

BACH: MASS IN B MINOR

**Irish Baroque Orchestra and
Choir**

Peter Whelan, director

**November 1 at 8pm Christ
Church Cathedral, Dublin**

Rachel Redmond, soprano
Katie Bray, mezzo-soprano
Hugh Cutting, countertenor
Anthony Gregory, tenor
Matthew Brook, bass



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A Seasonal Celebration

November 30 | 7.30pm

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Programme includes:

Corelli – Christmas Concerto,

Vivaldi – L'Amoroso – Concerto for violin

Winter from the 'Four Seasons'

Purcell – Next, Winter Comes Slowly arr.
for Strings

Sí Bheag, Sí Mhór arr. for Strings

Bach-Gounod – Ave Maria

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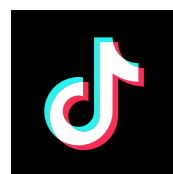
‘MASS IN B MINOR’

BWV 232

J.S. BACH

As we enter into a collective listening experience we ask you to please check that your phones are off or on silent. Please refrain from unauthorised photography or filming while the performance is in progress. Thank you.

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Bach's Miracle of Second-Hand Music

Seyd zu tausend mahl willkommen.

A thousand times, be welcome.

Helden, die wie Caesar fechten...

Heroes, who fight like Caesar...

Entfernet euch, ihr heitern Sterne! / Des Landes Sonne geht uns auf.

Begone, ye happy stars! / The nation's sun rises for us.

Es lebe der König.

Long live the king!

Ich bin deine, / Du bist meine, / Küsse mich, / Ich küsse dich.

I am yours, / You are mine, / Kiss me, / I kiss you.

What could these five decidedly secular German phrases have to do with history's most revered work of sacred music? As uncomfortable as it may seem for our view of the Mass in B minor, each of them was at some point associated with portions of music that would eventually find their way into Bach's culminant vocal work.

The phrases are to be found among the texts of three royal anniversary cantatas dating respectively from 1727 (BWV Anh. 9), 1732 (BWV Anh. 11) and 1733 (BWV 213). Owing to unplanned correspondences of syllables and stresses, the original music of 'Seyd zu tausend, zu tausend mahl willkommen' proved a good fit for the alternative words 'Christe, Christe eleison, eleison', that of 'Helden, die wie Caesar fechten' for 'Quoniam tu solus sanctus', that of 'Entfernet euch, ihr heitern Sterne!' for 'Et resurrexit, resurrexit', and that of 'Es lebe der König' for 'Osanna, osanna'. An abandoned draft of the love-duet 'Ich bin deine' shows that Bach initially tried fitting those words to music

he would eventually reuse for 'Et in unum'. This music no longer survives in its original state, but the existence of both a failed and a successful reworking of it illustrates the seriousness with which Bach applied himself to the process—perplexing to us—of adapting his own compositions.

The source material of the Mass in B minor is not entirely secular. The identical music of 'Gratias agimus tibi' and 'Dona nobis pacem' was adapted—not without a little adjustment of the counterpoint—from the chorus 'Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir' from a church cantata Bach had written in 1731 ('We thank you, O God', BWV 29). The cantata text, from Psalm 75, clearly prompted Bach to adapt its music for the apposite portion of the Gloria; the same music's second reappearance, at the very end of the Mass, is not so easily explained. The penitential 'Qui tollis peccata mundi' derives from a cantata with words from the Book of Lamentations, 'Schauet doch und sehet' ('Behold and see', BWV 46), while the doleful 'Crucifixus' adapts 'Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen' ('Weeping, lamentation, worry, apprehension', BWV 12), a cantata characterised by the chromatic repeating bass line typical of Baroque operatic laments.

For admirers of this music, it can be hard not to feel puzzled by Bach's recourse to adaptation. (Nor does it help that 'parody', the academic term for that method of composing, has comedic and pejorative connotations.) To be sure, following his arrival at Leipzig in mid 1723 Bach's self-imposed challenge of equipping the city churches with new repertoire unavoidably led to the recycling of much material he had written at Weimar and Köthen. From mid 1724 to mid 1725, however, and for two or three twelve-month periods thereafter, he appears to have composed a brand new sacred cantata every week, not to mention the St Matthew Passion of 1727. Still, this period was to prove by far his most productive in the realm of vocal music.

