



MESSIAH

GF HANDEL

NAPIER CIVIC CHOIR

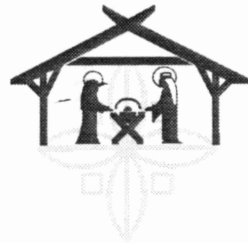


Napier Civic Choir

presents the



GF HANDEL



WITH

Anna Leese (Soprano)

Mary Newman-Pound (Mezzo-soprano)

Kenneth Cornish (Tenor)

Roger Wilson (Bass)

Orchestra Leader: José McGoverne

Trumpet Soloist: Jonathon Krebs

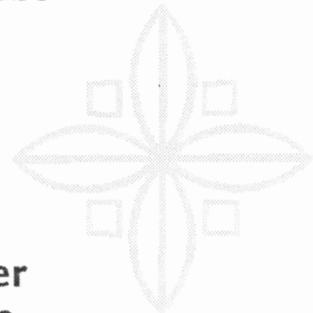
Organist: Vincent James

Conductor: Gary Bowler

St John's Cathedral, Napier

Tuesday 4th December 2007 8pm

Wednesday 5th December 2007 8pm



PROGRAMME NOTES

The *Messiah*, an oratorio by George Frideric Handel based on a libretto by Charles Jennens was composed in the summer of 1741 and premiered in Dublin on the 13 April 1742.

In the summer of 1741 Handel, at the peak of his musical prowess but depressed and in debt, began setting Charles Jennens' biblical libretto to music at his usual breakneck speed. In just 24 days, *Messiah* was complete. Like many of Handel's compositions, it borrows liberally from earlier works. At the premiere in the Music Hall in Dublin, Handel led the performance from the harpsichord.

Handel conducted *Messiah* many times and, as was his custom, often altered the music to suit the needs of the singers and orchestra he had available to him for each performance. In consequence, no single version can be regarded as the 'authentic' one. Tonight's performance and numbering is from an edition by Watkins Shaw using material from Covent Garden and other London presentations by Handel. Many more variations and rearrangements were added in subsequent centuries—a notable arrangement was one by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, translated into German.

The libretto compiled by Charles Jennens, consists of fragments of verses from the King James Bible. Jennens conceived of the work as an oratorio in three parts, each comprising several scenes.

Part I – The Birth of the Messiah

- i – The prophecy of Salvation
- ii – The prophecy of the coming of the Messiah
- iii – Portends to the world at large
- iv – Prophecy of the Virgin Birth
- v – The appearance of the Angel to the shepherds
- vi – Christ's miracles

Part II – The Passion

- i – The sacrifice, the scourging and agony on the cross
- ii – His death, His passing through Hell,
and His resurrection
- iii – His Ascension
- iv – God discloses His identity in Heaven
- v – The beginning of evangelism
- vi – The world and its rulers reject the Gospel
- vii – God's triumph

Part III – The Aftermath

- i – The promise of redemption from Adam's fall
- ii – Judgment Day
- iii – The victory over death and sin
- iv – The glorification of Christ

Much of the libretto comes from the Old Testament. The first section draws heavily from the book of Isaiah, which prophesies the coming of the Messiah. There are few quotations from the Gospels; these are at the end of the first and the beginning of the second sections. They comprise the Angel going to the shepherds in Luke, two enigmatic quotations from Matthew, and one from John: "Behold the Lamb of God". The rest of the second section is composed of prophecies from Isaiah and quotations from the evangelists. The third section includes one quotation from Job ("I know that my Redeemer liveth"), the rest primarily from First Corinthians. Interesting, too, is the interpolation of choruses from the New Testament's Revelation. The well-known 'Hallelujah' chorus at the end of Part II and the finale chorus 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain' ('Amen') are both taken from Revelation.

Many people stereotype Handel's Messiah as Christmas music, but in earlier years, Messiah performances were more likely to occur at Easter. For Handel, the Messiah was an Easter event that told not merely of birth but also of death and resurrection.

PROGRAMME

PART ONE

1 **Sinfonia** (*Orchestra*)

2 **Arioso** (*Tenor*) Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness: prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. (*Isaiah 40:1-3*)

3 **Air** (*Tenor*) Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill made low, the crooked straight, and the rough places plain. (*Isaiah 40:4*)

4 **Chorus** And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. (*Isaiah 40:5*)

5 **Recitative** (*Bass*) Thus saith the Lord of Hosts: Yet once, a little while, and I shall shake the heavens, and the earth, the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come. The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. (*Haggai 2:6,7; Malachi 3:1*)

6 **Air** (*Bass*) But who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire. (*Malachi 3:2*)

7 **Chorus** And He shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. (*Malachi 3:3*)

8 **Recitative** (*Mezzo Soprano*) Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name Emmanuel, 'God with us.' (*Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23*)

9 **Air** (*Mezzo*) and **Chorus** O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain. O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah: Behold your God! Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. (*Isaiah 40:9; 60:1*)

