

Minnesota Orchestra

Christopher Warren-Green, conductor

Anna Devin, soprano | Lawrence Zazzo, countertenor

Barry Banks, tenor | Derek Welton, bass-baritone

Minnesota Chorale, Kathy Saltzman Romey, artistic director

Holiday Concert

Friday, December 12, 2014, 8 pm | Central Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Saturday, December 13, 2014, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

George Frideric Handel

Messiah

ca. 60'

Sinfonia
Part I

I N T E R M I S S I O N

ca. 20'

George Frideric Handel

Messiah

ca. 60'

Part II
Part III

Please hold applause until the end of Part I, Part II and Part III.

Text appears on page 29.

The Saturday evening concert will be broadcast on Easter Sunday, April 5, 2015, on stations of [Minnesota Public Radio](#), including KSJN 99.5 FM in the Twin Cities.





Christopher Warren-Green, conductor

Christopher Warren-Green, music director and principal conductor of the London Chamber Orchestra and music director of the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra, works regularly with major orchestras in both Europe and North America. He was previously principal conductor of the Athens Camerata.

Minnesota Orchestra: He has led *Messiah* performances here in three previous seasons and next appears with the Orchestra in February 2015 as part of the Shakespeare Winterfest.

Recent, upcoming: This season Warren-Green appears with such ensembles as the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Bilkent Symphony Orchestra and Houston Symphony, and he joins the National Orchestra of Belgium on tour. Last summer he conducted at the Istanbul Music Festival.

Educator: Warren-Green plays a key role in Music Junction, a groundbreaking project which brings together young people from diverse backgrounds to

connect through music-making.

Of interest: He has conducted at many events for British royalty, including the 2011 wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton and the 80th birthday of Queen Elizabeth II.

More: harrisonparrott.com.



Anna Devin, soprano

Anna Devin, now welcomed for her Minnesota Orchestra debut, is one of today's brightest young sopranos, earning acclaim for her performances with major companies and orchestras throughout Europe and the U.S.

Currently: This season she joins the English Concert as Oberto in Handel's *Alcina* on tour in Europe and New York, and sings Morgana, from the same work, with the Russian National Orchestra. She returns to Covent Garden as Nanetta in Verdi's *Falstaff* and sings Michal in a new production of Handel's *Saul* with Glyndebourne Touring Opera. In concert she joins the Houston Symphony Orchestra

in Handel's *Messiah* and the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra in Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*, returns to the RTÉ NSO Dublin for New Year's Eve galas, and performs at Wigmore Hall with Classical Opera, with which she is an associate artist. **Recently:** Devin received critical acclaim for her performance in a new opera by Luke Bedford. She has also drawn applause with Scottish Opera, Garsington Opera, Glyndebourne Touring Opera and the Hallé Orchestra, the latter as part of the BBC Proms.

More: imgartists.com.



Lawrence Zazzo, countertenor

Lawrence Zazzo has appeared at many of the world's leading opera houses, from the Metropolitan Opera and La Monnaie to the Zürich Opera House, Oper Frankfurt and Opera di Roma, earning acclaim for his performances of both Baroque and contemporary music. These are his first performances with the Minnesota Orchestra.

Current season: Highlights of his 2014-15

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one-minute notes

Handel: *Messiah*

In the month of December, we often associate gracious acts of charity with the joyful holiday season. Thus it seems appropriate that Handel's great oratorio, *Messiah*, has become an integral part of Christmas celebrations, because it was written for inclusion in a series of Dublin concerts benefiting public causes. Handel was by far the most philanthropic composer of his time, and the first performance of *Messiah* in 1742 raised an impressive £400 for charity. Beginning in 1750, he led popular annual performances of the work for the benefit of London's Foundling Hospital Chapel, to which he donated a pipe organ in addition to bequeathing a copy of the score and parts to *Messiah*.

