

ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS CHORAL SOCIETY

85th SEASON

**ASSEMBLY HALL, TUNBRIDGE WELLS
SUNDAY 9th APRIL 1989**

3.00 p.m.

MASS IN B MINOR

J. S. BACH

Janice Watson

Soprano

Susan Mason

Contralto

Adrian Thompson

Tenor

Anthony Michaels-Moore

Baritone

Chamber Organ

David Maw

Harpsichord

Wilmarc Ellman

Orchestra led by **RITA JAMES**

**CONDUCTOR
DEREK WATMOUGH**

Programme 40p

MASS IN B MINOR JS BACH 1685-1750

We can only be grateful that Bach was inspired to assemble his settings of various sections of the Latin Mass into one cohesive and monumental work. At first it seems a little strange that such a staunch Protestant should write a Catholic mass but it was quite customary in the eighteenth century Lutheran Church to sing the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* in Latin on special feast days and Bach made several arrangements of the mass. He presented the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* as a model to the Dresden Court in 1733 in the hope of an official appointment. The *Credo* was a later composition and other sections were mostly adapted from cantatas; the *Hosanna* was formerly the opening movement of an Accession Day cantata for Augustus of Saxony. The whole conception spanned about seven years and was completed in 1738 though it is doubtful whether it was ever performed in its entirety in Bach's lifetime.

Differing styles are used ranging from the already archaic contrapuntal "stile antico" with its plainsong cantus firmus (*Credo* opening section) to the current concertato fugue of *Et expecto*. Unlike the Passions, the arias have no repeats, nor are there any recitatives or chorales. The human voice, whether chorus or solo, is often treated in an instrumental manner with strange rather awkward leaps.

The mass is a masterpiece, transcending doubt and dogma, a journey from the dark uncertainties of belief in the opening *Kyrie* in B minor to the final triumphant burst of conviction and affirmation of faith in the D major key of the *Dona Nobis Pacem*.

The *Kyrie* opens dramatically with a choral outburst prior to the orchestral introduction which is followed by an extended fugue. A more relaxed soprano and contralto duet of *Christe Eleison*, then the austere *Kyrie Eleison*, a contrapuntal use of plainsong. (Surely only Bach or Beethoven could have set just four words so magnificently).

The sombre mood is displaced by the joyful dance-like *Gloria* whose brilliance is highlighted by trumpets and drums. *In Terra Pax* is calmer and more tranquil and the contralto *Laudamus Te* happily exhorts us to give praise. *Gratias Agimus* is a fervent chorus of ascending phrases. *Domine Deus* is a florid duet for soprano and tenor but *Qui Tollis* is a far more intense and introspective chorus offset by the bright contralto aria *Qui sedes* and the powerful bass solo *Quoniam tu Solus* with its famous obbligato horn part. The climax of the *Gloria* is the tremendous five part chorus *Cum Sancto Spiritu* which dances along relentlessly in another dramatic outburst of praise.

The second part of the mass, *Credo*, opens with a resolute declaration, a Gregorian melody treated as a strict fugue, nevertheless weaving subtle harmonic shifts over a purposefully moving orchestral accompaniment. The *Patrem Omnipotentem* combines the cries of *Credo* with a powerful striding fugal theme. Tension is resolved in the gentle soprano and contralto duet, *Et in Unum Dominum*, and the unity is underlined by the unison canon. This leads to the point of great awe *Et Incarnatus*, with its mood of deep reverence before the dark despair of the *Crucifixus* which is emphasised by the sobbing passacaglia accompaniment. There is a sublime harmonic modulation into the climax, *Et Resurrexit*, a radiant burst of joy, a truly triumphant chorus. A relaxed pastoral bass aria *Et in Spiritum Sanctum* takes us back to the sombre Gregorian cantus firmus of *Confiteor* which changes dramatically from the intense to the exultant with *Et Expecto* driving along optimistically to the conclusion of the movement.

The *Sanctus* begins in stately triplets, the majesty of the six part choral writing enhanced by trumpets and developing into an exuberant grand fugue *Pleni Sunt Coeli* with *Glorias* ringing from voice to voice. The *Hosanna* is even more exciting with a double chorus alternating between harmonic passages and long florid runs. The tenor *Benedictus* with its solo flute obbligato restores a mood of repose before the *Hosanna* chorus is repeated. The *Agnus Dei* opens with a contemplative contralto aria before the whole colossal work is rounded off with *Dona Nobis Pacem*, using the same plainsong theme as the *Gratias*, developing and rising to soar assuredly, Bach's deep religious faith translated to music.

©DIHP

Synopsis

Kyrie

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Kyrie eleison | Chorus |
| 2 | Christe eleison | Soprano and Contralto |
| 3 | Kyrie eleison | Chorus |

Gloria

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 4 | Gloria in excelsis Deo | Chorus |
| 5 | Laudamus te | Contralto |
| 6 | Gratias Agimus | Chorus |
| 7 | Domine Deus | Soprano and Tenor |
| 8 | Qui tollis | Chorus |
| 9 | Qui sedes ad dexteram patris | Contralto |
| 10 | Quoniam tu solus sanctus | Bass |
| 11 | Cum Sancto Spiritu | Chorus |

interval

Credo

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 12 | Credo in unum Deum | Chorus |
| 13 | Patrem omnipotentem | Chorus |
| 14 | Et in unum Dominum | Soprano and Contralto |
| 15 | Et incarnatus est | Chorus |
| 16 | Crucifixus | Chorus |
| 17 | Et resurrexit | Chorus |
| 18 | Et in spiritum sanctum | Bass |
| 19 | Confiteor unum baptisma | Chorus |

