

Saturday
23rd June
at 7.30pm

Viva la Musica

Chamber Choir



The Saint Aidan's Festival 2018

‘Eternal Source of Light Divine’

Music for a Royal Occasion by
George Frederic Handel

with

Judit Felszeghy, *soprano* | Tom Williams, *countertenor*
Andrew Ashwin, *baritone*

Musica Donum Dei Chamber Orchestra

Conducted by
Simon Lumby

Programme - £3.00



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‘Eternal Source of Light Divine’

Music for a Royal Occasion by
George Frederic Handel

One of the last acts of King George I before his death in 1727 was to sign "An Act for the naturalizing of George Frideric Handel and others." Handel's first commission as a naturalized British citizen was to write the music for the coronation later that year. The four anthems Handel composed for the coronation of King George II and Queen Caroline on 11 October 1727 have never lacked popular favour. They were repeatedly performed at concerts and festivals during his life and since, and he incorporated substantial parts of them, with little change except to the words, in several oratorios, notably *Esther* and *Deborah*. (Incidentally, two of them were performed at the opening concert of Oxford's Holywell Music Room in 1748).

Their success may have contributed to the popular image of Handel as a grandiloquent composer demanding huge forces of voices and instruments - the more the better - the figure stigmatised by Berlioz as a barrel of pork and beer! In fact Handel always matched his music to the occasion and the building for which it was written, and no occasion could be grander than a coronation. His ceremonial style in these anthems differs from his music for theatre in much the same way as the *Fireworks Music*, designed for performance outdoors, differs from the instrumental concerti. It is wholly extrovert in tone, dealing in masses and broad contrasts rather than delicate colour: he was not going to waste finer points of detail on the reverberant spaces of The Abbey.

The forces that he used were substantial for the period: an augmented Chapel Royal Choir of 47 and an orchestra that may have numbered as many as 160! The chorus is divided from time to time into 6 or 7 parts (the tenors remain united) and a large body of strings includes three (not the usual two) violin parts.

The *Birthday Ode* for Queen Anne, is a secular cantata composed by Handel to a libretto by Ambrose Philips, of which the first line, "Eternal source of light divine", provides an alternative title for the work. It was probably composed during January 1713 for a performance on 6 February 1713, although there is no record of the performance having actually taken place.

The cantata celebrates Queen Anne's birthday, and the accomplishment of the Treaty of Utrecht (negotiated by the Tory ministry of Anne in 1712) to end the War of the Spanish Succession. Queen Anne was said by the Duke of Manchester to be "too careless or too busy to listen to her own band, and had no thought of hearing and paying new players however great their genius or vast their skill." Nevertheless, and whether or not she ever heard this ode for her birthday, she granted Handel a "pension" (subsidy for living expenses) of two hundred pounds a year, for life. Each of the seven stanzas of the ode concludes with the words sung by the chorus: "The day that gave great Anna birth, who fix'd a lasting peace on Earth".

The arias that make up the rest of tonight's programme all come from Handel Oratorios or Operas that claim some royal connection - even if the connection of 'Let the bright Seraphim' is far more recent than most!

PROGRAMME

Zadok the Priest

Zadok the Priest and Nathan the Prophet anointed Solomon King. And all the people rejoic'd, and said: 'God save The King, long live The King, may The King live for ever! Amen! Hallelujah!'

(Words 1 Kings 1:39–40)

Father of Heaven (from *Judas Maccabeus*) – sung by Tom Williams, countertenor

Father of Heav'n! From Thy eternal throne, look with an eye of blessing down, while we prepare with holy rites, to solemnize the Feast of Lights. And thus our grateful hearts employ; and in Thy praise this altar raise, with carols of triumphant joy. Father of Heav'n...

Let the bright Seraphim (from *Samson*) – sung by Judit Felszeghy, soprano

Let the bright seraphim in burning row, their loud, uplifted angel trumpets blow. Let the cherubic host, in tuneful choirs, touch their immortal harps with golden wires. Let the bright seraphim...

Let thy hand be strengthened

Let thy hand be strengthened and thy right hand be exalted. Let justice and judgement be the preparation of thy seat! Let mercy and truth go before thy face. Alleluia!