The German composer had spent most of his later years in London and was well known for his operatic and courtly compositions. Handel may not have considered himself a composer of sacred music, but it is reported that *Messiah* so moved him that after completing the "Hallelujah Chorus"—with tears streaming down his face—he declared: "I did think I did see all Heaven before me and the great God himself." Over the next 250 years *Messiah* secured a place as one of the most beloved compositions in the entire orchestral and choral repertoire, and as one of Handel's most enduring, and endearing, works.

season include singing Handel's *Semele* with both Concerto Köln and the Canadian Opera Company, Handel's *Theodora* with Early Music Vancouver, the world premiere of Rolf Riehm's *Sirenen* with Oper Frankfurt and debuting at Festival d'Aix-en-Provence in the title role of Weber's *Oberon*.

Opera highlight: Zazzo has had particular success in the title role of Handel's *Giulio Cesare* at the Metropolitan Opera, La Monnaie and the Opera national de Paris; the latter was released on DVD to acclaim.

Contemporary: He is also renowned for performances of modern music, having created characters in operas by Peter Eötvös, Jonathan Dove and Thomas Adès.

Discography: His newest album is his first orchestral recital disc, *A Royal Trio*, featuring music of Ariosti, Bononcini and Handel with La Nuova Musica.

More: harrisonparrott.com.



Barry Banks, tenor

Barry Banks has earned worldwide acclaim particularly for singing roles in the operas of Bellini, Rossini and Donizetti. He is now performing with the Minnesota Orchestra for the first time.

Currently: Highlights of his present season include his debut as Arnaldo in Rossini's *William Tell* with Welsh National Opera and a return to the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden as Don Narciso in Rossini's *Il turco in Italia*.

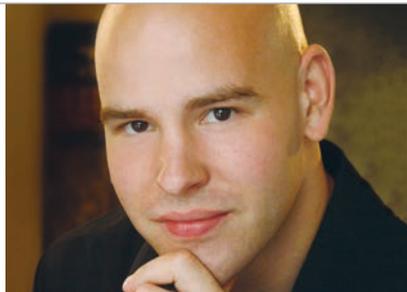
Opera: He has often performed at the Metropolitan Opera and has sung major roles at the Bayerische Staatsoper, Royal Danish Opera, Théâtre des Champs Elysées, Salzburg Festival and Santa Fe Festival. He also has a long association with English National Opera.

Concert: Banks has performed in the concert hall with such ensembles as the

London Symphony Orchestra, Munich Philharmonic and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Recordings: His discography includes numerous recordings in the Opera in English for Chandos, a DVD release of Armida from the Metropolitan Opera and an acclaimed solo recital disc, *Barry Banks Sings Bel Canto Arias*.

More: harrisonparrott.com.



Derek Welton, bass-baritone

Australian bass-baritone Derek Welton performs on major opera and concert stages around the world and has drawn notice as a major new voice in the operas of Wagner. He is now welcomed for his Minnesota Orchestra debut.

Recent, upcoming: This season he debuts at the Sächsische Staatskapelle Dresden as Graf Dominik in Strauss' *Arabella*; he also sings in two operas at Staatsoper Hamburg, making a role debut as Escamillo in Bizet's *Carmen* and creating the role of Regolo in the world premiere of Beat Furrer's *La bianca notte*. In addition, he performs with the Houston Symphony, Britten Sinfonia and Singapore Symphony.

Highlights: In past seasons he has debuted at such prominent opera houses and festivals as Opéra de Lille, Festspielhaus Baden-Baden, Salzburg Easter Festival and Teatro dell'Opera di Roma, Glyndebourne on Tour and the Beijing Music Festival. He has also sung with such orchestras as the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and London Symphony Orchestra.

Honors: In 2011 he was selected to join the prestigious Salzburg Festival Young Singers Project.

More: harrisonparrott.com.

Minnesota Chorale

Kathy Saltzman Romey, artistic director

Barbara Brooks, accompanist and artistic advisor

The Minnesota Chorale, the Minnesota Orchestra's principal chorus since 2004, is now in its 20th season under the leadership of Kathy Saltzman Romey. Founded in 1972, the Chorale is the state's preeminent symphonic chorus, performing regularly with both this Orchestra and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra.

Programs: Among the Chorale's initiatives are the acclaimed Bridges program, the Minneapolis Youth Chorus, Men in Music for high-school boys and InChoir for adults.

