

LONDON
CONCORD
SINGERS

St. Martin-in-the-Fields

**Wednesday, December 12th 1973
7.30**

Admission by programme 50p

O Sing unto the Lord

HENRY PURCELL

LONDON CONCORD SINGERS

CONCORD ENSEMBLE

Malcolm Cottle Conductor

O Sing unto the Lord

HENRY PURCELL

Divertimento in D, K 136

MOZART

Two Motets for Advent or Christmas

BRAHMS

Op 29 No 1 Es ist das Heil uns kommen her

Op 74 No 2 O Heiland reiss die Himmel auf

Messe de minuit

MARC-ANTOINE CHARPENTIER

(Midnight mass for Christmas eve)

The LONDON CONCORD SINGERS was started in its present form in 1966. It seeks to maintain a small, well-knit group of some 30 voices, practising and performing a wide range of choral music. Its members come from a great variety of backgrounds, though few of them are full-time musicians. The choir's range of activities is equally varied: it has accepted cabaret engagements at many functions, as well as promoting very successful concerts in and around London; most recently at the Purcell Room and in Chester.

The group is also much-travelled, and has won competitive prizes at home and abroad. It has visited Richmond, Waltham in Hertfordshire, Buxton in Derbyshire and Castle Howard, near York, while previous years have included Festival appearances at Montreux and Dubrovnik. The choir has enjoyed an enthusiastic reception both by audiences and by the press.

The Conductor of the choir, MALCOLM COTTLE, sang for many years as a boy with the choir of St Paul's Cathedral, during which time he sang at the Coronation of the Queen, and also toured the USA with them.

More recently, as well as conducting the LONDON CONCORD SINGERS, he has worked as repetiteur with the New Opera Company at Sadlers Wells Theatre, and also toured as Musical Director with the show 'Close the Coalhouse Door'. He has appeared also as Musical Director at the Sheffield Playhouse Theatre and the Swan Theatre, Worcester.

O Sing unto the Lord

HENRY PURCELL

Soloists: Soprano - Daphne Gedge
Counter-tenor - Geoffrey White
Tenor - Lawrence Howes
Bass - Richard Smith

Although it was not unknown for viols to be used for accompanying anthems, Purcell appears to have been the first composer to have used modern type violins in his verse anthems, of which this is one of the most popular. At that time the violin had been mostly heard in theatres and taverns. This led to many accusations of introducing secularity into the Church service, an attitude which has persisted until comparatively recently, so much so that many editions omit the orchestral ritornelli completely.

The words of 'O Sing unto the Lord' are from Psalm 96. The opening symphony is fairly long and is based on the music of the opening Bass solo, which is interspersed with Alleluys from the choir. This is followed by a ritornello and vocal quartet, then the Bass solo 'Declare his honour' and chorus 'Glory and worship'. After this comes a duet for Soprano and Alto constructed on a simple figure which serves as a ground-bass for this number and the following ritornello. The next section 'O worship the Lord' is one of Purcell's most beautiful slow passages. The work ends with the Bass solo 'Tell it out among the heathen', in which the choir responds to each phrase, and a final extended Alleluiah.

Divertimento in D, K 136

MOZART

Allegro - Andante - Presto

Mozart wrote the three Divertimenti K 136-8 in Salzburg in 1772 when he was 16 years old. It is possible that they were originally conceived as string quartets, but more probable that they were written as Italian-style symphonies for use in his forthcoming visit to Italy in October of that year.

K 136 opens with a dashing Allegro, a feature of which is the interplay between first and second violins. This is followed by a graceful Andante, while the final movement (in Sonata form, as are both preceding movements) is a brilliant Presto with a short, fugal, development section.

INTERVAL

Two Motets for Advent or Christmas

BRAHMS

Op 29 No 1 Es ist das Heil uns kommen her
 Op 74 No 2 O Heiland reiss die Himmel auf

Brahms wrote nothing for chorus during his first period, but his position at the Court of Detmold in 1857, and subsequently in Hamburg, gave him the opportunity. For the first time he became familiar with the choral form in practice, and no doubt heard the great Chorale based motets of Schütz and Bach. Many of his choral works from this period show a mastery of contrapuntal writing. Both of the motets being performed tonight are very much in the style of Bach.

