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Michael Bawtree conductor
Edinburgh Pro Musica Orchestra

MESSIAH



*137th new year performance
of Handel's celebrated oratorio*

Thursday 2 January 2025, 12 noon · Usher Hall, Edinburgh

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MESSIAH

137th new year performance
of Handel's celebrated oratorio

Emily Mitchell soprano
Rebecca Afonwy-Jones mezzo-soprano
Samuel Jenkins tenor
Jerome Knox baritone

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PROGRAMME NOTE

Words and music in *Messiah*

Many events took place, many articles were written and books published, to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the completion of the King James Bible in 2011.

Performances of *Messiah*, however, allow us to proclaim the beauty of the language contained in the Bible, every year. What better way could there be to celebrate the “Book of Books”, as Lord Bragg has described it, than to present Handel’s masterly settings of such familiar words and phrases? We have Charles Jennens to thank for their selection*.

Jennens was a cultured man of leisure. Handel trusted his literary and musical judgment and must have been very happy with the collection of scriptural extracts that Jennens suggested for *Messiah*, since they provided sufficient inspiration for him to produce a masterpiece from them in a mere three weeks!

Handel’s delight with the words of the Bible is evident in the opportunities he takes for word-painting in various arias, recitatives, and choruses. Many of these instances will be familiar, but for those not so well acquainted there are many special moments to look out for.

There is a simple example in the very first aria (no. 3), where the tenor soloist “exalts every valley” by singing long rising sequences of quavers and semiquavers, and the rocking notes of the “crooked way” are “made plain” via longer-held notes. Elsewhere, contrasts produce the



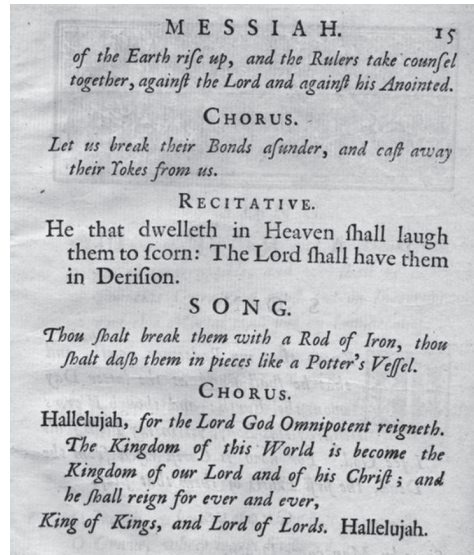
Portrait by Thomas Hudson (1701–1779), 1756
(National Portrait Gallery)

magic. In the alto aria no. 6, the serene undulations of “But who may abide the day of his coming” are shattered when he actually arrives. We can almost see the blazing flames of the “refiner’s fire”! Then, in no. 11, along with the soloist, we trudge with “the people that walked in darkness” down into the murky depths of the bass clef. When they see a “great light”, the scene is clearly lit up for us.

For a delightful narrative, listen out for nos. 14 to 17. The shepherds, quietly “abiding in the field” are suddenly aroused by the violins imitating the wings of the angel of the Lord. A whole choir of angels then arrives and the air is full of their beating wings. They sing “Glory to God” with high notes depicting heaven, and low tenor and bass notes for “peace on earth” below. “Good will” is joyfully passed with handshakes from voice to voice, until, among the most magical eight bars in the whole work, the angels depart meekly one by one, the very last giving a final twirl before disappearing.

A more subdued sequence of wonderful music opens part 2. The dotted rhythms of *Behold the Lamb of God* induce a persistent underlying tension. The aria which follows turns the most tender of orchestral introductions into open anguish in the ebbing phrases, “He was despised, despised and rejected”. When the music reverts back to a minor key in the middle section, the dotted notes reappear in the accompaniment illustrating how “He gave his back to the smiters”. The word-painting continues into no. 24, *Surely*. Here discordant suspensions in the vocal harmonies depict Christ’s wounding “for our transgressions”, and bruising “for our iniquities”, with the orchestra persisting with that throbbing accompaniment.