(Words: Psalm 89: 14-15)

How willing my paternal love (from *Samson*) – sung by Andrew Ashwin, baritone

How willing my paternal love the weight to share of filial care, and part of sorrow's burden prove! Though wand'ring in the shades of night, whilst I have eyes he wants no light.

The King shall rejoice

The King shall rejoice in thy strength, oh Lord! Exceeding glad shall he be of thy salvation. Glory and worship hast thou laid upon him. Thou hast prevented him with the blessings of goodness, and hast set a crown of pure gold upon his head. Alleluia!

(Words: Psalm 21: 1, 5 & 3)

INTERVAL - 20 minutes

My heart is inditing

My heart is inditing of a good matter; I speak of the things which I have made unto the King. Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women. Upon thy right hand did stand the Queen in vesture of gold and the King shall have pleasure in thy beauty. Kings shall be thy nursing fathers and queens thy nursing mothers.

(Words: Psalm 45:1, 10, 12 and Isaiah 49:23)

Da tempeste il legno infranto (from *Giulio Cesare*) - sung by Judit Felszeghy

Da tempeste il legno infranto,
se poi salvo giunge in porto,
non sa più che desiar.
Così il cor tra pene e pianto,
or che trova il suo conforto,
torna l'anima a bear.

When, broken by the storms,
the ship comes safe to port,
the sailor has no other desire.
So the heart, torn with suffering and tears,
when at last it is comforted,
brings ecstasy anew to the soul.

To power immortal (from *Belshazzar*) – sung by Andrew Ashwin

To pow'r immortal my first thanks are due; my next, great Cyrus, let me pay to you,
Whose arm this impious king laid low, the bitter source of all my woe. Tears, sure, will all my
life employ, e'en now I weep, but weep for joy.

Eternal source of light divine - Ode for the Birthday of Queen Anne

Countertenor	Eternal source of light divine with double warmth thy beams display and with distinguish'd glory shine to add a lustre to this day.
with choir	The day that gave great Anna birth who fix'd a lasting peace on earth.
Soprano	Let all the winged race with joy their wonted homage sweetly pay whilst tow'r'ing in the azure sky they celebrate this happy day.
Choir	The day that gave great Anna birth who fix'd a lasting peace on earth.
Countertenor	Let flocks and herds their fear forget, lions and wolves refuse their prey and all in friendly consort meet, made glad by this propitious day.
with Choir & Soprano	The day that gave great Anna birth who fix'd a lasting peace on earth.
Countertenor & Baritone Choir	Let rolling streams their gladness show with gentle murmurs whilst they play and in their wild meanders flow, rejoicing in this blessed day. The day that gave great Anna birth who fix'd a lasting peace on earth.
Soprano & Countertenor	Kind Health descends on downy wings, Angels conduct her on the way. To our glorious Queen new life she brings and swells our joys upon this day.
Soprano & Countertenor	The day that gave great Anna birth who fix'd a lasting peace on earth.
Baritone	Let envy then conceal her head and blasted faction glide away. No more her hissing tongues we'll dread secure in this auspicious day.
Choir	The day that gave great Anna birth who fix'd a lasting peace on earth.
Countertenor & choir	United nations shall combine, to distant climes their sound convey that Anna's actions are divine and this the most important day! The day that gave great Anna birth who fix'd a lasting peace on earth.

Judit Felszeghy, soprano

Judit Felszeghy, a coloratura soprano, was trained in the Kodály-method in Budapest, Hungary. She started her musical education on the piano and the recorder, and from the age of 6 she sang in various choir schools. Later on she sang in prominent youth choirs and was a soloist in various small groups, always feeling most at home with mediaeval, renaissance, baroque and classical repertoire. Judit graduated in singing from the Leo Weiner College of Music in Budapest with distinction.

She studied with famous coloratura sopranos: Prof. Sylvia Geszty, Prof. Krisztina Laki and Prof. Csilla Ötvös in Vienna and in Budapest. In England she feels very lucky to have regular lessons with one of her singing idols, Dame Emma Kirkby, and also with the wonderful Christine Cairns.



Judit's special vocal talent is that she can sing extraordinarily fast, pearl-like coloraturas, which is particularly suitable for performing virtuoso baroque arias. Her voice has a natural pure clarity combined with the art of virtuosity.