The death late in 1728 of Bach's former employer the young Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Köthen led to Bach's being commissioned to write a vast cantata for the prince's funeral in March 1729. Though neither a score nor parts

survive, the extant printed libretto shows the music was a wholesale adaptation of the St Matthew Passion, the requisite new words having been tailored—by Bach’s Leipzig librettist ‘Picander’—to the existing arias and choruses. While easily dismissed as mere expediency, this ad hoc derivation of an occasional composition from a permanent one made eminent practical sense: it could be accomplished in a short time, new parts needed to be written out only for the singers, and—best of all—next to no one from Köthen would have heard the original version in Leipzig two years previously.

Perhaps it was this exercise that made Bach more alive to the inverse possibility of deriving a permanent composition from an occasional one (or several). At any rate, partly or chiefly by this method were composed the St Mark Passion of 1731 (now lost), the Christmas Oratorio of 1734–5, the Ascension Oratorio of 1735, and—from 1733 to ’39—six multi-movement settings of the Lutheran mass, each comprising a Greek Kyrie and a Latin Gloria. The first of these Kyrie-Gloria pairs, in B minor, was put together in the summer of 1733 as Bach’s bid for the title of composer to the Saxon court chapel at Dresden. The ensuing three-year delay in ratifying the title was doubtless due to glacier-like court bureaucracy, not to any objection that the composition submitted as proof of the applicant’s abilities was partly a re-hash of movements from certain of his earlier works (and perhaps more of them than can now be identified).

We shall never know for certain why, within the last two years of his life, Bach set about expanding the Dresden Kyrie-Gloria into an entire solemn mass. His most likely intention nonetheless seems to have been the self-conscious creation of a musical monument that would outlast the cantatas he had penned—weekly for the church, and occasionally for public celebrations—in the 1720s. The addition of the Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei involved only two completely new movements: ‘Confiteor’ and ‘Et incarnatus est’. Already to hand were ‘Credo in unum Deum’ (one of two motet-like settings of the Gregorian intonation Bach is known to have written for use with mass settings by other composers) and the Sanctus (composed for Christmas

1724). Each of the remaining ten added movements, it seems, had begun life in some cantata, sacred or secular.

For Bach it had been a safe bet in 1733 that his Kyrie-Gloria would not be dismissed as second-hand music. In his last years, he could foresee this would likewise be a safe bet for all of the Mass in B minor, and for all time. Today, his autograph score is one of just 274 items listed in UNESCO's Memory of the World Register for Europe and North America, while a new release by the French ensemble Pygmalion under Raphaël Pichon was this month announced as Gramophone magazine's Recording of the Year. Clearly, Bach understood better than anyone else that a great musical work does not have to be born: it can be made.

Andrew Johnstone, October 2025

I. MISSA

I. MISSA

1. *Kyrie eleison.*

1. Lord, have mercy.

2. *Christe eleison.*

2. Christ, have mercy.

3. *Kyrie eleison.*

3. Lord, have mercy.

4. *Gloria in excelsis Deo,*

4. Glory to God on high,

5. *et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.*

5. and on earth peace to persons of good will.

6. *Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te, glorificamus te.*

6. We praise you, we bless you, we worship you, we glorify you.

7. *Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.*

7. We give you thanks on account of your great glory.

8. *Domine Deus, rex coelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens, Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe altissime, Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.*

8. Lord God, heavenly king, God Father almighty, Lord only begotten Son, Jesus Christ most high, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father.

9. *Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis, qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram.*

9. You who take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you who take away the sins of the world, accept our prayer.

10. *Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis,*

10. You who sit at the right [hand] of the Father, have mercy on us,

11. *quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe,*

11. for you alone are holy, you alone are Lord, you alone are most high, Jesus Christ,

12. *cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris, amen.*

12. with the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father, amen.

