



# 2010 Bach

THE COMPLETE CHORAL CANTATAS



## CANTATAS I 20 February 2005

BWV 1, Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern  
BWV 29, Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir  
BWV 191, Gloria in excelsis

*Jodie McGuren, Soprano (BWV1 & 29)*

*Kristen Butchatsky, Soprano (BWV191)*

*Derek Ward, Countertenor*

*Simon Gilkes, Tenor (BWV1 & 29)*

*Nathan Gilkes, Tenor (BWV191)*

*Theodore Piekos, Baritone*

*Christopher Shepard, Conductor*

### Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern



How bright and fair the Morningstar,  
The shining messenger afar,  
To hail the seed of Jesse.  
Thou son of David's royal line,  
Beloved Lord and Master mine,  
My heart and soul possessing.  
Kindly, friendly,  
Fair and noble, rich in bounty,  
Faithless never.  
High enthroned above forever.

What joy my Saviour brings to me,  
My Alpha and Omega He,  
Beginning and my ending.  
To dwell in Paradise with Him,  
Enthroned among the Seraphim,  
In blessedness transcending.  
Amen! Amen!  
Come, Thou fairest crown of gladness,  
Wait no longer!  
Thou for whom the world is yearning.

# TRANSLATIONS



## **BWV 1: Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern**

### *1. Chorus*

How beautiful beams the morning star  
With truth and blessing from the Lord,  
The darling root of Jesse!  
Thou, David's son of Jacob's stem,  
My bridegroom and my royal king,  
Art of my heart the master,  
Lovely,  
Kindly,  
Bright and glorious, great and righteous,  
rich in blessings,  
High and most richly exalted.

### *2. Tenor Recitative*

O thou true Son of Mary and of God,  
O thou the king of all the chosen,  
How sweet to us this word of life,  
By which e'en earliest patriarchs  
Both years and days did number,  
Which Gabriel with gladness there  
In Bethlehem did promise!  
O sweet delight, O heav'nly bread,  
Which neither grave, nor harm, nor death  
From these our hearts can sunder.

### *3. Soprano Aria*

O fill now, ye flames, both divine and celestial,  
The breast which to thee doth in faith ever strive!  
The souls here perceive now the strongest of feelings  
Of love most impassioned  
And savor on earth the celestial joy.

### *4. Baritone Recitative*

No earthly gloss, no fleshly light  
Could ever stir my soul;  
A sign of joy to me from God has risen,  
For now a perfect gift,  
The Savior's flesh and blood,  
Is for refreshment here.  
So must, indeed,  
This all-excelling blessing,  
To us eternally ordained  
And which our faith doth now embrace,  
To thanks and praise bestir us.

### *5. Tenor Aria*

Let our voice and strings resounding  
Unto thee  
Evermore  
Thanks and sacrifice make ready.

Heart and spirit are uplifted,  
All life long  
And with song,  
Mighty king, to bring thee honor.

### *6. Chorale*

I am, indeed, so truly glad  
My treasure is the A[lf]pha and O[m]ega,  
Beginning and the ending;  
He'll me, indeed, to his great praise  
Receive into his paradise,  
For this I'll clap my hands now.  
Amen!  
Amen!  
Come, thou lovely crown of gladness,  
be not long now,  
I await thee with great longing.

## **BWV 29: Wir danken dir Gott, wir danken dir**

### *1. Sinfonia*

### *2. Chorus*

We give thee thanks, God, we give thee thanks  
and proclaim to the world thy wonders.

### *3. Tenor Aria*

Hallelujah, strength and might  
To the name of God Almighty!  
Zion is his city still,  
Where he doth his dwelling keep,  
Where he still with our descendants  
Keeps our fathers' covenant.

### *4. Baritone Recitative*

Praise God! We are so blest!  
God is still our sure confidence,  
His shield, his help and light  
Protect the town and all its mansions,  
His pinions hold the walls unshaken.  
He gives us ev'rywhere his blessing,  
And faithfulness which kisseth peace  
Must evermore  
With justice meet together.  
Where is a people such as we,  
Whom God so near and gracious is?

### *5. Soprano Aria*

Remember us with thine affection,  
Embrace us in thy mercy's arms!  
Bless all those who us now govern,

Those who lead us, guard us, guide us,  
Bless those who obey as well!

