

Guildford Corporation Concerts

Director of Music : J. CROSSLEY CLITHEROE

Seventh Annual Music Festival

Saturday, May 24th, 1952, at 7 p.m.

Technical College, Stoke Park



MASS in B MINOR (Bach)

Municipal Philharmonic Orchestra

Leader : TATE GILDER

GUILDFORD FESTIVAL CHOIR

THELMA GODFREY (Soprano)

MARJORIE THOMAS (Contralto)

ALEXANDER YOUNG (Tenor)

BRYAN DRAKE (Bass)

KATHLEEN DUNN-DAVIES (Harpichord Continuo)

Conductor: Crossley Clitheroe



PROGRAMME - SIXPENCE

PROGRAMME

In 1733, after long and patient efforts to induce the Leipzig Town Council to improve the conditions under which he had to provide the Church music, Bach petitioned the King of Poland, who was also the Grand Duke of Saxony and held his court in Dresden, for the status of Court Musician, hoping that the dignity of such a title would influence the Town Council. As an act of grace he decided to compose a special mass for the Grand Duke, a result of which was the great B minor Mass, which, however, was not completed until 1738. With his petition Bach sent the parts of the Kyrie and the Gloria. At first Bach was not favoured with the royal patronage for which he was seeking, but after a number of applications, in 1736, he obtained the title of Court Composer.

It was quite a common practice in Bach's day for composers to save themselves trouble when writing a new work for some occasion by borrowing whole sections or movements from their own works. Handel, of course, was a notorious exponent of this art of saving time. Bach himself resorted to this practice in the case of his B minor Mass, and it is now often described as a pastiche, for eight of the twenty-four numbers of the Mass were borrowed from various pieces written for the Lutheran services in the Leipzig churches, and from pieces from certain church cantatas. A notable instance of this was the "Gratias agimus," which was taken from a cantata which Bach wrote two years previously for the annual civic service held on the Sunday before the municipal elections for the Leipzig Town Council.

It has often been remarked that the B minor Mass has an all-embracing spiritual range and appeal. Apart from the great expressiveness of the music itself, this is probably due to the fact that this essential part of the Catholic service has been treated in the simple style of a composer in the Lutheran tradition. The great Bach authority, Albert Schweitzer, has pointed out that "some of the splendid and brilliant chief choruses have quite a Catholic tinge. Yet in the other movements we get the same subjective, intimate spirit as in the cantatas, which we may regard as the Protestant element in Bach's religion. The sublime and the intimate do not interpenetrate; they co-exist side by side; they are inseparable from each other like the objective and the subjective in Bach's piety; and so the B minor Mass is at once Catholic and Protestant."

Whatever its religious implications are it remains one of the greatest masterpieces of music. In this Mass, Bach's art as a polyphonist, particularly as regards fugal writing, as in the closing chorus of "Cum Sancto Spirito" of the "Gloria" and in the opening chorus of the "Credo," is unsurpassed. And the beauty and expressiveness of the choral and solo writing in general and the impressiveness of the climaxes, which at times are almost overwhelming, are obviously the work of inspired genius.

"The popular conception of Bach as cold and academic," says Charles Sandford Terry, "draws a veil between those who hold it and a sympathetic understanding of his art. He was, in fact, an incorrigible romanticist, extraordinarily sensitive to literary suggestion, easily inspired to pictorial illustration, and as rapidly moved to give it musical expression, not infrequently irrelevantly to his libretto as a whole. In his use of the orchestra, as Sir Hubert Parry points out, Bach, like Handel, hardly crossed the threshold of that art, and did little to exploit or contrast the qualities of orchestral tone. His pigments are idiomatic rhythms rather than tonal contrasts. But he is none the less a colourist, though he etched in line."

KYRIE

CHORUS

Kyrie eleison. | Lord have mercy upon us.

DUET (Soprano and Alto)

Christe eleison. | Christ have mercy upon us.

CHORUS

Kyrie eleison. | Lord have mercy upon us.

GLORIA

CHORUS

Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terrâ pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis.
Glory to God on high, and on earth peace to men of goodwill.

AIR (Soprano)

Laudamus te; benedicimus te; adoramus te; glorificamus te.
We praise thee, we bless thee; we worship thee; we glorify thee.

CHORUS

Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.
We give thanks to thee for thy great glory.

DUET (Soprano and Tenor)

Domine Deus, rex cœlestis, Deus Pater omnipotens. Domine Fili unigenite Jesu
Christe altissime; Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris,
O Lord God, Heavenly King, God the Father Almighty. O Lord, the only begotten
Son Jesu Christ most high; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,

CHORUS

Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis; qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe
deprecationem nostram,
That takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us; Thou that takest away
the sins of the world, receive our prayer.

AIR (Contralto)

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis.
Thou that sittest at the right hand of the Father, have mercy upon us.

AIR (Bass)

Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe,
For thou only art holy, thou only art the Lord, thou only, O Jesus Christ, art most
high.

CHORUS

Cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.
With the Holy Ghost, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

INTERVAL.

CREDO

Credo in Unum Deum.
I believe in one God.

CREDO

CHORUS

Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, factorem cœli et terræ, visibilium
omnium et invisibilium.
I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all
things visible and invisible.

DUET (Soprano and Contralto)

Et in unum Dominum, Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum, et ex Patre natum ante omnia sæcula; Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero; genitum non factum, consubstantialem Patri, per quem omnia facta sunt. Qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem, descendit de cœlis.

And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven:

CHORUS

Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine, et homo factus est.
And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man.

CHORUS

Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato, passus et sepultus est.
And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried.

CHORUS

Et resurrexit tertia die secundum Scripturas, et ascendit in cœlum, sedit ad dexteram Patris, et iterum venturus est cum gloria judicare vivos et mortuos, cujus regni non erit finis.

And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven; and sitteth at the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.

AIR (Bass)

Et in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum et vivificantem, qui ex Patre Filioque procedit; qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur et conglorificatur; qui locutus est per prophetas. Et unam sanctam Catholicam et Apostolicam Ecclesiam.

And in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; Who spake by the prophets. And one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

CHORUS

Confiteor unum baptisma in remissionem peccatorum,
Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum et vitam venturi sæculi. Amen.
I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

SANCTUS

CHORUS

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt cœli et terra gloria ejus.
Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts. Heaven and earth are full of his glory.

AIR (Tenor)

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

AGNUS DEI

AIR (Contralto)

Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.
O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

CHORUS

Dona nobis pacem. | Grant us thy peace.