Op 29 No 1 is for five voices and starts with the chorale. The melody of each line of the chorale is then treated fugally before being sung by the first bass in the manner of a cantus firmus.

Es ist das Heil uns kommen her	Salvation is come to us
Von Gnad und lauter Güten	Through grace and pure bounty
Die Werke helfen nimmermehr	Deeds can avail nothing
Sie mögen nicht behüten	May they be no hindrance
Der Glaub sieht Jesum Christum	Faith turns to Jesus Christ
an	He hath provided for us all
Der hat G'nug für uns all getan	He is become our mediator
Er is der Mittler worden.	

Op 74 No 2 is for four voices and is a series of chorale variations. In the first and second verses the melody is sung by the Sopranos, in the third by the Tenors, and in the fourth by the Basses, the fifth being a fugato based on the melody, followed by an elaborate Amen.

O Heiland reiss die Himmel auf	O Saviour, rend the heavens
Herab, herauf von Himmel lauf	asunder
Reiss ab vom Himmel Tor und	Flow down to us from heaven
Tür	Tear from Heaven gate and
Reiss ab was Schloss und	portal
Riegel für.	Rend open every lock and bolt.

O Gott ein Tau vom Himmel	O God, let dew pour down from
giess	Heaven
Im Tau herab O Heiland fliess	O Saviour, flow to earth in dew
Ihr Wolken brecht und regnet aus	Ye clouds, break forth, in rain
Den König über Jakob's Haus.	pour down
	The King of Jacob's house.

O Erd schlag aus, schlag aus	O earth give bud, O earth
O Erd	Let hill and vale blossom
Dass Berg und Tal grün alles	green
werd	O earth bring forth this
O Erd herfür dies Blumlein	flower
bring	Burst forth, O Saviour, from
O Heiland aus der Erden spring.	the earth.

Hie leiden wir die grösste Not	We suffer here in dire distress
Vor Augen steht der bittre Tod	The sting of death before us
Ach komm, führ uns mit starker	Come, lead us with all-powerful
Hand	hand
Von Elend zu dem Vaterland.	Out of our distress to the home
	of our fathers.

Da wollen wir all danken dir	Then let us all give thanks
Unserm Erlöser für und für	To our Saviour Lord
Da wollen wir all loben dich	All praise be to thee
Je allzeit immer und ewiglich.	For all time and eternity.
Amen	Amen

Messe de Minuit
(Midnight mass for Christmas Eve)

MARC-ANTOINE CHARPENTIER

Soloists: Soprano - Daphne Gedge
Soprano - Hilary Doherty
Counter-tenor - Geoffrey White
Tenor - Lawrence Howes
Bass - Richard Smith

Marc-Antoine Charpentier was born in Paris about the year 1635. As a young man he went to Rome to study painting. While there he was so influenced by the music of Carissimi that he gave up painting and became that composer's pupil. On his return to Paris he collaborated with Molière, providing music for several of his plays, but was not able to do much work for the theatre as this type of music was under the jealous dictatorship of Lully. Because of this, Charpentier turned most of his efforts towards composing sacred music. In 1698 he became musical director of the Sainte-Chapelle. He died in Paris in 1704.

The 'Messe de minuit' is Charpentier's best known work. It consists of the usual sections of the Mass, but what is unusual about it is that the entire setting is based on old French carols. This would have made an instant appeal to the congregation of the time as they would have immediately recognised the melodies. The carols were chosen with great skill, not only for their musical value, but also because they follow, in sequence, the Gospel narrative.

The titles of the carols used are:

Kyrie: Joseph est bien marié
On nous-dites Marie
Une jeune poucelle

Gloria: Les bourgeois de Chastres
Ou s'en vont ces gais bergers

Credo: Vous qui désirez sans fin
Voici le jour solennel de Noël
A la venue de Noël

Sanctus: O Dieu que n'étois-je en vie

Agnus Dei: A minuit fut fait un réveil

LONDON CONCORD SINGERS

PURCELL ROOM

Monday, 28 January 1974 at 7.30 pm

'The Two Sides of the
London Concord Singers'