** Interval - 20 minutes**

II. SYMBOLUM NICENUM

1. | 13. *Credo in unum Deum;*

1. | 13. I believe in one God;

2. | 14. *Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, factorem² coeli et terrae, visibilibus omnium et invisibilibus.*

2. | 14. I believe in one God, the Father almighty,¹⁰ maker of heaven and earth, of all things, seen and unseen.

3. | 15. *Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum, et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula, 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 coelis,*

3. | 15. And [I believe] in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God,¹¹ born of the Father before all the ages,¹² God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made,¹³ of one substance with the Father;¹⁴ through whom all things were made, [the Son] who on account of us human beings and on account of our salvation, came down from the heavens,

4. | 16. *et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine et homo factus est.*

4. | 16. and was embodied in flesh,¹⁶ from the Holy Spirit, of the Virgin Mary, and was made a human being.

5. | 17. *Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato, passus et sepultus est,*

5. | 17. He was also crucified for us under Pontius Pilate;²⁰ he suffered [on the cross] and was buried,

6. | 18. *et resurrexit tertia die secundum scripturas; et ascendit in coelum, sedet ad dexteram Dei Patris; et iterum venturus est cum gloria judicare vivos et mortuos, cujus regni non erit finis.*

6. | 18. and rose again on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and ascended into heaven, sitting at the right [hand] of God the Father; and he will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, of whose reign there will be no end.

7. | 19. *Et in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum et vivificantem, qui ex Patre Filioque procedit, qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur et glorificatur, qui locutus est per Prophetas; et unam sanctam catholicam et Apostolicam Ecclesiam.*

7. | 19. And [I believe] in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who is worshiped and glorified together with the Father and the Son, [the Spirit] who spoke through the Prophets; and [I believe in] one holy, world-wide, and Apostolic Church.

8. | 20. *Confiteor unum baptisma in remissionem peccatorum, [9a.] et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum;*

8. | 20. I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins, [9a.] and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead;

9[b]. | 21. *et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum et vitam venturi saeculi, amen.*

9[b]. | 21. and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come, amen.

III. SANCTUS

- | 22. *Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth, pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria ejus.*

- | 22. Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of his glory.

IV. OSANNA, BENEDICTUS, AGNUS DEI, ET DONA NOBIS PACEM

1. | 23. *Osanna in excelsis.*

1. | 23. Hosanna on high.

2. | 24. *Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.*

2. | 24. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

3. | 25. *Osanna in excelsis.*

3. | 25. Hosanna on high.

4. | 26. *Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.*

4. | 26. Lamb of God, you who take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you who take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

5. | 27. *Dona nobis pacem.*

5. | 27. [Lamb of God,] Grant us peace

(transl. Michael Marissen & Daniel R. Melamed)

DIRECTOR Peter Whelan

IRISH BAROQUE CHOIR

Soprano Rachel Redmond*, Aisling Kenny

Mezzo-soprano Katie Bray*, Amy Wood

Countertenor/ Alto Hugh Cutting*, Laura Lamph

Tenor Anthony Gregory*, Christopher Bowen

Bass Matthew Brook*, William Gaunt

*Soloists

IRISH BAROQUE ORCHESTRA

Violin 1 Kinga Ujszaszi, Marja Gaynor, Conor Gricmanis

Violin 2 Huw Daniel, Mark Seow, Jenna Raggett

Viola Joanna Patrick-Taffs, Tadhg Sudlow

Cello Sarah McMahon, Gulrim Choi

Bass Rosie Moon

Organ Malcolm Proud

Flute Miriam Kaczor, Elisabeth Vogel

Oboe Andreas Helm, Laura Hoeven, Maria Rojas

Bassoon Lisa Goldberg, Fergus Butt

Horn Anneke Scott

Trumpet Darren Moore, Paul Bosworth, Sam Pierce

Timpani Robert Kendell

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Scottish-born, Paris-based soprano **Rachel Redmond** is establishing herself as a sought-after interpreter of baroque repertoire. Appearing at major venues and festivals throughout Europe, her recent Handel roles have attracted particular praise.

