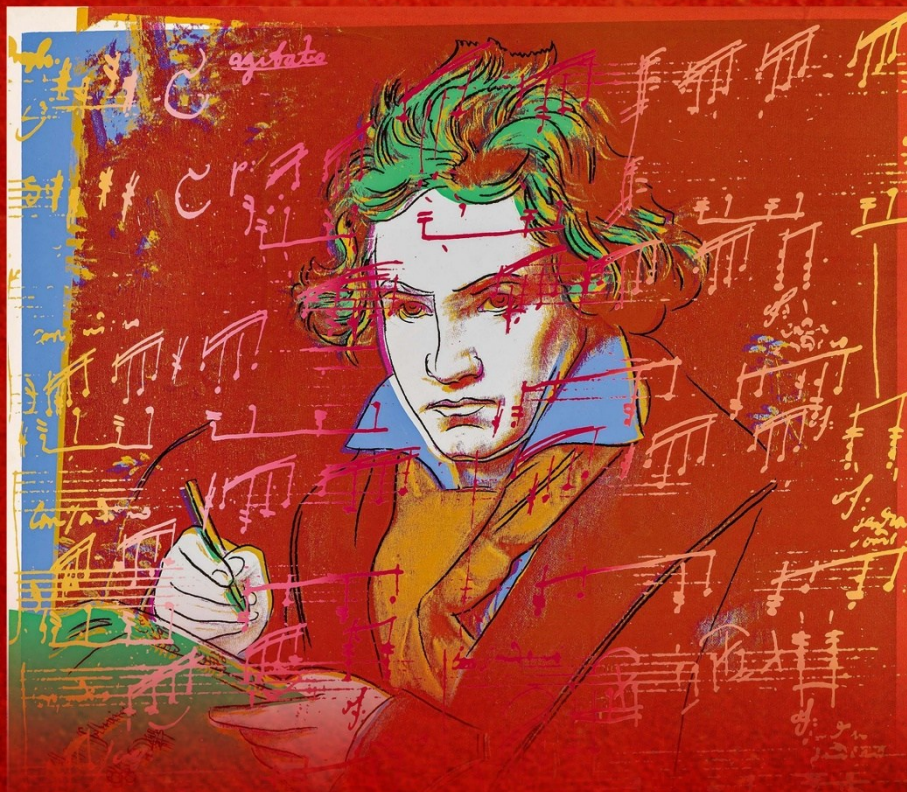




President: Patrica Parkes

Conductor: Michael Cayton



**BEETHOVEN!**

*Mass in C & Choral Fantasia*

Saturday, April 5, 19:30  
Amersham Free Church

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## *A welcome from the Chair*

We are so pleased to see you here at the Amersham Free Church – a lovely venue for our concert.

We have a busy time ahead with an opportunity to reprise Michael's composition *The Way Through the Woods* at St John's Wood Church in May (a free concert to which everyone is welcome), and then a tour to the West Country in July.



Our summer concert will be around the theme of *Songs of Light* and we are returning to Sarratt Village Hall – always a popular venue for our summer event.

I do hope you enjoy tonight's concert, and thank you for your continued support.

Lyndsay Ward  
*Chair*

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Lyndsay'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

**Back cover:** A less familiar portrait of Beethoven, painted by Joseph Mähler in 1804/5, shortly before the composition of the *Mass in C* and *The Choral Fantasia*.

*Programme: Beethoven!*  
*(plus a little Mozart...)*

*Beethoven: Mass in C Major, Op. 86*

- I. Kyrie
- II. Gloria
- III. Credo
- IV. Sanctus/Benedictus
- V. Agnus Dei

————— *Interval* —————

*Mozart: Divertimento in D Major, KV 136*

*Beethoven: The Choral Fantasia, Op. 80*

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Emma Ellis, Soprano  
Caroline Carragher, Mezzo-soprano  
Matthew Pochin, Tenor  
Alex Pratley, Bass

Simon Howat, piano  
Benjamin Frost, organ

The Chiltern String Quartet,  
leader Anastasia Stahlmann

## *Choir members singing this evening*

### Sopranos:

Caroline Bartlett  
Sam Beard  
Hilary Broadbent  
Mary Bungard  
Anni Facer  
Gabrielle Fisher  
Christine Guy

