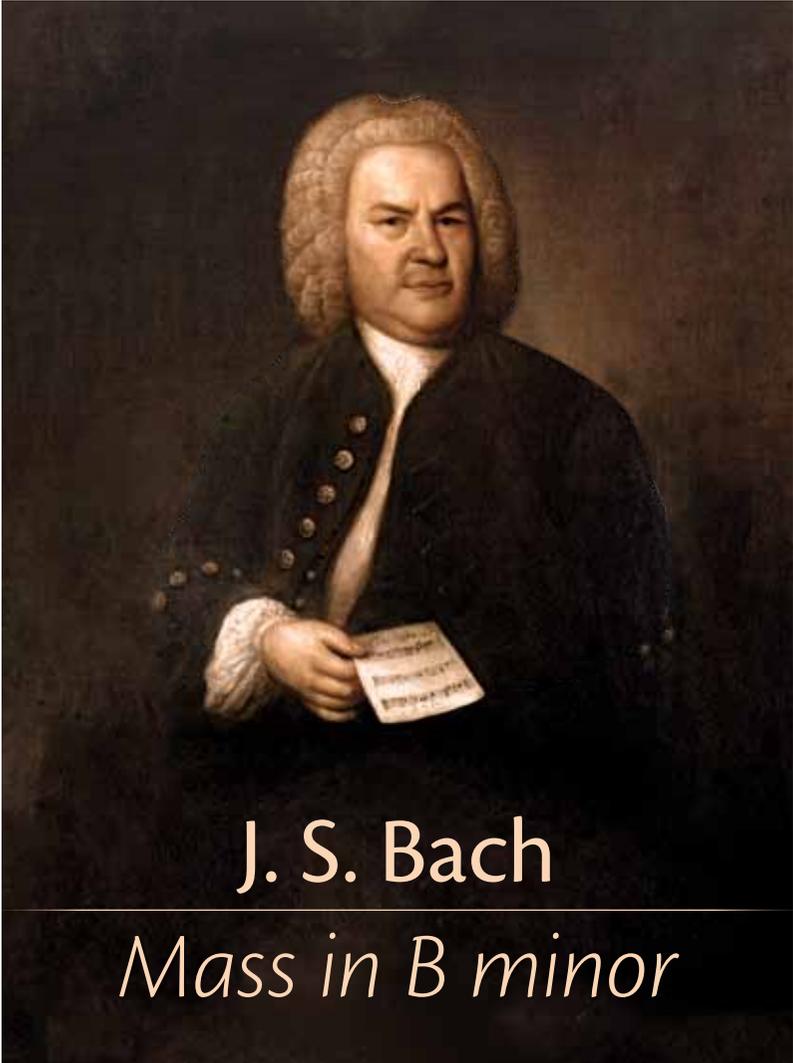


# Summertown Choral Society



J. S. Bach

*Mass in B minor*

St Andrew's Church, Summertown  
7.30pm, Saturday 4th February, 2012

# Mass in B minor

BWV 232

Johann Sebastian Bach

## Kyrie

*Kyrie eleison* (à 5)

*Christe eleison* (soprano I and II)

*Kyrie eleison* (à 4)

## Gloria

*Gloria in excelsis* (à 5)

*Et in terra pax* (à 5)

*Laudamus te* (soprano II)

*Gratias agimus tibi* (à 4)

*Domine Deus* (soprano I, tenor)

*Qui tollis peccata mundi* (soprano II, alto, tenor, bass)

*Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris* (alto)

*Quoniam tu solus sanctus* (bass)

*Cum Sancto Spiritu* (à 5)

— interval of 20 minutes —

## Credo

*Credo in unum Deum* (à 5)

*Patrem omnipotentem* (à 4)

*Et in unum Dominum* (soprano I, alto)

*Et incarnatus est* (soprano I and II, alto, tenor, bass)

*Crucifixus* (à 4)

*Et resurrexit* (à 5)

*Et in Spiritum Sanctum* (bass)

*Confiteor* (à 5)

*Et expecto* (à 5)

## Sanctus

*Sanctus* (à 6)

## Benedictus

*Osanna* (à 8)

*Benedictus* (tenor)

*Osanna* (à 8)

## Agnus Dei

*Agnus Dei* (alto)