Having started her earlier career with the young artist's programme of Les Arts Florissants, Rachel has performed extensively with the group in programmes of the French baroque masters as well as Purcell, Handel and Bach directed by both William Christie and Paul Agnew. She made her stage début at the Opéra Comique in Lully Atys. Her other opera appearances include Second Woman Dido & Aeneas for Aix-en-Provence Festival, Loena La Belle Hélène at Théâtre du Châtelet, Dalinda Ariodante for Göttingen International Handel Festival, Fortuna L'Incoronazione di Poppea at Opéra du Rhin, Papagena Die Zauberflöte for Edinburgh International Festival, Susanna The Marriage of Figaro for English Touring Opera and Aminta in Vivaldi L'Olimpiade for Irish National Opera and the Royal Opera House Linbury Theatre. In concert she has also sung the roles of Dorinda Orlando with the Academy of Ancient Music / Laurence Cummings and Doña Isabel The Indian Queen at the Salzburg Festival with the Utopia Orchestra / Teodor Currentzis.

Concert engagements include Bach B Minor Mass with Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment / John Butt at the BBC Proms; Purcell and Handel with the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra Kristian Bezuidenhout; Handel Esther and London Handel Festival / Laurence Cummings and Bach and Handel with The English Concert / Harry Bicket. Aside from period ensembles Rachel has worked with the Northern Sinfonia, BBC Scottish Symphony, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestras. She counts amongst her musical collaborators conductors Christophe Rousset, Trevor Pinnock, Leonardo Garcia Alarcón and Jordi Savall.

Recently released on the Linn label is Rachel Baptist: Ireland's Black Syren with the Irish Baroque Orchestra and Peter Whelan.

Winner of the Dame Joan Sutherland Audience Prize at Cardiff Singer of the World, British mezzo-soprano **Katie Bray** has become known for her magnetic stage presence and gleaming, expressive tone.

In the opera house her roles have included Hansel Hansel and Gretel, Rosina Il Barbiere di Siviglia, Varvara Katya Kabanova, Nancy Albert Herring, Zerlina Don Giovanni, Juno Semele, Minerva Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria, Isolier Le Comte Ory and Vivaldi's Griselda (title role) for companies including English National Opera, Irish National Opera, Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera, Garsington Opera, Grange Park Opera and Opera Holland Park. Her interest in the music of Weill and cabaret has led to staged productions of this music, including Effigies of Wickedness, based on songs banned by the Nazis, at the Gate Theatre Notting Hill.

On the concert platform she has appeared with orchestras including London Philharmonic Orchestra, The Hallé, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Aalborg Symphony, Britten Sinfonia, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Orchestre de Chambre de Paris in repertoire ranging from Messiah and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony to Verdi Requiem, Elijah and The Dream of Gerontius. She recently gave the premiere of Spell Book by Freya Waley-Cohen with the Manchester Collective and performed Haydn's Seven Last Words with RIAS Kammerchor at Konzerhaus Berlin.

Noted for her interpretations of baroque repertoire she has received regular invitations from early music groups including Academy of Ancient Music, The English Concert, Barokksolistene, Monteverdi Choir, Wroclaw Baroque, La Nuova Musica and Spira Mirabilis with conductors including Harry Bicket, Laurence Cummings, Bjarte Eike, Peter Whelan and John Eliot Gardiner.

Highlights this 25/26 season include singing Rosmira Partenope at English National Opera, Medoro Orlando for Longborough Festival Opera, Messiah on tour with The Sixteen, Dido Dido and Aeneas with Royal Northern Sinfonia and St Markus Passion with the Arctic Philharmonic.

A former choral scholar at St John's College, Cambridge, British countertenor **Hugh Cutting** is a graduate of the Royal College of Music, where he was a member of the International Opera Studio. On graduating, he was awarded the Tagore Gold Medal, presented by King Charles III. In 2021, he became both the first countertenor to win the Kathleen Ferrier Award and the first to be named a BBC New Generation Artist (2022–24).