Jill Haslam  
Katherine Hyde  
Sarah Moreton  
Gillian Proctor  
Stefanie Robinson  
Lyndsay Ward  
Gill Watson

### Altos:

Cathy Amos  
Sue Canderton  
Marian Davies  
Ana de'Ath  
Rita Fryer

Clare Hearnshaw  
Miriam Morgan  
Maggie Shrive  
Marian Wax  
Beryl Whittaker

### Tenors:

Philip Brown  
Gijs Crone

Andy Etchells  
Isabel Walker

### Basses:

Simon Boulcott  
Paul Davies  
John Haslam  
Martin Robinson

Robert Thackery  
Richard Watson  
Tim Wynne-Jones

# Mass in C

## 1. Kyrie

*Kyrie eleison.*

*Christe eleison.*

*Kyrie eleison.*

## 2. Gloria

*Gloria in excelsis Deo,*

*et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis.*

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

*Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.*

*Domine Deus, Rex cœlestis, Deus Pater omnipotens.*

*Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe.*

*Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.*

*Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.*

*Qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram.*

*Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis.*

*Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus Dominus,*

*tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe.*

*Cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris,*

*Amen.*

## III. Credo

*Credo in unum Deum Patrem omnipotentem,*

*factorem cœli et terræ, visibilium omnium et invisibilium.*

*Et in unum Dominum, Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum.*

*Et ex Patre natum ante omnia sæcula.*

*Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine,*

*Deum vero de Deo vero.*

*Genitum, non factum, consubstantialem Patri,*

*per quem omnia facta sunt.*

*Qui propter nos homines et propter nostram salute*

*descendit de cœlis*

Lord, have mercy.  
Christ, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy.

Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace on earth to men of goodwill.  
We praise you, we bless you, we worship you, we glorify you.  
We give you thanks for your great glory.  
Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father almighty.  
Lord Jesus Christ, only begotten Son.  
Lord God, lamb of God, Son of the Father.  
You who take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.  
You who take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer.  
You who sit at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.  
For you alone are holy, you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the most high, Jesus Christ.  
With the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father,  
Amen.

I believe in one God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth, of all things seen and unseen.  
And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, only begotten Son of the Father.  
Born of the Father before the world was made,  
God of God, light of light,  
True God of true God.  
Begotten, not made, of one being with the Father,  
by whom all things were made.  
Who for us men and for our salvation  
came down from heaven.

*Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex  
Maria virgine, et homo factus est.  
Crucifixus etiam pro nobis:  
sub Pontio Pilato passus et sepultus est.  
Et resurrexit tertia die secundum Scripturas.  
Et ascendit in cælum:  
sedet ad dexteram Patris.  
Et iterum venturus est cum Gloria judicare vivos et mortuos:  
cujus regni non erit finis.  
Et in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum et vivificantem:  
qui ex Patre Filioque procedit.  
Qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur et conglorificatur:  
qui locutus est per Prophetas.  
Et in unam sanctam catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam.  
Confiteor unum baptisma in remissionem peccatorum.  
Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum  
et vitam venturi sæculi.  
Amen.*

#### **IV. Sanctus / Benedictus**

*Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth,  
Pleni sunt cæli et terra gloria tua.  
Osanna in excelsis.  
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini,  
Osanna in excelsis.*

#### **V. Agnus Dei**

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.  
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.  
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,  
dona nobis pacem*



And was conceived by the Holy Spirit of the  
Virgin Mary, and became man  
He was crucified for us:  
through Pontius Pilate he suffered death and was buried  
And he rose on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.  
And He ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of the Father.  
And He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead:  
His reign will never end.  
And in the Holy Spirit, Lord and giver of life:  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.  
Who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified:  
who has spoken through the Prophets.  
And in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.  
I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
And I await the resurrection of the dead  
and the life of the world to come.  
Amen.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.

