

BACH: CHRISTMAS ORATORIO BWV 248

Irish Baroque Orchestra and Choir
Peter Whelan, director

December 12th, 7.30pm
St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin
December 13th, 7.30pm
Kilkenny Castle, Kilkenny

Anna Dennis, soprano
Aisling Kenny, soprano
Rebecca Leggett, mezzo-soprano
Laura Lamph, mezzo-soprano
Jonathan Hanley, tenor
Ruairi Bowen, tenor
Frederick Long, bass-baritone
William Gaunt, bass

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‘CHRISTMAS ORATORIO’

J.S. BACH

First performed 1734-1735, in Leipzig

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.

The performance at Kilkenny Castle is being recorded by RTÉ Lyric fm for broadcast at 7pm on December 26th.

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A large congregation warmed up the Nikolaikirche in Leipzig on Christmas morning in 1734 as they all gathered for the first service of the Nativity. Snow and ice likely covered a dark city outside while anticipation filled the room, waiting on this first cantata from the Oratorium that Johann Sebastian Bach had promised in his pre-released libretto books. The Lutheran Church emphasises congregational singing, a practice which shaped the foundations of Bach's musical output, most evident in this oratorio through his use of chorales, arias and choruses in response to the Gospel narratives.

Bach's compositions for Leipzig's Christmastide in 1734-35 now hold an important place in our Christmas repertoire. The six cantatas were performed on the 25th, 26th, 27th December 1734, and the 1st, 2nd, 6th January 1735. All six were performed at the Nikolaikirche, alternating between morning and evening services, while number 1, 2, 4, and 6 were also performed at the neighbouring Thomaskirche on the same days. As part of his duties as the Director of Music in Leipzig, Bach composed or re-worked a series of cantatas each year for the Christmas period, as he did throughout liturgical calendar year. The 1734 cantatas have the title Oratorium written at the top of the first page, with the text for all six cantatas appearing in one book with the same title. This was common practice, with Bach's libretto books usually containing the text of 4-6 cantatas for the upcoming weeks.

There are no direct representations of characters in this biblical story, instead Bach emphasised the congregation's role in observing the Nativity, encouraging reflection and strengthening one's own relationship with Christ. The oratorio presents narratives from the Gospels of Luke and Matthew in recitatives alongside choruses, arias, and ariosi that interpret and respond to this text. The use of a tenor Evangelist to sing the narrative begs comparison with Bach's famous Matthew and John Easter passions. This musical approach aligns with developing Lutheran values of the time, contrasting with earlier musical portrayals of the Christmas story where each singer had a persona, such as in the Dresden *Historia der Geburt Jesu Christi* (1660) composed by Heinrich Schütz.

Much of the music in Bach's Oratorio was originally conceived in his 1733 cantatas BWV213-215. All except nine arias and choruses were parodies from these secular compositions. Seven of the remaining nine are suspected to be parodies from a lost church cantata (BWV 248a) and the lost Markus Passion (1731). This would mean that no.31 'Schließe, mein Herze, dies selige Wunder' was the only newly composed aria, and no.43 'Ehre sei dir, Gott, gesungen' the only original chorus. From a modern

perspective it is easy to see musical recycling as lacking in creativity, however at the time this was very common. There was every reason to re-purpose well-constructed compositions for a new context, and the way Bach achieves this is genius.

Bach composed the cantatas BWV213-215 to impress the Elector of Saxony in search of a position as composer and musical director in Dresden. He expressed frustrations with the situation in Leipzig in a letter to the Elector, demonstrating the importance these cantatas held for his prospects:

“I have held the Directorium of the music at the two principal churches in Leipzig, but have blamelessly had to suffer one indignity or another, and on occasion also a reduction of the fees associated with this position; but these injuries would vanish altogether if Your Royal Highness were to be so gracious as to confer upon me the title of Your Highness’s Court Kapelle.”

An example of Bach’s parodying process, no.19 ‘Schlafe, mein Liebster’ was a parody of BWV213 no.3. Bach created a lullaby to the baby Jesus from material sung by a personified character of ‘Pleasure’ in his secular cantata.

BWV213 (Pleasure, soprano):

Oratorio (Alto):

Sleep, my darling, and get used to ease,
follow the enticement of inflamed thoughts.

Savour the delight
of a lustful heart
and recognise no limits.

Sleep, my dearest, enjoy your rest.
wake after this so that all may thrive!

Comfort the breast,
feel the pleasure
with which we make glad our hearts!

As well as adapting the text, Bach re-orchestrated the movement. He allocated the tutti violin parts to the oboes da caccia and added a flute part doubling the voice an octave above. The original/parody arias are otherwise identical and even retained the same number of bars. These minor orchestration changes turned a seductive, passionate secular aria into a sweet, intimate, sacred lullaby.

Bach only needed to adapt one or two elements in his compositions to completely change the character. Music was always divine regardless of its context within his Lutheran beliefs. The ethical value of a composition was defined by the intention of its use and text rather than the music itself. Gottfried Vopelius' 1682 Neu Leipziger Gesangbuch contains many secular melodies, some with especially suggestive original texts repurposed into sacred hymns for the Church. The melody 'Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ,' appears twice in Bach's oratorio. Originating as a secular song about yearning for lost love, it was one of the favourite Christmas hymns noted in Vopelius' collection. Perhaps the congregation would have also joined in and sung the familiar Lutheran hymns in the chorales?

Tonight's performance presents all six cantatas, exploring the complete Nativity of Jesus. This follows the re-discovery and performance of the oratorio in 1857 by the Berlin Sing-Akademie. This tradition would soon develop across the world over the next century and a half, with Bach's oratorio touching countless hearts, igniting imaginations, and celebrating the incredible power of music across generations each Christmastide.

Tadhg Sudlow, December 2025

Johan Sebastian Bach - Christmas Oratorio, BWV 248

PART ONE

For the First Day of Christmas

1. Chorus

Jauchzet, frohlocket, auf, preiset die Tage,
Rühmet, was heute der Höchste getan!
Lasset das Zagen, verbannet die Klage,
Stimmet voll Jauchzen und Fröhlichkeit an!
Dienet dem Höchsten mit herrlichen Chören,
Lasst uns den Namen des Herrschers verehren!

*Rejoice, be glad, praise the days,
Praise what the Most High has done this day!
Cease fearing, banish lamentation,
Raise your voices full of joy and mirth!
Serve the Most High with wondrous choirs
Let us worship the name of the Lord!*

2. Recitative (Evangelist)

Es begab sich aber zu der Zeit, dass ein
Gebot von dem Kaiser Augusto ausging, dass alle
Welt geschätzt würde. Und jedermann ging, dass
er sich schätzen ließe, ein jeglicher in seine Stadt.
Da machte sich auch auf Joseph aus Galiläa, aus
der Stadt Nazareth, in das jüdische Land zur Stadt
David, die da heißet Bethlehem; darum, dass er von
dem Hause und Geschlechte David war,
auf dass er sich schätzen ließe mit Maria, seinem
vertrauten Weibe, die war schwanger.
Und als sie daselbst waren, kam die Zeit, daß sie
gebären sollte.

*And it came to pass in those days, that there went
out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the
world should be taxed. And all went to be taxed,
everyone into their own city.
And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the
city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of
David, which is called Bethlehem; because he was
of the house and lineage of David:
to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being
great with child. And so it was, that, while they
were there, the days were accomplished that she
should be delivered.*

LUKE 2: 1, 3-6

3. Arioso (alto)

Nun wird mein liebster Bräutigam,
Nun wird der Held aus Davids Stamm
Zum Trost, zum Heil der Erden
Einmal geboren werden.

