



Charles Wood
The Passion,
According to
St Mark

Performed by
Cantores Oecumenica

(formerly the combined choirs of Christ Church, Timperley and Holy Angels, Halebarns with Guests)

Palm Sunday, 1st April 2012 at Holy Angels, Halebarns

Evangelist : **Richard Pollock**
Jesus : **Oliver Dunn**
Guest Organist : **Derrick Cantrell**
Conductor : **Neil Provost**

Choir

Sopranos

Jean Brookes
(Maid I) Sue Brown
Marie Dixon
Margaret Dyson
(Solo) Madeleine Hamilton
Sue McEwan
Frances Provost
Kath Whyte
Clare Wilkinson

Altos

Joy Anderson
Gill Bate
Jane Hardman
Christine O'Kell
Hazel Pryor (Maid II)
Adrienne Thompson

Tenors

Tony Champion
Steve Crowther
(High Priest) Ted Thompson
John Yates

Bass

Bro Leo Anthony
Michael Brown (Judas)
Gus Hopper
Keith Lewis
John Mulholland (Peter & Solo)
Ian Provost (Pilate)

The Work

Answering a request from Eric Milner-White, the then Dean of King's College, Cambridge, Charles Wood completed his setting of the *St Mark Passion* in August 1920; the work received its first performance on Good Friday 1921, with King's College Choir directed by A.H. Mann. It is interesting to note that the request came after Mann had reviewed all the available Passion settings, including the two well-known works of J.S. Bach, and concluded that 'the Bach Passions are too vast for an ordinary choir, however good'. Milner-White also saw another opportunity, adding that 'it is about time that the bigger parish churches superseded Stainer's *Crucifixion* – or at least had an alternative'.

It is worth looking back a little further to the late nineteenth-century English interest in the Passion narrative. Perhaps stemming from Mendelssohn's pioneering work and role within the Bach revival, Joseph Barnby established an annual performance of Bach's *St John Passion* in London in 1873. Subsequently, numerous composers were moved to set the Passion story within a contemporary libretto rather than one of the Gospel accounts. Following Stainer in 1887, Maunder's *Olivet to Calvary* appeared in 1904, and Somervell's and Nicholson's Passions were published in 1914 and 1924 respectively. Wood's setting of 1920 stands out in this collection as the only example of an English setting of the biblical narrative.

In order to break up the biblical narrative into five sections, Wood incorporates four hymns into the scheme. Opening and closing with verses from the plainsong hymn *Pange lingua gloriosa*, he also uses verses from *Verbum supernum prodiens*, *Lord when we bow before thy throne* and *My God, I love Thee*. Whilst not so well-known to us today, these hymns would have been better-known to the congregation who attended the work's first performance. It is the idea of familiarity and intelligibility underlined by the inclusion of well-known hymns and the fact that the story is told in the vernacular, which brings Wood's scheme into closer consideration with that of J.S. Bach. As with Bach's inclusion of Lutheran chorales, and the connotations and theological links that they would have suggested to the average Lutheran in the congregation, so here the flow of the biblical narrative in English, interspersed with well-known hymns for choir and congregation, provides the key to the work's success.

It would be wrong to assume that Wood's setting is stuck in the Anglican mould of late nineteenth-century romanticism. Whilst it clearly inhabits that sound world, the musical language goes much further than one would expect in comparison to Wood's numerous setting of canticles and anthems. There are flashes of late Wagnerian harmony alongside the very dry *a cappella* textures of the fifth gospel. Wood clearly knew J. S. Bach's many chorale settings for the organ, as the accompaniments to the hymns display his contrapuntal ability akin to J.S. Bach's *Orgelbüchlein* settings.

Richard Pollock was awarded a distinction in Vocal Performance and Opera from the Royal Northern College of Music, as a pupil of Mr Patrick McGuigan and Sir Peter Moores Foundation scholar. By that time he had also graduated in law and begun his teaching career.