## PROGRAMME NOTES

### 6. *Aria Recitative with Choir*

Forget not further still with thine own hand  
Prosperity to give us;  
Thus shall  
Now this our town and this our land,  
Here with thine honor filled,  
With sacrifice and thanks extol thee,  
And all the people shall say:  
Amen!

### 7. *Alto Arioso*

Hallelujah, strength and might  
To the name of God Almighty!

### 8. *Chorale*

Now laud and praise with honor  
God Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!  
That he in us make flourish  
What he to us in mercy pledged,  
That we should firmly trust him,  
In full on him relying,  
Sincerely in him hoping;  
That our heart, mind and will  
To him with joy be fastened;  
To this now let us sing:  
Amen, we shall achieve it,  
We trust with all our heart.

## **BWV 191: Gloria in excelsis**

### 1. *Chorus*

Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace,  
good will towards men.

### 2. *Soprano & Tenor Duet*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Ghost.

### 3. *Chorus*

As it was in the beginning, is now,  
and ever shall be, world without end.  
Amen.

*Translations © copyright Z. Philip Ambrose*

## **BWV 1: Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern**

When the editors of the Bach-Gesellschaft, the first edition of the complete works of Bach, began their project in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, they had hoped to begin with the B Minor Mass. That score being unavailable, they opted instead to commence the project by choosing ten of Bach's greatest cantatas. It was because of this, not for any reason of chronology, that *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern* was given the honour of being listed as BWV1. In fact, it was written towards the end of the second Leipzig cantata cycle in 1725, composed for the Feast of the Annunciation, which fell on Palm Sunday in that year.

In the reading for the day, Luke 1:26-38, the angel Gabriel appears to Mary and tells her that she will bear God's son. This text has an obvious connection with Christmas, and indeed, Bach's cantata uses Phillip Nicolai's justly famous Advent hymn as the departure point for this cantata. Bach chooses to highlight the theme of kingship in the instrumentation of this cantata, using horns, which are associated both with the "call" of the annunciation, and with kingship. The use of the oboes da caccia find a later expression in the Christmas Oratorio, where they represent the bucolic colour of the shepherds. Even the metrical design of the opening movement, redolent of a pastorale, finds a later echo in the Christmas Oratorio.

This intricate and beautiful movement combines four different musical themes: kingship (horns and oboes da caccia); the opening instrumental motto derived from the chorale tune; the morningstar, illustrated by the filigree of the two solo violins; and the chorale tune itself, sung as a slow cantus firmus by the sopranos.

The first recitative links the music directly to the appearance of Gabriel, followed by a joyful and florid soprano aria. As is often the case in Bach's sacred music, spiritual "fire" is illustrated with melismatic semi-quaver writing. The bass recitative which follows refers directly to the "Morgenstern" of the chorale—the Morningstar, or light from heaven. The tenor's stately, almost minuet-like answer is a song of praise full of imagery about singing and music.

Nearly every Bach cantata finishes with a 4-part chorale, a hymn that would have been well-known by the congregation, although it is not believed that they joined the choir at the end of the cantata. These settings, though always intricate in their harmonisations, are generally quite straightforward, with the orchestra doubling the choir parts. BWV1 provides a wonderful exception to Bach's usual practice. In this setting, the second horn plays an obbligato fanfare-like accompaniment, recapitulating both the idea of Gabriel's annunciation and the kingship of God, as well as

echoing the violin figuration from the opening movement, representing the morningstar.



### **BWV 29: Wir danken dir Gott, wir danken dir**

Bach's biographers are always quick to point out that he was a somewhat prickly employee, leaving some jobs because of disagreements or dissatisfaction, and spending the final years of his life locked in an insurmountable conflict with his headmaster at the Thomasschule in Leipzig. But this is not entirely fair to Bach. Part of his professional difficulties in the commercial city of Leipzig was that he ultimately answered to two masters who themselves didn't agree about much: the church council and the town council.

As part of his duties to the town council, Bach provided music to celebrate the election. This cantata had its first performance on Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> August 1731. Signalling its importance to Bach, it was performed at least twice again, in 1739 and 1749, when it was very likely the last cantata that Bach performed in his lifetime.

The text of the cantata combines thankfulness to God with an almost jingoistic sense of God as Leipzig's protector. These were heady days for this famous German trade fair city, and it is not surprising that the city fathers saw themselves as having a "most favoured nation" status. As the bass recitative questions, "Where is there a people such as we, to whom God is so near and merciful?"