*Now my beloved bridegroom,
now the hero of David's house
for the solace and salvation of earth
will at last be born.*

Nun wird der Stern aus Jakob scheinen,
Sein Strahl bricht schon hervor.
Auf, Zion, und verlasse nun das Weinen,
Dein Wohl steigt hoch empor.

*Now will shine the star of Jacob,
its rays already burst forth.
Arise, Zion, abandon your tears,
your salvation goes up on high!*

4. Aria (alto)

Bereite dich, Zion, mit zärtlichen Trieben, Den
Schönsten, den Liebsten bald bei dir zu sehn!

*Prepare yourself, Zion, with tender affection,
Soon to see the fairest and dearest!*

Deine Wangen
Müssen heut viel schöner prangen,
Eile, den Bräutigam sehnlichst zu lieben!

*Your cheeks
Must shine much more brightly today,
Hasten, to love your bridegroom with all
tenderness.*

5. Chorale

Wie soll ich dich empfangen,
Und wie begegn' ich dir?
O aller Welt Verlangen,
O meiner Seelen Zier!

*How shall I receive thee,
And how encounter thee?
Oh, desired of all the world,
Oh, my soul's adornment!*

O Jesu, Jesu, setze
Mir selbst die Fackel bei,
Damit, was dich ergötze,
Mir kund und wissend sei.

*Oh, Jesu, Jesu, set
The torch by me thyself,
Whereby that which pleases thee,
May be manifest and known to me.*

6. Recitative (Evangelist)

Und sie gebär ihren ersten Sohn, und wickelte
ihn in Windeln und legte ihn in eine Krippen, denn
sie hatten sonst keinen Raum in der Herberge.

*And she brought forth her first-born son, and
wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in
a manger; because there was no room for them in
the inn.* LUKE 2: 7

7. Chorale (sopranos) with Recitative (bass)

Chorale Er ist auf Erden kommen arm,
Dass er unser sich erbarm,
Und in dem Himmel mache reich
Und seinen lieben Engeln gleich.
Kyrieleis!

*He came on this earth in poverty,
To have mercy upon us,
And make us rich in heaven,
And make us like his beloved angels.
Lord have mercy upon us!*

Recitative Wer will die Liebe recht erhöhen,
Die unser Heiland für uns hegt?
Ja, wer vermag es einzusehen,
Wie ihn der Menschen Leid bewegt?
Des Höchsten Sohn kömmt in die Welt,
Weil ihm ihr Heil so wohl gefällt,
So will er selbst als Mensch geboren werden.

*Who can extol the love
That our Saviour cherishes for us?
Yea, who can understand
How moved he is by people's suffering?
The son of the Most High comes into the world
Because its salvation pleases him so well,
That he will himself be born as a man.*

8. Aria (bass)

Großer Herr, o starker König,
Liebster Heiland, o wie wenig
Achtest du der Erden Pracht!
Der die ganze Welt erhält,
Ihre Pracht und Zier erschaffen,

*Great Lord, oh mighty king,
Dearest Saviour, oh, how little
Do you care for earthly splendour!
He who supports the whole world,
And created its splendour and beauty,*

Muss in harten Krippen schlafen.

Must lie in a hard crib.

9. Chorale

Ach mein herzliebes Jesulein,
Mach dir ein rein sanft Bettelein,
Zu ruhn in meines Herzens Schrein,
Dass ich nimmer vergesse dein!

*Oh, little Jesu, my heart's love,
Make thyself a clean soft little bed,
In which to rest in my heart's shrine,
That I may never forget thee!*

PART TWO

For the Second Day of Christmas

10. Sinfonia

11. Recitative (Evangelist)

Und es waren Hirten in derselben Gegend auf
dem Felde bei den Hürden, die hüteten des Nachts
ihre Herde. Und siehe, des Herren Engel trat zu
ihren, und die Klarheit des Herren leuchtet um sie,
und sie fürchten sich sehr.

*And there were in the same country 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.*

LUKE 2: 8–9

12. Chorale

Brich an, o schönes Morgenlicht,
Und lass den Himmel tagen!
Du Hirtenvolk, erschrecke nicht,
Weil dir die Engel sagen,
Dass dieses schwache Knäbelein
Soll unser Trost und Freude sein,
Dazu den Satan zwingen
Und letztlich Friede bringen!

*Break forth, oh lovely morning light,
And let the skies brighten!
Shepherds, do not be afraid:
As the angels tell you,
This weak infant boy
Will be our comfort and joy.
He will defeat the devil
And bring peace at last.*

13. Recitative (Duet)

Evangelist Und der Engel sprach zu ihnen:

And the angel said unto them:

Angel Fürchtet euch nicht, siehe, ich verkündige
euch große Freude, die allem Volke widerfahren
wird. Denn euch ist heute der Heiland geboren,
welcher ist Christus, der Herr, in der Stadt David.

*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.*

LUKE 2: 10–11

14. Recitative (bass)

Was Gott dem Abraham verheißen,
Das lässt er nun dem Hirtenchor
Erfüllt erweisen.

Ein Hirt hat alles das zuvor
Von Gott erfahren müssen.
Und nun muss auch ein Hirt die Tat,
Was er damals versprochen hat,
Zuerst erfüllet wissen.

*What God promised Abraham,
As he has shown to the shepherds,
Is now fulfilled.
A shepherd had to learn
All this from God before.
And now a shepherd must be first
To know that the promised act
Has been fulfilled.*

15. Aria (tenor)

Frohe Hirten, eilt, ach eilet,
Eh' ihr euch zu lang verweilet,
Eilt, das holde Kind zu sehn.
Geht, die Freude heißt zu schön,
Sucht die Anmut zu gewinnen,
Geht und labet Herz und Sinnen!

*Joyful shepherds, hasten, hurry,
Do not wait too long,
Hasten to see the lovely babe.
Go, the joy is all too fine,
Seek to gain grace,
Go, and refresh heart and mind.*

16. Recitative (Evangelist)

Und das habt zum Zeichen: Ihr werdet finden das
Kind in Windeln gewickelt und in einer
Krippen liegen.

*And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the
babe wrapped in swaddling clothes,
lying in a manger.*

LUKE 2: 12

17. Chorale

Schaut hin, dort liegt im finstern Stall,
Des Herrschaft gehet überall.
Da Speise vormals sucht ein Rind,
Da ruhet itzt der Jungfrau'n Kind.

*Behold! There in a dark stable lies
The one who has dominion over all.
Where, once, an ox sought food,
There now rests the virgin's child.*

18. Recitative (bass)

So geht denn hin, ihr Hirten, geht,
Dass ihr das Wunder seht;
Und findet ihr des Höchsten Sohn
In einer harten Krippe liegen,
So singet ihm bei seiner Wiegen
Aus einem süßen Ton
Und mit gesamtem Chor
Dies Lied zur Ruhe vor!

*So go then hence, you shepherds, go,
That you may witness the miracle;
And if you find the son of the Most High
Lying in a hard manger,
Then sing unto him by his cradle
In a sweet voice
And with full choir,
This lullaby to rest.*

19. Aria (alto)

Schlafe, mein Liebster, genieße der Ruh',
Wache nach diesem vor aller Gedeihen!

*Sleep, my dearest, enjoy your rest,
Wake thereafter so all may flourish.*

Labe die Brust,
Empfinde die Lust,
Wo wir unser Herz erfreuen!

*Refresh your breast,
Feel the joy,
Where we delight our hearts.*

20. Recitative (Evangelist)

Und alsobald war da bei dem Engel die
Menge der himmlischen Heerscharen, die lobten
Gott und sprachen:

*And suddenly there was with the angel
a multitude of the heavenly host praising
God, and saying:* LUKE 2: 13

21. Chorus

Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe
Und Friede auf Erden
Und den Menschen ein Wohlgefallen.

*Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace,
Good will toward all people.* LUKE 2: 14

22. Recitative (bass)

So recht, ihr Engel, jauchzt und singet,
Dass es uns heut so schön gelinget!
Auf denn! wir stimmen mit euch ein,
Uns kann es, so wie euch, erfreun.

*It is right, angels, rejoice and sing,
That all succeeds so well today.
Come! We will join our voices with yours,
For we can rejoice as well as you.*

23. Chorale

Wir singen dir in deinem Heer
Aus aller Kraft, Lob, Preis und Ehr,
Dass du, o lang gewünschter Gast,
Dich nunmehr eingestellt hast.

*We sing to you as one with all
Our might, praise, honour and glory,
Because you, oh long-desired guest,
Have now appeared.*

PART THREE

For the Third Day of Christmas

24. Chorus

Herrscher des Himmels, erhöere das Lallen,
Lass dir die matten Gesänge gefallen,
Wenn dich dein Zion mit Psalmen erhöht!
Höre der Herzen frohlockendes Preisen,
Wenn wir dir itzo die Ehrfurcht erweisen,
Weil unsre Wohlfahrt befestiget steht!

*Ruler of heaven, hear our stammering,
Let our feeble singing please you,
When your Zion exalts you with psalms!
Hear our hearts' jubilant praise,
As we now display our awe before you,
Because our welfare is assured.*

25. Recitative (Evangelist)

Und da die Engel von ihnen gen Himmel fuhren,
sprachen die Hirten untereinander:

*And as the angels were gone away from them into
heaven, the shepherds said one to another:*
LUKE 2: 15

26. Chorus

Lasset uns nun gehen gen Bethlehem und die
Geschichte sehen, die da geschehen ist, die uns der
Herr kundgetan hat.

*Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this
thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath
made known unto us.* LUKE 2: 15

27. Recitative (bass)

Er hat sein Volk getröst',
Er hat sein Israel erlöst,
Die Hülff aus Zion her gesendet
Und unser Leid geendet.
Seht, Hirten, dies hat er getan;
Geht, dieses trifft ihr an!

*He has comforted his people,
He has delivered his Israel,
Sent help out of Zion
And ended our suffering.
Behold, shepherds, this has he done,
Go, this is what you will find!*

28. Chorale

Dies hat er alles uns getan,
Sein' groß' Lieb zu zeigen an;
Des freu sich alle Christenheit
Und dank ihm des in Ewigkeit.
Kyrieleis!

*This has he done for all of us,
His great love to reveal;
In that all Christendom shall rejoice
And thank him in eternity.
Lord have mercy upon us!*

29. Duet (soprano and bass)

Herr, dein Mitleid, dein Erbarmen
Tröstet uns und macht uns frei.
Deine holde Gunst und Liebe,
Deine wundersamen Triebe
Machen deine Vätertreu
Wieder neu.

*Lord, your compassion, your mercy
Comforts us and makes us free.
Your gracious favour and love,
Your wondrous desire
Renew once more
Your paternal faith.*

30. Recitative (Evangelist)

Und sie kamen eilend und funden beide, Mariam
und Joseph, dazu das Kind in der Krippe liegen. Da
sie es aber gesehen hatten, breiteten sie das Wort
aus, welches zu ihnen von diesem Kind gesaget war.
Und alle, für die es kam, wunderten sich der Rede,
die ihnen die Hirten gesaget hatten. Maria aber
behielt alle diese Worte und bewegte sie in ihrem
Herzen.

*And they came with haste, and found Mary and
Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when
they had seen it, they made known abroad the
saying which was told them concerning this child.
And all they that heard it wondered at those
tidings which were told them by the shepherds.
But Mary kept all these things, and pondered
them in her heart.* LUKE 2: 16–19

31. Aria (alto)

Schließe, mein Herze, dies selige Wunder
Fest in deinem Glauben ein!

*Lock, my heart, this blessed wonder
Fast within your belief.*

Lasse dies Wunder, die göttlichen Werke,
Immer zur Stärke
Deines schwachen Glaubens sein.

*Let this miracle, these divine works
Ever strengthen
Your weak faith.*

32. Recitative (alto)

Ja, ja, mein Herz soll es bewahren,
Was es an dieser holden Zeit
Zu seiner Seligkeit
Für sicheren Beweis erfahren.

*Yes, yes, my heart will treasure
As certain proof
That, which to its great joy,
It has experienced at this blissful hour.*

33. Chorale

Ich will dich mit Fleiß bewahren,
Ich will dir
Leben hier,
Dir will ich abfahren,
Mit dir will ich endlich schweben
Voller Freud
Ohne Zeit
Dort im andern Leben.

*I will keep thee diligently in my mind,
I will live
For thee here,
I will depart with thee hence.
With thee will I soar at last,
Filled with joy
Time without end,
There in the other life.*

34. Recitative (Evangelist)

Und die Hirten kehrten wieder um, preiseten und
lobten Gott um alles, das sie gesehen und gehöret
hatten, wie denn zu ihnen gesaget war.

*And the shepherds returned, glorifying and
praising God for all the things that they heard and
seen, as it was told unto them. LUKE 2: 20*

35. Chorale

Seid froh dieweil,
Dass euer Heil
Ist hie ein Gott und auch ein Mensch geboren,
Der, welcher ist
Der Herr und Christ
In Davids Stadt, von vielen auserkoren.

*Be joyful meanwhile,
That your Saviour
Is here born both God and man,
He, who is
The Lord and Christ
Chosen among many in David's city.*

Chorus (reprise of 24)

Herrscher des Himmels, erhöre das Lallen...

Ruler of heaven, hear our stammering... (etc.)

PART FOUR

For the Feast of the Circumcision

36. Chorus

Fallt mit Danken, fällt mit Loben

Fall down with thanks, fall down with praise

Vor des Höchsten Gnadenthron!
Gottes Sohn
Will der Erden
Heiland und Erlöser werden.
Gottes Sohn
Dämpft der Feinde Wut und Toben.

*Before the mercy-seat of the Most High.
The son of God
Will be the Saviour
And Redeemer of the earth.
The son of God
Dampens the foes' rage and fury.*

37. Recitative (Evangelist)

Und da acht Tage um waren, dass das Kind
beschnitten würde, da ward sein Name genennet
Jesus, welcher genennet war von dem Engel, ehe
denn er im Mutterleibe empfangen ward.

*And when eight days were accomplished for the
circumcising of the child, his name was called
Jesus, which was so named of the angel before he
was conceived in the womb. LUKE 2: 21*

38. Recitative (bass) and Chorale (soprano)

Recitative Immanuel, o süßes Wort!
Mein Jesus heißt mein Hort,
Mein Jesus heißt mein Leben.
Mein Jesus hat sich mir ergeben,
Mein Jesus soll mir immerfort
Vor meinen Augen schweben.
Mein Jesus heißet meine Lust,
Mein Jesus labet Herz und Brust.

*Immanuel, oh sweet word!
My Jesus is my refuge,
My Jesus is my life.
My Jesus has given himself to me,
My Jesus shall for evermore
Float before my eyes;
My Jesus is my joy,
My Jesus restores heart and breast.*

Chorale Jesu, du mein liebstes Leben,
Meiner Seelen Bräutigam,
Der du dich vor mich gegeben
An des bittern Kreuzes Stamm!

*Jesu, my dearest life,
Bridegroom of my soul,
That you gave yourself for my sake
On the bitter tree of the cross!*

Recitative Komm! Ich will dich mit Lust umfassen,
Mein Herze soll dich nimmer lassen,
Ach! So nimm mich zu dir!

