



J. S. Bach

Mass in B Minor

Dulwich Choral Society
Meridian Sinfonia

Julia Doyle soprano
Katie Bray mezzo-soprano
Gwilym Bowen tenor
Ashley Riches bass-baritone
Conducted by **William Vann**

Saturday 22 March 2025, 7.00pm
Southwark Cathedral, London Bridge SE1 9DA

Mass in B Minor (BWV 232)

J. S. Bach (1685–1750)

I. Missa

1. Kyrie
2. Christe
3. Kyrie
4. Gloria
5. Et in terra pax
6. Laudamus te
7. Gratias agimus tibi
8. Domine Deus
9. Qui tollis
10. Qui sedes
11. Quoniam tu solus sanctus
12. Cum sancto spiritu

Interval of 15 minutes

II. Symbolum Nicenum

1. Credo in unum Deum
2. Patrem omnipotentem
3. Et in unum Dominum
4. Et incarnatus est
5. Crucifixus
6. Et resurrexit
7. Et in Spiritum Sanctum
8. Confiteor
9. Et expecto

III. Sanctus

Sanctus

Pleni sunt coeli

IV. Osanna, Benedictus, Agnus Dei et Dona nobis pacem

1. Osanna in excelsis
2. Benedictus
3. Osanna (repetatur)
4. Agnus Dei
5. Dona nobis pacem

Please ensure to switch your phone to silent before the start of the concert, and please refrain from filming or recording.

A brief history of Dulwich Choral Society

Towards the end of the Second World War, in 1944, the 'Dulwich Choral and Orchestral Society' was launched as an evening class with around 20 members, under the auspices of the London County Council (LCC). It rehearsed at Dulwich Hamlet School and its first regular Music Director was Leonard Rafter, a conductor and composer of film music, who was also a Dulwich resident. He continued in this role until around 1960. The 'orchestral section' of the society (led by Rafter's wife, of whom everyone seems to have been terrified) always struggled to attract more than a handful of players. This section was closed down on the instruction of the LCC in 1950, at which point the society was renamed Dulwich Choral Society (DCS). The society's performances were, and still are, focused on the classical repertoire, with a particular emphasis on sacred music.

The earliest written records of DCS go back to 1946 and are books of committee meeting minutes handwritten in elegant copperplate style. Some of the issues of the day that the minutes record thankfully no longer concern us, such as the difficulties of audiences getting to concerts because of petrol rationing (compounded by the atrocious winter weather conditions of 1946/47), or whether the choir could afford to make any payment at all to the Music Director! But many issues were exactly what DCS, and every other amateur choir in the country, still worries about, such as: at what level to set members' subscriptions, how much to charge for concert tickets, members chattering during rehearsals and poor attendance at rehearsals.

Following a short interregnum under the baton of Raymond Fischer, an Australian pianist who had recently settled in London, Graham Stewart took over in 1962, and he continued as the choir's Music Director for the next thirty years. Stewart was a freelance singer and conductor who was already Director of Music at St Stephen's Church in Dulwich and had founded the Ionian Singers in 1958. Over the years, he steadily built up DCS membership and musical capability with increasingly ambitious performances. Current DCS members might be startled (and envious) to hear that the membership subscription level during much of the 1970s was held at 50p, thanks

to some public sector financial support. But as the flavour of national politics changed, this support withered away and by the start of the 1990s, the choir had to become, as it remains, financially independent. Of course this has meant higher subscription levels, offset from time to time by money-raising social activities such as barn dances, progressive dinners and wine tastings. A remarkable venture in 2004 was a sponsored 'Singathon', at which members sang continuously in shifts over a 24-hour period, raising almost £7,000 for choir funds.

During Graham Stewart's tenure, the choir regularly gave three performances a year as well as a Christmas charity concert, many held at St Barnabas Church, which was also the choir's weekly rehearsal venue. A disastrous fire in 1992 not only severely damaged the church, requiring a change of rehearsal venue to a church in East Dulwich, but consigned the choir's music library (worth several thousand pounds) to the flames. The following year, ill health obliged Stewart to stand down as Music Director, although he continued as the society's President until his death in 1994.