Sanctus

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------------|--------|
| 20 | Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus | Chorus |
| 21 | Hosanna in excelsis | Chorus |

Benedictus

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------|-------|
| 22 | Benedictus qui venit | Tenor |
|----|----------------------------|-------|

Agnus Dei

- | | | |
|----|------------------------|-----------|
| 23 | Agnus Dei | Contralto |
| 24 | Dona Nobis Pacem | Chorus |

JANICE WATSON (Soprano), studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and recently won several prizes including the Kathleen Ferrier Memorial Award and Royal Overseas Gold Medal. Her operatic performances have taken her to Glyndebourne and the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and she took part in the City of London Festival production of Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*. She has appeared with the Songmakers' Almanac in a Ravel programme at the Wigmore Hall and other recitals have included the St Olave's Recital series. She has sung in oratorios and concert engagements with many leading orchestras and conductors, amongst them the Hallé under Richard Hickox, in works ranging from Bach and Haydn to Strauss and Berio. We are very pleased to welcome her to her first performance with us today.

SUSAN MASON (Contralto), was born in York and studied in London. In 1979 she won first prize in the Tunbridge Wells International Young Concert Artists' Competition and has since won various prizes elsewhere. As well as performances at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden she regularly takes part in festivals and has appeared in the leading cathedrals and concert halls of the country including those in London, and on Radio 3. Her Royal Festival Hall debut was in John McCabe's *Music Empire* and her repertoire extends from Monteverdi through Handel to present day composers. We are delighted to welcome Susan back for her fifth concert with us, one previous performance was Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* in 1983 together with today's tenor and baritone soloists.

ADRIAN THOMPSON (Tenor), was born in London and studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He made his first Prom appearance as a treble in Britten's *Golden Vanity* returning there as a tenor in 1981. He has sung most of the major tenor roles ranging from Bach, Mozart and Rossini to Britten and Elgar. He has performed on concert platforms in London and throughout the provinces and abroad and with all the principal orchestras and he broadcasts frequently on Radio 3. Festival appearances include those at Aldeburgh, Buxton and Lausanne. He has sung at the Wigmore Hall with the Songmakers' Almanac and as a soloist (*Die Schöne Müllerin* last December). Operatic performances have taken him to Glyndebourne, Wexford, Hong Kong and he has sung with Scottish and Handel Operas. We are very pleased to welcome him back for his third appearance with us, a previous occasion being *The Dream of Gerontius* in 1983.

ANTHONY MICHAELS-MOORE (Baritone), studied music at Newcastle University and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, specialising in Opera. He was joint winner of the Pavarotti Competition and subsequently took part in the Pavarotti Masterclass broadcast on BBC TV in 1987. He has taken part in numerous operas and concert hall performances here and abroad in works as varied as Geoffrey Burgon's *Revelations*, Verdi's *Requiem*, Bizet's *Carmen*, Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro* and Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* and *The Kingdom* - both the latter in Tunbridge Wells in 1983 and 1987 respectively. He is now principal baritone at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and sang *Marullo* in *Rigoletto* this January. He also broadcasts frequently. In June he will be taking part in Crowborough Choral Society's performance of the *St John Passion* at Trinity Arts Centre. We are delighted he is back for his fifth concert with us today.

THE ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS CHORAL SOCIETY

85th SEASON

Honorary Life President:	John H. Johnson
Chairman:	William Halstead Key
Musical Director and Principal Conductor:	Derek Watmough
Honorary Life Member:	Anthony Smith-Masters

PATRONS

Mr I. Audsley	Mr R. Douglas
Mr H. J. Hinves	Mr J. Johnson
Mr and Mrs W. H. Key	Dr D. S. J. Maw
Miss D. H. Phillips	Mrs M. Romney
Mrs H. Stear	Mrs G. Stewart
Mr M. Webb	Mr C. Wood
Mr M. W. Wynne	Mr W. Yates
The Music Centre, Tunbridge Wells	

VICE PATRONS 1987/88

Mrs D. I. Benson	Mrs K. C. Davey
Mr P. Hesse	Mrs J. Lyle
Mrs J. Smith (Canada)	Mr K. Pengelly
Mr and Mrs G. D. Stredder	

We are most grateful for the support of Patrons and Vice Patrons, and new ones are always welcome. Please ring or write to the General Secretary, Mr L.A. Lee, 233 Greggs Wood Road, Tunbridge Wells (Tunbridge Wells 21937).

The choir rehearses on Monday evenings from September to April. New members are always welcome. There is a simple and private audition. Please contact the Membership Secretary Miss M Standen - 38 Sandhurst Avenue, Pembury, Kent TN2 4JZ, Tel Pembury 2048 - we shall be pleased to have you join us.

SOME FORTHCOMING CONCERTS
AT TRINITY ARTS CENTRE AT 3.00 p.m.

1989

Sunday	16 April	Green Room Club - Schubert Ensemble
Sunday	21 May	Green Room Club - Romney Concert
Sunday	18 June	Crowborough Choral Society - St John Passion, <i>Bach</i> (7.00pm)

The Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society acknowledges financial assistance from the South East Arts Association and the Borough of Royal Tunbridge Wells.



FUTURE CONCERTS BY THE
ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS CHORAL SOCIETY
AT THE ASSEMBLY HALL AT 3.00 p.m.

1989

Sunday	12 November	Creation - <i>Haydn</i> .
Sunday	10 December	Carols.

1990

Sunday	25 March	German Requiem - <i>Brahms</i> . Chichester Psalms - <i>Bernstein</i> .
--------	----------	--