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Pastoral Symphony  
There were shepherds (Luke 2:8)  
Recitative: Soprano  
And lo, the angel (Luke 2:9)  
Accompagnato: Soprano  
And the angel said unto them (Luke 2:10-11)  
Recitative: Soprano  
And suddenly, there was with the angel (Luke 2:15)  
Accompagnato: Soprano  
Glory to God (Luke 2:14)  
Chorus  
There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, ‘Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.’

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the hea’rn’ host, praising God, and saying… ‘Glory to God in the Highest, and peace on earth, goodwill towards men.’

Rejoice greatly (Zechariah 9:9-10)  
Song: Soprano  
Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy King cometh unto thee. He is the righteous Saviour; and He shall speak peace unto the heathen.

Then shall the eyes of the blind (Isaiah 35:5-6)  
Recitative: Alto  
He shall feed his flock (Isaiah 40:11; Matthew 11:28-29)  
Duet: Alto and Soprano  
Then shall the eyes of the blind be open’d, and the ears of the deaf stopped; then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: and He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young. Come unto Him all ye that labour, come unto Him, that are heavy laden, and He will give you rest.

Take His yoke upon you, and learn of Him; for He is meek and lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

His yoke is easy (Matthew 11:30)  
Chorus  
His yoke is easy, His burden is light.

INTERVAL
PART THE SECOND
The death, resurrection and ascension of Christ; the spreading of the Gospel.

Behold the Lamb of God
(John 1:29)
Chorus
Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.

He was despised
(Isaiah 53:3 and 50:6)
Song: Alto
He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He gave His. back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: He hid not His face from shame and spitting.

Surely He hath borne our griefs
(Isaiah 53:4-5)
Chorus
And with His stripes we have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of all.

All they that see Him
(Psalm 22:7 – Book of Common Prayer)
Accompagnato: Tenor
He trusted in God
(Psalm 22:8 – BCP)
Chorus
All they that see Him laugh Him to scorn; they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying:

Thy rebuke hath broken His heart
(Psalm 69:20 – BCP)
Accompagnato: Tenor
Behold and see
(Lamentations 1:12)
Song: Tenor
He was cut off
(Isaiah 53:8)
Accompagnato: Tenor
But Thou didst not leave
(Psalm 16:10)
Song: Soprano
Thy rebuke hath broken His heart; He is full of heaviness. He looked for some to have pity on Him, but there was no man, neither found He any to comfort Him.

Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows: He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him.

And with His stripes we are healed.

All we, like sheep, have gone astray, we have turned ev’ry one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of all.

How beautiful are the feet
(Isaiah 52:7)
Song: Soprano
How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.

Their sound is gone out
(Romans 10:18)
Chorus
Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world.

Why do the nations
(Psalm 2:1-2 – BCP)
Song: Bass
Let us break their bonds
(Psalm 2:3)
Chorus
He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn; the Lord shall have them in derision.

Thou shalt break them
(Psalm 2:9)
Song: Tenor
Why do the nations so furiously rage together: why do the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His anointed.

Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yokes from us.

He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn; the Lord shall have them in derision.

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.

Hallelujah
(Revelation 19:6; 11:15; 19:16)
Chorus
Hallelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, Hallelujah! The Kingdom of this world is become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, Hallelujah!
PART THE THIRD
Victory over Death.

I know that my Redeemer liveth
(Job 19:25-26; 1 Corinthians 15:20)
Song: Soprano
I know that my Redeemer liveth,
and that He shall stand at the latter day
upon the earth.
And tho’ worms destroy this body, yet in
my flesh shall I see God.
For now is Christ risen from the dead,
the first fruits of them that sleep.

Since by man came death
(1 Corinthians 15:21-22)
Chorus
Since by man came death,
by man came also the resurrection of the dead.
For as in Adam all die,
even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

Behold, I tell you a mystery
(1 Corinthians 15:51-52)
Accompagnato: Bass
The trumpet shall sound
(1 Corinthians 15:52-53)
Song: Bass
Behold, I tell you a mystery:
We shall not all sleep,
but we shall all be chang’d,
in a moment,
in the twinkling of an eye,
at the last trumpet.
The trumpet shall sound,
and the dead shall be rais’d incorruptible,
and we shall be chang’d.

Worthy is the Lamb
(Revelation 5:12-13)
Chorus
Amen
Chorus
Worthy is the Lamb that was slain,
and Hath redeemed us to God by His blood,
to receive power, and riches,
and wisdom, and strength,
and honour, and glory, and blessing.
Blessing and honour,
glory and power be unto Him
that sitteth upon the throne,
and unto the Lamb,
for ever and ever.