He was replaced by a talented young conductor and keyboard player Sue Farrow, who had performed with DCS on several previous occasions. One of her first acts was to commission the composer Peter Snell to write a Requiem, which was given its World Premiere performance by DCS in memory of Graham Stewart at St John's Smith Square in 1996. Farrow was keen to explore new musical directions with the choir, and over the thirteen years of her leadership, a number of less commonly heard works were performed, including pieces by Dame Ethel Smyth at which the choir ladies wore suffragette sashes and the gents wore buttonhole favours. Under Sue Farrow the choir also began a tradition of trips to perform in foreign venues, including a memorable one to Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2004 on the occasion of the choir's 60th anniversary, where it gave performances in Sarajevo and Mostar.

At the start of the 2006/7 season, Aidan Oliver took over the reins from Sue Farrow. Aidan was then Director of Music at St Margaret's Church, Westminster (the Parliamentary church) and had founded the professional choir, Philharmonia Voices, two years previously. Over the next fourteen years he raised the musical standards of DCS

further, attracted younger singers, and increased its membership to well over a hundred, and many memorable concerts under his baton included a performance of Messiah in the Royal Naval College Chapel in Greenwich. Following his appointment to two prestigious new conducting roles, Aidan had to relinquish his leadership of DCS, and conducted a memorable final concert with them on 14 March 2020, coincidentally just at the time when the Covid-19 pandemic was taking off.

The following month, DCS appointed its current Music Director, William Vann, a talented professional keyboard player and conductor who has been Director of Music at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea since 2012. It could hardly have been a more challenging start for him – to be plunged into the Covid restrictions which made it so difficult for musical groups such as DCS to continue operating. However, with great energy, professionalism and good humour, over the next eighteen months he led online rehearsals via Zoom and delivered podcasts on YouTube about the music he was rehearsing. DCS was finally able to return to physical rehearsals at St Barnabas to prepare for another performance of Handel's Messiah in December 2021. Since then, DCS has performed an autumn, spring and summer concert each year, plus a carol concert every December.

Under William's leadership DCS has developed from strength to strength, and he has been at the forefront in helping us celebrate this, our 80th anniversary year. We started the season with a sold-out joint concert with Dulwich Symphony Orchestra, and in April members of the choir will be recording Vaughan Williams hymns under his baton, accompanied by the London Mozart Players. Thank you for helping us celebrate.



**Dulwich
Society**

Adapted from an article by Rosemary Leonard (with grateful thanks to Peter Main for his contribution on the history of the choir) originally published in the Dulwich Society Journal No. 222 (Autumn 2024) by kind permission of the Dulwich Society (www.dulwichsociety.com)

Programme notes

Bach's *Mass in B minor* stands at the very pinnacle of achievement in the composition of sacred choral music. It is a work of monumental scale, quite impractical in a liturgical context; yet its sheer vastness is surely a reflection of the depth of its spiritual devotion.

The *B Minor Mass* is such an established part of the choral repertoire that the listener may not always realise that it is also an enigmatic work. Its history is one of development rather than straightforward composition, and even the new chronology of Bach's musical output, established by Alfred Durr and other researchers, has failed to assign a complete series of precise dates to the various stages of its coming to birth. And at the heart of the enigma lie two questions: first, at what point did Bach, a Lutheran Protestant, plan to write a full Roman Catholic Mass and second, did he himself really regard the resulting composition as a performable work? Musicologists continue to speculate on the answers.

In attempting a description of the mass and its origins, we take as our starting point the year 1733. Bach had been in the prosperous Saxon town of Leipzig for ten years, serving as Musical Director of the chief churches of St Thomas and St Nicholas and as cantor of St Thomas's School. His creative genius had already produced many of the great works by which his fame has since been assured. That first decade at Leipzig alone had seen the composition of five complete cycles of church cantatas appropriate to all the feasts of the Christian year; his two great Passion settings, the St John and St Matthew; and many instrumental works and orchestral pieces. In 1729, he had added to a heavy workload of musical supervision, performance, recital work, and teaching by taking over direction of the Collegium Musicum, an orchestra of professional town musicians and university students that gave concerts at a local coffee house. But busy musician though he was, Bach was frequently at odds with his colleagues and employers at St Thomas's School and with the elders of the town council. Often there were disputes concerning fees, which were so vital to Bach, with a large family to support. By 1733, there is some evidence to suggest that he was feeling unappreciated at Leipzig.