In no. 25, *And with his stripes*, slow runs on the word “healed” in all the parts provide a kind of healing escape from this irregular rhythm. (The music of this aria was recycled by Handel from a previous work, so the effect may be serendipitous). The atmosphere brightens when the sombre F minor of the ‘stripes’ fugue modulates directly into the genial F major of no. 26, *All we like sheep*. The soprano lambs and tenor rams are obedient, until they “go astray”, wandering off in different directions. The altos and basses then decide to follow them. A mild panic ensues during which one might imagine the bleating of sheep turning this way and that until they are each lost and alone, “every one to his own way”. But guidance is at hand. In a beautiful final passage, taking us back into F minor, the flock is rounded up and saved, but only by the Lord having “laid their iniquities” on the Shepherd.



Messiah libretto, 1749

Messiah is a long work and there are many other examples of Handel’s painterly genius to be found occupying the hills and valleys that lie between the more familiar arias and choruses we all know and love. Perhaps the landmarks highlighted in this note may further enhance your enjoyment of a musical pilgrimage that is also a celebration of the English language at its most inspired.

*Jennens imitated the structure of a three-act opera, but avoided charges of secularising the scriptures by calling the acts, “Parts”. He was also careful to avoid accusations of blasphemy by not quoting Jesus’s words directly. The words of the psalms that he includes come not from the King James Bible but from Miles Coverdale’s translations of the Psalter which were later incorporated into the 1662 revision of the *Book of Common Prayer*.

Thomas McCabill

MESSIAH

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759)

PART 1

Sinfonia

Grave – Allegro moderato

Recitative (Tenor)

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplish'd, that her iniquity is pardon'd. 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)

Aria (Tenor)

Ev'ry valley shall be exalted, and ev'ry mountain and hill made low, the crooked straight, and the rough places plain. (Isaiah 40:4)

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)

Recitative (Baritone)

Thus saith the Lord of Hosts: Yet once, a little while, and I will shake the heav'ns and the earth, the sea and the dry land, and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come. (Haggai 2:6-7)

The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, ev'n the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in, behold he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. (Malachi 3:1)

Aria (Mezzo-soprano)

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)

Chorus

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

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)

Aria (Mezzo-soprano)

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! O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

Chorus

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, good tidings to Jerusalem, arise, say unto the cities of Judah: Behold your God! The glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. (Isaiah 40:9; 60:1)

Recitative (Baritone)

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 60:2-3)

Aria (Baritone)

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)

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)

Pastoral symphony

Larghetto e mezzo piano

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)

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)

And suddenly there was with the angel a
multitude of the heav'nly host, praising God,
and saying: (Luke 2:13)

Chorus

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

Aria (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)

Recitative (Mezzo-soprano)

Then shall the eyes of the blind be open'd, 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)

Aria (Mezzo-soprano & 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, come unto
him that 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 shall
find rest unto your souls. (Matthew 11:28-29)

Chorus

His yoke is easy, his burthen is light.
(Matthew 11:30)

INTERVAL – 30 MINUTES**PART 2****Chorus**

Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the
sin of the world. (John 1:29)

Aria (Mezzo-soprano)

He was despised and rejected of men, a man of
sorrows, and acquainted with grief. (Isaiah 53:3)

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 50:6)

Chorus

Surely, he hath borne our griefs and carried our
sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions,
he was bruised for our iniquities;
the chastisement of our peace was upon him;
(Isaiah 53:4)

And with his stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5)

All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned ev'ry one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:6)

Recitative (Tenor)

All they that see him, laugh him to scorn; they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying: (Psalms 22:7)

Chorus

He trusted in God that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, if he delight in him. (Psalms 22:8)

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)

Aria (Tenor)

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto his sorrow. (Lamentations 1:12)

Recitative (Tenor)

He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of thy people was he stricken. (Isaiah 53:8)

Aria (Tenor)

But thou didst not leave his soul in hell; nor didst thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption. (Psalms 16:10)

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, the Lord 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!

Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of Glory. (Psalms 24:7-10)

Chorus

The Lord gave the word; great was the company of the preachers. (Psalms 68:11)

Aria (Soprano)

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

Chorus

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

Aria (Baritone)

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. (Psalms 2:1-2)

Chorus

Let us break their bonds asunder and cast away their yokes from us. (Psalms 2:3)

Recitative (Tenor)

He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn, the Lord shall have them in derision. (Psalms 2:4)

Recitative (Tenor)

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

Chorus

Hallelujah: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, Hallelujah! 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, Hallelujah! (Revelation 19:6, 16; 11:15)

PART 3

Aria (Soprano)

I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And tho' worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. (Job 19:25-26)

I know that my redeemer liveth: For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep. (1 Corinthians 15:20)

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)

Recitative (Baritone)

Behold, I tell you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be chang'd, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. (1 Corinthians 15:51-52)

Aria (Baritone)

The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be rais'd incorruptible, and we shall be chang'd. (1 Corinthians 15:52-53)

Aria (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)

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 pow'r be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. (Revelation 5:12-13)

Final chorus

Amen.

Emily Mitchell

soprano



Scottish soprano Emily Mitchell began her formal classical training at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, where she graduated with honours, later achieving her Masters in Music. She is now a regular performer with Scottish Opera Chorus. Emily has made frequent appearances across Europe. As a regular singer with Dunedin Consort, she has performed in festivals such as the Versailles Handel Festival and the Oslo Internasjonale Kirkemusikkfestival. She has often appeared as a soloist with the Consort, namely in Handel's *Samson*, Vivaldi's *In furore iustissimae irae*, and Handel's *Messiah*.

Emily has appeared with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra on several occasions, most notably in Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise* and Poulenc's *Les Carmélites*. She made her debut at the BBC Proms with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and returned with Dunedin Consort. She has sung with most of the leading orchestras in Britain including the London Symphony Orchestra and Scottish Chamber Orchestra. Emily also performed the Scottish premiere of Thea Musgrave's *Voices of our Ancestors* with the Red Note Ensemble.

Emily has broadcast on BBC Radio Scotland and BBC Radio 3. Her commercial recordings include Bach's *Magnificat*, Handel's *Esther*, Mozart's *Requiem*, and Mozart's *Mass in C* with Dunedin Consort, and Handel's *Triumph of Time and Truth* with Ludus Baroque. The Mozart *Requiem* won a Gramophone award and was nominated for a Grammy award. Her operatic roles include Lauretta/*Gianni Schicchi*; Countess Almaviva/*Marriage of Figaro*; Mélisande/*Pelléas et Mélisande*; Marzelline/*Fidelio*; Elsa/*Lohengrin*; and Liu/*Turandot*.

Rebecca Afonwy-Jones

mezzo-soprano

Born in mid-Wales, mezzo-soprano Rebecca began her career as an Emerging Artist at Scottish Opera, in the title role of *Carmen*. She made her company debut with Welsh National Opera as Countess Geschwitz/*Lulu*, later returning as an Associate Artist. She made her BBC Proms debut singing Vaughan Williams' *Serenade to Music* with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra conducted by Donald Runnicles, and concert engagements have further included performances with Britten Sinfonia, Norwegian Wind Ensemble, London Mozart Players, the Philharmonia Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the RTÉ Orchestra, Dublin.

Contemporary credentials include Richard Blackford's *Pietà*, Kerstin in Joseph Phibbs' *Juliana* at the Cheltenham Festival, Judith Weir's *The Consolations of Scholarship* and *Sleeping Mat Ballad*, Julian Philips' *Looking West* at the Ryedale Festival and Paul Patterson's *The Fifth Continent* & Rick Peat's *The Sky Engine*, both for JAM on the Marsh Festival. Recordings include *Messiah* with the BBC Singers and the Norwegian Wind Ensemble conducted by David Hill and Hugh Wood's *Beginnings* & Kerstin in Joseph Phibbs' *Juliana*, both conducted by George Vass.