In the 2024/25 season, Hugh makes several major international opera debuts: La Scala, Milan as Corindo in Cesti's *Orontea*, in the United States singing the title role in Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* with Dallas Opera, and in Australia as Tolomeo in *Giulio Cesare* with Pinchgut Opera. He will also appear at the Garsington Festival as Unulfo in Handel's *Rodelinda*. Concerts this season include Bach's Christmas Oratorio with the NDR Radiophilharmonie Hannover and Bernard Labadie, Messiah with the Tonkünstler Orchestra and Ivor Bolton, St Matthew Passion with the Rotterdam Philharmonic and Jonathan Cohen, and Bach's solo Cantatas with les Violons du Roy and Bernard Labadie in Quebec City and Montreal. In the 2025/26 season, Hugh curates a residency at Wigmore Hall.

Hugh's first professional season (2022/23) included his debut at Opernhaus Zürich in works by Monteverdi; Arsace (Partenope) on a European tour with William Christie and Les Arts Florissants; his Wigmore Hall debut; and his U.S. concert debut singing Bach's St Matthew Passion at Carnegie Hall with Bernard Labadie and the Orchestra of St. Luke's. Hugh has since returned to Les Arts Florissants for Polinesso in *Ariodante*, and sung Arsace (Berenice) with il Pomo d'Oro and Bach's Christmas Oratorio with Masaaki Suzuki and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. Recent operatic highlights include role debuts as the Boy in George Benjamin's *Written on Skin* (Stavanger), Ariel in Anthony Bolton's *The Island of Dreams* (Grange Park Opera), and Dardano in Handel's *Amadigi* with The English Concert and Harry Bicket.

A passionate advocate for song, Hugh places recital work at the heart of his artistic identity and is committed to expanding the countertenor repertoire in

this sphere. Regular recital partners include pianist George Ireland, lutenist Danny Murphy, and composer Piers Connor Kennedy. He has performed at Wigmore Hall, the Oxford International Song Festival, and the Brighton, Cheltenham, and Ryedale Festivals, many of which have been broadcast by BBC Radio 3.

His discography includes Purcell: Royal Odes and Birthday Odes for Queen Mary with The King's Consort and Robert King (alongside Iestyn Davies and Carolyn Sampson), and Lamento with Iestyn Davies and Fretwork for Signum Classics.

Hailed by The Sunday Times' Hugh Canning as the "Mozart tenor to watch," **Anthony Gregory** is admired for his unique timbre, stage presence, and musicality. A former Jerwood Young Artist at Glyndebourne and alumnus of both the National Opera Studio and the Royal College of Music, Gregory was named one of opera's future stars by esteemed critic Rupert Christiansen and won the 2015 Breakthrough Artist Award at the WhatsOnStage Opera Poll following his standout performance as Peter Quint in *The Turn of the Screw*. His successes include appearances with Glyndebourne Festival, Royal Ballet and Opera, English National Opera, Festival de Aix-en-Provence, Teatro Real in Madrid, Bergen Opera, Opernhaus Zürich, Scottish Opera, and Norwegian National Opera in Oslo.

In the 2025–26 season, Gregory makes several debuts including his anticipated return to Opernhaus Zürich in a new production of *Glaucus et Scylla* in his role debut in the title role under the baton of Emmanuelle Haïm, his company debut with Santa Fe Opera as Grimoaldo in *Rodelinda*. On the concert platform he performs *Glaucus et Scylla* with Concert d'Astrée, tenor soloist in Bach's Mass in B Minor and Handel's *Messiah* with the Irish Baroque Orchestra; he joins The English Concert and Harry Bicket in concert at Wigmore Hall and Handel's *Messiah* with Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra.