Early in 1733, there came a period of enforced inactivity. On 1 February Augustus II, King of Poland and Elector of Saxony, died. This event was followed by five months of mourning, during which all public music-making was temporarily suspended. Relieved of the composition and supervision of music for the Lenten services, Bach found himself with time to devote to personal projects. It is believed that he used the opportunity to work on the composition of a *Missa*, a portion of the liturgy sung in Latin and common to both the Lutheran and Roman Catholic rites. The *Missa* comprised settings of the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* from the ordinary of the Mass. Its ecumenical qualities undoubtedly stimulated Bach to make a musical setting that he, a Lutheran, could duly dedicate to his new sovereign Augustus III, a Catholic. In the early months of 1733, Bach's eldest son, Wilhelm Friedemann, secured the post as organist at St Sophia's Church, Dresden, and began work there in June. In July, Johann Sebastian had a good excuse to visit Dresden: namely, to see how Friedemann was settling in. While there, he visited the new Elector's court and presented him with a copy of the parts of the *Missa*, together with a petition dated 27 July 1733. The petition was both a note of dedication, which referred to the *Missa* as "this insignificant example of the skill that I have acquired in Musique", and a request to be given a court title, which he hoped would improve his standing at Leipzig and give him some measure of security from what he considered to be the insulting treatment meted out to him by the Leipzig authorities. The petition failed, although the *Missa* may well have received a performance in Dresden that year. Bach did, however, eventually get his title: he was made court composer to Augustus in 1736.

At exactly what point Bach decided to expand the *Missa* into a full-blown setting of the Catholic Mass is a matter of conjecture. Modern researchers in general believe that the "Symbolum Nicenum" (Bach's term for the *Credo*) was composed between 1742 and 1745, but there are those that think it predates the *Missa* and was first heard in 1732. The *Sanctus* (a reworking of a setting of the same text that was already two decades old), the *Benedictus*, the *Agnus Dei*, and the *Dona Nobis Pacem* were all added in the late 1740s.

The *B Minor Mass* did not assume its final form until Bach's last years, perhaps by 1748. This was a period that found Bach preoccupied with musical projects that he obviously wished to be regarded as monuments of his skill, such as *The Art of Fugue* and *The Musical Offering*. It may be that the Mass also belongs to this category, for (as will be seen from the description that follows) it is a work based almost entirely upon earlier music, which Bach adapted and refined to meet a lofty sacred purpose. We may never know why he chose to marry his music to the Roman liturgy. We do know that he admired the Italian masters of sacred music from Palestrina to Pergolesi. Perhaps he hoped, like them, to leave his own musical essay upon the subject of this timeless text. He certainly followed the Italian fashion by using a richly diverse mixture of styles, and in choosing to reuse earlier material he may have felt himself to be selecting his finest work, laying it out for our inspection, and putting it to the service of praising God. In the event, whether he intended it or not, Bach has produced a moving and, notwithstanding its disparate origins and styles, a highly unified work transcending religious denominations.

The magnificence of the work is signalled at the very outset with the mighty adagio five-part setting of the words "Kyrie eleison" succeeded by a fugal section of architectural grandeur and complexity. The *Christe eleison* is a delicious Italianate duet for sopranos with a charming ritornello for strings that would not be out of place in a Handel opera. The second *Kyrie*, for four-part choir and marked "alla breve", is in the old church style, firm and convincing. The first part of the *Gloria*, a joyous outpouring, was probably reworked from a now lost instrumental movement. The contrasting beatific and ultimately victorious setting of "et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis" was grafted on to it without a break. The *Laudamus te*, with its angelic soprano solo balanced by an equally angelic violin obbligato, has all the hallmarks of having originally been a violin duet. The *Gratias* is a fairly straight copy of the opening chorus of Cantata No. 29 (1731), whose words "Wir danken dir, Gott" ("We thank Thee, O God") represent a literal German translation of the Latin text set here with such solemn nobility and assurance. The *Domine Deus* is a lovely duet for tenor and soprano, whose accompaniment for flute and muted strings has

fairy lightness. It leads directly into the *Qui tollis*, a revision of part of the opening chorus of Cantata No. 46 (1723), “Schauet doch und sehet” (‘Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow’). Note how the flutes weave their heavenly arabesques above long choral lines and heavy, throbbing, earthbound bass crotchets. In *Qui sedes*, the vocal alto solo is matched by the instrument of corresponding pitch, the oboe d’amore. The *Quoniam*, with its dark tones of horn obbligato and well-rounded bassoon duet figurations, provides an impressive vehicle for the baritone soloist, and leads straight into the gloriously jubilant *Cum sancto spiritu*, complete with agile choral fugue, marking the end of Bach’s original *Missa*.