Highlights this season include Wellgunde *Das Rheingold*/*Götterdämmerung* and Waltraute/*Die Walküre* for Longborough Opera *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, Elgar's *The Kingdom* at Three Choirs Festival, Richard Blackford's *Songs of Nadia Anjuman* at Presteigne Festival, Rebecca's debut for the Royal Opera, Covent Garden as Susie/*A Quiet Place*, Maurya/*Riders to the Sea* with Opera Up Close and Handel's *Messiah* at the Royal Albert Hall on Good Friday with the Royal Choral Society.

Samuel Jenkins

tenor

Winner of the Berlin Opera Academy's Luxton award and a graduate of the Royal College of Music, Samuel Jenkins is a British tenor of "operatic richness and delectability" (Haddo Arts).

In demand as an oratorio soloist, Samuel recently performed Handel's *Messiah* at St Paul's Cathedral; Mendelssohn's *Elijah* at Holy Trinity, Sloane Square; Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* at Romsey Abbey; and Bach's *Johannespassion* at St John's Smith Square, New College Oxford and St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh. Samuel's discography includes Stravinsky's *Mass* with

Scottish Chamber Orchestra wind soloists and Leighton's *Crucifixus*, both on the Delphian label, with the latter commended by *Gramophone*. Operatic roles have seen Samuel on stage as Tamino (*The Magic Flute*), Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), Don Carlos (*Les Indes Galantes*), and Dorvil (*La scala di seta*); and in scenes as Tonio (*La fille du régiment*), Camille (*Die lustige Witwe*) and Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*). He has sung in numerous recent productions at Glyndebourne, spanning works by Rossini, Puccini, Wagner, Poulenc and Ethel Smyth. As a recitalist, Samuel has programmed French *mélodies* with acclaimed pianist Roger Vignoles, and given performances of Lieder and English song at the Edinburgh International Festival and in London.

Samuel holds an MA in English Literature from the University of Edinburgh, where he specialised in Indian and African postcolonial literature, and sang at St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral. Now he is a Vicar Choral with the choir of St Paul's Cathedral and performs across the UK and Europe with renowned ensembles including the Monteverdi Choir and the Sixteen.



Jerome Knox baritone



Jerome Knox was born in London and is a graduate of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. He won first prize at the prestigious London Handel Festival Competition in 2020 and is now much in demand for both concert and opera performances. Recent appearances include his Swiss debut as Clodomiro in Handel's *Lotario*, Nick Shadow *The Rake's Progress* for English Touring Opera, multiple roles in Scottish Opera's *Opera Highlights* tour, Marcello *La bohème*, Pallante *Agrippina*, Don Prudenzi *Il viaggio a Reims*, Astolfo *Lucrezia Borgia* and Afron *The Golden Cockerel* (all for English Touring Opera), and Aeneas *Dido & Aeneas*, Polyphemus *Acis & Galatea* and Count *Le nozze di Figaro* (all for Waterperry Opera). He has also sung with Glyndebourne, British Youth Opera (Dandini *La Cenerentola*) and Garsington Opera.

In concert, Jerome recently appeared with the Flemish Radio Choir as soloist in Handel's *Messiah*, at the Wigmore Hall as soloist singing both Bach *Cantatas* and Bach *Magnificat* with the London Handel Players, and at the London Handel Festival singing both Christus and arias in the *St. John Passion*. He has also given recitals at the Händel-Festspiele in Halle, and at the Ludlow English Song Weekend, and joined baritone Roderick Williams at Music at Paxton, supported by the prestigious Momentum scheme.