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

# *The Choral Fantasia*

*Schmeichelnd hold und lieblich klingen unsers Lebens Harmonien,  
und dem Schönheitssinn entschwingen Blumen sich, die ewig blühn.  
Fried' und Freude gleiten freundlich wie der Wellen Wechselspiel;  
was sich drängte rauh and feindlich, ordnet sich zu Hochgefühl.*

*Wenn der Töne Zauber walten  
und des Wortes Weihe spricht,  
muß sich Herrliches gestalten, Nacht und Stürme werden Licht.  
Äuß're Ruhe, inn're Wonne herrschen für den Glücklichen.  
Doch der Künste Frühlingssonne Läßt uns beiden Licht entstehn.*

*Großes, das ins Herz gedrungen, blüht dann neu und schön empor,  
hat ein Geist sich aufgeschwungen, hallt ihm stets ein Geisterchor.  
Nehmt denn ihn, ihr schönen Seelen, froh die Gaben schöner Kunst.  
Wenn sich Lieb' und Kraft vermählen, lohnt dem Menschen Göttergunst.*

Enticingly charming and lovely is the sound of the harmony of our lives,  
and a sense of beauty wafts from flowers which ever bloom.  
Peace and joy flow in harmony like the rise and fall of the waves;  
all that presses forward, rough and hostile, is changed to exaltation.

When the magic of sound holds sway  
and speaks the words of consecration,  
something glorious takes shape, night and storm turn to light.  
Outward peace, inward delight, rule the happy man.  
The spring sun of art lets us receive the light of both.

The grandeur that penetrates the heart springs up, new and beautiful,  
the soul is uplifted, a chorus of spirits resounds forever.  
Accept, then, you lovely spirits, joyously the gift of beautiful art.  
When love and strength are united, divine favour is man's reward.

# Beethoven!

## Background

When Beethoven wrote his *Mass in C Major* in 1807, he had already established himself as Vienna's leading pianist and composer, having completed four symphonies, four piano concertos, the violin concerto, an opera, and a substantial body of chamber and piano music. His financial situation had improved to the point where he no longer needed to take students, or to compose the light or novelty pieces so much in demand by his publishers.

However, his livelihood still depended on a mixture of patronage and publication, and on concert and performance revenues, which he largely managed himself. This consumed a great deal of his time, and his suspicious and mercurial temperament proved a hindrance. In need of a steadier source of income, he submitted a proposal to the Directors of the Court Theatre in early 1807 that he be retained at a fairly sizeable salary, for which he would supply one opera a year.

This was a rather ambitious goal, given the immense difficulties he had experienced with his 1805 opera *Fidelio*, which had seen just six performances over two years, had undergone extensive revisions, and had appeared under two different names with two different overtures. It must therefore have seemed fortuitous to Beethoven when he was offered a commission at about that time from one of the theatre Directors, Nikolaus II, Prince Esterházy, to compose a Mass for Esterházy's wife Maria's name day.

Nikolaus was the fourth and last Esterházy whom Joseph Haydn served as *kapellmeister*, and the six name-day Masses that Haydn wrote for him between 1796 and 1802 are masterpieces of the genre. In 1804 the 72-year-old Haydn finally gave up his duties as *kapellmeister* and Johann Nepomuk Hummel, a former child

prodigy and pupil of both Mozart and Haydn, was brought in as his heir apparent.

Haydn's duties were actually divided among three music directors, an arrangement which encouraged rivalry and internecine conflict. *Konzertmeister* Hummel, who composed three name-day Masses for Nikolaus in his first two years there, was nominally in charge of secular music and opera, and was poaching on the territory of *vice-kapellmeister* Fuchs, who was in charge of sacred music. Haydn may have convinced Nikolaus to commission an outside composer to smooth the waters, recommending his former pupil Beethoven.



*Nikolaus II, Prince Esterházy, commissioner of the Mass*

If it weren't for the business opportunity of fulfilling a commission for a Director of the Court Theatre, Beethoven might have declined the work. He had shown little desire to write sacred music, and he did not relish the inevitable comparison to Haydn's famous Masses. His relationship with his former mentor was complicated. In 1792 Beethoven was sent to Vienna by his employer, the Elector of Köln, to study composition with Haydn. It was not a felicitous pairing. The young Beethoven was far more interested in establishing himself as the greatest pianist in Vienna and in identifying potential patrons than in studying counterpoint.

Haydn's career had been revitalized during his first extended stay in London. He was busy preparing music for a return visit and had little time for his pupil. Beethoven was less than honest with Haydn about his financial status and the provenance of works he submitted as newly composed. Haydn declined to take Beethoven to London with him in 1794, and Beethoven launched his independent career the next year with his first public concert and with the publication of his *Opus 1* piano trios. Haydn still took a lively interest in the progress of Beethoven's career and had a high regard for him as a composer, even if he didn't always understand where Beethoven was going with his music.