The *Credo* bursts forth with two vibrant fugal choruses. The first, in antique style, is based upon the plainchant associated with the words “Credo in unum deum” and symbolises strength of faith; the second is adapted from a chorus of praise from Cantata No. 171 (1729) “Gott, wie dein Name, so ist auch dein Ruhm” (“God, Thy Fame is as Thy name”). The duet *Et in unum Dominum* is set for soprano and alto with oboe and strings. Bach originally also incorporated the *Et incarnatus est* into this duet, but his subsequent version spun out the text by further repetitions so that it stops at “descendit de coelis”. The chorus *Et incarnatus est*, added in this second version, depicts an intense awe, an emotion that is deepened into despair in the *Crucifixus*, reworked from a chorus in a youthful Weimar Cantata, No. 12 (1714) “Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen”, a profoundly poignant chorus over the remorseless bass of a passacaglia. The Mass springs from the depths of hopelessness with the jubilant *Et resurrexit*, again apparently reworked from a last instrumental movement. The bass aria, *Et in spiritum*, recalls in tone the earlier duet, *Et in unum Dominum*. The fugal *Confiteor*, like the first movement of the *Credo*, harks back to the older church style and uses plainsong to underpin the firmness of the belief it represents. It is linked to the final joyous *Et expecto* by a passage of the strangest, most haunting quality - quite a contrast with the exuberant chorus that ends the *Credo*.

Bach's magnificent *Sanctus*, with its exultant fugue, was written originally for Christmas Day, 1724. The choir for this piece is divided into six parts. But a double (eight-part) chorus is required for the sprightly *Osanna*, based on the opening chorus of the secular Cantata No. 215 (1734) "Preise dein Glucke, Gesegnetes Sachsen" ("Praised be your fortunes, ye most blessed Saxons"), a piece performed in honour of the coronation of Augustus III as King of Poland. As one critic has observed, "In a society which regards Kings as divinely appointed by God, he [Bach] would have seen no incongruity in using the same music to praise the King of Poland and the King of Heaven".

The *Benedictus*, apparently the vestige of a lost tenor aria, is unusual in that Bach wrote an obbligato part but left the instrument unspecified. The part suits best the flute or violin, and most performances opt for one or other of these instruments. With its slow, long, graceful vocal and instrumental lines, this movement is an evocation of serene love and longing. The *Agnus Dei*, which follows a straight reprise of the *Osanna*, is scored for alto solo matched to a low-lying ritornello for strings. It uses almost the same music as "Ach bleibe doch, mein liebste Leben" ('Oh, stay with me, my dearest life'), from Cantata No. 11 (The Ascension Oratorio). The *Dona nobis pacem* reprises the *Gratias*, bringing the *B Minor Mass* to a triumphant close and linking majestically the concepts of peace, praise, and gratitude to the Almighty.

William Gould

with thanks to *Making Music*: www.makingmusic.org.uk

Text and translation

I. MISSA

1. *Kyrie*

Kyrie eleison.

2. *Christe*

Christe eleison.

3. *Kyrie*

Kyrie eleison.

4. *Gloria*

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

5. *Et in terra pax*

Et in terra pax hominibus
bonae voluntatis.

6. *Laudamus te*

Laudamus te, benedicimus te,
adoramus te, glorificamus te.

7. *Gratias agimus tibi*

Gratias agimus tibi
propter magnam gloriam tuam.

8. *Domine Deus*

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

9. *Qui tollis*

Qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
suscipe deprecationem nostram.

10. *Qui sedes*

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,
miserere nobis.

Chorus

Lord, have mercy

Duet (soprano 1 & 2)

Christ, have mercy

Chorus

Lord, have mercy.