Judit is the co-founder and the soprano soloist of the internationally acclaimed early music group, Ensemble Marquise. Judit moved to the UK in 2009 and since then has been building a growing reputation as a professional soloist and as a singing teacher. She regularly sings solos for Fiori Musicali early music group, and performs as a soloist for various music societies around Northamptonshire and Leicestershire. Recent engagements include a concert with the Orchestra of St John's under the baton of John Lubbock in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge.

Judit has been invited to perform at renowned festivals and has appeared and gained success in prestigious concert halls, historic houses and stately homes in Hungary, in the UK (including London) and in other countries of Europe. For a full list of performances, engagements and repertoire, see her website: www.juditfelszeghy.co.uk

Besides music she is highly interested in languages. She got her degree from ELTE University in Budapest where she studied Russian philology. Apart from English and Hungarian she speaks Russian, German and Italian.

Tom Williams, countertenor



Born in Halifax in 1977, countertenor Tom Williams is a former Chorister of Ripon Cathedral, Music Scholar at Uppingham School and Senior Choral Scholar of King's College in Cambridge. Whilst at King's he directed Collegium Regale, the ensemble formed of the Choral Scholars alone and toured in Europe, Australia, North America and the Far East with them and the main choir.

For the last twenty years or so he has worked as a freelance singer, conductor and singing teacher. He is a core member of the acclaimed EXAUDI Vocal Ensemble, one of only a few vocal groups to specialise in the performance of Cutting Edge Contemporary Music. With EXAUDI, he has performed in many of Europe's top concert venues, working with instrumental ensembles such as Ensemble Intercontemporain, Musik Fabrik, Talea, BCMG and London Sinfonietta.

He has also been involved in projects working with leading living composers such as Wolfgang Rihm, Salvatore Sciarrino, Beat Furrer, Gerard Pesson, Stefano Gervasoni and Michael Finnissy. Aside from the world of New Music, he sang as a regular member of Stephen Layton's choir Polyphony, taking part in iconic recordings of works by Whitacre, Lauridsen and Esenvalds.

He has also sung for Hanover Band and The Choir of the Enlightenment and for over fifteen years has been a Choirmaster of the Temple Church. As a soloist with the choir, he has appeared on live broadcast for BBC Radio 3 and on various discs for the Signum label.

As an independent soloist he enjoys concerts from Hull and Colwyn Bay to Paris and Dortmund. Tom lives in Leicester, where he is the proud Director of Leicestershire Chorale, a celebrated chamber choir of professional and gifted amateur musicians. He also very much enjoys his work as a Visiting Singing Teacher at Uppingham and Oundle Schools.

Andrew Ashwin, baritone



Baritone Andrew Ashwin has so far enjoyed a fifteen-year professional singing career, a decade of which was spent on the international opera circuit. He has performed operas, concerts, galas and recitals across the UK, Europe, and further afield.

As a child in Newcastle, Andrew discovered music through piano and trombone lessons, before finding his voice in his teens. He went on to gain a Bachelor of Music degree at The University of Birmingham and was a post-graduate student at the Royal College of Music in London, studying with Russell Smythe. He attained the distinguished LRSM (Licentiate of the Royal Schools of Music) diploma with Distinction in 2004, and a further post-graduate diploma at the Vlaamse Opera Studio in Gent, Belgium. He then spent two years at the Zurich International Opera Studio, as a young artist.

Operatic career highlights include the title role in the Austrian premiere of Benjamin Britten's *Owen Wingrave*, to high critical acclaim, Junius in a radical new production of *The Rape of Lucretia* with the Frankfurt Opera, Mackheath in *The Beggar's Opera* in Zurich, the title role in *Don Giovanni* at the Lismore Festival, Ireland, Danilo in *La Veuve Joyeuse* in Montpellier, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* with Grange Park Opera, Dr Malatesta with Opera Theatre Company, Ireland, Schaunard in *La Bohème* in Dessau, Germany, and two roles in Mexico City: Billy in Weill's *Mahagonny Songspiel*, and the title role in Milhaud's *Les Malheurs d'Orphée*.