Engagements: Later this season the Chorale will join the Orchestra in performances of Verdi's Requiem and, with conductor Eric Whitacre, a program of American music.

More: mnchorale.org.

soprano

Sophie Amelkin
Sara Butwinick
Deborah Carbaugh
Monica deCausmeaker
Amanda K. Fitze
Michelle Hayes
Heather Hood
Shannon McGuire
Penny Meschke
Linda Neuman
Elizabeth M. Nordling

Krista L. Sandstrom
Karen R. Wasiluk
Jan Storhoff Weber

alto

Judy Arnstein
Sara Boss
Deyhdra Dennis-Weiss
Susan Sacquitte
Druck
Julie Schlueter
Engen
Jesse Fleming
Erica Perl
Barbara S. Prince
Deborah E. Richman

Sue Tuthill Schiess
Kathleen Stuebner
Elizabeth Sullivan

tenor

Claude Cassagne
Chris Crosby-Schmidt
John deCausmeaker
Rich Maier
Joshua McCallister
Jason Nicholson
David Nordli
Mike A. Pettman
Jeffrey J. Raehl
Patrick Romey
Mark L. Trease

bass

Andrew Beard
Peder Bolstad
David Goudzwaard-Vaught
Nathan Oppedahl
Bob Peskin
Nathan Petersen-Kindem
Michael P. Schmidt
Chad Shultis
Justin A. Staebell
Andrew Stoebig
Rick Wagner





George Frideric Handel

Born: February 23, 1685, Halle

Died: April 14, 1759, London

Messiah

By the spring of 1741 Handel's 30-year effort to make a success of Italian opera in London had come to a shuddering conclusion. He finally had to admit failure, and rumors circulated in London that he was about to leave England and return to Germany.

Relief came from an unlikely source. The Duke of Devonshire, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, invited Handel to Dublin to put on a series of concerts in support of various local charities. For Handel, Ireland was literally new territory, and he was glad to accept the invitation, get away from London for a while and seek new audiences. In addition to gathering earlier works for performance there, that summer he began work on a new oratorio that would have its premiere in Dublin.

at breakneck speed

This oratorio represented a new direction for Handel, who by no means considered himself a composer of sacred music. It was on a text assembled from the Bible and the Prayer Book Psalter by his longtime friend Charles Jennens. Handel worked with unbelievable speed: from the time he sat down in front of a blank sheet of paper until the completion of the full orchestral score of *Messiah*, just 24 days had elapsed—from August 22 to September 14. He then pressed on with his oratorio *Samson*, completing it by late October, and left almost

immediately, taking one of the packet boats that ran regularly from Chester to Ireland.

Handel's arrival in Dublin—on November 18, 1741—was very much like Haydn's would be in London precisely 50 years later. Both composers journeyed to a foreign land and discovered that they were famous. Both were feted, delighted by the quality of the performers and acclaimed by enthusiastic crowds in jammed halls. Just as Haydn would later do in London, Handel began his Dublin residency by performing earlier works, including *L'Allegro*, *Acis and Galatea*, *Esther* and *Alexander's Feast*. Not until he had been in Dublin for five months did Handel present his new oratorio: he led an open rehearsal of *Messiah* on April 9, 1742, and the official premiere followed four days later, on April 13.

success in ireland

It was a stunning success, and Dubliners struggled to get tickets. Neal's Musick Hall, where the premiere took place, had room for only 600, and so management came up with a shrewd solution. The day of the performance, *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* carried this admonition: "The Stewards of the Charitable Musical Society request the Favour of the Ladies not to come with Hoops this Day to the Musick-Hall in Fishamble-Street: the Gentlemen are desired to come without their swords." Thus slimmed down, 700 listeners were crammed into the hall, and the performance turned the handsome profit of 400 pounds for Mercer's Hospital, the Charitable Infirmary and the Charitable Music Society (for the relief of those imprisoned for debt). A second performance of *Messiah*, on June 13, was equally successful, and Handel left Ireland in August, eager to repeat that success in London.