*Come, I will embrace you with joy,
My heart shall never leave you,
Come, then, take me to you!*

Recitative Auch in dem Sterben sollst du mir
Das Allerliebste sein;
In Not, Gefahr und Ungemach
Seh ich dir sehnlichst nach.
Was jagte mir zuletzt der Tod für Grauen ein?
Mein Jesus! Wenn ich sterbe,
So weiß ich, dass ich nicht verderbe.
Dein Name steht in mir geschrieben,
Der hat des Todes Furcht vertrieben.

*Even in death you shall be
Dearest of all to me,
In distress, danger and discomfort
Longingly I look to you.
Why should death frighten me at the last?
My Jesus, when I die
I know by this I shall not perish;
Your name, which has dispelled
The fear of death, is inscribed within me.*

39. Aria (soprano and echo soprano)

Flößt, mein Heiland, flößt dein Namen

My Saviour, does your name instil

Auch den aller kleinsten Samen
Jenes strengen Schreckens ein?
Nein, du sagst ja selber nein! (Nein!)
Sollt ich nun das Sterben scheuen?
Nein, dein süßes Wort ist da!
Oder sollt ich mich erfreuen?
Ja, du Heiland sprichst selbst ja! (Ja!)

*The tiniest grain
Of that fierce terror?
No, you yourself say no! (No!)
Shall I then fear death?
No, your sweet word is there!
Or shall I rejoice?
Yes, my Saviour, you yourself say yes! (Yes!)*

40. Recitative (bass) and Chorale (sopranos)

Recitative Wohlan, dein Name soll allein
In meinem Herzen sein.
So will ich dich entzückt nennen,
Wenn Brust und Herz zu dir vor Liebe brennen.
Doch Liebster, sage mir:
Wie rühm ich dich, wie dank ich dir?

*Come then, your name alone
Shall be in my heart!
So will I call you, filled with delight,
When heart and bosom do burn for love of you.
But, dearest, tell me:
How shall I praise you? How shall I thank you?*

Chorale Jesu, meine Freud und Wonne,
Meine Hoffnung, Schatz und Teil,
Mein Erlösung, Schmuck und Heil,
Hirt und König, Licht und Sonne,
Ach! wie soll ich würdiglich,
Mein Herr Jesu, preisen dich?

*Jesu, my joy and bliss,
My hope, my treasure and my portion,
My Redeemer, my refuge and salvation,
Shepherd and king, light and sun!
Oh, how shall I properly
Praise you, my Lord Jesus?*

41. Aria (tenor)

Ich will nur dir zu Ehren leben,
Mein Heiland, gib mir Kraft und Mut,
Dass es mein Herz recht eifrig tut!
Stärke mich,
Deine Gnade würdiglich
Und mit Danken zu erheben!

*I will live only to honour you;
My Saviour, give me strength and courage,
That my heart may so do zealously.
Strengthen me,
That I may worthily
And with gratitude extol your goodness.*

42. Chorale

Jesu richte mein Beginnen,
Jesu bleibe stets bei mir,
Jesu zäume mir die Sinnen,
Jesu sei nur mein Begier,
Jesu sei mir in Gedanken,
Jesu, lasse mich nicht wanken!

*Jesus, direct my beginning,
Jesus, remain ever near me,
Jesus, curb my senses,
Jesus, be my sole desire,
Jesus, be ever in my thoughts,
Jesus, let me never falter!*

PART FIVE

For the first Sunday in the New Year

43. Chorus

Ehre sei dir, Gott, gesungen,
Dir sei Lob und Dank bereit'.
Dich erhebet alle Welt,
Weil dir unser Wohl gefällt,
Weil anheut unser aller Wunsch gelungen,
Weil uns dein Segen so herrlich erfreut.

*Let us sing praises to you, oh God!
Let honour and thanks be prepared for you.
All the world extols you,
Because you are pleased to care for us,
Because on this day all our wishes are fulfilled,
Because your blessing fills us so much with joy.*

44. Recitative (Evangelist)

Da Jesus geboren war zu Bethlehem im
jüdischen Lande zur Zeit des Königes Herodis,
siehe, da kamen die Weisen vom Morgenlande
gen Jerusalem und sprachen:

*Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem
of Judaea in the days of Herod the king,
behold, there came wise men from the east
to Jerusalem, saying: MATTHEW 2: 1*

45. Chorus with Recitative (alto)

Chorus Wo ist der neugeborne König der Juden?
Wir haben seinen Stern gesehen im Morgenlande
und sind kommen, ihn anzubeten.

*Where is he that is born king of the Jews?
For we have seen his star in the east,
and have come to worship him.*

Recitative Sucht ihn in meiner Brust,
Hier wohnt er, mir und ihm zur Lust!
Wohl euch, die ihr dies Licht gesehen,
Es ist zu eurem Heil geschehen!
Mein Heiland, du, du bist das Licht,
Das auch den Heiden scheinen sollen,
Und sie, sie kennen dich noch nicht,
Als sie dich schon verehren wollen.
Wie hell, wie klar muß nicht dein Schein,
Geliebter Jesu, sein!

*Seek him here in my bosom,
Here he dwells for my delight, and his.
Blessed are you who have seen that light,
It has risen for your salvation.
My Saviour, you are the light,
That should shine upon the heathen too
And even still they do not know you,
When they already want to worship you.
How bright, how clear, beloved Jesu,
Must your radiance be! MATTHEW 2: 2*

46. Chorale

Dein Glanz all Finsternis verzehrt,
Die trübe Nacht in Licht verkehrt.
Leit uns auf deinen Wegen,
Dass dein Gesicht
Und herrlichs Licht
Wir ewig schauen mögen!

*Your brightness consumes all darkness,
And turns the gloomy dark to light.
Lead us in your ways,
So that your face
And glorious light
We may always see!*

47. Aria (bass)

Erleucht auch meine finstre Sinnen,
Erleuchte mein Herze
Durch der Strahlen klaren Schein!
Dein Wort soll mir die hellste Kerze
In allen meinen Werken sein;
Dies lässet die Seele nichts Böses beginnen.

*Cast light into my dark thoughts,
Illuminate my heart
With the clear radiance of your light.
Your word shall be the brightest candle
To me in all my doings!
It shall prevent my soul embarking on evil.*

48. Recitative (Evangelist)

Da das der König Herodes hörte, erschrak er und
mit ihm das ganze Jerusalem

*When Herod the king had heard these things, he
was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.*

MATTHEW 2: 3

49. Recitative (alto)

Warum wollt ihr erschrecken?
Kann meines Jesu Gegenwart euch solche Furcht
erwecken?
O solltet ihr euch nicht
Vielmehr darüber freuen,
Weil er dadurch verspricht,
Der Menschen Wohlfahrt zu verneuen.

*Why are you so afraid?
Can the presence of my Jesus awake such fear in
you?
Oh, should not you
Rejoice instead,
For he promises
To restore the wellbeing of humankind!*

50. Recitative (Evangelist)

Und ließ versammeln alle Hohepriester
und Schriftgelehrten unter dem Volk und
ersforschete von ihnen, wo Christus sollte geboren
werden. Und sie sagten ihm: Zu Bethlehem im
jüdischen Lande; denn also stehet geschrieben
durch den Propheten: Und du Bethlehem im
jüdischen Lande bist mitnichten die kleinste unter
den Fürsten Juda; denn aus dir soll mir kommen der
Herzog, der über mein Volk Israel ein Herr sei.

*And when he had gathered all the chief priests
and scribes of the people together, he demanded
of them where Christ should be born.
And they said unto him: In Bethlehem
of Judaea: for thus it is written
by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem,
in the land of Juda, art not the least among the
princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a
Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.*

MATTHEW 2: 4-6

51. Trio

Soprano Ach, wenn wird die Zeit erscheinen?
Tenor Ach, wenn kömmt der Trost der Seinen?
Alto Schweigt, er ist schon wirklich hier.
Soprano & Tenor Jesu, ach, so komm zu mir!