Other operatic outings include Ercole/Oreste in Cavalli's *Il Giasone* with Vlaamse Opera, Belgium, Maximillian in *Candide*, also at Vlaamse Opera, Mercutio in Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* with Opera Ireland, Angelotti in *Tosca*, also with Opera Ireland, and Guglielmo in a tour of *Così fan tutte* in Switzerland and southern Germany. Andrew sang Svegliato/Notaro in Paisiello's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* in Zurich, as well as Perückenmacher in *Ariadne auf Naxos* in both Zurich and Berlin. Other ventures into the Britten repertoire include Novice's Friend and First Mate in *Billy Budd* in Bilbao.

Outside Europe Andrew has sung in concerts and recitals in Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia. He has returned to Mexico City a number of times to sing solo works by Bach, Ravel, Poulenc, and Satie.

Andrew is equally at home on the oratorio and recital circuit. He has sung much of the oratorio repertoire, particularly that of Handel, Bach, Mozart and Haydn. Notable highlights include Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony* at The Sage Centre, Gateshead, Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem* in Durham Cathedral, Bach's *Magnificat* in Cadogan Hall, London, and Monteverdi's *Vespers* at St John's, Smith Square.

Andrew has sung under the baton of many well-known conductors, including Sir David Willcocks, Christoph von Dohnányi, Bernard Haitink, Yves Abel, David Temple, Paul Spicer and Jan Latham Koenig. Andrew has shared the opera and concert stage with singers such as Jonas Kaufmann, James Bowman, Catherine Bott, Jose Cura, Neil Shicoff, Matti Salminen, Roberto Sacca, Violeta Urmana, John Tomlinson, Nathan Gunn, James Gilchrist, Michael Spyres, Javier Camarena, Jacques Imbrailo, Stephen Costello and many more.

Simon Lumby, conductor

Born in 1970, Simon was educated at Solihull School and Solihull Sixth Form College. He studied organ principally with Andrew Fletcher in Birmingham, and singing with Robert Alderson at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester where Simon was studying on the opera course.

Organ recitals have included the Cathedrals of Hereford, Leicester, Coventry, Lichfield and Liverpool, the Abbey of Ampleforth, St. Giles' Cripplegate, and St. Bride's Fleet Street. Other concerts of note have included the opening recital of the Harrison Organ at the Community of the Resurrection in Mirfield and several Battle of the Organs with the late and great flamboyant American virtuoso, Carlo Curley.



Recent singing performances have included **Bach** *St. John Passion* (for Liverpool Cathedral), **Handel** *Messiah* at the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester, **Tippett** *A Child of our Time* for Manchester Cathedral and Stainer Crucifixion for Lichfield Cathedral. Other concert appearances of note have included **Mozart** *Mass in C minor* for the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and **Beethoven** *Missa Solemnis* at Manchester Town Hall with the Northern Symphonia.

A versatile musician, Simon has also worked extensively in professional theatre and was an associate Musical Director to Bayley Vann Productions and has conducted many shows including *Miss Saigon* at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane and part of the national tour of 'Chess' starring Rebecca Storm.

Simon more or less retired from professional music making when he was ordained to the Sacred Priesthood in the Church of England in June 2003 and for the next three years served as Curate at the Priory of Our Lady and Saint Cuthbert in Worksop, Nottinghamshire. He is currently serving as Parish Priest of St. Aidan's, New Parks,

His music-making since being ordained has been almost exclusively for the Church. He is enjoying coming back to more serious music making after a period of time away and founded '8ctave' – a choir of Priests all from the Leicester Diocese. Simon also directed much of the music for 'Stand up for Jesus' – the 150th anniversary celebrations of the Society of the Holy Cross, of which Simon is a member, which saw Simon featured at the newly restored Father Willis organ of the Royal Albert Hall. Simon took over the baton of *Viva la Musica* in 2015, something he is enjoying immensely as this very talented chamber choir goes from strength to strength. He also very much enjoys singing with the Leicestershire Chorale - something that has continued to inspire and challenge him since 2014.