Richard started singing as a church chorister in Sutton Coldfield, and went on to develop a successful sacred concert solo repertoire, performing in cathedrals and concert halls across the country. Such works include Bach St John and St Matthew Passions and Christmas Oratorio as the Evangelist, Beethoven 'Choral' Symphony, Britten Saint Nicolas, Elgar The Kingdom, Handel Messiah and the title roles Judas Maccabeus, Samson, and Acis and Galatea, Puccini Messa di Gloria, Dvorak Stabat Mater, Mozart Requiem, Solemn Vespers and Coronation Mass, Haydn Creation, Mendelssohn Elijah and Symphony No 2, Orff Carmina Burana, Rossini Petite Messe Solennelle, and Bizet Te Deum. He was a guest artist for the Prom Praise celebrations at the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester and also performed the world premiere of Rawsthorne's Kubla Kahn there.

In recital, Richard was the winner of the RNCM Cronshaw/Frost Song Cycle competition with Britten's Winter Words. Despite no longer singing opera, he still enjoys the occasional gala, both home and abroad.

He and his wife live in Cheshire, where both sons use their father's musical scores to build dens. Richard currently teaches at St Mary's CE School in Davyhulme, and somehow still finds time to go sailing, cook, watch rugby and walk his two dogs.

Oliver Dunn, baritone, is a Kentish man and in 2010 graduated with distinction and a Dip RAM from the Opera Course at the Royal Academy of Music, where he studied with Mark Wildman and Iain Ledingham.

He currently studies with Robert Dean. On entry to the Academy Oliver was awarded the Norman McCann Scholarship, for which he is extremely grateful. Previously to this he completed a degree and two Post Graduate years of study at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester under the tutelage of Robert Alderson.

Last year he was one of twelve trainees studying at the National Opera Studio in London. Oliver's NOS studies were supported by a Lionel Anthony Scholarship, the Robert Vivian Memorial Scholarship and the Royal Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys for which he is very grateful. He is currently a fellow of Independent Opera. Oliver is the current holder of the Glyndebourne on Tour 2012 Donald A Anderson Award.

Derrick Cantrell received his first music lessons from his father, a professional musician in Sheffield. He passed ARCO with the Sawyer Prize whilst still at school and won a Holroyd Music Scholarship to Keble College, Oxford. During his years at Oxford he was organ scholar at New College and passed FRCO with the Limpus Prize.

His first organ appointment was at the Church of the Holy Rude, Stirling which he combined with a lectureship at Glasgow University and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music. His first cathedral appointment was at Chelmsford with teaching at the Royal College of Music. He followed Allan Wicks at Manchester Cathedral with teaching at Chetham's School of Music and the Royal Manchester College of Music. He left the cathedral to take on a Senior Lectureship at the then newly formed Royal Northern College of Music.

Neil Provost was involved in music through the amateur theatre at an early age, first performing on stage at the age of seven in a world premier called The Royal Rose. Starting piano lessons by age nine he progressed to the organ by age fourteen receiving lessons from Derrick Cantrell. He took his first parish post at St Mark's, Dunham just before his sixteenth birthday. Singing in the school choir at St Ambrose College, Halebarns he took a strong interest in choral conducting and under the informal tutelage of John Chadwick and Michael English, who was also later on his organ tutor, he has developed his own unique style and methods in choral training and conducting.

He moved to the parish of St John the Divine, Brooklands in 1990 as Director of Music, training and directing a mixed choir ranging in age from seven to seventy years old. Whilst there he helped two choristers gain places in Manchester Cathedral choir and brought the choir up to sufficient standard to be invited to sing in Manchester Cathedral for Choral Evensong.

Ten years later he moved to Christchurch, Timperley where he has forged a musical link between Holy Angels Choir and Christchurch Choir. Five years ago the first of many successful Palm Sunday presentations began with Stainer's Crucifixion, followed by Olivet to Calvary and Faure's Requiem. Last year, although he was unable to attend due to ill health, the combined choirs now supplemented further by guest singers performed a presentation of music for Lent and Easter. The combined choirs have also sung together for many years at Christchurch for the Christmas Nine Lessons and Carols service. Cantores Oecumenica (literal translation, singers ecumenical) is a cementing of this musical collaboration.