### **The Mass in C**

Köln was a Catholic electorate and Beethoven served as deputy organist at the Court Chapel for eight years, so he was very familiar with the Mass, both as a liturgy and as a musical genre. The music is built on the five prayers of the 'ordinary' (unchanging) part of the service. The five movements form a symmetrical arrangement, with the outer movements (*Kyrie* and *Agnus Dei*) being prayers of supplication and the second (*Gloria*) and fourth (*Sanctus*) movements being prayers of praise, surrounding a central affirmation of faith (*Credo*).

A number of musical conventions had developed over the years. The final phrases of the *Gloria* ('cum Sancto Spiritu'), *Credo* ('et vitam venturi sæculi'), and *Sanctus* ('osanna in excelsis') were typically set as fugues. Since the middle of the 18th century, the long movements (*Gloria* and *Credo*) were usually set in a three-part fast–slow–fast manner, like an Italian sinfonia. The *Sanctus* was divided into two movements to allow a moment of silence for the consecration and elevation of the Host.

Beethoven took all of this as a basic framework for his Mass, creating a setting that is very centred on the text, but filtered through his own personal beliefs. To honour the text, he often returned to older formats or tropes, but they are always presented in his own unique idiom. He unified the Mass to a remarkable degree. Four of the five movements begin and end in C major. He employed both a chorus and a solo quartet, but they share the same text, rather than singing separate sections, providing variations in colour and texture, with the parts flowing seamlessly into each other.

The *Kyrie* is set in the usual 'ABA' format, reflecting the tripartite text, something that was already considered a bit antique. But Beethoven's harmonic treatment was anything but traditional, moving from the expected key of C in the *A* section to the unexpected, distant key of E in the *B* section. Beethoven was fascinated by this interval of a third, and it reappears in various contexts throughout the Mass.

The *Gloria* opens with rapidly ascending passages, leading up to the word 'excelsis' (highest), and Beethoven sets the words 'in terra' (on Earth) an octave lower – the sort of tone painting that Handel might have done. But he also sets the rising theme against a mirror-image descending line, creating a spaciousness which suggests the great distance between Heaven and Earth. It was customary to bow when the phrase 'adoramus te' was recited, and this was often referenced in the musical setting. Beethoven's

approach is highly idiomatic; the flanking texts, 'benedicimus te' and 'glorificamus te', are firmly rooted in C major and are sung *forte*, but he drops the 'adoremus te' text an octave to a quiet B-flat chord, a bit of a rogue tonality for C major. This rapid change in dynamics and pitch and the unexpected tonality creates a very striking moment.

The closing 'cum Sancto Spiritu' fugue never gets beyond the statement of the first subject. It is interrupted first by a restatement of the *quoniam* music, and then by a series of 'amens' whose instrumental accompaniment forms a long chain of descending thirds. The chain ends on a G-flat major chord, the most distant tonality from the C-major tonic that Beethoven needed to reach. He adopted an expedient but highly unorthodox solution, merely raising the pitch of the next chord a half-step to G major, which is now just a cadence away from C.

The *Credo* often opens with a strong unison statement of belief, but Beethoven chose a hushed opening that quickly swells. He took advantage of the dramatic opportunities for word painting that the middle section of the *Credo* affords, alternating the text dealing with the incarnation, crucifixion, death, and resurrection between the solo quartet and chorus – the lightly scored tenor solo on the key words 'et homo factus est' (and He became man), the descending chromatic line of Christ's suffering, the anguished 'passus' (He suffered death), and the hesitant 'et, et, et sepultus est' (and, and, and He was buried). The *Credo* closes with the expected fugue on the 'et vitam venturi' text, but, as in the *Gloria*, it is repeatedly interrupted after the statement of the first subject.

Beethoven set the *Sanctus* and *Benedictus* as a single movement, and it is the only one which is not at least partly in C major. Although the *Sanctus* is a hymn of praise, the opening here is a soft adagio in A major, conveying a sense of wonder and awe. It is the next phrase, 'pleni sunt coeli', that erupts in a brilliant, joyous allegro. As expected, he sets the 'osanna' as a

fugue, and like the other fugues, it is interrupted after the first subject. In this case, there is a liturgical reason – there needs to be a pause for the consecration of the Host. The *Benedictus* itself opens with a beautiful, lullaby-like melody and features wonderfully written duets for the quartet and chorus before ending with a reprise of the truncated ‘osanna’ fugue.