*Oh, when will the time come?
Oh, when will the comfort of his people appear?
Be silent, he is surely already here.
Oh Jesus, come, then, to me!*

52. Recitative (alto)

Mein Liebster herrschet schon.

My dearest already reigns.

Ein Herz, das seine Herrschaft liebet,
Und sich ihm ganz zu eigen gibet,
Ist meines Jesu Thron.

*A heart that loves his rule,
And completely gives itself to him,
Is my Jesus's throne.*

53. Chorale

Zwar ist solche Herzensstube
Wohl kein schöner Fürstensaal,
Sondern eine finstre Grube;
Doch, sobald dein Gnadenstrahl
In denselben nur wird blinken,
Wird es voller Sonnen dünken.

*A heart as small as this
Is no beautiful princely hall,
But rather a dark pit;
Yet, no sooner shall your mercy's ray
But gleam within,
Than it will seem filled with light.*

PART SIX

For the Feast of Epiphany

54. Chorus

Herr, wenn die stolzen Feinde schnauben,
So gib, dass wir im festen Glauben
Nach deiner Macht und Hülfe sehn.
Wir wollen dir allein vertrauen;
So können wir den scharfen Klauen
Des Feindes unversehrt entgehn.

*Lord, when proud enemies snarl,
Let us in firm trust
Look to your might and help.
We will put our trust in you alone,
So may we withstand unharmed
The sharp talons of the foe.*

55. Recitative (Duet)

Evangelist Da berief Herodes die Weisen heimlich
und erlernet mit Fleiß von ihnen, wenn der Stern
erschieden wäre? Und weiset sie gen Bethlehem
und sprach:

*Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise
men, enquired of them diligently what time the
star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem
and said:*

Herod Ziehet hin und forschet fleißig nach dem
Kindlein, und wenn ihr's findet, sagt mir's wieder,
dass ich auch komme und es anbete.

*Go and search diligently for the young child, and
when ye have found him, bring me word again,
that I may come and worship him also.*

MATTHEW 2: 7–8

56. Recitative (soprano)

Du Falscher, suche nur den Herrn zu fällen,
Nimm alle falsche List,
Dem Heiland nachzustellen;
Der, dessen Kraft kein Mensch ermisst,
Bleibt doch in sichrer Hand.
Dein Herz, dein falsches Herz ist schon,

*You false man, who seeks to bring down the Lord,
Though you employ all devious means
To hunt the Saviour:
Yet he, whose strength no-one can measure,
Remains in perfect safety.
Your heart, your false heart, along with all its*

Nebst aller seiner List, des Höchsten Sohn,
Den du zu stürzen suchst, sehr wohl bekannt.

*craft, Is known too well already to the Most High's
son, Whose downfall you seek.*

57. Aria (soprano)

Nur ein Wink von seinen Händen
Stürzt ohnmächt'ger Menschen Macht.
Hier wird alle Kraft verlacht!
Spricht der Höchste nur ein Wort,
Seiner Feinde Stolz zu enden,
O, so müssen sich sofort
Sterblicher Gedanken wenden.

*A mere wave of his hand
Topples the might of impotent ones.
Here all power shall be derided!
If the Almighty speaks but one word
To end his enemies' pride;
Oh, thus the thoughts of mortals
Must change at once.*

58. Recitative (Evangelist)

Als sie nun den König gehöret hatten, zogen
sie hin. Und siehe, der Stern, den sie im
Morgenlande gesehen hatten, ging für ihnen hin,
bis dass er kam, und stund oben über, da das
Kindlein war. Da sie den Stern sahen, wurden sie
hoch erfreuet und gingen in das Haus und funden
das Kindlein mit Maria, seiner Mutter, und fielen
nieder und beteten es an und taten ihre Schätze
auf und schenkten ihm Gold, Weihrauch und
Myrrhen.

*When they had heard the king, they departed;
and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went
before them, till it came and stood over where the
young child was. When they saw the star, they
rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they
were come into the house, they saw the young
child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and
worshipped him: and when they had opened their
treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and
frankincense, and myrrh. MATTHEW 2: 9–11*

59. Chorale

Ich steh an deiner Krippen hier,
O Jesulein, mein Leben;
Ich komme, bring und schenke dir,
Was du mir hast gegeben.
Nimm hin! es ist mein Geist und Sinn,
Herz, Seel und Mut, nimm alles hin,
Und lass dir's wohlgefallen!

*I stand here beside your manger,
Oh, dear little Jesu, my life,
I come, bring and give to you
That which you have given me.
Take it, it is my mind and thought,
Heart, soul and spirit, take it all,
And may it please you well!*

60. Recitative (Evangelist)

Und Gott befahl ihnen im Traum, daß sie sich nicht
sollten wieder zu Herodes lenken, und zogen durch
einen anderen Weg wieder in ihr Land.

*And being warned of God in a dream that they
should not return to Herod, they departed into
their own country another way.*

MATTHEW 2: 12

61. Recitative (tenor)

So geht! Genug, mein Schatz geht nicht von hier,
Er bleibet da bei mir,
Ich will ihn auch nicht von mir lassen.

*Go then! Enough, my treasure will not leave me;
He will stay here by me,
Neither will I let him leave me.*

Sein Arm wird mich aus Lieb
Mit sanftmutsvollem Trieb
Und größter Zärtlichkeit umfassen;
Er soll mein Bräutigam verbleiben,
Ich will ihm Brust und Herz verschreiben.
Ich weiß gewiss, er liebet mich,
Mein Herz liebt ihn auch inniglich
Und wird ihn ewig ehren.
Was könnte mich nun für ein Feind
Bei solchem Glück versehren?
Du, Jesu, bist und bleibst mein Freund;
Und werd ich ängstlich zu dir flehn:
Herr, hilf! so lass mich Hülfe sehn.

62. Aria (tenor)

Nun mögt ihr stolzen Feinde schrecken;
Was könnt ihr mir für Furcht erwecken?
Mein Schatz, mein Hort ist hier bei mir!

Ihr mögt euch noch so grimmig stellen,
Droht nur, mich ganz und gar zu fällen,
Doch seht! mein Heiland wohnt hier.

63. Recitative (quartet)

Was will der Höllen Schrecken nun,
Was will uns Welt und Sünde tun,
Da wir in Jesu Händen ruhn?

64. Chorale

Nun seid ihr wohl gerochen
An eurer Feinde Schar,
Denn Christus hat zerbrochen,
Was euch zuwider war.
Tod, Teufel, Sünd und Hölle
Sind ganz und gar geschwächt;
Bei Gott hat seine Stelle
Das menschliche Geschlecht.