HYMN

Sing, my tongue, the glorious battle,
Sing the last, the dread affray;
O'er the Cross, the victor's trophy,
Sound the high triumphal lay,
How, a victim's death enduring,
Earth's Redeemer won the day.

Thus the scheme of our salvation
Was of old in order laid,
That the manifold deceiver's
Art by art might be outweighed,
And the lure the foe put forward
Into means of healing made.

Amen.

FIRST GOSPEL

And the first day of unleavened bread His disciples went forth, and came into the city, and they made ready the Passover. And in the evening He cometh with the twelve. And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said:

Verily I say unto you, one of you which eateth with Me shall betray Me.

And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto Him one by one:

Is it I?

And He answered and said unto them:

It is one of the twelve that dippeth with Me in the dish.

And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said:

Take, eat; this is My Body.

And He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it unto them; and they all drank of it.

And He said unto them:

This is My Blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until that day that I drink it new in the Kingdom of God.

And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.

HYMN

The Heavenly Word proceeding forth,
Yet leaving not the Father's side,
Accomplishing His work on earth,
Had reached at length life's eventide.

He gave himself in either kind,
His precious Flesh, His precious Blood;
In Love's own fullness thus designed
Of the whole man to be the Food.

Amen.

God, man's Maker, sorely grieving
That the first man, Adam, fell,
When he ate the fruit of sorrow,
Whose reward was death and hell;
Mark'd e'en then this Wood, the ruin
Of the ancient wood to quell.

To the Trinity be glory
Everlasting, as is meet;
Equal to the Father, equal
To the Son, and Paraclete:
Trinal Unity, whose praises
All created things repeat.

By false disciple to be given
To foemen for His life athirst,
Himself, the very Bread of heaven,
He gave to His disciples first.

O Saving Victim, opening wide
The gate of heaven for men below,
Our foes press on from every side;
Thine aid supply, Thy strength bestow.

SECOND GOSPEL

And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane, and He saith to His disciples:
Sit ye here, while I shall pray.

And He taketh with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy, and saith unto them:

My soul is exceeding sorrowful, unto death; tarry ye here and watch.

And He went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed, that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him.

And He said:

Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee; take away this cup from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what Thou wilt.

And He cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter:

Simon, sleepest thou? Couldst not thou watch one hour? Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation; the spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.

And again He went away, and prayed, and spake the same words.

Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee; take away this cup from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what Thou wilt.

And when He returned, He found them asleep again (for their eyes were heavy), neither wist they what to answer Him. And He cometh the third time, and saith unto them:

Sleep on now, and take your rest; it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth Me is at hand.

And immediately, while He yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve,

And with him a great multitude with swords and staves from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.

And he that betrayed Him had given them a token, saying:

Whomsoever I shall kiss that same is He: take Him and lead Him away safely.

And as soon as he was come he goeth straightway to Him, and saith:

Master, Master,

And kissed Him.

And they laid their hands on Him, and took Him. And they all forsook Him, and fled.

HYMN

Lord, when we bow before Thy Throne,
And our confessions pour,
Teach us to feel the sins we own,
And hate what we deplore.

When we disclose our wants in prayer,
May we our wills resign,
And not a thought our bosoms share,
Which is not wholly Thine.

May faith each weak petition fill,
And waft it to the skies,
And teach our hearts 'tis goodness still
That grants it or denies.

THIRD GOSPEL

And they led Jesus away to the high priests; and with him were assembled all the chief priests, and the elders, and the scribes. And Peter followed Him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest; and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire. And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put Him to death; and found none. And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying:

Answerest Thou nothing? What is it which these witness against Thee?

But He held His peace and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked Him, and said unto Him:

Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

And Jesus said:

I am; and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

Then the high priest rent his clothes, and said:

What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy; what think ye?

And they all condemned Him to be guilty of death. And some began to spit on Him, and to cover his face, and to buffet it, and to say unto Him, Prophecy; and the servants did strike Him with the palms of their hands.