*Dona nobis pacem* (à 4)

# Summertown Choral Society

*founded 1961*

Duncan Saunderson, *conductor*

Helen Ashby, *soprano*  
Kate Ashby, *soprano*  
Stephen Burrows, *countertenor*  
Guy Cutting, *tenor*  
George Coltart, *bass*

*with the*  
**Summertown Players**  
*on period instruments, led by Simon Jones*

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Summertown Choral Society was founded in 1961. The choir is directed by Duncan Saunderson and our accompanist is Julian Littlewood. New members are always welcome, without audition, to this friendly and well-established choir. The choir season runs from September to May and we perform two concerts each season. Details of our next concert are on the back page. Rehearsals for our new term start on Thursday 16 February at 8 p.m. at St Michael and All Angels church in Summertown. Why not come and join us? More information about the choir, including details of repertoire, can be found on the choir's website at [www.summertownchoral.org.uk](http://www.summertownchoral.org.uk).

Charity registration no. 900317

## The Soloists

*Helen Ashby, soprano*

Helen Ashby sings with a variety of ensembles in the UK including Oxford Camerata, the Brabant Ensemble and Philharmonia Voices. She is a member of the choir of Hampstead Parish, London, and also teaches singing in two London schools. She appears frequently on television and film soundtracks, including *Harry Potter 7* and the recent *A Musical Nativity* with John Rutter. She currently studies with Berty Rice.

*Kate Ashby, soprano*

Kate Ashby enjoys a busy career as a professional singer and teacher. Growing up in Oxford, her passion for singing in general and early music in particular, was kindled by her time in The Hildegard Choir. As a choral scholar at Trinity College, Cambridge, she co-founded Stile Antico, an internationally acclaimed, award-winning early music vocal ensemble. She also performs with groups such as The Brabant Ensemble and Chapelle du Roi, and regularly records film soundtracks with London Voices. This is her second appearance with Summertown Choral Society. She studies singing with Berty Rice and is a member of the choir of All Saints, Margaret Street, London.

*Stephen Burrows, countertenor*

Stephen Burrows studied Music at Bristol University where he was both University Organ Scholar and a Choral Scholar in the Cathedral Choir. He studies singing with Nicholas Clapton.

Stephen currently combines his freelance singing with a Lay Clerkship at Westminster Cathedral. As an ensemble singer, he has worked with Tenebrae, The Orlando Consort, The New London Consort and The London Handel Singers amongst others. In addition he is a member of the male-voice consorts Quintessential Voices, Opus Anglicanum and

Liedertafel. He performs frequently on CD and in television and radio broadcasts. Engagements have taken him throughout the UK, Europe and the USA. He has appeared at The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in *Dido and Aeneas* and *Acis and Galatea*.

As a soloist Stephen has given a wide variety of performances. Recent appearances include Vivaldi's *Gloria* in the Waterloo Chamber, Windsor Castle as part of the Windsor Festival, Bach's *Magnificat* in Lincoln Cathedral and Bach's *B-minor mass* in Southwark Cathedral. In addition he works regularly with the pianist Andrew Plant on a wide variety of recital repertoire.

When not singing, Stephen spends most of his time looking after his two-year-old son, Luke whilst continuing in his struggle to learn French with the help of his wife Flora who comes from Toulouse.

### Guy Cutting, *tenor*

As a chorister with New College, Oxford, Guy gained extensive experience, performing throughout Europe and as far away as Japan. He sung on several occasions on BBC television and radio; high profile engagements included a televised BBC Proms and an appearance at The Classical Brit Awards in the Albert Hall. Whilst still at school he gained a high distinction in his ATCL Recital Diploma.

Having gained a place to read Music at New College in 2009, he is now a third year choral scholar, studying with Bronwen Mills. As a permanent member of both New College Choir and The Blenheim Singers, he tours worldwide at least four times a year. In the last few years, he has taken part in master classes with Paul Farrington, Jim Holmes and the late Robert Tear, who described him as a 'rare talent'.