Fewer than twenty extant cantatas begin with a sinfonia, a free-standing orchestral introduction—and few are as festive as the opening organ concerto of BWV29. This is a direct and complete parody of the first movement of the E Major Violin Partita, a brilliant work that Bach used again later in the Wedding Cantata. This is a particularly fine reworking of the idiomatically violinistic writing. It is thought that Bach himself would have played the solo organ part.

The thanksgiving chorus also reappeared later in Bach's life, signalling the esteem in which he held the movement, when he transformed it into the *Gratias agimus tibi* and *Dona nobis pacem* of the B Minor Mass. At first glance, it is typical of Bach's *stile antico* writing, in which he imitates the Palestrina-like Renaissance motets. These tend to have instruments double the vocal parts *colla parte* and are devoid of the concerto-type ebullience associated with Baroque music. But after establishing the Renaissance flavour, Bach adds trumpets and timpani later in the piece, both doubling the singers and adding their own voices as they develop the musical material.

The tenor aria celebrates God's strength and offers praise to God; Bach literally highlights the word "highest" by taking the tenor to the top of his range for this word. The

comparison of Leipzig to Zion is evident in the second half of this aria; a litany of how God shows Leipzig his favour follows in the bass recitative. In the lovely, lilting *siciliano* that follows, the soprano shows more humility, asking for blessing and mercy and guidance for the town's leaders. The alto recitative is essentially a prayer for the town council, answered by the citizens singing "Amen." Interestingly, Bach recapitulates the tenor aria—a rare practice for him—by having the alto sing the first part of that aria verbatim, though in a higher key.

Just as in BWV1, the brass provide a fanfare to the closing chorale, in another departure from Bach's usual technique. This is a particularly bright hymn, pitched at the very top of all the singers' and instrumentalists' range, affirming the townsfolk's belief in God and their city.



### **BWV 191: Gloria in excelsis**

Like the chorus from BWV29, the music in this cantata is also found in the B Minor Mass. In this case, however, the parody is in the other direction: Bach turned to the *Missa* 1733 in 1745, when he compiled this cantata to celebrate the Peace of Dresden, which ended the Second Silesian War. It was performed on Christmas Day, 1745.

The first movement is almost identical to the text of the Mass, though it is interesting to note the slight changes, which are a result of the differing syntax. In this case, the biblical text is the words of the angels at the Nativity from Luke, as opposed to the liturgical Gloria. The triumphant, trumpet-driven opening section highlights the "glory", whereas the more pleading fugue of the second section places the emphasis on "peace." For Leipzig, which would have suffered during the war, one can only imagine how deeply meaningful this sentiment would have felt in 1745.

The other two movements, also from the B Minor Mass, are simply the doxology, so the words are actually quite different from the original text. The soprano, tenor and flute pass around a descending four-note motto throughout their movement. This alternation originally illustrated the son proceeding from the father, a meaning that is lost here.

The full orchestra and chorus returns in the final movement, one of the most florid and exciting choral movements Bach ever wrote. Like the first movement, a concertato-style opening section gives way to a fugue, this one spilling over with fast melismas in all five voice parts. The whole fugue is repeated with the orchestra adding to the texture, bringing this cantata celebrating both Christmas and the end of a dreaded war to a spectacular finish.

*C.P. Shepard*



## Bach Cantatas

The Bach cantatas: The holy grail. The brass ring. The golden fleece. They are to choral musicians what the complete Beethoven sonatas are to pianists. What the Ring cycle is to opera aficionadi. What the collected Shakespeare is to actors. Although only two hundred of the purported three hundred of them are extant, they still form a complete oeuvre. In their thousand-plus movements can be found all the forms of music then available. They are an encyclopedia, a universe of music, a total education. The rare opportunity to perform all of Bach's vast choral output takes the performers and audience on a journey of Bach's musical language, a landscape equalled by only a few other composers and exceeded by none.

Bach was thirty-eight years old when he accepted the job he would hold for the rest of his life, essentially serving as the town Music Director in Leipzig. Among other things, he would oversee the music programmes at the city's major churches, in particular Thomaskirche and Nicolaikirche. He would also be one of the highest-ranking members of the teaching staff at Thomasschule, where he would train the boys to sing in the Sunday services, spreading their services across the city's four main churches. But the single largest part of his job for the final twenty-seven years of his life—and the monumental task for which his work in Leipzig is best remembered—was the composition of some three hundred cantatas.