Amen.
Stephen Layton
Conductor

Stephen Layton is one of the most sought-after conductors of his generation, whose ground-breaking approach has had a profound influence on choral music over the last 30 years. Often described as the finest exponent of choral music in the world today, Stephen is regularly invited to work with the world’s leading choirs, orchestras and composers. His interpretations have been heard from Sydney Opera House to the Concertgebouw, from Tallinn to São Paolo, and his recordings have won or been nominated for every major international recording award. He has two Gramophone Awards and a further ten nominations, five Grammy nominations, the Diapason d’Or de l’Année in France, the Echo Klassik award in Germany, the Spanish CD compact award, and Australia’s Limelight Recording of the Year.

The founder and director of Polyphony, Stephen is also Fellow and Director of Music at Trinity College Cambridge and Music Director of Holst Singers. Former posts include Chief Conductor of Netherlands Chamber Choir, Chief Guest Conductor of Danish National Vocal Ensemble, Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of City of London Sinfonia, and Director of Music at the Temple Church, London.

Stephen’s recordings have consistently broken new ground, creating a new sound world in British choral music that continues to influence and inform conductors and choirs throughout the world. Award-winning discs with Polyphony include Britten’s Sacred and Profane, James MacMillan’s Seven Last Words from the Cross and Poulenc’s Gloria.

Stephen guest-conducts widely, working with and inspiring the world’s finest choirs and orchestras. His interpretations of Bach and Handel have been heard with orchestras ranging from Academy of Ancient Music to the London Philharmonic and Philadelphia orchestras. Performances include Messiah in Sydney Opera House, the first staged St John Passion with English National Opera, and regular BBC broadcasts.

In their 20th anniversary year, the ensemble was privileged to work with Queensland Symphony Orchestra under maestro Stephen Layton in a performance of J.S. Bach’s Mass in B Minor – since broadcast twice on ABC Classic FM – and share the concert platform with internationally renowned saxophonist, Diana Tolmie. The Brisbane Chamber Choir regularly commissions works and is currently the resident Chamber Choir of St John’s Anglican Cathedral.

Brisbane Chamber Choir
Music Director Graeme Morton AM

The Brisbane Chamber Choir is an auditioned vocal ensemble of up to twenty singers, established in 1997 and based in Brisbane, Australia. Under founding musical director Graeme Morton AM, it performs music of all styles and periods with a focus on Australian premiere performances and works of Australian composers.

For more than 20 years, the ensemble has delighted concert audiences at home and across Australia and has produced several landmark recordings.

In 2014, they were guest artists of Musica Viva in Sydney and collaborated with cornerstone Australian choral ensembles, the Adelaide Chamber Singers and the Sydney Chamber Choir, in A Tale of Three Cities in 2015. The ensemble regularly performs with leading instrumentalists including Camerata, the Badinerie Players, and The Adina String Quartet.

Sara Macliver
Soprano

Sara Macliver is one of Australia’s most popular and versatile artists, and is regarded as one of the leading exponents of Baroque repertoire.

Sara is a regular performer with all the Australian symphony orchestras as well as the Perth, Melbourne and Sydney Festivals, Pinchgut Opera, the Australian Chamber Orchestra and Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, Musica Viva, and a number of international companies.

Sara has been awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Western Australia in recognition of her services to singing.

In 2017/18, Sara sang with Sydney Symphony Orchestra, West Australian Opera, West Australian Symphony Orchestra and Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, the Australian String Quartet, St George’s Cathedral, the Auckland Philharmonic Orchestra, and in several programs with Melbourne Symphony Orchestra; she also sang with Bangalow Festival, St George’s Cathedral, and Collegium Musicum amongst many other projects. Sara recorded a CD of Calvin Bowman songs which was released last year.

In 2019, Sara sings with the West Australian, Tasmanian, Queensland and Adelaide Symphony Orchestras, Sydney Philharmonia, Ten Days on the Island, the Peninsula Summer Festival, Brisbane Camerata, and ANAM amongst others.

Helen Charlston
Mezzo-soprano

Acclaimed for her musical interpretation, presence and ‘warmly distinctive tone’ (The Telegraph), Helen Charlston is quickly cementing herself as a key performer in the next generation of British singers.

Helen won first prize in the 2018 Handel Singing Competition and was a finalist in the Hurn Court Opera Competition. She was a Rising Star of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment 2017-2019 and is a 2018 City Music Foundation Artist.