In 2010, he recorded Mozart's *Requiem* as tenor soloist with New College, Oxford (which also featured on BBC Radio 3), a Couperin disc (*Exultent Superi*) as 'haute-contre' with Edward Higginbottom, and as soloist on Merton College, Oxford's debut CD, *In the Beginning*. Recent solo performances include Monteverdi's *Marian Vespers* of 1610 in St John's Smith Square; J.S. Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* at St. Peter's College, Oxford;

Gilles' *Requiem* at the University Church, Oxford; Handel's *Esther* at New College, Oxford; the title role in Handel's *Jeptha* in Eastcote, London; Britten's *Serenade for Tenor and Horn* with the Oxford String Ensemble; Handel's *Alexander's Feast* for the finale of the Turl Street Arts Festival; Handel's *Acis and Galatea* with New Chamber Opera; Haydn's *Missa in Angustiis* with OUSC and J.S. Bach's *St. John Passion* for both CPC Baroque (arias), and West London Bach Consort and Players (Evangelist), under Sandy Burnett. Future solo engagements include Coleridge-Taylor's *Hiawatha's Feast*, and J.S. Bach's *Mass in B Minor*.

### George Coltart, *bass*

George Coltart is a junior doctor in Reading. He studied medicine at New College Oxford, where he was been a choral scholar in its internationally renowned choir. He has performed leading roles in many operas within Oxford including *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Così fan tutte*, *Albert Herring*, *A Dinner Engagement*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *Gianni Schicchi*, and Salieri's *Falstaff*. He has also sung bass solos in oratorios in Oxford and beyond, by composers including Handel, J. S. Bach, Brahms, Monteverdi, Rossini, and Haydn. George featured as baritone soloist in the recently released recording of Couperin, *Exultent Superi* with Edward Higginbottom. He will be appearing as The Count in the St Peter's College production of the *Marriage of Figaro* next week, to which supporters of Summertown Choral Society would be very welcome. George is studying with Paul Farrington and Giles Underwood.

## J. S. Bach: Mass in B minor

Johann Sebastian Bach was born in 1685 at Eisenach, in Thuringia in central Germany, into a family of musicians and composers stretching back into the 16<sup>th</sup> century. His musical talent was recognised early and, after his father's death in 1695, he was brought up by his brother Johann Christoff, organist at nearby Ohrdruf, who taught him the clavier and the organ. In 1703 he was appointed organist at Arnstadt, also near Eisenach, from where he made a famous journey on foot to Lübeck (about 200 miles) to hear the organist and composer Buxtehude. In 1707 he moved to Mühlhausen and in 1708 to the ducal court at Weimar. After nine years there he was appointed to the post of kapellmeister at the court of Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen, where he wrote much of his instrumental work including the *Brandenburg Concertos*. In 1723 he was appointed to the Thomaskirche, Leipzig, as Kantor (Music Director) with responsibility for the music in the four principal city churches, where he remained until his death in 1750. His writing while here in Leipzig included an entire five-year cycle of church cantatas, of which 200 survive, and among other liturgical works the *St Matthew Passion* and the *Mass in B Minor*.

The **Mass in B minor** is Bach's only complete setting of the Mass and, though we hear it now as one unified work standing in its own right, Bach did not write it as such. Only towards the end of his life, probably around 1748-9, did he bring together earlier compositions into the one complete work.

It was accepted liturgical practice at that time that masses for high feast days should take the form of a 'Lutheran' mass consisting simply of the *Kyrie* and the *Gloria* sung in Latin (unlike other services when German-language versions of the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* were said or sung). In 1733, perhaps using earlier material, Bach composed a 'Lutheran' mass with the dedication to the new Elector of Saxony Frederick Augustus II, later to become King of Poland (it was sent to his court in Dresden probably on the occasion of Bach's son, Wilhelm Friedemann, taking up the position of organist at the Sophienkirche, Dresden). The following movements, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, *Osanna*, *Benedictus*, *Agnus Dei* and *Dona nobis pacem*, Bach assembled from re-workings of earlier compositions. The *Crucifixus*, part of the *Credo*, he adapted from the cantata *Weinen, klagen, sorgen, zagen* ('Weeping, wailing,

*grieving, fearing*') written in about 1718. For the *Sanctus* he used a work he had written previously for a Christmas Day service in Leipzig in 1724. In the closing movement *Dona nobis pacem* he reverted to the *Gratias agimus* from the *Gloria*.