EDINBURGH PRO MUSICA ORCHESTRA

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Gill Risi
Feargus Hetherington
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Laura Macmillan
Alex Bragg
Frances Patterson

Violin 2

Stewart Webster
George Smith
Kirsty Orton
Ysla Robertson
Andrew Lees
Rosamund Noll

Viola

Liam Brolly
David McCreadie
Nicola Boag
Aaron Morrison

Violoncello

Sarah Oliver
Andrew Huggan
Elias Rooney
Jessica Kerr

Double Bass

Chris Sergeant
Callum Cronin

Oboe

Amy Turner
Kirstin Logan

Bassoon

Kath Nagl

Trumpet

Andy Connell-Smith
Iain Archibald

Timpani

Thomas Lowe

Harpichord

John Kitchen

Organ

Morley Whitehead

Michael Bawtree conductor



A musician with a wide-ranging international career, British conductor and organist Michael Bawtree was appointed Principal Conductor of JAM (John Armitage Memorial Trust) in 2017. He regularly conducts the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and has directed the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, London Mozart Players, Red Note Ensemble, the Orchestra of Scottish Opera, Orchestra North East and many performances for Scottish Ballet, Northern Ballet and Raymond Gubbay Ltd across the British Isles. For seven years he was Assistant Music Director of the Lyrique-en-Mer summer opera festival in Brittany. He joined the music staff at Glyndebourne for their 2018 production of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*, and has worked as guest chorus master for the BBC Singers, Danish National Opera (*Michael Kohlhaas*, *Eugene Onegin*) and St Endellion Festival (*Death in Venice*).

Since 2005, Michael Bawtree has been Chorus Director of the Edinburgh Royal Choral Union and Music Director of Glasgow Chamber Choir. He was Artistic Director of Edinburgh University Chamber Choir (2017-2024). He has worked with the Edinburgh Festival Chorus, the RSNO chorus (as Acting Chorus Director) and Andrea Bocelli, and toured with other choruses across Europe, North America, Hong Kong and New Zealand. He made his debut at the Royal Albert Hall in 2015 conducting Mozart's *Requiem* with the London Philharmonic Choir. He conducted a specially formed ensemble at His Majesty

King Charles III's "Scottish Coronation" in Edinburgh in July 2023.

Bawtree spent the summer of 2014 in Mumbai, directing a choral project with 250 children from all walks of life at the National Centre for the Performing Arts. Shortly before the pandemic, he directed a Youth Choir project at the Queensland Conservatorium in Brisbane and visited Vanderbilt University in Tennessee as Guest Artist. Last autumn, he travelled to a remote island in north-west Greenland to lead a week of workshops and performances with young musicians from across Scandinavia. Other recent and upcoming guest conducting engagements include concerts in Sweden, Croatia, Holland, Germany, Faroe Islands, Denmark and Tuscany. In February, Bawtree returned to Mumbai to perform Saint-Saëns *Organ Symphony* with the Symphony Orchestra of India; later in the season, he heads back to Brisbane to lead another youth choir project.

A keen advocate of contemporary music, Michael Bawtree has conducted world premieres of works by Judith Bingham, Paul Mealor, Cecilia McDowall, Richard Peat and Rory Boyle; he has worked with Scotland's foremost composers including the late Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Sir James MacMillan, Thea Musgrave and Sally Beamish. Bawtree studied music and the organ at Christ's College, Cambridge University, and conducting at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (formerly the RSAMD). As organist and continuo player, he has performed with many orchestras including the London Symphony, Swedish Radio, Bergen Philharmonic, BBC Symphony, BBC Scottish Symphony, Scottish Chamber and the RSNO, including frequent concerts at the BBC Proms and the Edinburgh International Festival. Organ recital invitations have taken Bawtree to all the major British cathedrals, Notre-Dame de Paris, Washington National Cathedral, Auckland Town Hall and to Bermuda, New England, California and across Scandinavia. He is Lecturer in Conducting at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in Glasgow.

Edinburgh Royal Choral Union

Soprano

Jenny Bain
Mary Ball
Carolyn Beattie
Nina Birbeck
Eileen Burke
Moirra Burke
Libby Campbell
Ruth Couper
Catherine Donaldson
Natalia Filipiak
Maureen Fowler
Jackie Grigor
Henrietta Hales
Susie Hazeldine
Phyll Hoskyns-Abraham
Sally Leighton
Alison Macdonald
Aideliz Montiel
Joyce Moon
Chelsea Morison
Suzy Morrison
Seonaidh Morton
Anna Munro
Moirra Reekie
Jan Robertson
Hannah Robinson
Yuxin Shen
Maureen Stewart
Rosemary Stewart
Sally Swann
Cherry Tinniswood
Abigail Van der Lek
Jane Watson
Juliet Weenink
Louisa Whalley
Julia Witney-Hunter
Margaret Wilson
Pat Wood
Rachael Wood