It was traditional in the Viennese Masses to begin the *Agnus Dei* in a minor key, which makes the prayer of supplication more plaintive, and Beethoven follows suit. This is perhaps the most personal movement in Beethoven's Mass, and the repetition of the ‘miserere’ text imparts a sense of urgency. The third repeat of the *Agnus Dei* text moves to C major with a beautiful, lyrical melody. Beethoven repeats the phrase ‘dona nobis pacem’ (grant us peace) over and over. He had spent his entire adult life to this point under the shadow of the Napoleonic Wars, and Vienna had already been bombarded and occupied once, so his preoccupation with peace was quite understandable. And in a wonderful touch, he sets that text at the very end to the opening *Kyrie* melody, a gesture that reinforces the essential unity of the Mass.

### **Aftermath, and the Choral Fantasia**

If Beethoven had expected to win Prince Nikolaus’s support with the *Mass in C*, he was to be disappointed. Rehearsals did not go well. Only one of five altos was in attendance, prompting a scorching letter from Nikolaus to *vice-kapellmeister* Fuchs to make all the musicians available to Beethoven. While there is no account of the performance, it is unlikely to have met Beethoven's expectations. At the reception following the service, Nikolaus greeted the composer with the ambivalent phrase “But my dear Beethoven, what it is that you have done again?”. Hummel, who was standing within earshot, snickered, and Beethoven was incensed by both the comment and the laugh. He stormed out of



the reception, withdrew the dedication, and never provided Nikolaus with the manuscript.

Beethoven was convinced of the musical worth of the Mass and began extensive negotiations with his publisher, who explained that there was little interest in sacred music. Beethoven, who had taken such care with setting the Latin text, even suggested including a German translation or paraphrase so that the Mass could be used in Lutheran services. In order to drum up interest among the public, he decided to present a portion of the Mass at a massive *Akademie* (self-produced concert) in 1808. Because the church frowned on secular performance of the sacred liturgy, he billed the selections as a hymn with Latin text in the church style (the Kyrie and Gloria) and a Sanctus with Latin text in the church style (the *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*). The programme also included both the fifth and sixth symphonies, the *Piano Concerto No. 4*, an aria, and a solo piano fantasia.

Since he already had the piano, orchestra, vocal soloists and chorus available, Beethoven also decided to present “a fantasia for the pianoforte which ends with the gradual entrance of the entire orchestra and the introduction of the chorus as a finale”. He had a text quickly prepared along ideas he suggested, probably by the poet Christoph Kuffner, and the *Choral Fantasia* was composed in about two weeks.

Despite its seeming utilitarian origins, the *Fantasia* is a wonderfully constructed, highly inventive work. The opening piano solo offers a rare glimpse into Beethoven’s legendary improvisational style; at the premiere he improvised the piano part, notating it only later for publication. After a brief dialogue between the low strings and the piano, the main theme, taken from an unpublished 1794 *lied*, is introduced. It is developed as an exquisite series of variations, set first for piano, then various combinations of winds, then string quartet, full orchestra, and finally a vocal sextet and then full chorus.

There is much in the *Choral Fantasia* that can be heard as a precursor to Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*. The dialogue of the strings and piano, the main theme which so resembles the *Ode to Joy* in tone and contour, its presentation as a set of variations, even the final *presto* with the music racing along at double time, would all ultimately find their way into the *Ninth*. Beethoven was not entirely satisfied with the text, which had been written in haste. He told his publishers that he would entertain suggestions for an alternative text, save for the word *Kraft* (strength). It forms the musical climax of the piece, a long, *forte* chord which brightens at the end as it moves from C minor to C major. It is a characteristic Beethoven flourish, and one with which he was evidently well satisfied.

Unfortunately, he was less satisfied with the performance of the *Choral Fantasia*. There was only time for a single rehearsal, and he directed the orchestra to skip a particular repeat. But in the performance, Beethoven was swept up by the music and took the repeat while the orchestra sailed on ahead. It was the concertmaster who saw what was happening, stopped the music, and restarted the piece, this time with the repeat. Beethoven was furious, but it eventually convinced him that his hearing had deteriorated to the point where he could no longer perform with an ensemble, and this became his last public performance with orchestra.