This season, Helen makes debuts with Academy of Ancient Music, Cambridge Handel Opera Company, Il Gardellino, Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Concertgebouw Chamber Orchestra, as well as joining Fretwork for a solo recital programme at Wigmore Hall and York Early Music Christmas Festival. Helen will premiere the full role of Anna in the newly completed opera Blue Electric by Tom Smail and will continue her commissioning project of lute songs with duo partner Toby Carr.

Often heard on BBC Radio 3 in live concert relays, Helen features on recordings of Bach B Minor Mass (Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment/Trinity College Choir), and Bach Actus Tragicus & Himmelskönig sei willkommen (Amici Voices/Amici Baroque Players), both available from Hyperion. The ‘mesmerising delivery’ of her aria in BWV 182 on the Amici Voices CD was singled out by Gramophone Magazine as the highlight of the recording. This season she will record John Eccles Semele (Juno) with Cambridge Handel Opera Company and the Academy of Ancient Music.

Helen began singing as chorister and head chorister of the St Albans Abbey Girls Choir. She then studied music at Trinity College, Cambridge where she held a choral scholarship for four years and was a scholar on the Pembroke College Lieder Scheme, led by Joseph Middleton.
**ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES**

**Gwilym Bowen**  
*Tenor*

Acclaimed for the clarity and beauty of his singing and dynamic stage presence, British tenor Gwilym Bowen performs internationally with orchestras and ensembles of the highest calibre. His engagements in the 2019/20 season include James MacMillan’s *All the Hills and Vales Along* at the Edinburgh Festival and Dussek’s *Mass in G* with the Academy of Ancient Music; a Purcell programme, ‘Gabriel – An Entertainment with Trumpet’ with The English Concert, Alison Balsom and Harry Bicket at the Barbican Centre; Messiah with Queensland Symphony Orchestra conducted by Stephen Layton; Christmas Oratorio with Oslo Philharmonic; St John Passion with Ensemble Orlando Fribourg and the English Concert, and Evangelist in *St Matthew Passion* with BBC National Orchestra of Wales conducted by John Butt.

A regular with the Academy of Ancient Music, Gwilym’s most recent recording with the orchestra, of Handel’s Brockes-Passion conducted by Richard Egarr, was released in September 2019.

In concert, Gwilym has sung the Evangelist in *St John Passion* with John Butt and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the *St Matthew Passion* for De Nederlandse Bachvereniging and the Auckland Philharmonia, and has sung Bach cantatas with Masaaki Suzuki at the Lincoln Center; Monteverdi and Schütz with the Dunedin Consort; Christmas Oratorio across Australia with Richard Tognetti and the Australian Chamber Orchestra and with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment; *Das Lied von der Erde* with the City of London Sinfonia; Ernst Wilhelm Wolf’s *Passionsoratorium* with Die Koelner Akademie; Messiah with Seattle Symphony Orchestra, West Australian Symphony Orchestra, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, Hanover Band and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra; and Bach’s *Mass in B Minor* with the OAE at St John’s, Smith Square.

Born in Hereford, Gwilym was a choral scholar at Trinity College, Cambridge, graduating with Double-First class honours in Music, before studying at the Royal Academy of Music.

Recent operatic roles have included Colline in Puccini’s *La Bohème* (Hampstead Garden Opera), Mr Gedge in Britten’s *Albert Herring* (Hampstead Garden Opera), Smirnov in Walton’s *The Bear* (Cambridge Opera Society & Leeds Chamber Ensemble), and Opera Scenes Various (The Guildhall School of Music and Drama).

Laurence is a sought-after musician in the United Kingdom, active with choirs such as Polyphony, The Gabrieli Consort and ORA. He is passionate about introducing young voices to choral music, and has extensive experience directing children’s and youth choirs.

**Laurence Williams**  
*Bass-baritone*

Acclaimed for his eloquent singing and lush tone, Laurence Williams is an international Bass-Baritone soloist, specialising in oratorio singing. Runner up in the 2019 Patricia Routledge National English Song Competition, his recent highlights include Bach’s Christmas Oratorio with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, the world premiere of Stephen McNeff’s *The Waking Shadows* with Canticum Choir at St Martin-in-the-Fields, Bach’s *St Matthew Passion* with Stephen Layton and the Auckland Philharmonia, broadcast live on Radio NZ, and Haydn’s *Nelson Mass* with John Butt and the OAE.

He trained at The Guildhall School of Music and Drama and graduated with distinction and a Concert Recital Diploma in 2017. He is widely praised for his lyrical tone and engaging communication of narrative. He was a finalist in the 2018 London Song Festival Masterclass.
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