*His arm will gently enfold me out of love
With gentle courageous desire
And deepest tenderness;
He ever shall remain my bridegroom,
I will promise him my heart and bosom.
I know for sure he loves me,
My heart loves him too, fondly,
And will ever honour him.
What enemy could do me harm
With such bliss?
You, Jesus, are and shall remain my friend;
And if I was to call to you in fear
'Lord, help me!' then let me know your mercy!*

*Now try to frighten me, proud enemies
What fear could you awake in me?
My treasure, my refuge is beside me here!*

*You may appear as fierce as you like,
Threaten to fell me completely,
But see, here lives my Saviour.*

*What now of the terrors of hell?
What harm can the world and sin do to us,
When we rest in Jesus's hands?*

*Now are you fully revenged,
Upon all of your enemies,
Christ has broken
That which was against you.
Death, devil, sin and hell
Are completely laid low,
And at God's side
Humanity has its place.*

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR

Peter Whelan

IRISH BAROQUE CHOIR

Soprano Anna Dennis, Aisling Kenny
Alto Rebecca Leggett, Laura Lamph
Tenor Jonathan Hanley, Ruairi Bowen
Bass Frederick Long, William Gaunt

IRISH BAROQUE ORCHESTRA

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Violin 2 Huw Daniel, Anita Vedres, Kevin Meehan
Viola Joanna Patrick, Francesca Gilbert
Cello Jonny Byers, Samuel Ng
Bass Alex Felle
Organ Malcolm Proud
Flute Miriam Kaczor, Elisabeth Vogel
Oboe Amadeo Castille, Grace Scott Deuchar, Maria Rojas
Bassoon Julien Debordes
Horn Anneke Scott. Martin Lawrence
Trumpet Darren Moore, Michael Harrison, Emily Ashby
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Development Officer Alison Byrne | Keyboard Technician Marc Veinturier | Choir Fixer
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Described by The Times as a ‘delectable soprano and a serene, ever-sentient presence’, **Anna Dennis** studied at the Royal Academy of Music with Noelle Barker. Notable concert performances have included Britten’s War Requiem at the Berlin Philharmonie, a programme of Russian operatic arias with Philharmonia Baroque in San Francisco, Handel’s Joshua with Laurence Cummings at the Laeiszhalle Hamburg, Bach’s Christmas Oratorio with the Australian Chamber Orchestra in Sydney Opera House, Haydn’s Creation with Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa in Japan, the Russian premiere of Thomas Adès’ Life Story at the Rachmaninov Hall in Moscow, and the modern premiere of Rameau’s Anacréon of 1754 with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. Her BBC Proms appearances include performances with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the Britten Sinfonia and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

Anna twice created title roles in new operas at the Almeida Theatre – The Girl of Sand and Ariadne, both composed by Elena Langer, and more recent opera roles include: Emira in Handel’s Siroe (with Laurence Cummings), Paride in Gluck’s Paride ed Elena (with Andreas Sperling), Katherine Dee in Damon Albarn’s Dr Dee, Ilia in Mozart’s Idomeneo and l’Ingrata in Monteverdi’s Ballo delle Ingrate, both directed by Graham Vick, premieres of Francisco Coll’s Cafe Kafka and Jonathan Dove’s The Walk from the Garden, Flora in Jonathan Dove’s The Enchanted Pig, Francesca in Edward Rushton’s The Shops, Moll Hackabout in Will Tuckett’s Pleasure’s Progress, Kyoto in Yannis Kyriakides’ An Ocean of Rain, and Strawberry Seller and Strolling Player in Britten’s Death in Venice at La Scala, Milan.

Aisling Kenny is a soprano soloist, ensemble singer and recitalist specialising in historical performance. She performs regularly with leading Irish and European ensembles including the Irish Baroque Orchestra, Collegium Vocale Gent and Resurgam. As Choir Fixer for the Irish Baroque Orchestra, she works closely with the Artistic Director and Executive Team to engage soloists and ensemble singers for the IBO Chorus.

Aisling has a broad professional background spanning research, teaching and organisation. Awarded funding from the Arts Council and the Irish Research Council for both performance and research, she has organised numerous concerts, recitals and conferences. As an educator, Aisling has taught in schools and universities as lecturer and vocal coach, contributing to module design, curriculum review and student mentoring. She has served as examiner for the Royal Irish Academy of Music and adjudicator at national competitions. Her research includes Women and the

Nineteenth-Century Lied (Ashgate, 2015), co-edited with Susan Wollenberg, and articles on Irish singers in The Encyclopaedia of Music in Ireland. Aisling was Trustee and Choir Advisor for the Charles Wood Festival and Summer School (2012-17), curating a forty-voice choir of professional and student singers for concerts, services and live broadcasts. She holds a BMus and PhD in Musicology from Maynooth University and an MA from the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, Basel. She is passionate about access to music education and performance, and nurturing a love of classical music in those new to it. For more information see aislingkenny.com.

Since joining the 11th edition of the Jardin des Voix of Les Arts Florissants, the young British singer **Rebecca Leggett**, described as singing with ‘grace and beauty’ (The Telegraph), has performed worldwide with the ensemble in a new production of Purcell’s The Fairy Queen, in prestigious halls such as Philharmonie de Paris, The Lincoln Center NYC, Palau de Artes in Valencia as well as at festivals in Luzern, Bremen, Utrecht, Teatro alla Scala, the Royal Albert Hall for the 2024 BBC Proms and, more recently, during a South American tour. Further engagements with the ensemble saw Rebecca sing for William Christie’s 80th birthday tour in 2025, which included her debut at Carnegie Hall, and singing the role of Piacere in Handel’s Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno in European concert halls to great critical acclaim. Rebecca’s next engagement with the group is at the Wigmore Hall in a programme of English baroque together with countertenor Hugh Cutting this December 2025.

In 2025/2026, Rebecca has been invited to sing with the Monteverdi Choir & Orchestra (under the baton of Masaaki Suzuki, Peter Whelan et Jakob Lehmann), Gabrieli Consort, The Sixteen, Les Arts Florissants, and will make her debut with Academy of Ancient Music at the Barbican Centre (role of Arsamene in Handel’s Serse) and Opéra Impératrice in Switzerland (role of Gismonda in Handel’s Ottone). She will also be touring Europe making her debut with renowned Italian ensemble, Il Pomo d’Oro, in the role of Sesto in Giulio Cesare, sharing the stage with Jakub Orlinski and Sabine Devieille.

Recent concert highlights include Bach’s ‘Easter Oratorio’ at London’s Southbank Centre with the OAE, as part of their ‘Rising Stars’ programme 2023/25, her debut with the Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra under the baton of Christophe Rousset, Harry Christophers and the Sixteen (Wigmore Hall), Arcangelo and Jonathan Cohen, Oxford Philharmonic, Oxford Bach Soloists, The Instruments of Time and Truth, City of

London Sinfonia, London Handel Players and Le Concert d'Astrée with Emmanuelle Haïm for which she covered the title role in their 2022 production of Dido and Aeneas. She also sang Irene in Handel's Theodora with Collegium Musicum Bergen, Norway conducted by Nicholas Kraemer and performed Couperin's Leçons de Ténèbres with fellow mezzo Helen Charlston at the York Early Music Festival.

Rebecca was a finalist at the Kathleen Ferrier Award 2023 at the Wigmore Hall. At the RCM she won the 2020 Brooks-van der Pump English Song Competition. Alongside pianist George Ireland, she received first place at the 2022 London Song Festival's British Art-Song Competition. Song is high on the agenda for Rebecca and in recent years she has given recitals for the Lewes Song Festival, London Song Festival and Oxford Lieder Festival. She has also given joint recitals for the Ludlow English Song Festival with Brindley Sherratt and the Thames Concert Series with countertenor Hugh Cutting. Rebecca, Hugh and George gave a Sussex themed recital titled 'The South Country' for the Brighton Festival in May 2024 which received 5 star reviews.

Rebecca Leggett is a 2020 masters graduate of the Royal College of Music where she was an Ian Evans Lombe Scholar. Prior to this, Rebecca completed her undergraduate degree at Trinity Laban Conservatoire in 2018 graduating with First Class Honours, the TCM Trust Silver Medal for Voice and the Alan J Kirby Conducting Prize.

Laura Lamph began her musical education at Methodist College Belfast and went on to read music at Leeds University. She began her professional singing life in Christ Church Cathedral Choir, Dublin. After a while living on a volcano in Sicily, she lived in London where she performed with a variety of UK and Irish based ensembles including Arcangelo, The Dunedin Consort, Siglo de Oro, Polyphony, Fieri Consort, The Gabrieli Consort, Chamber Choir Ireland, Sestina and Resurgam.