Chorus

Glory to God in the highest

Chorus

And on earth peace to men
of good will.

Aria (soprano 2)

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

Chorus

We give you thanks
for your great glory,

Duet (soprano1 & tenor)

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

Chorus

Who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.

Who takes away the sins of the world
receive our prayer.

Aria (alto)

Who sits at the right hand of the
Father, have mercy on us.

11. *Quoniam tu solus sanctus*

Quoniam tu solus sanctus,
tu solus Dominus,
tu solus altissimus,
Jesu Christe.

12. *Cum sancto spiritu*

Cum Sancto Spiritu
in gloria Dei Patris.
Amen.

Aria (bass)

Since you alone are holy,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are most high
Jesus Christ.

Chorus

With the Holy Spirit
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

II. SYMBOLUM NICENUM

1. *Credo in unum Deum*

Credo in unum Deum.

2. *Patrem omnipotentem*

Credo in unum Deum.
Patrem omnipotentem,
factorem caeli et terrae,
visibilium omnium et invisibilium.

3. *Et in unum Dominum*

Et in unum Dominum
Jesum Christum,
Filius Dei unigenitus.
Et ex Patre natus
ante omnia saecula.
Deum de Deo,
lumen de lumine,
Deum verum de Deo vero.
Genitum, non factum,
consubstantiali Patri,
per quem omnia facta sunt.
Qui propter nos homines
et propter nostram salutem
descendit de coelis.

Chorus

I believe in one God.

Chorus

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.

Duet (soprano 1 & alto)

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

4. *Et incarnatus est*

Et incarnatus est
de Spiritu Sancto
ex Maria virgine
et homo factus est.

5. *Crucifixus*

Crucifixus etiam pro nobis,
sub Pontio Pilato
passus et sepultus est.

6. *Et resurrexit*

Et resurrexit tertia die
secundum scripturas.
Et ascendit in coelum,
sedet ad dexteram Patris.
Et iterum venturus est cum gloria
iudicare vivos et mortuos,
cujus regni non erit finis.

7. *Et in Spiritum Sanctum*

Et in Spiritum Sanctum
Dominum et vivificantem,
qui ex Patre Filoque procedit.
Qui cum Patre et Filio simul
adoratur et conglorificatur,
qui locutus est per prophetas.
Et unam sanctam catholicam
et apostolicam ecclesiam.

8. *Confiteo*

Confiteor unum baptisma
in remissionem peccatorum.

9. *Et expecto*

Et expecto resurrectionem
mortuorum,
et vitam venturi saeculi.
Amen.

Chorus

And was incarnate
by the Holy Ghost
of the Virgin Mary
and was made man.

Chorus

And was crucified also for us
under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.

Chorus

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

Aria (bass)

And I believe in the Holy Ghost,
the Lord and Giver of Life,
who proceeds from the Father and
the Son, who with the Father and the
Son together is worshipped and
glorified, who spake by the Prophets.
And I believe in one Catholic and
Apostolic Church.

Chorus

I acknowledge one Baptism
for the remission of sins.

Chorus

And I await the resurrection of the
dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.

III. SANCTUS

Sanctus

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus,
Domine Deus Sabaoth.

Chorus

Holy, Holy, Holy
Lord God of hosts.

Pleni Sunt Coeli

Pleni sunt caeli et terra
gloria ejus.

Chorus

Heaven and earth
are full of your glory.

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

1. Osanna in excelsis

Osanna in excelsis.

Chorus

Hosanna in the highest.

2. Benedictus

Benedictus qui venit
in nomine Domini.

Aria (tenor)

Blessed be he that comes
in the name of the Lord.

3. Osanna

Osanna in excelsis.

Chorus

Hosanna in the highest

4. Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei
qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.

Aria (alto)

Lamb of God,
who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.

5. Dona nobis pacem

Dona nobis pacem.

Chorus

Give us peace.

Biographies

Julia Doyle: soprano

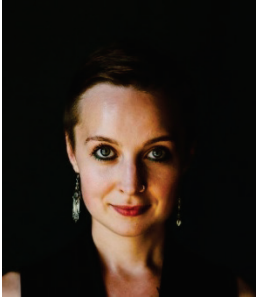


Born and educated in Lancaster, Julia read Social and Political Sciences alongside a Choral Scholarship at Cambridge. She made her professional début singing *Messiah* with the Britten Sinfonia / Polyphony at St John's Smith Square. Since then she has performed all over the world and is in demand as one of the world's leading sopranos for Baroque repertoire.