10 **Arioso** (*Bass*) For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. (*Isaiah 9:2,3*)

11 **Air** (*Bass*) The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. (*Isaiah 9:2*)

12 **Chorus** For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. (*Isaiah 9:6*)

13 **Pastoral Symphony** (*Orchestra*)

14 **Recitative** (*Soprano*) There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. (*Luke 2:8*)

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. (*Luke 2:9*)

15 Recitative (*Soprano*) And the angel said unto them: Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. (*Luke 2:10,11*)

16 Arioso (*Soprano*) And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying: (*Luke 2:13*)

17 Chorus Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will toward men. (*Luke 2:14*)

18 Air (*Soprano*) Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold thy King cometh unto thee: He is the righteous Saviour, and He shall speak peace unto the heathen. (*Zechariah 9:9,10*)

19 Recitative (*Mezzo Soprano*) Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. (*Isaiah 35:5,6*)

20 Air (*Duet - Mezzo and Soprano*) He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; and He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young. (*Isaiah 40:11*)

Come unto Him all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and He will give you rest. Take His yoke upon you and learn of Him, for He is meek and lowly of heart, and ye will find rest unto your souls. (*Matthew 11:28,29*)

21 Chorus His yoke is easy and His burthen is light. (*Matthew 11:30*)

♦ ————— INTERMISSION ————— ♦

PART TWO

22 Chorus Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world! (*John 1:29*)

23 Air (*Mezzo*) He was despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. He hid not His face from shame and spitting. (*Isaiah 53:3; 50:6*)

24 Chorus Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrow; He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him. (*Isaiah 53:4,5*)

25 Chorus And with His stripes we are healed. (*Isaiah 53:5*)

26 Chorus All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. (*Isaiah 53:6*)

29 Recitative (*Tenor*) Thy rebuke hath broken His heart; He is full of heaviness; He looked for some to have pity on Him, but there was no man; neither found He any to comfort Him. (*Psalms 69:20*)

30 Arioso (*Tenor*) Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow. (*Lamentations 1:12*)

31. Recitative (*Tenor*) He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgressions of Thy people was He stricken. (*Isaiah 53:8*)

32. Air (*Tenor*) But Thou didst not leave His soul in hell; nor didst Thou suffer the Holy One to see corruption. (*Psalms 16:10*)

33 Chorus Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors;

and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, strong and mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. He is the King of Glory, the Lord of Hosts. (*Psalm 24:7-10*)

37 Chorus The Lord gave the word; great was the company of the preachers. (*Psalm 68:11*)

38 Air (Soprano) How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things. (*Romans 10:15*)

39 Chorus Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world. (*Romans 10:18*)

40 Air (Bass) Why do the nations so furiously rage together, why do the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His Anointed. (*Psalm 2:1,2*)

41 Chorus Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yokes from us. (*Psalm 2:3*)

42 Recitative (Tenor) He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn; the Lord shall have them in derision. (*Psalm 2:4*)

43 Air (Tenor) Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. (*Psalm 2:9*)

44 Chorus Hallelujah; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. (*Revelation 19:6; 11:15; 19:16*)

PART THREE

45 Air (Soprano) I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep. (*Job 19:25,26; 1 Corinthians 15:20*)

46 Chorus Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (*1 Corinthians 15:21,22*)

47 Recitative (Bass) Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. (*1 Corinthians 15:51,52*)

48 Air (Bass) The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (*1 Corinthians 15:52,53*)

52 Air (Soprano) If God be for us who can be against us? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is at the right hand of God, who makes intercession for us. (*Romans 8:31,33,34*)

53 Chorus Worthy is the Lamb that was slain and hath redeemed us to God by His blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Blessing and honour, glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

Amen. (*Revelation 5:12,13*)



Anna Leese

SOPRANO

Soprano Anna Leese (26) has recently completed the Royal College of Music Benjamin Britten Opera course under Ryland Davies, after finishing a MusB degree with First Class Honours at the University of Otago in 2002, under Isabel Cunningham. She currently studies privately with London-based Enid Hartle.

Anna had a predominantly choral introduction to music through singing in church choirs, and was a member of the New Zealand Secondary Students choir, and the Tower New Zealand Youth Choir before she decided to concentrate on solo voice. She has

won an impressive list of awards and aria prizes, including the 2001 Dame Sister Mary Leo Scholarship, the 2002 Mobil Song Quest, the 2002 Lockwood Aria scholarship and the 2003 McDonalds Aria Scholarship in Sydney, held in the Sydney Opera House.

Anna's solo oratorio performances include Mendlessohn's *Elijah*, Bach's *St John Passion*, Handel's *Messiah*, and Faure's *Requiem*. Since moving to London she has won the 2004 Royal Overseas League Vocal competition, was named best overseas competitor in the same competition, has performed, Mahler's *Second Symphony* with Bernard Haitink, and Donna Anna in excerpts from Mozart's *Don Giovanni* with the London Mozart Players under Andrew Parrot.

