

Nantwich Choral Society



HANDEL DIXIT DOMINUS BACH DOUBLE VIOLIN CONCERTO

Saturday 12th. November 1988



The Parish Church of St. Mary, Nantwich
at 7.30 p.m.

NANTWICH CHORAL SOCIETY

MUSIKFREUNDE
(Angus Gibbon, leader)

Catrin Ley, soprano
Sarah Wright, soprano
Marjorie Seddon, contralto
James Watson, tenor
David Cross, bass

Joy Roberts, harpsichord

conducted by
Stephen Buckman



MAGNIFICAT

G. B. Pergolesi (1710 - 1736)

1. Magnificat (chorus)
2. Et misericordia (soprano, contralto & chorus)
3. Deposuit potentes (chorus)
4. Suscepit Israel (tenor & bass)
5. Sicut locutus est (chorus)
6. Sicut erat in principio (chorus)

CONCERTO IN D MINOR FOR TWO VIOLINS (BWV 1043)

J. S. Bach (1685 - 1750)

1. Vivace
2. Largo ma non tanto
3. Allegro

INTERVAL

NISI DOMINUS (Psalm 127)

G. F. Handel (1685 - 1759)

1. Nisi Dominus (chorus)
2. Vanum est vobis ante lucem surgere (tenor)
3. Cum dederit dilectis suis somnum (alto)
4. Sicut sagittae (bass)
5. Beatus vir (tenor)
6. Gloria Patri (double chorus)

DIXIT DOMINUS (Psalm 109)

G. F. Handel

1. Dixit Dominus (quartet & chorus)
2. Virgam virtutis tuae (contralto)
3. Tecum principium in die virtutis (soprano)
4. Juravit Dominus (chorus)
5. Tu es sacerdos in aeternum (chorus)
6. Dominus a dextris tuis (quartet & chorus)
7. De torrente in via bibet (sopranos & male chorus)
8. Gloria Patri, et Filio (sopranos, tenor & chorus)

Handel's setting of Psalm 109 (110 according to Luther) is scored for 5 solo voices, 5 part chorus and a string orchestra, also in 5 parts. The work is written as a concerto grosso, demanding virtuoso-like performances from all. The energy, agility and precision required to give a convincing account of this work are relentless. Evidence of the youth of the composer can be found in his assumption that voices can function like violins and that violins can function like manuals of an organ.

It was on a quest to discover modern music that Handel went to Rome in 1707, when he was 22 years old. He stayed in Italy for three-and-a-half years. This period away from the stifling confines of North Germany was to have a decisive influence on the rest of his life.

Handel completed Dixit Dominus in 1707. Although the details of the first performance are not known it is believed to have been given on Easter Day either in the Church of St John Lateran or in the Palace of Cardinal Ottoboni.

Current musical scholarship leads us to consider another possible origin for Dixit Dominus. The work may have been commissioned for performance at Vespers on the Feast of the Madonna del Carmine (16th July) by Cardinal Colonna. If this was the case it would have been performed together with other psalm-settings (including Nisi Dominus), antiphons and solo motets.

Whatever the origins of this great work it remains one of the most technically difficult and yet most rewarding works in the choral repertoire.