No performance of the Mass as a complete work is known to have taken place during Bach's lifetime. His manuscripts were split up between his four musical sons, and his second son, Carl Philipp Emanuel, directed a performance of the *Credo* in a Hamburg church in 1786 as an 'oratorio', not as a liturgical work. The complete Mass did not enter the repertoire for at least 100 years after J S Bach's death.

In the opening four-bar phrase of the *Kyrie* Bach expresses Trinitarian beliefs by repeating the word 'Kyrie' ('Lord') three times (for the Father, Son and Holy Spirit), followed by a single 'eleison' ('have mercy'), suggesting the unity of the Godhead. Following this, he sets the words of the full *Kyrie* in three extended movements: a spacious five-part fugal *Kyrie* for the Father, *Christe eleison* for soprano duet closely and floridly entwined, and a fervent polyphonic *Kyrie* for the Spirit in what would in Bach's time have appeared as an 'antique' polyphonic style. It may have been significant for Bach that the total number of bars in these sections amounts to 270, which is divisible by three times three times three (Father, Son and Spirit).

The lively *Gloria* for orchestra, choir, trumpets, woodwind and drums portrays the angels dancing to proclaim the glory of God in the Bethlehem fields. *Et in terra pax* brings a slower, more measured tempo with oboes hinting at the shepherds. The opening theme suggests the beginning of a chorale, which Bach re-works into a five-part fugue. The chorale motif returns, with trumpets and drums moving upwards as though the angels are returning heavenward, and the movement ends in a blaze of light.

After a soprano *da capo* aria on *Laudamus te*, with florid violin *obbligato*, a choral *Gratias agimus te* follows, again reminiscent of earlier styles of polyphony, but bringing in trumpets and drums at the end. A duet *Domine Deus* intertwines the soprano and tenor soloists, alternating 'Lord God, King of Heaven' and 'Lord, Only begotten Son' between the soloists in close canon. This appears to start out as a *da capo* aria, but instead of returning to the opening material breaks into a languorous *Qui tollis* in four parts with repeated suspensions.

The *Qui sedes* which follows for alto solo has a measured but angular theme, which twice comes almost to a complete halt, as though for a cadenza, before continuing. The following bass aria *Quoniam tu solus sanctus* with

florid semiquaver runs is a showpiece for the *obbligato* horn player's abilities. This leads immediately to a vigorous extended choral *Cum Sancto Spiritu*, in which the opening section presents harmonic sequences over a moving bass line, followed by a five-part fugue on a subject derived from the opening motif, ending in a fortissimo full close.

The *Credo*, which opens the second half of the work, takes the plainsong theme in long notes as a five-part fugue subject, with a flowing instrumental bass. A vigorous choral *Patrem omnipotentem* with a long and melodically wide-ranging fugue subject is followed by a duet for soprano and alto soloists in close canon on *Et in unum Dominum*, again emphasising the unity of Father and Son. A five-part descending *Et incarnatus* leads to the stately *Crucifixus* whose chromatic suspensions close with the burial of the body of Christ.

*Et resurrexit* has a vigorous opening phrase which is then developed contrapuntally. After a bass aria *Et in Spiritum Sanctum* the chorus returns for a fugal *Confiteor* in which the plainsong is sung by lower parts in long notes, leading seamlessly to a hushed *Et expecto resurrectionem* from the soloists, which soon expands into a spirited chorus, with trumpets and drums, on the same words.

In the six-part *Sanctus* the upper parts dance floridly in triplets while the bass line moves in octaves. The following *Pleni sunt coeli* is an extended six-part fugue for chorus. The *Osanna* is something of an Italianate tour-de-force for double four-part chorus, interchanging contrapuntal development with concerted phrases. A measured *Benedictus* for tenor solo and flute *obbligato* is followed by a recapitulation of the *Osanna*. A serene and deeply sustained *Agnus Dei* for alto solo seems to bear the whole weight of the sins of the world upon itself, before the work closes with *Dona nobis pacem*, repeating the music of the *Gratias* and bringing us full circle.

The *B-minor Mass* was Bach's last completed work on a large scale, and was perhaps seen by him as part of an 'artistic legacy', along with the *Musical Offering* (dedicated to Frederick the Great, Elector of Prussia, following Bach's visit to his court in 1747) and the *Art of Fugue*, written without any commission or patron and left unfinished at his death. We should regard it as fortunate that, despite the lack of evidence as to its performance as a complete work during Bach's lifetime, nevertheless the full score of the Mass has come down to us.