Most of the cantatas are about twenty minutes long. In the Lutheran church service, they served to reflect on the bible readings of the day, and many cantatas are based on a relevant chorale whose significance would have been instantly meaningful to the Leipzig parishioners. Although there was not a set form, most cantatas begin with a choral movement, followed by two or three solo arias, often linked to recitatives. Most cantatas finish with a hymn.



## The Concerts

Beginning in February 2005, the Sydneian Bach Choir and Orchestra will begin a six-year project to perform all of Bach's choral cantatas. Although posterity has given us two hundred cantatas, fifty of these are solo cantatas, in which the only choral participation is the closing chorale. We will explore the 150 choral cantatas, those cantatas in

which there is at least one freestanding choral movement. Each of the concerts, which will take place at 4.00 on Sunday afternoons in Sydney Grammar School's Big Schoolroom, will be approximately 90 minutes long.

The performance order of the BACH 2010 cantatas is based on the liturgical season for which they were composed. In 2005, we will begin with the Advent and Christmas cantatas, working our way through the church calendar in subsequent years.

The first concert, however, is more of a festive "sampler." Though the numbering of the BWV (Bach's catalogue of works) is essentially outdated and meaningless, it still seemed appropriate to begin with BWV1, if only as a nod to the 19<sup>th</sup> century musicians who "rediscovered" Bach. The fact that Bach reused the music from BWV29 and BWV191 at other times in his life gives an indication of his own high regard for that music, so we have chosen these two especially festive cantatas with which to begin.



## The Choir and Orchestra

There are different kinds of "authenticity." One fact about Bach's life in Leipzig that often goes underexplored is that his job was based at the school attached to Thomaskirche. His church choir was composed of the boys he taught, who sang all parts from treble to bass. The boys remained at school longer in Bach's day, however, so many of the tenors and basses would have been in their late teens and early twenties. Because he was perennially short of singers, Bach also augmented the choir with young men from the university. All arias were sung by the male choristers.

As is true of most modern choirs, the Sydneian Bach Choir includes both women and men, and the average age is much older than that of the Thomasschule boys! But we will also include current Grammar boys in the choir, and on a few occasions each year, the SGS Schola Cantorum will perform. This group, made up of school-age boys, is a much closer approximation to Bach's choir, though significantly larger.

Like Bach's choir, his orchestra, too, was a composite of ages and stages of musical development. He had boys from Thomasschule playing in the orchestra; we will rotate through a large number of advanced players from Grammar. He had university students from his Collegium Musicum; we will invite back Old Sydneians to join in performances. And like Bach's Stadtpfeifers, the professional "town-pipers" for whom the most difficult wind and brass parts were written, we will be joined by staff members and professional musicians from Sydney.

Part of the purpose of this project is to introduce Grammar instrumentalists to the glory of Bach's music. Because of

this, we will usually perform on modern instruments, though with a commitment to incorporating the essential principles of Baroque performance practice. But we are also very pleased to welcome La Folia, an early-music ensemble from the Sydney Conservatorium, to join us in this project.



### **The Importance of the Cantatas**

But why perform all of the cantatas? Surely there is a group of cantatas that could be performed, representing the best of the lot? It seems that with Bach, there is no shortcut, something about which some of the world's most eminent Bach proponents agree. Albert Schweitzer, the great humanist and Bach scholar, wrote that in order to perform one cantata, you need to perform all of them. Helmuth Rilling was the first conductor to record all of Bach's cantatas, a project begun in 1971 and lasting nearly twenty years. He has said that "only if you know Bach's cantatas can you say that you really know Bach." John Eliot Gardiner, one of the world's leading Bach conductors, took his Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra on a Bach Pilgrimage in 2000, when they performed all of Bach's cantatas in a year. During that project, Gardiner wrote, "One source of constant amazement during this tour is the sheer variety and beauty of the music: week after week Bach surprises us with one masterpiece after another, and at the end of each week's concerts—though one is sad to have to say goodbye to the outgoing cantatas, one can hardly wait to begin rehearsals for the next programme."



### **"Deciphering Bach"**

Particularly for the choir, one of the great joys of this project is being able to spend time examining Bach's musical language in greater detail. Time and again, we see in Bach's vocal music various figures representing different ideas, both material and theological. A certain rhythm might represent joy. A combination of different notes might represent the cross or death. A certain leap might indicate prayer. A certain chord progression might indicate descent.

