



part of **the Adoration of the Magi**

Hieronymus Bosch, *circa* 1494

FLEISCHMANN CHOIR

Emma Nash *soprano*

Sinéad Ní Mhurchú *soprano*

Ross Scanlon *tenor*

Brendan Collins *baritone*

Tom Doyle *conductor*

MARC-ANTOINE CHARPENTIER

Te Deum H146

CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS

Super flumina Babylonis

FRANZ SCHUBERT

Magnificat in C major D486

Sunday, 3 December 2023

St Finbarr's South Church (South Parish), Dunbar Street, Cork

Programme Notes

In keeping with the form of the so-called 'Versailles' *Grand Motet*, the *Te Deum* of **MARC-ANTONIE CHARPENTIER** (1643 – 1704) is designed as a one-part, grand polyphonic motet, which in the diversity of its scoring reflects the original verse-like structure of the hymn. Following the model created by Lully in 1677, the work begins with an instrumental introduction composed in the form of a rondo. In the trumpet key of D major – a key which Charpentier described as 'bright and very warlike' in his rules for compositions (*Règles de composition*, 1692) – this leads up to the powerful first verse begun by the bass soloist, which is then followed by the chorus and groups of voices alternating in ever new combinations.

The twenty-nine versets of the *Te Deum* are performed in one go. The composer apparently did not want it to be performed in sections, which would compromise the integrity of the work, because the direction can be found at several places in the score requesting that it be played 'without interruption'. Only three short breaks are expressly specified, but as they are termed 'short rest', 'grand silence' and 'a little silence', there are only vague hints as to their actual duration. Bearing in mind the traditional exegesis of the Latin text, the following basic structure can be deduced from the changing orchestrations: the chorus dominates in versets 1 – 9, with groups of soloists appearing sporadically. Individual singers form solos, duets, and trios in versets 10 – 20 while the chorus recedes into the background. In versets 21 – 25, the chorus and soloist groups alternate, with the soloist group taking up the lines of the chorus again. Versets 26 – 28 which immediately follow the 'grand silence' are performed by the soloists only. The final verset in the form of a large-scale fugue ('In te, Domine, speravi, / non confundar in aeternum'; 'In thee, O Lord, have I

trusted, / let me never be confounded') is reserved for the chorus, except for a short trio for soloists in the middle.

— *Helga Schauerte-Maubouet*
(translated by Steve Taylor)

In the course of his long life, **CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS** (1835 – 1921) must have turned time and again to the psalm *Super flumina Babylonis* (By the rivers of Babylon), otherwise he would hardly have produced four arrangements of it within the space of several decades. There exists an arrangement of 1854 with saxophone quartet, another with a large wind band, a third with a small wind band, which became detached over the years, and of which only roughly half of the work currently exists in two sections; and finally an arrangement with piano and English text. Some of the puzzles surrounding the settings have remained unsolved to the present day, nor do we have much information about the occasions of their performance. The manuscript of the saxophone version, in particular, offers a glimpse into the compositional process: here we can clearly see that Saint-Saëns struggled with the inclusion of the saxophones, which had only been introduced a short while earlier.

On March 21, 1846, Adolphe Sax (1814 – 1894) took out a patent on his saxophones in France, having worked on their invention since 1838. Only after the resolution of a patent dispute was he able, in 1854, to have the saxophones incorporated as established instruments in the *musique militaire*, which was then supplied with arrangements of explicitly sacred works. At the same time, keeping abreast of his era, Saint-Saëns set *Super flumina Babylonis* in the version with saxophones (Saint-Saëns and Sax frequently encountered each other in Paris, where Sax had lived since 1842).

The work occupies a special place in Saint-Saëns' church music, indeed, in his entire oeuvre. Although he wrote an incomplete oratorio in 1848, and a forty-nine-bar *Ave verum, Super flumina Babylonis* is probably the first relatively large piece of vocal church music he ever completed. With this, Saint-Saëns must be accorded a pioneering role in the literature for saxophone quartet – a role that has, until now, been attributed to Jean-Baptiste Singelée (1812 – 1875) and his *Premier Quatuor*, Op. 53, of 1857.