Laura now lives in Copenhagen with her husband Miles and their sons Lysander and Orlando. She is a member of Ars Nova Copenhagen, directed by Sofi Jeannin, and Theatre of Voices, directed by Paul Hillier.

Laura collaborates regularly with pianist Miles Lallemand and they have given recitals in Ireland, UK, Germany and Italy. Solo opera and oratorio roles have included Irene in Handel's Theodora, Dido in Purcell Dido & Aeneas, Handel's Dixit Dominus and Messiah, Bach's B minor Mass, St Matthew Passion, and Christmas Oratorio, Purcell's Ode to St Cecilia and Come ye sons of Art, Mozart Requiem, Vivaldi's Glorias, Steffani Stabat Mater, Mendelssohn Elijah and Rossini Petite Messe Solennelle.

Highlights of 2025 so far have included a Carnegie Hall Debut with Theatre of Voices and a flying visit to Oslo to perform Bent Sørensen's John Passion, followed by a Lenten Bach concert in Vor Frelzers Kirke with organist Lars Sømød and violinist Anne Ngoc Søe.

Jonathan Hanley is a British tenor working as a soloist and ensemble singer with a particular interest in Baroque vocal music. Upcoming solo projects include Bach with Concerto Copenhagen and Irish Baroque Orchestra in December 2025; Bach and Mendelssohn in 2026 with Sir John Eliot Gardiner's newly formed Constellation Choir; more Bach with the OAE and Vox Luminis in 2026; alongside a busy international schedule with vocal ensemble Stile Antico.

Born in Suffolk, Jonathan was a chorister and choral scholar at St Mary-le-Tower, Ipswich under the direction of Dr Michael Nicholas, before reading History at the University of York, where he was a choral scholar at York Minster. During his time at university, he also performed with a number of ensembles including the Yorkshire Bach Choir and the Ebor Singers. After graduating, he spent three years as a lay clerk at Peterborough Cathedral under the direction of Steven Grahl and was a member of the 'Genesis Sixteen' programme for young singers (2016/2017). He is now a freelance singer and a member of the vocal ensemble, Stile Antico. He was also a Monteverdi Choir Apprentice for 2018/2019, going on to work regularly for the group.

Jonathan has performed as a soloist internationally, appearing with the Constellation Choir, the Monteverdi Choir, and English Baroque Soloists under the batons of Sir John Eliot Gardiner and Dinis Sousa, the English Concert, the OAE, Irish Baroque Orchestra, La Grande Chapelle, Royal Northern Sinfonia, and the Instruments of Time and Truth. He has recently performed JS Bach Mass in B Minor (Elbphilharmonie; Alte Oper Frankfurt; Bozar; Luxembourg Philharmonie; Harris Theater, Chicago; Carnegie Hall, New York), St John Passion (arias and evangelist), Weihnachts-Oratorium (Chapelle-Royale, Versailles; La Scala, Milan; St Martin in the Fields), St Matthew Passion (Cadogan Hall), Handel L'Allegro, il penseroso ed il Moderato (Harris Theater, Chicago; Carnegie Hall, New York), Acis and Galatea, Mendelssohn Die Erste Walpurgisnacht (Haus für Mozart, Salzburg), Monteverdi 1610 Vespers, and Britten St Nicolas (York Minster). Jonathan appears on disc as a soloist in Bach's Christmas Oratorio with the Monteverdi Choir, conducted by Sir John Eliot Gardiner (2024), as well as a Jose de Nebra Responsorios de Navidad with La Grande Chapelle (2025), and in a contemporary opera performance and recording of Margaret Catchpole - Two

Worlds Apart by Stephen Dodgson (2022). He also enjoys performing English song and lieder, regularly collaborating with pianist Gavin Roberts. Most recently, he has performed a programme of Raymond Yui, Finzi and Britten and Schumann Liederkreis (Op. 39) interspersed with Britten folksongs, and Schubert Die Schöne Müllerin, Beethoven An die Ferne Geliebte, and Schumann Liederkreis (op. 24).

As an ensemble singer, Jonathan works regularly with some of the finest vocal ensembles in the world, most notably Gramophone-award winners Stile Antico as well as Vox Luminis and the Constellation Choir both of whom he appears with regularly a step-out soloist in music from Monteverdi to Mendelssohn. He is also a member of SANSARA, and appears frequently with groups such as The Tallis Scholars, the Monteverdi Choir, The Gabrieli Consort, ORA Singers, Polyphony, and the BBC Singers. He has also performed with the Monteverdi Choir in staged productions of Handel Semele and Berlioz Benvenuto Cellini and Les Troyens. He has recorded discs with Stile Antico, the Monteverdi Choir, the English Concert, SANSARA, Polyphony, The Sixteen, the Oxford Consort of Voices, the Ebor Singers, and the choirs of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, York Minster, and Peterborough Cathedral.

Highly acclaimed British tenor **Ruairi Bowen** is increasingly in demand on both the operatic and concert stage.

Engagements during 2024 / 2025 included Damon Acis and Galatea for Opera Holland Park; Thespis – Mercure Platée for National Theatre, Prague; Evangelist / Arias St John Passion with Polyphony & Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, A Baroque Christmas with English Baroque Soloists and Lechmere Owen Wingrave at Festival della Valle d'Itria in Martina Franca.

Engagements in the 2023 / 2024 season included his debut with English National Opera as Earl Tolloller Iolanthe; First Armed Man Die Zauberflöte with Scottish Chamber Orchestra at Edinburgh International Festival; staged performances of Die Schöpfung at Lithuanian National Opera; Handel's Messiah at Dubai Opera House, multiple roles in Purcell's The Indian Queen with Le Concert d'Astrée, Cyril Princess Ida with Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Evangelist / Arias St John Passion with Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, J. S. Bach's Easter Oratorio with Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Lili Boulanger's Faust et Hélène with Royal Orchestral Society

Ruairi is an established interpreter of Baroque music in the UK and abroad, collaborating with some of the leading conductors in the field including Emmanuelle Haïm, Sir John Eliot Gardiner and Stephen Layton, Vaclav Luks, Peter Whelan and Christophe Rousset. An experienced Evangelist of Bach's Passions, he has performed at Wigmore Hall, Bachfest Leipzig and Snape Maltings, as well as with numerous choral societies across the UK; he will undertake the role at the annual Good Friday performance of St John Passion at St John's Smith Square in 2026.

Other concert engagements have included B Minor Mass with Opole Philharmonic Orchestra and Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra; Christmas Oratorio with Britten Sinfonia; Magnificat and Messe in h-moll at Tilford Bach Festival, St John Passion with both the Adelaide and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras, Handel's Messiah at Händel Festspiele Halle; The Creation with London Mozart Players; and Vaughan Williams' A Cotswold Romance with the Lebanese Philharmonic Orchestra. He made his debut with the Philharmonia singing Dvorak's Requiem at the 2022 Three Choirs Festival, returning in 2023 to sing Vaughan Williams Sancta Civitas.

A graduate of King's College, Cambridge, Ruairi Bowen was invited to sing on Proud Songsters, an album of English Solo Song recorded with pianist Simon Lepper, featuring distinguished former members of the world-famous chapel choir. His broadcasts and recordings further include Delius' Hassan – Complete Incidental Music with Britten Sinfonia on Chandos CD, Percy Grainger's Brigg Fair and Nathaniel Dett's Music in the Mine for BBC Radio 3 and Stanford's Mass Via Victrix with the BBC National Orchestra & Chorus of Wales on Lyrita CD.

