



Performed by

**Cantores**

**Oecumenica**

Tenor

**Christopher Turner**

Baritone

**Oliver Dunn**

Guest Organist

**Charles Wood**

**The Passion**  
**According to**  
**St Mark**

## **Sopranos**

Lorna Barton  
Jean Brookes  
Sue Brown  
Marie Dixon  
Margaret Dyson  
Liz Fallon  
Caroline McEwan  
Sue McEwan  
Jennifer Nugent  
Carole McNab  
Frances Provost  
Jean Tragen  
Kath Whyte  
Clare Wilkinson-Kirsop

## **Tenors**

Tony Champion  
Steve Crowther  
John Fallon  
Alan Johnston  
Melanie-Anne Jose  
Kevin McAloon  
Tony Nash  
Ted Thompson

## **Altos**

Gill Bate  
Adrienne Davies  
Liz Dunn  
Ann Heap  
Sally Peterken  
Hazel Pryor  
Adrienne Thompson  
Christine Underwood  
Julia Williamson

## **Bass**

Michael Brown  
Michael Cummings  
Mike Dunn  
Roy Jervis  
Keith Lewis  
Ian Provost  
Tony Robinson

## ***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 Milner-White also saw another opportunity, adding that 'it is about time that the bigger parish churches superseded Stainer's *Crucifixion* – or at least had an alternative'.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.

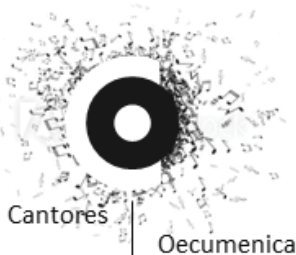
It would be wrong to assume that Wood's setting is stuck in the Anglican mould of late nineteenth-century romanticism. Whilst it clearly inhabits that sound world, the musical language goes much further than one would expect in comparison to Wood's numerous setting of canticles and anthems. There are 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.

***Cantores Oecumenica*** was officially formed under its new name in 2012 although the choir has been performing together since 2008. Over the years numbers attending performances have risen year on year from only forty to over two hundred. Performances are always free entry with all donations collected at performances going to nominated charities. Palm Sunday 2015 raised just over £1,300!



The choir is headed by our Musical Director and Principal Conductor, Neil Provost, supported by our Musical Consultant, Paul Provost (Assistant Organist - Guildford Cathedral). Cantores Oecumenica is a voluntary, not-for-profit organization. All expenses are covered by individual sponsors with voluntary support from members of the choir.

New members are always welcome and membership is free. We rehearse on Thursdays at Christchurch, Timperley from 7.15pm. If you are interested in taking part in any of our performances please go to our website [www.cantoresoec.org](http://www.cantoresoec.org) for further details. Sponsorship is always welcome too!



**Christopher Turner** was born in Birmingham, read Music at the University of Hull, furthering his studies with Barbara Robotham at the Royal Northern College of Music and at the National Opera Studio, where he was sponsored by the Scottish Endowment Trust and The Friends of Covent Garden. He has received many prizes, including The Michael and Joyce Kennedy Prize for Singing Strauss, The Frederic Cox Prize, the Elizabeth Harwood Prize, and, most recently, a Countess of Munster 'Young Star' Award and the Sybil Tutton Award from the Musicians Benevolent Fund. He was also a major scholar of the Sir Peter Moores Foundation.



Christopher made his professional début as Dr Blind *Die Fledermaus* for Scottish Opera On Tour before joining the Young Singers Programme at English National Opera where roles included Robert Wilson *Doctor Atomic*, First Armed Man/First Priest *The Magic Flute*, Beppe *Pagliacci*, Simpleton *Boris Godunov*, Spoletta *Tosca*, Pong *Turandot* and Messenger *Aida*. Since then he has sung Don Ottavio (Opera North/Diva Opera in France), Roderigo *Otello* (Opera North), Janek *The Makropulos Case* and Esquire *Parsifal* (English National Opera) Borsa *Rigoletto* and Pong *Turandot* (Scottish Opera), Dr Caius *Falstaff* (Opera Holland Park), Damon *Acis and Galatea*, Prunier *La Rondine* and Iro *The Return of Ulisses* (Iford Arts), title role Albert Herring (Mid Wales Opera), Tebaldo *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* (Chelsea Opera Group), Ecclitico *Il Mondo della Luna* (English Touring Opera) and Artemidoro in Salieri's *La grotta di Trofonio* (Bampton Classical Opera). He recently made his Italian debut singing Inquisitor/ Sultan Achmet in *Candide* (Opera de Firenze).

Christopher performs regularly in concert and his performances have taken him throughout the UK, and also to Europe and the Far East. Recent engagements include Beethoven Ninth Symphony with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Albert Hall and with the Philharmonia at the Lichfield Festival, Mozart Requiem and Messiah with the Orchestra of St John's Smith Square, and Messiah at Cadogan Hall with the London Chamber Orchestra.

**Oliver Dunn** studied at the Royal Northern College of Music, the Royal Academy of Music, and the National Opera Studio, where he was supported by the Lionel Anthony Charitable Trust. Awards include the 2011 Glyndebourne Donald A Anderson Prize, an Independent Opera Scholarship, and numerous awards at the RAM and the RNCM.