*Andrew Crispus-Jones*

# The Choir

## 1st Sopranos

Jane Amies, Jan Archer, Gillian Atkinson, Liz Baird, Nicky Boughton, Penelope Carnwath, Sue Cloke, Anne Deakin, Rosemary Dearden, Fiona Duxbury, Jackie EatockTaylor, Sue Gerhardt, De Grant, Angela Hassall, Anna Marshall, Isidra McFarlane, Lucy Melville, Emily Newson, Moira Robinson, Julie Ross, Gillian Smit, Enid Stoye, Rebecca Tudor, Rachel Turney and Valerie Worth.

## 2nd Sopranos

Judith Atkinson, Gillian Beattie, Diane Bergman, Felicity Butterfield, Victoria Cairns, Katharina Floss, Debbie Hamilton, Jennifer Hay, Tilly Kortland, Mireille Levy, Chela Nunez, Lois Pearson, Sally Prime, Catrin Roberts and Ailsa White.

## 1st Altos

Sheila Alison, Diane Benfield, Vicky Bullard, Emma Campbell, Sue Cavanna, Gillian Chapman, Karin Eldredge, Gerry Guinan, Sandie Hardaker, Hilary Hullah, Alison Jones, Manda Joyce, Ilze Jozepa, Rosie Lodwick, Kate Lush, Sophie Marris, Andy Rimmer, Amanda Saville, Gay Sypel, Sally Tsang, Jackie Weaver and Helen Whitehouse.

## 2nd Altos

Dagmar Albert, Sue Ashcroft-Jones, Kareni Bannister, Anita Bayne, Philippa Berry, Caroline Best, Penny Birdseye, Jenny Blyth, Vreni Booth, Emma Britton, Diana Chandler, Christine Doubleday, Lotti Ekert, Vanessa Emmett, Katie Eyre, Felicity Feeny, Rosemary Foot, Barbara Harriss-White, Josephine King, Anna Manuel, Elsa Morgan, Gillian Morriss-Kay, Meg Movshon, Anne Murphy, Diana Paine, Jo Poulton, Mari Prichard, Marion Robertson, Jill Southam, Raquel Stremme, Louise Talbot and Frances Thomas.

## 1st Tenors

Philip Booth, Alastair Dent, Hugo Everitt, Aeron Goldby, Paul King, Emma Sadler and David Crispin.

## 2nd Tenors

Larry Eldredge, Colin Kilpatrick, Stuart McFarlane, Iain McLean, Mary Meagher and Roger Sears.

## 1st Basses

Martin Berry, Mark Chater, Andrew Crispus-Jones, Rodney Eatock Taylor, Tony Gillman, Nigel Hamilton, Oliver Jacobs, Leon Maciocia, John McCleod, Jack Miller, Paul Smith and Keith Young.

## 2nd Basses

Hugh Atherstone, Duncan Bain, Clive Booth, Jeremy Cunningham, Robert de Newtown, David Faulkner, Tom Kempton, Jean-Louis Metzger, Wolfgang Ritter, Chris Romney, Ron Stern, Clive Williams and Martyn Wilson.

## Our next concert ...

Saturday 12 May, 2012 – St Andrew's Church

**Vaughan Williams:** *Five Mystical Songs*

**Britten:** *Rejoice in the Lamb,*  
*A Hymn of St. Columba,*  
*Hymn to St. Peter*

**Finzi:** *My Spirit Sang All Day*

**Stanford:** *Songs of the Sea*

**Rachmaninov:** *Magnificat (from Vespers)*

**Randall Thompson:** *Frostiana*

[www.summertownchoral.org.uk](http://www.summertownchoral.org.uk)



### Songs and Sorrowful Sonnets

The new CD featuring James Bowman (countertenor) and Dorothy Linell (lute) performing Tallis, Dowland, Gibbons and Purcell can be purchased this evening.



The recently released Oxford Liedertafel CD "Paradise on Earth" featuring Stephen Burrows, Ben Alden and Duncan Saunderson, as well as James Bowman and Colin Dexter, can be purchased this evening.