Recent and future engagements include Mozart *Mass in C Minor* in Toronto with Tafelmusik, Vivaldi *Juditha Triumphans* at the Concertgebouw, Palace of Versailles and Theater an der Wien, Handel *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo* at Halle Handel Festival, various European tours with the Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra including the BBC Proms, Monteverdi with La Nuova Musica, Haydn songs with the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie under Sir Roger Norrington, *St Matthew Passion* with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and the Bach Choir, recordings and concerts with the J.S. Bach Stiftung, Handel *Occasional Oratorio* with Bayerische Rundfunk, Bach arias for voice and violin with Vilde Frang and Arcangelo and the Basel Chamber Orchestra, *Messiah* with the Gulbenkian Orchestra and a European tour of *Messiah* as well as European tours and recordings with the Rias Kammerchor.

A busy recitalist, she works regularly with lutenist Matthew Wadsworth and their recording of Purcell has been received to critical acclaim.

Katie Bray: mezzo-soprano



Winner of the Dame Joan Sutherland Audience Prize at Cardiff Singer of the World 2019, British mezzo-soprano Katie Bray has become known for her magnetic stage presence and gleaming, expressive tone.

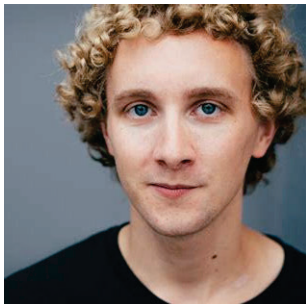
In recital she has performed in venues such as the Wigmore Hall and the Holywell Music Room and she appears regularly in the London English Song Festival, where she has directed concerts at Wilton's Music Hall, as well as at the Oxford Lieder Festival for which she recorded a disc of Schumann songs with Sholto Kynoch. Other highlights include a semi-staged version of Wolf's *Italienisches Liederbuch* with Christopher Glynn and Roderick Williams at Milton Court Concert Hall and Ryedale Festival, and the premiere of new monodrama *Frida* with the East London Music Group. She has also performed in a staged cabaret of 'songs banned by the Nazis', *Effigies of Wickedness*, at the Gate Theatre, Notting Hill.

Katie Bray is particularly noted for baroque repertoire and has appeared with Barokksolistene and Bjarte Eike, Monteverdi Choir and Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Irish Baroque Orchestra and Peter Whelan, La Nuova Musica, Ludus Baroque, London Handel Orchestra and Laurence Cummings, Wroclaw Baroque Orchestra, and Spira Mirabilis.

Equally at home on the operatic stage, she has appeared for Opera North, English National Opera, Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera, Irish National Opera, Opera Holland Park, Garsington Opera and most recently Varvara in *Katya Kabanova* for Grange Park Opera.

Katie Bray graduated as a Karaviotis Scholar from the opera course at the Royal Academy of Music, was awarded the Principal's Prize and won First Prize in the Richard Lewis Singing Competition.

Gwilym Bowen: tenor



Born in Hereford, Gwilym Bowen studied at Trinity College, Cambridge, and London's Royal Academy of Music. He performs internationally with orchestras and ensembles of the highest calibre throughout the UK, Europe and further afield in Australia and the USA, as well as on the operatic stage, his engagements including *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

at Opéra de Lille; *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* at The Grange Festival; *Acis and Galatea* and multiple roles in both *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* and *Il ritorno d'Ulisse* with Academy of Ancient Music; in Hasse's *Piramo e Tisbe* with The Mozartists; and *L'incoronazione di Poppea* at Angers Nantes Opera.

Recordings include *B Minor Mass* with Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (Hyperion), *St John Passion* with De Nederlandse Bachvereniging (All of Bach); *Brockes Passion* with Academy of Ancient Music (AAM) and Concerto Copenhagen (cpo); and Dussek's *Messe solennelle* (AAM).