During the 2024–25 season, Gregory made a series of exciting role and company debuts: as Achilles in *Iphigénie en Aulide* at Greek National Opera, Oronte in *Alcina* at Opera di Roma, and the title role in *Mitridate*, *Re di*

Ponto in a return to Staatsoper Hamburg. Other highlights include his return to the role of Flute in Laurent Pelly's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Opéra de Lausanne and joining the Scottish Chamber Orchestra under the baton of Maxim Emelyanychev for a performance of Haydn's *Nelson Mass*.

Matthew Brook is known for his honest and open portrayal of characters whether on the opera or concert stage. He has developed a world-wide reputation for his interpretation of the music of J.S Bach and George Frederic Handel but his musical tastes stretch far beyond this, often performing new commissions, and has appeared as a soloist throughout Europe, Australia, North and South America and the Far East. Further concert repertoire he performs regularly include pieces such as Beethoven Ninth Symphony and *Missa Solemnis*, Berlioz *L'Enfance du Christ*, Brahms' *Requiem*, Elgar *Dream of Gerontius*, Haydn *Die Schöpfung* and *Die Jahreszeiten*, Mendelssohn *Elijah*, Tippett *A Child of Our Time* and Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast*. This season, Matthew returns to Opera North to sing Chelsias Susanna and Claudio Agrippina at Opera de Rouen. He gives performances with the Bachakademie Stuttgart, Concergebouw-orkest Amsterdam, Antwerp Symphony Orchestra, Irish Baroque Orchestra, Nederlandse Bachvereniging, and George Enescu Philharmonic, to name a few.

In 2023 Matthew made his Opéra National de Paris debut performing the role of Il Re di Scozia in a new Robert Carsen production of *Ariodante* under Harry Bicket, and his debut with Opera North in David Poutney's "*Masque of Might*", music by Purcell, conducted by Harry Bicket. He has performed roles at Staatstheater Stuttgart, Opera Comique, Göttingen International Handel Festival, Grand Théâtre de Luxembourg and at the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino. Matthew has an extensive discography resulting in many nominations and awards including several Gramophone awards for the music of Handel and Bach and a Grammy nomination for the *Mozart Requiem*. His recording *Bach: Ich habe genug* with the Dunedin Consort for the Linn label won the choral award in the 2022 BBC Music Magazine Awards.

Olivier Award winner, **Peter Whelan**, is among the most dynamic and versatile exponents of historical performance of his generation. He is Artistic Director of Irish Baroque Orchestra and Curator for Early Music of Norwegian Wind Ensemble. He becomes Music Director of Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra from the 2026/27 season and is Music Director Designate in 2025/26.

As a conductor, Peter has a particular passion for exploring and championing neglected music from the Baroque and Classical eras. Recent engagements have included appearances with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Beethoven Orchester Bonn, Netherlands Chamber Orchestra, Royal Northern Sinfonia, Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana, Kristiansand Symphony Orchestra, Lahti Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, The English Concert, Dunedin Consort, Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists, Gluck Orfeo with San Francisco Opera, Vivaldi l'Olimpiade with Irish National Opera (across Ireland and the Royal Opera House, London) and Rodelinda at Garsington Opera.

Highlights of the 2025/26 season include an appearance at the BBC Proms with the Irish Baroque Orchestra and return visits to Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Meininger Hofkapelle, National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, Tapiola Sinfonietta and Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists. Peter's artistic direction in live performance and the recording studio has been widely praised for its "rich insight, style and charisma" (Guardian), its "stylish verve" (BBC Music Magazine), and "energetic yet unfailingly sensitive direction" (Gramophone).

As a champion of early music and opera, Peter represents "the very best of contemporary trends in bringing this music to life: flex and zest with tempi, lithe and vigorous ... an incredible alertness to colors and moods summoned by the cut-and-thrust harmonic footwork of this music" (Operawire).

The Oliver Award-winning **Irish Baroque Orchestra** is acclaimed as Ireland's flagship period music ensemble and delivers world-class historically-informed performances across Ireland and abroad. Under the artistic direction of Peter Whelan, scholarship and musical excellence converge in a unique way through the IBO's work, creating an original offering like no other organisation on the Irish classical music scene. The founding of the **Irish Baroque Choir** in 2023 has deepened the ensemble's artistic identity, with high-profile collaborations including the BBC Proms in 2025.

