

THE CHERWELL SINGERS

with

OXFORD SINFONIA

Conductor: Andrew Carwood

BACH

Magnificat in D (BWV 243)

HAYDN

Imperial 'Nelson' Mass (1798)

Phyllida McCormick : Soprano

Stephen Carter : Alto

Matthew Vine : Tenor

Michael McCarthy : Bass

**Saturday 11th March 1989
at 8pm**

Merton College Chapel

J.S. Bach's setting of the 'Magnificat' is almost certainly the greatest setting of this text in the eighteenth century. It exists in two versions: one in E flat, BWV 243a (1723) with four Christmas interludes and a revised version in D, BWV 243 (c. 1730) to be performed tonight. Except for the key and a few small details, chiefly of orchestration, the two versions of the Magnificat proper are identical. They are both admirably concise. Ritornello form is used in most of the movements, fugal writing in the others and the last twenty-three bars of the last movement are based on the material of the first.

The five choruses have a full five part (SSATB) texture throughout and make much use of imitation and the Baroque idea of 'Fortspinnung' (that is 'spinning out' a musical idea to its very final limits). The solo items often present contrasting emotions, especially in the moving 'Quia respexit' and 'Et misericordia' and the gentle 'Esurientes'.

Orchestrally accompanied music was banned from the churches of Austria between 1783 and 1792 by Imperial decree, and during this time, Haydn worked in the evolving symphonia form. On his return to church music, his recent preoccupation is obvious. All of the late masses (six between 1796 and 1802) are on a large scale using orchestra, chorus and soloists.

The 'Lord Nelson' or 'Imperial' Mass is one of the most well-known. Written in 1798, Haydn headed it 'Missa in angustiis'. It is possible that the work was written to celebrate Nelson's victory at Aboukir Bay or that he heard the Mass performed at Eisenstadt in 1800. Either way there is a strong military flavour here. The Kyrie in D minor opens with a unison introduction with stirring use of the trumpets and timpani. These two instruments also reappear in the usually relaxed and often lengthy Benedictus.

True to the Viennese tradition, Haydn interchanges solo voices with chorus; what is new is the leading position given to the orchestra and the pervasion of the symphonic style.

MAGNIFICAT (BWV 243) - J S BACH

- 1 Magnificat (Chorus)
- 2 Et exultavit spiritus meus (Soprano Aria)
- 3 Quia respexit (Soprano Aria)
- 4 Omnes generationes (Chorus)
- 5 Quia fecit mihi magna (Bass Aria)
- 6 Et misericordia (Alto, Tenor Duet)
- 7 Fecit potentiam (Chorus)
- 8 Deposuit potentes (Tenor Aria)
- 9 Esurientes implevit bonis (Alto Aria)
- 10 Suscepit Israel (Soprano I & II, Alto Trio)
- 11 Sicut locutus est (Chorus)
- 12 Gloria Patri (Chorus)

INTERVAL (15 MINUTES)

"NELSON MASS" (1789) - F J HAYDN

- 1 Kyrie
- 2 Gloria
- 3 Credo
- 4 Sanctus - Benedictus
- 5 Agnus Dei

Phyllida McCormick - Soprano
Lindsay Bramley - Soprano
Stephen Carter - Alto
Matthew Vine - Tenor
Michael McCarthy - Bass

SOPRANOS

Jane Carlton Smith
Julia Craig-McFeely
Anne Fenwick
Sarah Franks
Louise Locock
Lesley Manning
Joanna Tucker

TENORS

Bill Johnston
David Sutton
John Tucker

ALTOS

Jennifer Barnes
Liz Healing
Janet Jeffs
Judith Mossman
Jenny Pickering

BASSES

John Callow
Chris Franks
Robert de Newtown

THE CHERWELL SINGERS

The Cherwell Singers are a group of talented amateur musicians, founded by a group of friends in 1978. Their repertoire extends from major choral work, madrigals and motets to modern choral songs and close harmony. They are equally at home in church or concert hall.

In June, the Cherwell Singers are performing in the chorus of a production of Purcell's Dido and Aeneas, to be staged at Bourton House, Bourton-on-the-Hill.

Their Conductor, Andrew Carwood is a Lay Clerk at Christ Church Cathedral, having studied at St John's College, Cambridge, where he worked with Dr George Guest for three years. He is a freelance singer and conductor in both Oxford and London.