— Christina M. Stahl

(translated by J. Bradford Robinson)

According to information in the autograph, **FRANZ SCHUBERT** (1797 – 1828) wrote his Magnificat in C major (D486) in September 1815 and although intended for the liturgy, did not set the complete *Magnificat* text. One could possibly explain the considerable textual omissions and variants with the adaptation of the original Vespers chant to another liturgical context. One could also consider – and thus, although supported by the musical analysis, venture even more into the area of speculation – whether or not something is shown that is encountered in a number of his other sacred compositions, and that we also already know above all from the art songs of his early period: Schubert's often unique manner of musically interpreting poetry. As regards the content, Schubert concentrates on the verses that stand for the 'special meaning', namely, the antithesis of greatness and lowliness.

Schubert entrusts the text to two sections which differ from one another so greatly in terms of instrumentation, tempo and metre that they are perceived as contrary musical characters. The first section, the *Allegro maestoso*, encompasses verses one to three and is dominated by Mary's praise of God. The second section, an *Andante*, includes verses seven to

ten. It is closely linked to the first section in that the instruments melodically and harmonically transform the concluding cadence of the previous section into the upbeat of the *Andante*. With this musical enjambment, Schubert closes the textual gap that he created through the omission of verses four to six; verse seven now appears closely tied to verse three. Schubert's composing, which equally embraces the text and the music, establishes relationships between the verses as they are indeed also in the poem, but do not show themselves openly in direct encounter. Unlike in the poem, in Schubert's setting of Mary's 'magnify' ('Magnificat') and her singing of the 'lowliness of his handmaid' ('humilitatem ancillae suae') find their immediate reverberation in the verse that promises the divine revaluation of all values: 'He casts the mighty from their throne and lifts up the humble' ('Deposuit potentes de sede et exsultavit humiles').

— *Rudolf Faber*
translated by Howard Weiner

Biographies

The **FLEISCHMANN CHOIR** was founded in November 1992. Initially called the Cork School of Music Symphony Orchestra Chorus, it sang in public for the first time on 22 April 1993 when it gave a concert with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra in Cork's City Hall to mark the opening of the 40th Cork International Choral Festival. The programme was of music by Aloys Fleischmann – one of the founders of the Festival – who had died the previous year. Shortly after this concert, and with the permission of the family, the choir was renamed in memory of the man who did so much to further the cause of choral music and choral singing in Ireland. From 1992 to 2013, the choir was led by founder-conductor Dr Geoffrey Spratt (former Director of the Cork School of Music and founder-conductor of the Irish Youth Choir and Canticum Novum). In 2013, Conor Palliser was appointed conductor; and since September 2022, the choir has been under the direction of Tom Doyle.

The Fleischmann Choir has achieved an enviable reputation for fulfilling its mission to perform the large-scale repertory for choir and orchestra. Past concerts have included Stainer's *The Crucifixion*, Söderman's *Andeliga sänger*, Puccini's *Messa di Gloria*, Vaughan Williams' *Towards the Unknown Region*, Poulenc's *Gloria*, Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, Dvořák's *Te Deum*, *Stabat Mater* and *Mass in D*, Finzi's *Intimations of Immortality*, Tippett's *A Child of Our Time*, Honegger's *Christmas Cantata*, and Karl Jenkins' *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace*. In addition, the choir has accepted invitations as diverse as 'Songs of Praise' for the BBC, backing Johnny Logan during the Eurovision Song Contest broadcast by RTÉ from Millstreet, Co. Cork, and singing with Niamh Kavanagh for her RTÉ Christmas Show from Cork Opera House. The choir tours regularly with past performances in Como, Italy, and Cologne, Germany.

Cork soprano **EMMA NASH** has been described as ‘captivating’ (Irish Times) and a soprano with an ‘exciting, individualised vocal colour’ (Opera Today). She is an alumna of Opera Theatre Company’s young artist programme, winner of the PWC / Wexford Festival Opera Emerging Young Artist bursary and the UCH Limerick Rising Star Award. Upcoming Christmas engagements include guest soloist for Carols at Lismore Castle, 9 – 11 December.

Recent engagements include a European tour of Berlioz’s grand opera *Les Troyens* (Berlioz Festival, Salzburg Festival, Châteaux de Versailles and Berliner Festspiel) and an appearance at Electric Picnic with Irish National Opera. Other opera highlights include roles with Wexford Festival Opera, Irish National Opera, Welsh National Opera, Opera Collective Ireland and Longborough Opera Festival. Concert highlights include performances with the National Symphony Orchestra, RTÉ Concert Orchestra, Monteverdi Choir, City of Dublin Chamber Orchestra and Cork Concert Orchestra. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Emma participated in a range of digital performances including the critically acclaimed *20 Shots of Opera* with Irish National Opera and RTÉ Concert Orchestra. The Wallstreet Journal praised ‘A Message for Marty’ by Conor Mitchell as ‘hilarious, opera extremism in modern dress’.