Engagements during 2024/25 include Keiser's *Octavia* with Lautten Compagney, Berlin; *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* at The Grange Festival; J. S. Bach *Cantatas* with a Insula Orchestra; *Christmas Oratorio* with Music of the Baroque, Chicago; and *St John Passion* with Polyphony; *Bach, the Universe and Everything: Soul Music* with Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment; Britten *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings* with Orchestra di Padova e del Veneto; *Alexander's Feast* at Three Choirs Festival; *Messiah* with The Sixteen; *Elijah* with Heidelberg Philharmonic Orchestra; and Monteverdi *Vespers 1610* with Solomon's Knot and Finnish Baroque Orchestra.

Ashley Riches: bass-baritone



Bass-baritone Ashley Riches studied at King's College, Cambridge and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He was a Jette Parker Young Artist at the Royal Opera House and a BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist.

An extremely versatile artist, his 2024/25 season includes Handel's *Messiah* at the BBC Proms with John Butt and the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, Rossini's *Stabat Mater* with Nil Venditti and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Berlioz *L'Enfance du Christ* with the NFW Wroclaw Philharmonic and Paul McCreesh, Bach's *St John Passion* with The English Concert and Harry Bicket, and Puccini's *La Rondine* with the London Symphony Orchestra and Antonio Pappano.

In 2023/24 he returned to the Royal Opera House as Roucher *Andrea Chénier*, sang Rheinberg in Wallace's *Lurline* with the National Symphony Orchestra Dublin and Péter Halász, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* with David Afkham in Madrid, Verdi's *Requiem* with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Kazuki Yamada, and Handel's *Messiah* in concert at Glyndebourne and with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and Bernard Labadie, and Purcell's *King Arthur* with Paul McCreesh in Lyon and Lausanne.

An accomplished recitalist, he released his debut solo recital recording, *A Musical Zoo*, in 2021.

William Vann: conductor



William Vann was appointed Musical Director of Dulwich Choral Society in March 2020 and is delighted to be leading DCS in its 80th anniversary season and making his Southwark Cathedral debut. A multiple-prize winning and critically acclaimed choral, orchestral and opera conductor and song accompanist, he is particularly renowned for his revival performances and recordings of lost and lesser-known works of vocal and choral music by

British composers and has performed with a host of renowned singers, instrumentalists and orchestras across the world.

Born in Bedford, he was a Chorister at King's College, Cambridge and a Music Scholar at Bedford School. He subsequently read Law alongside a Choral Scholarship at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge and studied piano accompaniment at the Royal Academy of Music with Malcolm Martineau and Colin Stone. His extensive discography as conductor and accompanist includes over twenty-five recordings for Albion, Champs Hill, Chandos, Delphian, Etcetera, Navona and SOMM. His recording of Hubert Parry's *Prometheus Unbound* was awarded Gramophone Recording of the Month in October 2023 and subsequently shortlisted for a 2024 Gramophone Award.

He is the Director of Music at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, an Associate of the RAM, a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists, a Trustee of the Ralph Vaughan Williams Society, a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Musicians, the Chairman of Kensington and Chelsea Music Society, a conductor and vocal coach at the Oxenfoord International Summer School and the founder and Artistic Director of the London English Song Festival. In 2024 he took up the role of Chorus Master at The Grange Festival, where he will return in 2025 for productions of *La traviata* and *Die Fledermaus*.
www.williamvann.com

DULWICH CHORAL SOCIETY

Honorary President **Rt Hon Baroness Harman KC**

Musical Director **William Vann**

Chairman **Dr Rosemary Leonard MBE**

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Charlotte Harris, Denise Lawson, Kassy Luto, Susie Nicklin,
Maggie O'Grady, Diane Pengelly, Hannah Smith, Lydia Swift,
Sue Thompson, Cathy Wearing, Gracita Woods

2nd Sopranos

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Pippa Grayson, Cecilia Hill, Juliana Kirby, Kate Lennard,
Morven Main, Isobel Nicklin, Doris Nikolić, Liz Nixon, Sue O'Neill,
Carmo Ponte, Stephanie Prior, Sophie Robson, Janine Streete,
Sarah Terrazas, Jane Tippet, Lauren Whitfield

