

Nantwich Choral Society

DETTINGEN TE DEUM

G. F. Handel

HAIL BRIGHT CECILIA COME YE SONS OF ART H. Purcell

SATURDAY 17th NOVEMBER
- 1990 -



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

NANTWICH CHORAL SOCIETY

Catrin Ley, soprano
Stephen Carter, countertenor
Duncan Saunderson, countertenor
Philip Ravenscroft, bass

conducted by
Stephen Buckman



Henry Purcell (1659 - 1695)

Come Ye Sons of Art (Ode for the Birthday of Queen Mary, 1694)

1. Overture
2. Come, ye Sons of Art
3. Sound the trumpet
4. Come, ye Sons of Art
5. Strike the viol
6. The day that such a blessing gave
7. Bid the Virtues
8. These are the sacred charms
9. See Nature, rejoicing

Ode for St. Cecilia's Day, 1692

1. Symphony
2. Hail! bright Cecilia
3. Hark, each tree
4. 'Tis nature's voice
5. Soul of the World
6. Thou tun'st this world
7. With that sublime celestial lay
8. Wond'rous machine
9. The airy violin
10. In vain the am'rous flute
11. The fife and all the harmony of war
12. Hail! bright Cecilia

INTERVAL

George Frederic Handel (1685 - 1759)

The Dettingen Te Deum

1. We praise Thee, O God
2. All the earth doth worship Thee
3. To Thee all angels cry aloud
4. To Thee Cherubim and Seraphim
5. The glorious company of th'apostles
6. Thine honourable, true, and only Son
7. Thou art the King of glory
8. When Thou tookest upon Thee
9. When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death
10. Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven
11. Thou sittest on the right hand of God
12. (Adagio)
13. We therefore pray Thee
14. Make them to be number'd
15. Day by day we magnify Thee
16. And we worship Thy name
17. Vouchsafe, O Lord
18. O Lord, in Thee have I trusted

"Come Ye Sons of Art" is the sixth of Purcell's odes for the birthday of Queen Mary, wife of William III, and was performed on 30th April 1694 when she was 33 years old. The ode celebrates Mary's generous patronage of the arts (particularly in the countertenor solo "Strike the viol") and has much in common with Purcell's odes in praise of St. Cecilia as all the instruments of music are called upon to help 'celebrate this triumphant day'.

St. Cecilia's day itself (22 November) was celebrated almost every year in London from 1683 to 1703 with the performance of a new musical ode, specially commissioned by 'The Musical Society'. Purcell's offering for the festivities in 1692 was received "with universal applause" and the composer himself sang the countertenor solo "'Tis Nature's voice" 'with incredible graces'. After the Overture and a chorus invoking the saint and her "celestial art", there follows a sequence of movements describing the power of music to move nature, whether it be through Orpheus' lute, human passions, or the Music of the Spheres. In the second half of the work, Cecilia's own instrument, the organ, is eulogised as being superior to all others and the piece ends with a second great chorus in praise of the patron saint of music.

The setting of the hymn "Te Deum Laudamus" which Handel wrote to celebrate the British and Austrian victory over the French at Dettingen was first performed on 27 November 1743. (It has since been used in many state services of thanksgiving and is particularly associated with St. Cecilia's day.) Handel's genius was ideally suited to such an occasion - even more so than that of his model for this kind of music, Purcell - and the opening of the piece sets the appropriate tone of pomp and ceremony with martial trumpets and drums and great choral acclamations. Much of the music is in this grand manner, but there is contrast too, such as in the third movement ("To Thee all angels") and the prayerful bass solo "Vouchsafe, O Lord". This contrast even extends to the writing for trumpets, whose simple unaccompanied fanfare announcing the Last Judgement (movement 12.) is a dramatic masterstroke.

Colin Bromelow