Emma is a featured artist alongside rappers MuRli and God Knows in Body & Soul Festival’s new movie *Ériu* which premiered at the Lighthouse Cinema Dublin and is available to stream on the RTÉ Player.

From her first lessons with Bob Beare at Cork School of Music, soprano **SINÉAD NÍ MHURCHÚ** has been lauded for her natural stage presence and remarkable vocal timbre. She holds a Masters in Vocal Performance from the Royal Irish Academy of Music where she studied with Veronica Dunne and Virginia Kerr, and she is a recent graduate of Stimmkunst

Institute opera programme in Zürich. In competition, Sinéad has been a recipient of the Margaret Dillon Memorial Perpetual Trophy (Feis Maitiú Corcaigh), a finalist in the Quigley Dramatic Cup (Dublin Feis Ceoil) and was selected as an emerging artist for the Boyne Music Festival.

Sinéad has wide and varied experience as a soloist on the operatic stage, having sung with major opera companies in Ireland. Engagements include Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*), Erste Dame (*Die Zauberflöte*) and Mrs. Paškova (*The Cunning Little Vixen*) for RIAM; Nancy T'ang (*Nixon in China*) for Wide Open Opera, with Opera Magazine describing her performance of Zelatrice in *Suor Angelica* as 'powerful'. As a recitalist, Sinéad has performed major solo works including Berlioz's *Les nuits d'Été* and Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder* and has recently been a guest artist with Irish Songmakers, Cork Fleischmann Symphony Orchestra and Cork Midsummer Festival.

ROSS SCANLON trained at the DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama where he was awarded the Michael McNamara Gold Medal of excellence in performance and at the Royal Academy of Music, London. At the Royal Academy of Music Opera School, his roles included Lurcanio (*Ariodante*), Masino (*La vera Costanza*), Monostatos (*Die Zauberflöte*) and Scaramuccio (*Ariadne auf Naxos*). Elsewhere, his roles have included Le Thérière (*L'Enfant et les sortlièges*) with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Barbican, London; Hot Biscuit (*Paul Bunyan*) for Welsh National Opera; John Pynes (*Vagabones*), Irus (*The Return of Ulysses*) and Male Chorus (*The Rape of Lucretia*) for Opera Collective Ireland; Ed (*A Belfast Opera*) for NI Opera; Bookkeeper (*The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*) for OTC, Dublin; Remendado (*Carmen*) for Lyric Opera, Dublin; and Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*) for Glashule Opera.

Ross sings widely in concert, his engagements including *Alexander's Feast*, *Messiah* and *The Creation* with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, *Messiah* at the Halle Festival, Germany, at the Handel Music Festival, Dublin, and with the Irish Philharmonic Orchestra. Other oratorios include Britten's *Saint Nicolas*, Dvořák's *Stabat Mater*, Handel's *Coronation Anthems*, Haydn's *Die Jahreszeiten* and *Missa in Tempore Belli*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and *St Paul*, Stainer's *Crucifixion*, Mozart's *Vesperae Solemnes de Confessore* and *Coronation Mass*, Schubert's *Mass in B-flat*, Jenkins' *The Armed Man – A Mass for Peace*, the Irish premiere of Goodall's *Eternal Light – A Requiem*, Bach's *Magnificat* and Respighi's *Lauda per la Natività del Signore*. In 2018, Ross was invited to sing for HRH, Prince of Wales, with the Ulster Orchestra, Belfast. Recent engagements include *Ode for St Cecilia's Day*, Edinburgh Bach Choir, Edinburgh; and tenor Soloist for Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Bray Choral Society.

Ross is a member of the Vocal Faculty at the Lir Academy, Trinity College and the American College, Dublin where he lectures on the Musical Theatre course. He is also on the Board of Examiner for the Royal Irish Academy of Music.

Irish baritone **BRENDAN COLLINS** began his training at the Cork School of Music under Robert Beare, graduating with BMus (Hons.) in Performance, before pursuing a PGDip (Hons.) in Performance from the DIT Conservatory in Dublin and Opera Studio of Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels under renowned bass-baritone José van Dam.