It must have come as the worst possible surprise to the composer when the oratorio failed at its London premiere on March 23, 1743. Perhaps he should have seen it coming. That performance was preceded by a furor in the newspapers about his decision to present an oratorio on Biblical texts in a public theater, and Handel's performance was attacked as "blasphemous." A few subsequent performances had scarcely more success, and it was not until May 1, 1750, when Handel led *Messiah* as a benefit for the opening of the Hospital Chapel of the Foundling Hospital, his favorite charity, that the oratorio finally won favor.

By the time Handel died nine years later, in April 1759, *Messiah* had been performed 56 times in London and was on its way to achieving the status it enjoys today, that of a beloved icon.

nativity, crucifixion, resurrection

Messiah was originally composed for the Easter season,

at the same time...

In 1742, when *Messiah* premieres in Dublin:

- Britain's Prime Minister, Robert Walpole, resigns amid an election fraud scandal
- Benjamin Franklin invents the Franklin Stove, enabling American colonists to heat their homes with less wood
- London's first indoor swimming pool opens—for "Gentlemen" only
- Card-game pioneer Edmond Hoyle publishes *A Short Treatise on the Game of Whist*

“Handel is the greatest and ablest of all composers; from him I can still learn.”

– Ludwig van Beethoven
in 1827, at the end of his life

yet for two and a half centuries it has been a perennial event in Christmas celebrations.

Jennens structured his work around the three central events of Christianity: Part I is about the birth of Christ, Part II is about the crucifixion, and the final part is about the resurrection and the spreading of the gospel. Thus *Messiah* focuses essentially on Christianity’s three primary holy days: Christmas, Good Friday and Easter.

His arrangement of texts for *Messiah* was brilliant. Basic to his plan was his decision not to cast *Messiah* as drama—there is no narrative line here, no rising action, no climax. He began with the assumption that his audience already knew the story and required no telling; he then chose texts about specific incidents in the life of Christ, and these become a sequence of moments-along-the-way in one of the most famous and familiar of all stories, rather than an attempt to tell that story.

magnificent music

But Jennens’ text would have been long forgotten were it not for the magnificence of Handel’s music. Handel composed *Messiah* from many different kinds of music. From opera he retained the recitative and dramatic aria, though he shrewdly avoids making the arias too brilliant. In place of florid lines that might seem operatic and out of context for this subject, he blesses the soloists with some of the most appealing, straightforward melodies ever written—though these also can be brilliant.

The famous *Pastoral Symphony*, or *Pifa*, is derived from the *pifferari*, the music of the Italian shepherds who would make an annual Christmas pilgrimage to Rome to play wind instruments in imitation of the shepherds who watched over the Nativity. Handel is quite willing to paint pictures with his orchestra, as in the resounding brass of “The trumpet shall sound,” and in the stunning progress from the ominous B-minor murmurings of “For behold, darkness shall cover the earth” to the radiant G-major sunlight of “For unto us a Child is born.”

Yet the real glory of *Messiah* lies in its choruses, and Handel demands great versatility from his singers: their music ranges from the lyric to the brilliant (“And he shall purify”) to the dramatic (“Glory to God in the highest”) and—most impressively—to the great fugues (“And with his stripes,” “He trusted in God” and the concluding “Amen”).