Alto

Lindsey Anderson
Sheila Badenoch
Heather Bain
Norda Barber
Pat Bell
Alice Bennett
Fiona Bisset
Avril Brown
Clare Castell
Amanda Cowking
Phyllis Craig
Winnie Croall
Masha Dvoriashyna
Helena Dykes
June Gilles
Judy Hardy
Cat Harris
Evelyn Henderson-Child
Johanna Howes
Liz Humphreys
Rosemary Ling
Maddie Luhrs
Fiona Macdonald
Elizabeth MacEwen
Laura Marshall
Helen Martin
Anne McLeod
Jane McLeod
Sophie Milne
Jody Moles
Bettina Mumenthaler
Rachel Nimmo
Lesley Orr
Alison Paterson
Anne Robertson
Susan Rodger
Ruth Sinclair-Jones
Caroline Snell
Christine Stewart
Christine Thompson
Sheila Wallace
Susan Watkins
Margaret West

Tenor

Chris Brown
Harry Lempriere-Johnston
tenor scholar
Fraser David Macdonald
David Morgan
Les Morss
Jesper Smidt
John Thompson

Bass

Richard Arnott
David Bagshaw
David Baird
Thomas Bender
David Benson
Alastair Bruce
Douglas Burke
Ewan Campbell
Simon Capewell
Simon Duffin
Allan Gray
William Haddock
Timothy Jacob-Owens
Malcolm Mahony
John-Paul Marney
John McNaughton
Ian Paterson
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Philip Thornton
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Stephen Tweedie
Ewan Walker
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*Lists of singers and orchestra
correct at time of publication*

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EDINBURGH ROYAL CHORAL UNION

Michael Bawtree *chorus director*
Morley Whitehead *accompanist*
Fraser David Macdonald
conducting fellow

Established in 1858, the Edinburgh Royal Choral Union has played a significant part in the musical life of Scotland, having given the first Scottish performances of many works, including Bach's *B Minor Mass*. ERCU sang at the opening of the Usher Hall in 1914 and retains a strong association with that venue to the present day. Under the patronage of the Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh, it has worked with orchestras such as the Hallé, the Royal Philharmonic, the London Symphony, the Vienna Philharmonic, the BBC Scottish Symphony, the Scottish Chamber and the Royal Scottish National under such legendary figures as Sir Henry Wood, Sir Thomas Beecham, Sir Malcolm Sargent, Otto Klemperer and Sir Adrian Boult. ERCU's annual new year presentation of *Messiah* at the Usher Hall

is a highlight of the festive season: in 2023 Sir James MacMillan was guest conductor at a sold-out performance.

ERCU continues to promote new music and give Scottish premieres, including *The Farthest Shore* by Paul Mealor, *The Voices of our Ancestors* by Thea Musgrave, *Shadow Aspect* by Judith Bingham, commissioned for the choir's 150th anniversary, *water psalms* by Thomas LaVoy, commissioned to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the opening of Greyfriars Kirk for worship, *Cantemus Igitur* by award-winning Scottish composer Rory Boyle and *Pietà* by Richard Blackford. Other highlights have included performances with Andrea Bocelli at Glasgow's Ovo Hydro; concerts to celebrate the Commonwealth Games and the centenary of the completion of the Usher Hall; visits to Orkney's St Magnus International Festival for concerts alongside the St Magnus Festival Chorus; and a sell-out performance at the magnificently restored McEwan Hall of Verdi's *Requiem* side by side with the Edinburgh University Chamber Choir and student instrumentalists.

If you want to sing with us ...

Come and join us for a rehearsal – usually Tuesdays at Augustine United, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, 7.15 pm – 9.30 pm. Admission is through a simple audition.

Find out more:

[@ercuchoir/ercu.org.uk](https://www.ercu.org.uk)



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