Simon has released two solo recordings, which have both been met with popular and critical acclaim. 'Loud Organs His Glory Forth tell in Deep Tone' was the first recording to be made on the new organ that was installed in Saint Aidan's, New Parks, in 2007 and features a programme of popular organ masterworks. 'A Grateful Heart' is a collection of English Song that Simon recorded with pianist Helen Davies and features works by Ivor Gurney, Michael Head and a complete recording of Vaughan Williams Songs of Travel. Both are being sold in aid of the Saint Aidan's Hall Renovation Appeal. Simon also recently recorded a series of organ videos for the Eminent Organ company that are now freely available on the internet, receiving both popular and critical commendation.

Simon's next releases include a recording of British organ music, including the First Organ Sonata of Basil Harwood, played on the organ at Saint Aidan's, and an album of lyrical song by composers including Haydn, Brahms and Richard Strauss.



Viva la Musica

is a chamber choir based in Loughborough.

It was formed in 2002 by a group of singers who enjoy singing together and welcome the challenges and experiences that being part of a small ensemble brings, together with Viva's first Music Director, David Necklen. It sings a wide range of music from early to modern, sacred to secular, largely in the a capella style.

As well as performing locally, the choir has begun to travel further afield, with a concert weekend in Haworth in 2013, Tideswell in 2015 and Worcester in 2016.

Viva la Musica has been busy this past year - especially featuring a popularly and critically acclaimed Choral Evensong at Southwell Minster before a concert of Madrigals and Part Songs at Leicester's Guildhall in April.

Next year sees many exciting projects all of which are detailed at the back of this programme.

soprano:

Jo Boddison†, Sue Elliot, Louise Houslip, Meg Burton, Jenny Kemp, Claire Parkyns‡, Jeanne Simpson

alto:

Eleri Bristow, Clare Ward-Campbell, Joanna Milner, Lis Muller

tenor:

Richard Thomas, Neil Waddell*, Peter Finch, Simon Nicholls*

bass:

Simon Collins, John Thawley, Kevin Norman, James Ward-Campbell

† We are indebted to Claire Parkyns and Jo Boddison, who are deputising this evening for two of our sopranos who were not able to be with us because of a prior engagement.

* We are also indebted to Simon Nicholls and Neil Waddell for deputising on the tenor line while vacancies in this part of the choir still remain.

If you would like to be notified of these and other concerts, please email info@vivalamusica.org.uk to be added to our mailing list.

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Viva la Musica

Forthcoming Concerts and Events

'For unto us a child is born' - Music for the Festive Season

Sunday 9th December 2018 at 7.00pm at **Saint Aidan's Parish Church**
followed by dinner in the Parish hall

Tickets - £15 (concert with dinner), **£7.50** (concert only)

Tickets for concert only will be available on the door. Full tickets available in advance only.

Music includes works by:

Jonathan Rathbone, Simon Preston, Philip Stopford
and, of course, John Rutter (along with many other seasonal favourites)



Choral Evensong Lichfield Cathedral
Lichfield, WS13 7LD.

Saturday 2nd February 2019 (the Feast of Candlemas)
at 5.30pm

Music includes:

Magnificat Prima Toni - **Palestrina** | Nunc Dimittis Quinti Toni - **Palestrina**
Adoramus te Christi - **Monteverdi** | Alma Redemptoris Mater - **Palestrina**

Entry to this service is free - but a retiring collection is often encouraged

Rejoice in the Lamb!

A Concert of 20th Century British Choral Music

Saturday 11th May 2019 at 7.30pm at Trinity Methodist Church,
Royland Rd, Loughborough LE11 2EH

Tickets - £10 (£8 student, under 16s free)

Available on the door or in advance from www.vivalamusica.org.uk

Music includes:

Rejoice in the Lamb - **Britten** | Take him earth for cherishing - **Howells**
Hymn to Saint Cecilia - **Britten** | Five Mystical Songs - **Vaughan Williams**



Mozart Requiem

and other choral masterworks from the Classical era

Saturday 5th October 2019 at 7.30pm at Stoneygate Baptist Church,
315 London Rd, Leicester, LE2 3ND

Tickets - £10 (£8 student, under 16s free)

Available on the door or in advance from www.vivalamusica.org.uk

Music includes:

Insanae et Vanae Curae - **Haydn** | Te Deum in C - **Haydn**
Requiem in D minor - **Mozart** (transcribed by Czerny for piano duet accompaniment)



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