— Michael Moore

## *Divertimento in D Major*

Mozart composed the *Divertimento* in the winter of 1772, following two extended periods working in Italy. During those visits his dramatic works had found particular success, and he spent most of his time in Salzburg working on a new opera for the 1773 Milan carnival season. That work, *Lucio Silla*, was the 16-year-old Mozart's most ambitious Italian-language opera to date, and the *Divertimento*, KV 136 (one of three such works he composed at the time), a fine example of Mozart's progressive work in a genre traditionally designated as 'light' music, was perhaps a way to blow off some steam.

We don't know much about these *divertimenti*; in fact, the title 'Divertimento' on the autograph is not even in Mozart's hand. He probably wrote them for one of the musical evenings held in the homes of Salzburg's leading residents, at which he frequently performed on both keyboard and violin. (At the time, his official position in Salzburg was as concertmaster of the court orchestra.) He may have intended the works for a string quartet, a 'divertimento' quartet (with double bass instead of cello), or a chamber-scale string ensemble.

This *Divertimento* is in three movements, fast–slow–fast after the manner of the Italian *sinfonia*. The opening *allegro*, in sonata form, centres around a delightful theme that ends with an amusing dynamic retreat. The development moves into the minor mode, surprising the listener with a second episode where a less-inventive composer simply would have recapitulated the opening theme. The *andante* is typically warm and elegant, its two halves contrasted by a brief acceleration in the accompaniment's pulse. A spirited *presto* finale brings the *Divertimento* to a close.

— John Mangum

## *This evening's performers*

### **Michael Cayton – Conductor**

The 2022/3 season saw Michael celebrate his 20<sup>th</sup> year as the Chiltern Choir's musical director. Under his baton the Choir has performed a wide-ranging repertoire, from Monteverdi's *Vespers* to the *Mass in Blue* by Will Todd, and everything in between; he brings a wealth of choral conducting, arranging, and recording experience to his position.

Michael was appointed Director of Music of Watford Philharmonic Society in September 2014. As well as his duties to the Choir and WPS, Michael holds the position of Director of Music at St John's Wood Church, where he directs the critically acclaimed professional choir.

Over the years Michael has written a number of choral works, some of which are performed nationally by church choirs on a weekly basis. His Mass setting *Missa Beatae Virginis Mariae* has been performed by several choirs and is published by Shorterhouse publications, while 2024 saw the premiere of his *The Way Through the Woods*, a large-scale piece based on poems around the four seasons.



Michael also works as a freelance organist and pianist. He can be heard regularly playing for services and concerts at St Martin in the Fields and St Stephen's Church, Walbrook.

## Simon Howat – Piano

Simon studied Music at Cambridge University, followed by post-graduate Piano Accompaniment at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, with Professors Nina Serena and Paul Hamburger.

Over the last thirty-five years, he has, at different points, been in demand as an accompanist, music examiner for ABRSM, and peripatetic piano instructor. On the concert platform, Simon has appeared as a two-piano/piano-duet pianist, an accompanist for instrumental/vocal recitals, and a concerto performer with several regional orchestras (in *Rhapsody in Blue*, and the Grieg and Beethoven *Emperor* Concertos). Further afield, he has appeared at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and the Grimeborn Festival in London, accompanying chamber opera.

As the pianist currently for a number of choirs in the Bucks/Herts region (The Chiltern Choir since 2022), Simon has accompanied a wide spectrum of choral repertoire, with particular highlights being: Verdi's *Requiem*, Brahms' *German Requiem* and *Liebeslieder* Waltzes, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, *Carmina Burana*, *Porgy and Bess*, *The Rio Grande*, *Belshazzar's Feast*, *Symphony of Psalms*, *The Bells*, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*; also, Will Todd's *Mass in Blue* and *Songs of Peace*, plus Vaughan Williams' *Sea Symphony*, Michael Cayton's *The Way Through the Woods*, and *The Passing of the Year* by Jonathan Dove.



## Emma Ellis – Soprano

Emma began her singing career as a chorister at Worcester Cathedral, where she became head chorister in her final year. During this time she performed in CD recordings, a service attended by Queen Elizabeth II, and the girl choristers' first live broadcast on BBC Radio 3.

Emma went on to study BA History at Royal Holloway, University of London. She continued singing with the University's Founder's Choir as well as church choirs in London, and trained privately for several years with Jean-Claude Ohms of the Royal College of Music.