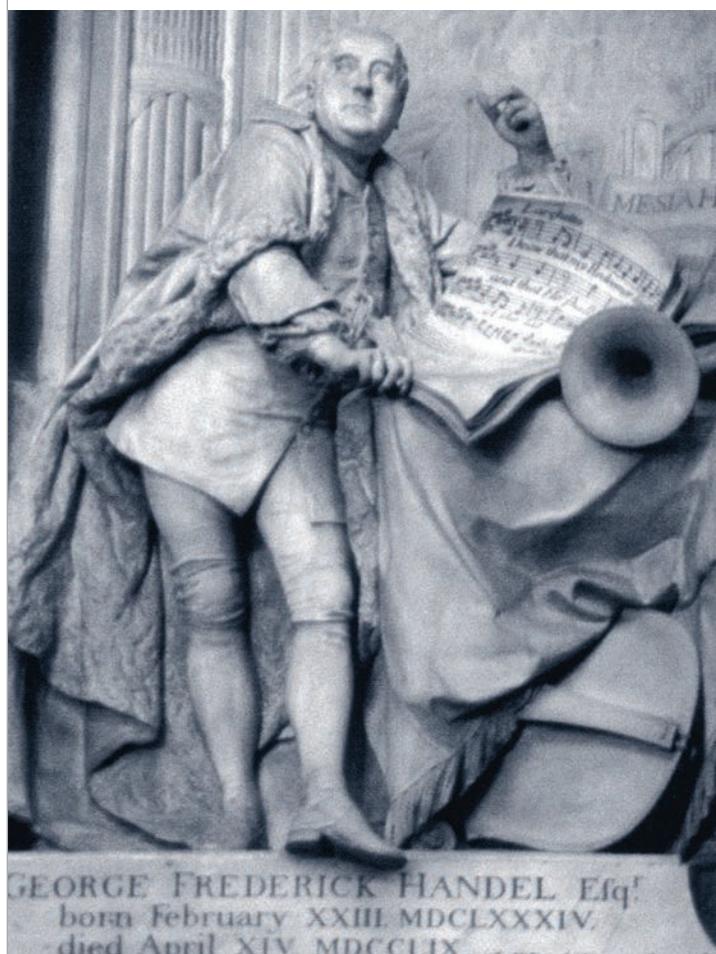
Even its creator could be overpowered by this music. As he completed the “Hallelujah Chorus,” Handel, tears streaming down his face, is reported to have told his manservant: “I did think I did see all Heaven before me and the great God himself.”

Instrumentation:

vocal soloists and mixed chorus with orchestra comprising 2 oboes, bassoon, 2 trumpets, timpani, harpsichord, organ, theorbo and strings

Program note by **Eric Bromberger**.

Handel’s memorial in Westminster Abbey, London.



PART I

Sinfonia (Overture)**Tenor Arioso and Aria**

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God, Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem; and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness. "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill made low, the crooked straight, and the rough places plain.

Chorus

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

Bass-Baritone Recitative

Thus saith the Lord of Hosts: yet once a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come. The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.

Countertenor Aria

But who may abide the day of His coming, and who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire.

Chorus

And He shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

Countertenor Recitative and Aria

Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Emmanuel, "God with us." O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain; O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

Bass-Baritone Arioso and Aria

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee, and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and the kings to the brightness of thy rising. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: and they that dwell in the land of

the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

Chorus

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

Pifa (Pastoral Symphony)**Soprano Recitatives and Ariosos**

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night.

And lo! the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, "Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying:

Chorus

Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will towards men.

Soprano Aria

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee. He is the righteous Savior, and He shall speak peace unto the heathen.

Countertenor Recitative

Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.

Soprano Aria

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; and He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

Soprano and Countertenor Aria

Come unto Him, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and He will give you rest. Take His yoke upon you, and learn of Him; for He is meek and lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Chorus

His yoke is easy and His burthen is light.

INTERMISSION

PART II

Chorus

Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.

Countertenor Aria

He was despised, despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.

Chorus

Surely, He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him.

And with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Tenor Arioso

All they that see Him, laugh Him to scorn, they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying:

Chorus

He trusted in God that He would deliver Him, let Him deliver Him, if He delight in Him.

Tenor Recitative and Arioso

Thy rebuke hath broken His heart; He is full of heaviness. He looked for some to have pity on Him, but there was no man, neither found He any to comfort Him.

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow.

Soprano Recitative

He was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of thy people was he stricken.

Tenor Aria

But thou didst not leave his soul in hell, nor didst thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption.

Chorus

Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts: he is the King of glory.

The Lord gave the word, great was the company of the preachers.

Soprano Aria

How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.

Chorus

Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world.

Bass-Baritone Aria

Why do the nations so furiously rage together: why do the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth do rise up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed.

Chorus

Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yokes from us.

Tenor Recitative and Aria

He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn, the Lord shall have them in derision.

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.

Chorus

Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. The kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever. King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, Hallelujah!

PART III

Soprano Aria

I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep.

Chorus

Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

Bass-Baritone Recitative and Aria

Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.

The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

Chorus

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever.

Amen.

Text compiled by **Charles Jennens**
from Biblical texts.