As a soloist, he has performed across Ireland, the UK, Europe, the Middle East, China and America. Opera engagements include Irish National Opera, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Scottish Opera, English Touring Opera, NI Opera, Opera Theatre Company, Longborough Festival Opera, Opera Collective Ireland, Cork Operatic Society, Regents Opera

and Iford Opera. His repertoire of nearly seventy operatic roles include the title role in *Gianni Schicchi*, Scarpia (*Tosca*), Count Almaviva (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Marcello (*La Bohème*), Escamillo (*Carmen*), Germont (*La Traviata*), Tonio (*Pagliacci*), Alfio (*Cavalleria Rusticana*), Paolo Albani (*Simon Boccanegra*), Count Gil (*Il segreto di Susanna*) amongst others.

A regular performer on the concert platform, his repertoire includes Handel's *Messiah* (Pro Cathedral, Dublin) and *Birthday Ode for Queen Anne* (St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin); Mozart's *Requiem* (National Concert Hall, Dublin), *Vespers* (Kajetanekirche, Salzburg), *Coronation Mass* (St. Stephen's Cathedral, Vienna), *Mass in C Minor* (Ulster Hall, Belfast), and *Spatzenmesse* (Westminster Cathedral, London); Haydn's *Creation Mass* (Clonard Monastery, Belfast) and *Nelson Mass* (St Finbarr's Cathedral, Cork); Fauré's *Requiem* (St. Bavo's Cathedral, Ghent); Schubert's *Mass in G* (St Nicholas, Galway); Puccini's *Messa di Gloria* (Cork City Hall); Orff's *Carmina Burana* (National Concert Hall, Dublin); Mendelssohn's *Elijah* (Wexford Opera House); and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels).

Highlights include the BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall in *Billy Budd* under Sir Andrew Davis, his New York debut at the Brooklyn Academy of Music under Sir Mark Elder, his Swiss debut at Opéra de Lausanne under Monica Huggett, his debut at the Grand Théâtre de Luxembourg in Donnacha Dennehy's *The Last Hotel*, and his Chinese debut in concert at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre under maestro Henry Shek.

A graduate of both UCC and MTU Cork School of Music, **TOM DOYLE** is highly sought after as a musical director and pianist in Cork City and its environs. With a keen interest in both musical theatre and opera, Tom's credits as musical director have included *The Stalls* (Ulysses Theatre Company & Cork Midsummer Festival), *Pubcrawl: the Musical*

(Chattyboo Productions), *American Idiot* (CIT Musical Society), *Songs for a New World* (Hibernian Ensemble), *The Opera Director* – a reimagined translated version of Mozart's *Der Schauspieldirektor*, *The Last Five Years* (Scruffy Duck Productions), *Ragtime* (UCC Dramat) and [title of show] (UCC Dramat).

As a choral enthusiast, Tom has had the pleasure of working with the Blackpool Parish Choir, Mayfield Gospel Choir, Cork ETB Youth Choir, the workplace choirs at Musgraves and Cork County Council, Munster Rugby Supporters Club Choir, Cantate, the choir at Presentation Secondary School Ballyphehane, the Wilcollane Singers, and the Cork Garda Male Voice Choir. From 2008 - 2015, Tom conducted the UCC Choral Society, helping to produce the ever-popular 'Carols by Candlelight' in the Honan Chapel as well as winning several awards at international competitions in Ghent, Verona and Olomouc.

An accomplished conductor and répétiteur, Tom has worked with many singers including the late Cara O'Sullivan, Majella Cullagh and Mary Hegarty, as well as ensembles such as Irish Youth Opera, Cork Concert Orchestra, Cork Operatic Society and the University of Limerick Orchestra.

Tom is the acting Conservatoire Coordinator at MTU Cork School of Music where he also lectures in conducting and directs the 130-strong Fleischmann Choir.

FLEISCHMANN

Sopranos

Ciara Ann Breen
Marjorie Brennan
Regina Broderick
Beth Buchanan
Mairéad Casey
Marrita Clifford
Kate Coppinger
Hilary Coughlan-
Piskorski
Grace Crowley
Ali Cullinane
Deirdre Deasy
Leona Duffy
Christina Favier
Julia Foerster
Mairéad Gallagher
Anne Godfrey
Hannah Günther
Ann Harrington
Susan Hickey
Sinead Kelleher
Liz Lynch
Margaret Murphy
Niamh Murray
Deirdre Ní Drisceoil
Sinead Nolan
Grace O'Connell
Ali O'Hehir