As a soloist, Emma has performed works including Faure's *Requiem*, Handel's *Dixit Dominus*, Vivaldi's *Gloria*, Panufnik's *Westminster Mass*, Britten's *Ceremony of Carols*, and Charpentier's *Messe de Minut pour Noel*. Her solo performances for radio include Stanford's *Magnificat in G* and Leighton's *Easter Sequence*. Emma was also a soloist in premieres of Ian Venables' *Requiem* and Adrian Rickard's *Home Field*, the latter of which she performed both at the Swaledale Festival Young Artist Platform, Yorkshire and the Athenaeum Club, London.

Emma sings regularly with professional church choirs in London including St John's Wood Church, Christ Church Hampstead, and St George's Cathedral, Southwark. She has also performed in larger ensembles such as the Epiphoni Consort, the Rodolfus Choir, and the Cantus Ensemble at venues including the Royal Albert Hall, Royal Festival Hall, St Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, St John's Smith Square, and the Savoy Hotel. Emma has additionally featured on-screen singing in a church choir for an episode of Marvel's

*Secret Invasion* — a somewhat more novel highlight of her career.

When not singing, Emma works full-time creating exhibitions at the Science Museum in London, covering topics from IVF to aeroplanes. She has recently moved to St Albans and is looking forward to her first performance with the Chiltern Choir.



## Caroline Carragher – Mezzo-soprano

Lyric mezzo-soprano Caroline studied with Dennis O'Neill and Nuccia Focile, having achieved her MA with distinction at Wales International Academy of Voice.

Recent engagements include Miss Rose for Chelsea Opera Group's *Lakmé*, and a guest appearance for The Mastersingers' 25th anniversary gala featuring John Tomlinson. Caroline made her Wagner debut as Rossweisse in Regents Opera's acclaimed *Die Walküre*, and went on to sing the role for New Palace Opera in November. She performed the role of Tisbe in





*La Cenerentola* for both Guildford Opera and Aylesbury Opera, and Baba the Turk for the latter's *The Rake's Progress*.

Caroline also appeared as alto soloist for Windsor & Eton Choral Society's *Elijah* with the Brandenburg Sinfonia conducted by Tim Johnson; and was delighted to make a role debut with Opera Holland Park as Ruth in *Ruddigore*, a co-production with Charles Court Opera.

Current work includes a return to Regents Opera to sing Rossweisse in their full Ring Cycle at York Hall; Caroline will also cover the role of Mari in Opera Holland Park's inaugural Wagner production, *Der Fliegende Holländer*, in summer 2025.

Previous roles include Cousin Hebe (cover), *HMS Pinafore* (Opera Holland Park/Charles Court Opera); Third Lady/Third Boy, *The Magic Flute* (Opera Alegria); Anne Boleyn, *Henry VIII* (Saint-Saëns, Guildford Opera); Ragonde, *Count Ory* (Opera Alegria); La Badessa, *Suor Angelica* (Random Opera, digital); Suzuki, *Madama Butterfly* (Ormond Opera); Marthe Schwerlein, *Faust* (Swansea City Opera); Fenena, *Nabucco* (Kennet Opera); and the title role in *Carmen* (for Ormond Opera).

Caroline has also created new roles including Wona (*The Prometheus Revolution*, Fulham Opera), Morgan le Fay (*Merlin*, Ensemble OrQuesta), and The Nurse in The OperaMakers' *Hopes And Fears*, an opera featuring the music of Debussy and telling the stories of two women living with cancer diagnoses, which featured as part of the Grimeborn Festival.

Caroline is also a skilled multi-discipline aerialist, and when not singing can usually be found upside down on some sort of circus apparatus. For further information, see [www.carolinecarragher.com](http://www.carolinecarragher.com).

## Matthew Pochin – Tenor

Matthew began his career as a chorister at Hereford Cathedral, where he later became a choral scholar and lay clerk. He went on to study with Marilyn Rees and Buddug Verona Jones at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. He currently studies privately with Gavin Carr.

After several years working as a pastry chef, Matthew moved to South London in 2007 to continue his career as a singer. He has held positions at several churches across the city and now sings with the choirs of St John's Wood Parish Church and Belsize Square Synagogue. He also sings regularly with the choirs of HM Chapel Royal, Hampton Court, Temple Church and St Mary-le-Bow in the City of London.