She has performed many operatic roles for the Benjamin Britten Opera School, the British Youth Opera and the Classical Opera Company. Her Royal Opera House, Covent Garden appearances include roles in *La Boheme* and *Carmen* and she has also performed lead roles for Canadian Opera and New Zealand Opera. Recent engagements include recitals and soloist roles at Wigmore Hall, Colchester Festival, Canterbury Cathedral, Royal College of Music 125th Anniversary Celebrations, concerts in Madrid with the Spanish Radio Television Orchestra and recordings and opera appearances at Sadlers Wells, London.



Roger Wilson

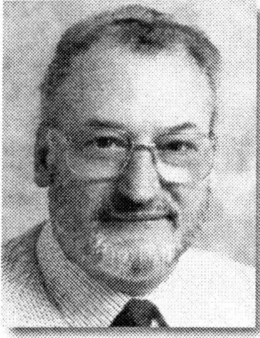
BASS

Roger Wilson is one of New Zealand's most experienced and versatile resident singers. Born in Dunedin, New Zealand, he studied and began his professional career in Switzerland and Germany in the 1970s. He studied at the University of Zürich, Switzerland 1970-72; the Nordwestdeutsche Musikakademie Detmold, Germany 1972-74; and the Staatliche Musikhochschule für Musik Rheinland, Cologne, Germany 1974-75. During this time he had concert engagements throughout Germany, as well as France and Switzerland. As a consequence of his time and

study in Europe, he speaks fluent German and sings it with particular ease, as well as French and Italian (and English!).

Roger has a comprehensive concert repertoire and has been engaged many times as a soloist by the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, orchestras and choirs nationwide. He is also an experienced recitalist, broadcaster and recording artist. Roger is known to be trustworthy in demanding scores of newer music and has performed in the premières of several operas by New Zealand composers: These include Gillian Whitehead's *Tristan and Iseult*, Dorothy Buchanan's *The Woman at the Store*, Helen Fisher's *Taku Wana* and the recreated Ribbands/Don musical *Marama*.

In addition to his career as an opera and concert singer, Roger keeps himself busy as a teacher, broadcaster and music journalist.

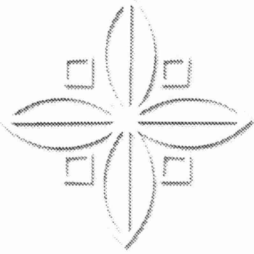


Kenneth Cornish

TENOR

Kenneth Cornish makes a welcome return to sing with the Napier Civic Choir in his speciality which is the interpretation of the great oratorios such as Bach's *St Matthew Passion* and Handel's *Messiah*. After studying lieder and oratorio in his native Australia at the New South Wales Conservatorium of Music Kenneth came and settled in New Zealand in 1975 when he received coaching over many years from Beatrice Webster.

Kenneth Cornish has developed a reputation as one of New Zealand's leading tenors in a repertoire which included the World Premier of Douglas Mews Lenten Opera *The Kiss* and also cantor for the Papal Mass in Rome during 1986. A life member and President of the Auckland Choral Society, Kenneth is also teaching singing privately and at various high schools in Auckland.



Mary Newman-Pound

MEZZO SOPRANO

After graduating with Honours in Voice from the University of Auckland's School of Music, Mary Newman-Pound joined New Zealand National Opera as an emerging artist with chorus and solo roles in various operas.

The diversity of her skills became apparent when whilst singing a season in *La Traviata* in the Mercury Theatre, she was also premiering a one woman comic show written for her by William Dart. Mary also enjoyed singing in oratorio throughout New Zealand, being a Radio NZ artist and, on

T.V., singing contemporary music on *Kaleidoscope*, 30's music in the show *Radio Times* and great fun was had filming for the feature as the 'Singing Bus Driver' on the 6 o'clock news!

After winning various New Zealand's voice competitions and coming second in the Mobil Song Quest, Mary was awarded an Arts Council travel grant. Based in London, Mary was a member of the Extra Chorus at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Her solo operatic roles in various English opera companies included appearances in *Aida*, *Don Carlos*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Peter Grimes*, *Falstaff* and *Dido and Aeneas*. In the Contemporary Festival in Spoleto, Italy, Mary sang in the premiere of a Mexican opera and was described in Opera magazine as "excellent, young and nearly naked"! Having performed in *Sweeney Todd* in Auckland's Mercury Opera production, she enjoyed repeating the experience at Wormwood Scrubs Prison working alongside the 'lifers' in the cast.

Her versatile voice and musicianship involves her in a wide range of music, from learning the cello to accompany herself as Lady Jane in Gilbert and Sullivan's *Patience* to cabaret shows; from Edinburgh Festival solo recitals to radio broadcasts; from being invited by two Archbishops of Canterbury to sing the Easter Hymn at Lambeth Palace to the premiering of works written especially for her. Mary recently returned to New Zealand after 20 years in London.