1st Altos

Carrie Andrews, Zina Boykova, Marilyn Checkley, Mary Donkin,
Eve Freeman, Joanna French, Vicki Garratt, Ellen Hanceri, Jill Harris,
Elizabeth Heather, Claire Johnston, Julie Jones, Julie John,
Rosemary Leonard, Jo Merry, Karen Mills, Jane Palmer, Nicola Prior,
Rebecca Sloane, Frances Steele

2nd Altos

Beccy Bahar, Sonia Butler, Miranda Collinge, Liz Day, Anna Fenlon,
Grainne Gleeson, Helen Graham, Jo Haynes, Sarah Hughes,
Jenny Kay, Helen Lall, Sue Ramsden, Susan Robinson,
Philippa Tudor, Sladjana Vuckovic-Grant

1st Tenors

Forbes Bailey, Giles Craven, Richard Fergusson, Peter Frost,
John Greig, Robert Guthrie, Steve Harrison, Emmet Kiberd

2nd Tenors

Christopher Barrat, Nick Bolt, Tim Finch, Robert Foster, Jon Layton,
Michael Palmer, Peter Rae, Richard Stephens

1st Basses

Alec Barton, Wulstan Berkeley, Christopher Braun, Theo Finkel,
Joe Garratt, Alan Grant, Yan Hawkins, Iain Johncock, Peter Main,
Kieran Murphy, Aziz Panni, Tim Pearce, Duncan Pratt,
Barney Rayfield, Peter Smith

2nd Basses

Stephen Frost, Bruce Gregory, Alex Hamilton, Greville Healey,
Adrian Lambourne, Adam Mars-Jones, Tom O'Grady, Chris Putt,
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MERIDIAN SINFONIA

Violin 1: Catherine Martin (Leader), Abel Balzas, Julia Black,
Joseph Lowe

Violin 2: Persephone Gibbs, Ellen O'Dell, Rebecca Miles

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Cello: Christopher Suckling, Martyna Jankowska

Bass: Tim Amherst

Flute: Eva Caballero, William Lyons

Oboe: Andres Villalobos, Grace Scott-Deuchar, William Sherratt

Bassoon: Philip Turbett, Hayley Pullen

Horn: Anneke Scott

Trumpet: David Blackadder, Richard Thomas, Tamsin Cowell

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Meridian Sinfonia is a dynamic and highly flexible professional ensemble, drawing on players from both the period instrument and modern orchestral worlds. The players of the Meridian Sinfonia are highly sought after throughout the UK and Europe as performers, soloists and teachers. The range of the orchestra encompasses the Renaissance through to the contemporary, having given first modern revivals of long-lost works and the first performances of contemporary compositions.

The period instrument branch of the Meridian Sinfonia covers pitches from Renaissance A440 & A465, through the Baroque A415 and the Classical A430. The choice of the instruments used is carefully considered to bring the most authentic realisation of sounds the composers would have expected. The Meridian Sinfonia has had the pleasure of working for the North London Chorus, Waltham Singers, Skolia, Stondon Singers, Southend Festival Chorus, Milton Keynes Chorale and Kings Lynn Festival Chorus.

Dulwich Choral Society

Registered Charity No. 264764

www.dulwichchoral.com

Forthcoming events

Saturday 26 April 2025 10am to 5pm

Come and Sing!

St Stephen's Church, College Road, Dulwich

All-day workshop focusing on Elgar's *The Music Makers*.

All are welcome to participate. £20 (under 16s £10)

Sunday 29 June 2025 7pm

Bella Italia!

St Stephen's Church, College Road, Dulwich

Works by Palestrina, Monteverdi, Donizetti, Verdi et al.

£15 (under 16s £8)

Friends of Dulwich Choral Society

The Friends of Dulwich Choral Society are a group of people, often past or present members, but also those who enjoy coming to our concerts and social events whenever possible, who are interested in ensuring the future stability of the choir by supporting it with regular donations. New Friends will be warmly welcomed.

Benefits of becoming a Friend include:

- mailings of details of past and future programmes, events and news
- on request, reserved seats for concerts in local churches
- a free interval drink with any reserved seat
- a Friends contact within the choir.

Dulwich Choral Society is a registered charity. Donations made under Gift Aid will enable the income tax to be recovered as an additional benefit. If we do not already possess a Gift Aid form we will ask new Friends to complete one.

For more information, please contact Mike Shepherd – friendsdcs@gmail.com