Growing up in the Welsh Marches, he developed a keen interest in exploring the integrated relationship between poetry and nature through pastoral song with recent highlights including a recital on Innocence & Experience with William Vann, performing Finzi's A Young Man's Exhortation and Tippett's Boyhood's End. During the live music hiatus in 2020/21, he was a Support Worker for the Children's Section of the British Refugee Council, and formed part of The Hampstead Collective, an ensemble drawn from the musicians in the resident octet at Hampstead Parish Church, with whom he has performed many of Bach's sacred works. He continues his studies with John Lattimore and Sam Queen, and plays regularly for Addiscombe Cricket Club in the Surrey Championship.

Described by The Arts Desk as "charismatic, agile and authoritative both in voice and movement", **Frederick Long** is garnering an international reputation for bringing drama and vivid communication to the concert platform.

His fluid bass-baritone has seen him in particular demand in music of the baroque, and his flourishing relationship with IBO includes Messiah, Bach's Christmas Oratorio and St Matthew Passion. He has worked with other world-leading ensembles, including the Dunedin Consort, and as a guest soloist of the Monteverdi Choir, with whom he has performed and recorded for Deutsche Grammophon.

A highly experienced operatic performer, he launched his career at Glyndebourne and has since been engaged by most of the major houses in the UK. He trained at the Royal Academy of Music, and elected an associate in 2019.

When avoiding work, or work is avoiding him, he can be found pottering about the cider presses of Somerset where he has made his home with his wife and two children.

William Gaunt was born in Yorkshire and received his early musical education there as a chorister at Ripon Cathedral. Following a choral scholarship to King's College, Cambridge, he began his professional career in the choir of Christ Church, Oxford, before spending 17 years at Westminster Cathedral. Since 2021 he and his family have been resident in Ireland.

William performs much of the core oratorio and concert repertory. Performances have included Carissimi *Historia di Abraham et Isaac* and *Jephthe*; Monteverdi *Vespro della Beata Vergine* 1610; Bach *Johannes-Passion*, *Matthäus-Passion*, *Mass in B Minor*, *Magnificat*; Handel *Messiah*, *Acis and Galatea*, *Judas Maccabaeus*, *Brookes-Passion* and *Samson*; Haydn *Creation*, *Stabat Mater* and *Nelson Mass*; Rossini *Petite Messe Solennelle* and *Stabat Mater*; Mendelssohn *St Paul*; Fauré *Requiem*; Stravinsky *Les Noces*; Tippett *A Child of Our Time*; Pärt *Passio*. He has appeared with the Gabrieli Consort/Paul McCreesh; the Choir of King's College, Cambridge/Sir Stephen Cleobury; the Choir of Christ Church, Oxford/Stephen Darlington; Dunedin Consort/John Butt; Nieuwe Philharmonie Utrecht/Johannes Leertouwer; Ulster Orchestra/David Brophy; Portland Baroque Orchestra/Desmond Earley; Chamber Choir Ireland, Ars Nova Copenhagen and Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir/Paul Hillier; Orchester Wiener Akademie/Martin Haselböck; Freiburger Barockorchester/Kristian Bezuidenhout. On stage he recently created the role of Homer in Irish National Opera's premiere production of Evangelia Rigaki's *Old Ghosts*.

William's solo recordings include Monteverdi Vespro della Beata Vergine 1610 with both the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment/Howarth and the Dunedin Consort/Butt; Fauré Requiem with the London Symphony Orchestra Chamber Ensemble/Short; Handel Messiah with Nieuwe Philharmonie Utrecht/Leertouwer; Bach Matthäus-Passion with the Academy of Ancient Music/Cleobury.

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 Tendu' 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.

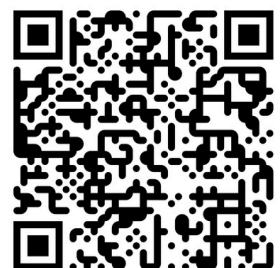
The IBO is committed to developing the national scene for historically-informed performance and works with a number of partner organisations across Ireland to ensure its continued growth for future generations. The award-winning Irish Youth Baroque Orchestra (delivered in partnership with the Irish Association 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).

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 deliver on our unique and exciting mission?

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 rewards such as Priority Booking, VIP seating and invitations to special events.

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The Apprentice Programme in 2025 is generously supported by Mike Beary & Gary Gates.

The Christmas Oratorio performances are part of the IBO's ambitious new Bach Cycle 2024 - 2026, made possible by the generous philanthropic support of an anonymous donor.

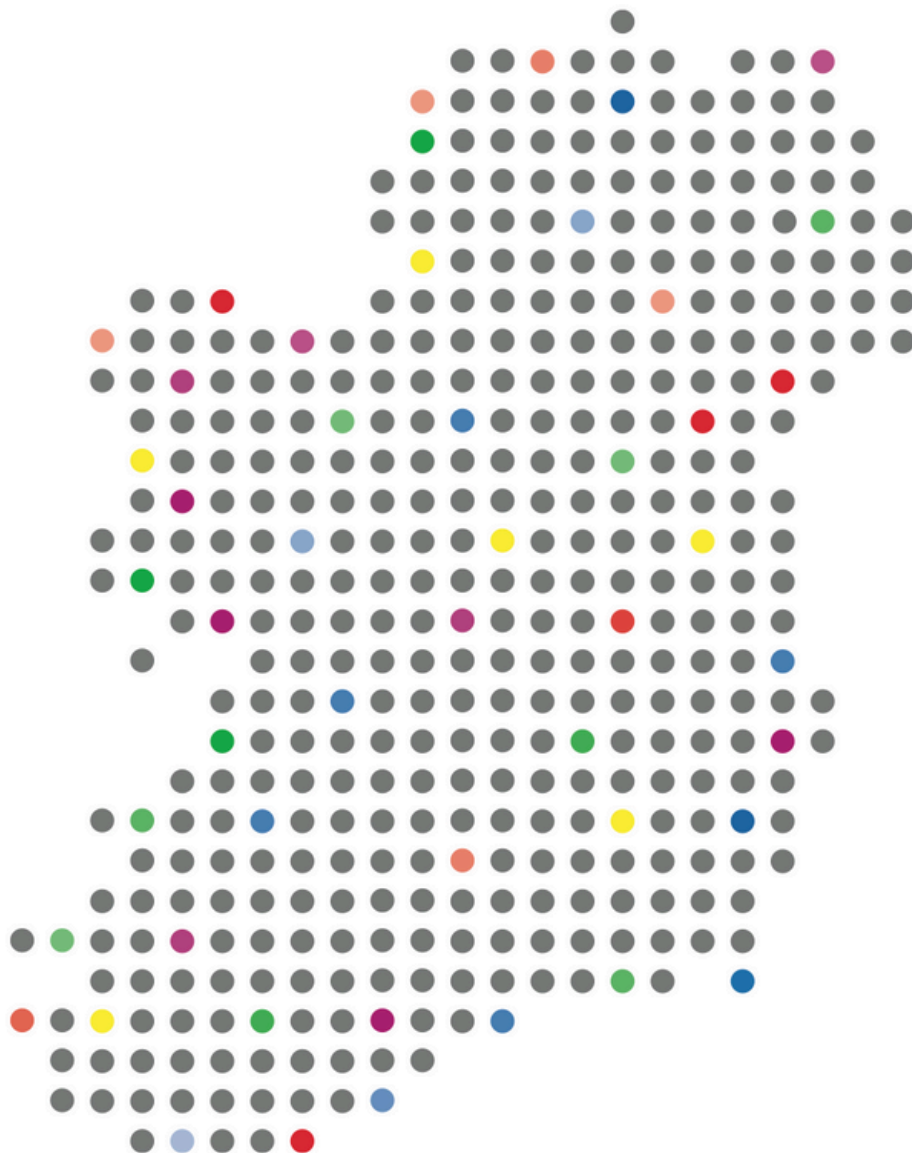
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