Most recent operatic performances include Marchese d'Orbigny in *La Traviata*



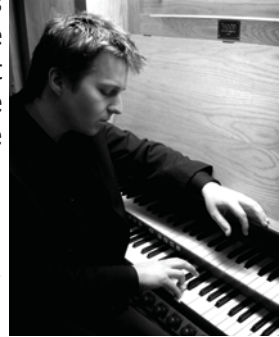
(Glyndebourne Festival) the lead role of Brother in *The House Taken Over* for the Aix-en-Provence Festival, Marcello in *La Boheme* and Junius in *The Rape of Lucretia* (Glyndebourne on Tour), Masetto in *Don Giovanni* (Opera North), Ned Keene in *Peter Grimes* with the Cambridge Philharmonic, 1st Mate in *Billy Budd*, Argive and Venegeance in *Medea* (English National Opera), Fiorello in *Il Barbieri di Siviglia* (Lille, Caen, Limoges, Reims and Dijon), Cascada in a semi staged version of *The Merry Widow* with the Philharmonia Orchestra and John Wilson at the Royal Festival Hall, Marcello for Silent Opera, and Lopez in *L'amant jaloux* (Bampton Classical Opera), as well as covering title role Don Giovanni and Baritone in *The Cautionary Tales* (Opera North), Donald in *Billy Budd* (ENO), Argante in *Rinaldo* and 1st Mate in *Billy Budd* (Glyndebourne Festival) amongst many other roles.

On the concert platform he has appeared extensively across Britain with a variety of orchestras and ensembles including The Hallé, The Philharmonia, The Hanover Band and Manchester Camerata. Oratorio performances include Mozart's *Vesperae Solennes de Confessore*, Bach *St Matthew Passion* (Christus) and *St John Passion* (Christus and Pilate), Mendelssohn *Elijah*, Handel *Messiah*, Haydn *Nelson Mass*, Rossini *Petite Messe Solennelle*, Puccini *Messa di Gloria*, Purcell *King Arthur* and Karl Jenkins' *The Armed Man*, conducted by the composer.

Oliver also performed concert excerpts of Disney's *The Jungle Book* and *The Lion King* with the RNCM Wind Orchestra at the Bridgewater Hall in which he played the roles of Baloo from the *Jungle Book* and Scar from *The Lion King*.

**Jonathan Scott** enjoys a hugely varied performing career on a diverse spectrum of keyboard instruments performing music which spans the entire classical repertoire. In addition to his career as pianist and organist Jonathan has a busy concert schedule with his pianist brother, Tom Scott, performing as Scott Brothers Duo.

Born in Manchester, Jonathan studied piano and organ at Chetham's School of Music before gaining a scholarship on both instruments to attend the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM). With the aid of a Countess of Munster Scholarship he was able to continue his studies in USA and Holland. Jonathan won the coveted Worshipful Company of Musicians WT Best Scholarship and gold medal, and is a Freeman of The City of London. He has been a member of the keyboard staff at RNCM since 2001.



Jonathan's recent performances have included concertos with BBC Philharmonic, Hallé Orchestra, Orchestra of Opera North, Royal Scottish National Orchestra and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Concert highlights include a solo recital at Mansion House, London on the new organ for Westminster Abbey, appearances at the BBC proms, mid-Atlantic performances on Queen Mary 2 and a series of performances as organ and piano soloist at The Royal Albert Hall, London. Jonathan is also Associate Artist of the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester where he gives a series of popular lunchtime organ recitals which returns this week on 24th March 2016 for a fourth series.

In collaboration with his brother, Tom Scott, Jonathan has released several CDs to great critical acclaim on the Scott Brothers Duo label. The discs have received wide international airplay and the duo's online performance videos have totalled over 1 million views. They have just released their second recording of Duos for Piano & Organ.

**Neil Provost** was born in Altrincham and involved in music through the amateur theatre at an early age. Starting piano lessons at age nine he progressed to the organ by age fourteen receiving lessons from Derrick Cantrell then of Manchester Cathedral.

He took his first parish post at St Mark's, Dunham just before his sixteenth birthday. At St Ambrose College, Halebarns he took a strong interest in choral conducting under the tutelage of John Chadwick and Michael English, who later became his organ tutor. Neil has gone on to develop his own unique style and methods in choral training and conducting.



He moved to St John the Divine, Brooklands in 1990 as Director of Music, training and directing a mixed choir. Whilst there, through Neil's training, a number of choristers gained places in cathedral choirs and he brought the choir up to sufficient standard to be invited to sing in Manchester Cathedral for Choral Evensong.

In 2000 Neil moved to Christchurch, Timperley where he has forged a musical link between Holy Angels Choir and Christchurch Choir and some eight years ago began many successful Palm Sunday presentations which have included Stainer's 'Crucifixion', Maunder's 'Olivet to Calvary', Faure's 'Requiem' and two world premieres; Robert Steadman's 'Requiem' and last year 'Via Crucis', libretto by Neil himself in collaboration with Robert Steadman who wrote the score. The combined choirs, with guests, have also sung together for many years at Christchurch for the Christmas Nine Lessons and Carols service.

The culmination of these efforts was the formation of Cantores Oecumenica (literal translation, singers ecumenical). Neil is Musical Director and Principal Conductor for Cantores Oecumenica.



## ***The Movements***

Hymn	<i>Sing, my tongue, the glorious battle</i>
1st Gospel	<i>The Last Supper</i>
Hymn	<i>The Heavenly Word proceeding forth</i>
2nd Gospel	<i>The Garden at Gethsemane</i>
Hymn	<i>Lord, when we bow before Thy Throne</i>
3rd Gospel	<i>Jesus Before the High Priest</i>
Hymn	<i>My God, I love Thee</i>
4th Gospel	<i>Jesus Before Pilate</i>
Hymn	<i>Faithful Cross! above all other</i>
5th Gospel	<i>The Crucifixion at Golgotha</i>
A Short Silence	
Hymn	<i>Bend thy boughs, O Tree of Glory!</i>

## 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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.

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.

Amen.

## 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 want 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 lovèd me, O ever-loving 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.

**- Silence is kept for a short time -**

## **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.

This performance has been given free of charge.

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.



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