And as Peter was beneath in the palace there cometh one of the maids of the high priest; and when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him and said:

And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.

But he denied, saying:

I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest.

And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew. And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by:

This is one of them.

And he denied it again. And a little after they that stood by said again to Peter:

Surely thou art one of them; for thou art a Galilæan; and thy speech agreeth thereto.

But he began to curse and to swear, saying:

I know not the man of whom ye speak.

And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him. Before the cock crew twice thou shalt deny me thrice.

And when he thought thereon he wept.

HYMN

My God, I love Thee: not because I hope for heaven thereby,
Nor yet because who love Thee not Are lost eternally.
Thou, O my Jesus, Thou didst me Upon the Cross embrace;
For me didst bear the nails, and spear, And manifold disgrace,

And griefs and torments numberless, And sweat of agony;
Yea, death itself; and all for me Who wast Thine enemy.
Then why, most loving Jesus Christ, Should I not love Thee well?
Not for the sake of winning heaven, Or of escaping hell;

Not from the hope of gaining aught, Not seeking a reward;
But as Thyself has loved me, O everloving Lord?
So do I love Thee, and will love, Who such a love hast showed
Only because Thou art my King, Because Thou art my God.

FOURTH GOSPEL

And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders, and scribes, and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried Him away, and delivered Him to Pilate. And Pilate asked Him:

Art Thou the King of the Jews?

And He answering said unto Him:

Thou sayest it.

And the chief priests accused Him of many things; But He answered nothing. And Pilate asked Him again, saying:

Answerest thou nothing? Behold how many things they witness against thee.

But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled. Now at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired. And there was one named Barabbas, which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.

And the multitude, crying aloud, began to desire him to do as he had ever done unto them.

But Pilate answered them, saying:

Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

But the chief priests moved the people that he should rather release Barabbas unto them. And Pilate answered, and said unto them:

What will ye then that I should do unto Him whom ye call the King of the Jews?

Crucify Him. Crucify Him.

Then Pilate said unto them.

Why, what evil hath he done?

And they cried out the more exceedingly:

Crucify Him. Crucify Him.

And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus when he had scourged Him, to be crucified.

And the soldiers led Him away into the hall, called Prætorium; and they call together the whole band. And they clothed Him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about His head; and began to salute Him, Hail, King of the Jews. And they smote Him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon Him, and, bowing their knees, worshipped Him.

And when they had mocked Him, they took off the purple from Him, and put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him.

HYMN

Faithful Cross! above all other,

One and only noble tree!

None in foliage, none in blossom,

None in fruit thy peer may be;

Sweetest Wood and sweetest Iron!

Sweetest Weight is hung on thee.

FIFTH GOSPEL

And they bring Him into the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, the place of a skull. And they gave Him to drink wine mingled with myrrh; but He received it not.

And when they had crucified Him they parted His garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take. And it was the third hour, and they crucified Him.

And the superscription of His accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

And with Him they crucify two thieves, the one on His right hand, and the other on His left.

And they that passed by railed on Him, wagging their heads and saying:

Ah, Thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save Thyself, and come down from the cross.

Likewise, also the chief priests, mocking, said among themselves with the scribes:

He saved others; Himself He cannot save. Let Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe.

And they that were crucified with Him reviled Him.

And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying:

Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?

Which is, being interpreted, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said:

Behold, He calleth Elias.

And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed and gave Him to drink, saying:

Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take Him down.

And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

HYMN

Bend thy boughs, O Tree of Glory!

Thy relaxing sinews bend;

For awhile the ancient rigour

That thy birth bestow'd suspend;

And the King of heav'nly beauty

On thy bosom gently tend.

Sing, my tongue, the glorious battle,

Sing the last, the dread affray;

O'er the Cross, the victor's trophy,

Sound the high triumphal lay,

How a victim's death enduring,

Earth's Redeemer won the day.

Amen.

May peace be with you this Eastertide

The retiring collection will be divided equally between, and given in entirety to the St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) and Christian Aid, thank you for any contribution you are able to make.