Huma O'Malley
Kay Scoutts O'Mahony
Beata Smith
Noreen Spillane
Marie Sprott
Sonia Stronach
Marcella Twomey
Rosie Twomey
Tanja Vucinic
Katherine Walsh
Denise White
Alice Wong

Altos

Christine Allan
Dorothy Barry
Phil Buckley
Mari Byrne
Dara Carberry
Aoife Coyne
Jane Daly
Gretta Daly
Anne Donnelly
Sarah Foley
Mary Phil Giltinan
Barbara Keating
Niamh Kelliher
Laura Lagerqvist

Mary Lisson
Maeve Long
Caroline Long-Nolan
Judith Macklin
Anne Malone
Yvonne Manning
Jane McCarthy
Bernadette Murray
Dearbhail O'Callaghan
Anne O'Connor
Patricia O'Gorman
Clare O'Shea-O'Neill
Clíona O'Sullivan
Linda Roberts
Sinead Ryan
Marlene Scheible
Isabelle Sheridan
Alison Smyth
Gráinne Stafford
Anna Xaubet-Piferrer

CHOIR WINTER 2023

Tenors

Jim Cashman
Jim Cleary
Brian Collins
Margaret Crowley
Patrick Fitzpatrick
Edmund Hogan
Stephen Holly
Carolyn Marks
Sean McGann
Dan Mulcahy
Brian O'Connor
Seumas O'Donovan
Nevan O'Driscoll
Proinnsias O'Keeffe
Ann-Marie O'Sullivan
David Shine
David Sprott

Basses

Conor Arkins
Willie Beechinor
Mark D'Aughton
Justin Donnellan
Eamonn Fleming
Colm Gleeson
Justin Finbarr Healy
Dave Linehan

Anthony Malone
Graham Manson
Sean O'Flynn
John Cornelius Ryan
Paul Scannell
John Spillane
Paweł Świtaj
Richard Winfield

Choir Manager

Cliona O'Sullivan

Treasurer

Graham Manson

Membership

Secretary

Dearbhail O'Callaghan

Line Leaders and

Facilitators

Jim Cleary
Aoife Coyne
Justin Donnellan
Ann Harrington
Laura Lagerqvist
Margaret Murphy
Deirdre Ní Drisceoil

Seumas O'Donovan
Cliona O'Sullivan
David Shine
Paweł Świtaj

Archivist

Margaret Crowley

Photographer

Seumas O'Donovan

Stage Managers

Graham Manson
Terence Murphy

Website

David Sprott

Accompanist

Eoin O'Callaghan

Founder-Conductor

Emeritus

Dr Geoffrey Spratt

Conductor

Tom Doyle

Ensemble

Oboes

Eva Crowley
Coral O'Sullivan

Saxophones

Mary Black
Stephen Keenan
Ken Marshall
Orla O'Donovan

Bassoons

Katie Cody
Clare Daly

Trumpets

Heather Nash
Órlaith O'Driscoll

Timpani

Dylan Tierney

Organ

James Taylor

Violins

Mary Bollard
Myn Fitzpatrick
Caitríona Johnston
Marian Power
Katie Sheehan
Sidney Užík

Violas

Cian Adams
Ciara Moloney
Katherine Veeckman

Cello

Norah O'Leary

Acknowledgements

Our sincere thanks to:

Fr Kevin O'Regan, Fr John O'Donovan and all the volunteers at St Finbarr's South Church; Susannah Ahern, Nano Nagle Place, Basil Market & Deli, and Cork Flower Studio; Pdraig O'Donovan; Tom Crowley, Michelle Kiely, Paul Veale and all at Cork Orchestral Society; Dr Ciara Glasheen-Artem, Maria Judge and Cian Ó Dúill; Ildikó Dosa, Diana Scriven and the administrative staff at MTU Cork School of Music; John Bruen and the Apleona building management team; sectional leaders Anne Dunphy and Richard Rudkins; Patrick Abrams; and George Parris.

Sing With Us!

The Fleischmann Choir welcomes new members of all voice types. To find out more about the choir, please visit **thefleischmannchoir.org** or email **Thomas.Doyle@mtu.ie** to arrange an audition.

thefleischmannchoir.org

Supported by



MTU
Ceol-Scoil Chorcaí
Cork School of Music



CORK
ORCHESTRAL
SOCIETY
YOUR CITY
YOUR MUSIC
YOUR PROVIDER