He performs as an oratorio and consort soloist across the UK and Europe. Recent engagements have been few, and mostly involved recording in an airing cupboard for Church zoom services. One highlight was meeting with two friends in a local park, suitably socially distanced, to record Monteverdi's *Duo Seraphim* – performed, unaccompanied, to confused joggers, and many startled parakeets.

Matthew is a founder member and Artistic Director of Scaramella, specialising in music for men's voices from the renaissance to modern close harmony. He also researches and prepares new performance editions and arrangements for the group. Future projects include a new complete edition of Adrian Willaert's *Petrarcha* madrigals, and performances with Linarol Consort of Viols and upper-voices early-music duo Fair Oriana.

He is a member of the unique Jewish barbershop group 'bOYbershop', performing traditional Jewish liturgical music, folksongs as well as close harmony standards and original comedy songs. In recent years the group have released an album of traditional Sephardi and Ladino melodies. In early 2020, bOYbershop had the unique honour of singing Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) music under the central dome of the Grand Mosque in Strasbourg as part of *Les Sacrées Journées de Strasbourg*.

The last 18 months have rekindled Matthew's love of baking. Readers of his previous biographies will be pleased to note that his wife now gets her cake!



## **Alex Pratley – Bass**

Alex is a freelance singer in demand across the UK as a soloist and educator. He began his musical journey at age seven as a chorister in Guildford Cathedral Choir. He received his MMus in Vocal Performance from the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire (RBC), with distinction, and holds a BA Hons in English Literature from King's College London. He is currently on the Advanced Postgraduate Diploma course at RBC where he studies with Jonny Gunthorpe and is generously sponsored by the Headley Trust scholarship.



A “seasoned comic practitioner,” Alex’s opera credits include Vater in Humperdinck’s *Hansel und Gretel* (OperaKipling), Zuniga in Bizet’s *Carmen* (Arcadian Opera), Hildebrand/North Wind in Dove’s *The Enchanted Pig*, Surgeon in McNeff’s *Banished* (Royal Birmingham Conservatoire), Alidoro in Rossini’s *La Cenerentola* and Le Mari in Poulenc’s *Les Mamelles de Tiresias* (Morley College Opera Scenes), and Voltaire in Bernstein’s *Candide* (King’s College London Opera Society).

Alex is passionate about the power of musical outreach and works regularly with children and adults across the country through programmes like RBC’s LEAP Ensemble and the vocal ensemble Horizon Voices. Most recently, he has performed with ‘Opera Tutti,’ the outreach programme of Welsh National Opera, that organises concerts for those with SEN and PMLD.

He is currently preparing the roles of Vicar Gedge in Britten’s *Albert Herring* for RBC’s Spring Opera, and Zaretsky in Tchaikovsky’s *Eugene Onegin* with WildArts Opera.

## Patrons and Honorary Members

If you would like closer involvement with the Chiltern Choir, consider becoming a patron. For a modest annual fee we offer:

- Complimentary concert tickets during the season
- Advance publicity
- Invitations to social and other events
- Recognition in concert programmes

If you would like to lend your support in this way, please contact Stuart Marshall – [info@chilternchoir.org.uk](mailto:info@chilternchoir.org.uk).

*Our current patrons are:*

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*The following have been made honorary members, in recognition of extended service to the Choir:*

**Mrs Patricia Parkes – President**

**Dame Gillian Pugh – Vice-President**

Mrs K. Darby	Mr M. Gaudie	Prof. I.D. Howarth
Mr D. Lloyd	Mr D. Treanor	



The Chiltern Singers, a small group drawn from the Chiltern Choir, is available to sing at events – weddings, funerals, social functions, etc.

Please direct enquiries to John Haslam by email (preferred):

[chilternsingers@chilternchoir.org.uk](mailto:chilternsingers@chilternchoir.org.uk)

or by 'phone, 01494 724125

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## **The Chiltern Choir – dates for your diary:**

### ***2025 May 18: The Way Through the Woods***

A special concert at St. John's Wood Church, with the Church Choir and orchestra. Admission free.

### ***2025 June 28: Songs of Light***

Sarratt Village Hall; including works by Bach, Tallis, Elgar, and Whitacre.

### ***2025 July 19: Stoke Gabriel, Devon***

An 'awayday' performance in the parish church.

Look out for details at [chilternchoir.org.uk](http://chilternchoir.org.uk) or our [facebook](#) page.



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