As an ambassador for the stories of Ireland's musical past, the IBO uses its unique perspective to develop the growing store of knowledge surrounding the very early days of Baroque and Classical music in Ireland. The IBO's research, recordings and performances offer audiences across Ireland a new opportunity to reevaluate and reclaim their cultural heritage, while also engaging the Irish diaspora through the increasing global reach of this work. Even Handel's Messiah - an annual touring highlight in the IBO calendar - is a rekindled link to Dublin's cultural life in 1742.

Celebrating 30 years in the 2025/2026 season, the IBO's programme includes a tour to the USA, a return to London's Wigmore Hall and the long-awaited release of a new recording on Linn Records, bringing Handel's 'Messiah' to audiences with all the hallmarks of the IBO's approach under Peter Whelan.

Storytelling sits at the heart of the IBO's Irish heritage recording cycle on Linn Records, which spotlights the interesting characters and extraordinary music from an Ireland of old. This cycle includes 'Welcome Home Mr Dubourg' (2019), 'The Trials of Tenucci' with Tara Erraught (2021), 'The Hibernian Muse' with Sestina (2022), 'Mr Charles the Hungarian' (2023) and 'Rachel Baptist - Ireland's Black Syren' (2024). A warm critical response to these recordings internationally has marked out the IBO's distinctive voice on the world stage. Future recordings include an ambitious reconstruction of Handel's 1742 'Dublin' Messiah (2026)

In February 2022 the IBO made its debut to critical acclaim at the Linbury Theatre, Royal Opera House, London with Vivaldi's 'Bajazet', a co-production from Irish National Opera and the Royal Opera House. The excellence of their work on 'Bajazet', with artistic director Peter Whelan, was recognised in April 2022 with an Olivier Award for 'Outstanding Achievement in Opera'.

In recent seasons the IBO has made high-profile debuts at the BBC Proms, the Edinburgh International Festival, the MA Festival Bruges and Summer at Snape. In Ireland, the IBO continues to work in partnership with a number of organisations, to bring excellent artistic experiences to audiences around the country. In 2025/2026 these include the Blackwater Valley Opera Festival, the Office of Public Works and University Concert Hall, Limerick.

The IBO is committed to developing the national scene for historically-informed performance and works with a number of partner organisations across Ireland to ensure its continued growth for future generations. The award-winning Irish Youth Baroque Orchestra (delivered in partnership with the Irish Association of Youth Orchestras) gives students the opportunity to work intensively on elements of period style under the guidance of director Claire Duff. IBO's Apprentice programme supports students as they take their first steps into the profession, with several alumnae now working with the IBO as active professional musicians.

The Irish Baroque Orchestra is generously funded by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon. It also receives financial support from Culture Ireland to support an expanding international profile, and Dublin City Council for Dublin HandelFest. The orchestra has its own collection of period instruments, purchased with the assistance of an Arts Council capital grant and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. The IBO is resident at the National Concert Hall, Dublin and as of 2021 is an ensemble and Board member of the Réseau Européen de Musique Ancienne (European Early Music Network).

Our community of supporters occupies the heart of the IBO, and plays a significant role in helping us to realise our ambitions. Thank you!

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The IBO is proudly funded by Arts Council Ireland/An Chomhairle Ealaíon and the Bach Cycle 2024-2026 is generously supported by an anonymous donor.

Did you know that the Irish Baroque Orchestra is a registered charity, which relies in part on the generosity of our supporters to enable us to produce and promote world-class Baroque music?

Our Friends and Patrons form a community of support that lies at the heart of our organisation, while enjoying a closer relationship with the orchestra. Packages start from €50 per year (just over €4 per month) and come with a range of special privileges such as Priority Booking, regular office coffee mornings, VIP seating and invitations to special events.

Scan the QR code or visit irishbaroqueorchestra.com/support to find out more. We look forward to welcoming you into the IBO community!



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