As part of our dedication to the exploration of Bach's language, we will choose one cantata in each concert to look at in greater detail, performing small excerpts and teasing out different elements of the complex tapestry of Bach's writing. I am indebted to my teacher Helmuth Rilling for this model of teaching, and I hope that the examination of the cantatas in greater detail can serve as a springboard for the audience's own exploration of Bach's music.

### **Bach at Grammar**

Since our first Bach Festival in 2001, the music of Johann

Sebastian Bach has occupied a place of special importance at Sydney Grammar School. Part of this is simply Bach's universal appeal; we programme the music carefully, beginning with the more immediately attractive of Bach's works, and proceeding to the more arcane as the boys understand more of Bach's compositional style. There is also an intellectual quality to Bach's music that appeals to the boys; there always seems to be a hidden meaning in Bach's music, and the deciphering of that code provides the budding musician with a range of intellectual challenges.

Quite apart from the importance of Bach's music itself, there is an aspect of BACH 2010 that is designed specifically for the pupils of Sydney Grammar School. In a school in which a sense of intellectual adventure and a commitment to one's endeavours are highly prized, we hope that this massive project might inspire the boys to pursue their own aspirations with single-mindedness. We hope that, at least for some of the boys, this project might serve as a blueprint for later in their own lives.



### **Bach in Sydney**

For a lover of Bach's music, this is a tremendously exciting time to be part of the music community in Sydney. The renaissance of Baroque music in the last decade has seen the rise of many outstanding ensembles, both instrumental and choral. 2005 is a particularly exciting year for the Bach devotee: in addition to the start of our own cantata cycle, the Sydney Philharmonia Choirs will be performing over thirty cantatas in a series of ten concerts this year. Accompanied by period instruments and featuring a slate of outstanding soloists, these concerts will be de rigeur for all lovers of Bach's music.

*C.P. Shepard*



**SYDNEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL**



# PERFORMERS

## **Jodie McGuren, Soprano**

After completing her Bachelor of Music Education at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music in 1995, Jodie McGuren took up a classroom teaching position for the next four years at Cranbrook School. After completing operatic study in England and an Italian language degree in Italy, Jodie returned to Sydney to pursue a career in singing. She has performed roles in *The Magic Flute* and *Dido and Aeneas* and is currently studying various coloratura roles with Dr Rowena Cowley. Apart from opera, Jodie performs regularly as a soloist with the Sydneian Festival Choir, The American-Briton Society, and St Paul's College (Victoriana). In 2002 and 2003, she was a semi-finalist in the MacDonald's Operatic Aria competition.

Jodie has been soprano soloist in a number of works with the Sydneian Bach Choir, including the Mozart C Minor Mass, Bach's B Minor Mass and the Monteverdi Vespers. She currently teaches singing at Sydney Grammar School and the Ascham School, as well as running a private studio.

## **Kristen Butchatsky, Soprano**

Kristen Butchatsky completed a Bachelor of Music with first class honours at UNSW in 2000, while studying singing with Geoffrey Chard and Neil Easton. From 2001-2003, she worked full-time with the Music Performance Unit at UNSW, and continued to develop vocally. In early 2004, Kristen began vocal studies with Jane Edwards, and also enjoyed being a part of Pacific Opera's production of Humperdinck's *Hansel & Gretel*. Musical highlights in recent years include performing the soprano solos for Haydn's *Paukenmesse* with UNSW's Collegium Musicum in 2004, and Handel's *Messiah*, Mozart's *Requiem* and Haydn's *Theresienmesse* in 2002. In 2003, Kristen had the pleasure of directing UNSW's Burgundian Consort (chamber vocal ensemble), and being a chorister and soloist for the Sydneian performance of Bach's B Minor Mass. She is very glad to have a second opportunity to perform this lovely duet.

## **Derek Ward, Countertenor**

Derek Ward graduated from the University of New South Wales with a MSc in mathematics in 1987 and also has an A.Mus.A in flute performance. He has taught mathematics at Sydney Grammar School for the last fifteen years. His great passion however is singing and he was for many years in the choir at Christ Church St Laurence and was a soloist on their recording of Victoria's *Missa Surge Propera*. He has written music for the choir including a mass, a setting for evensong and several motets and carols. In 1996 he was locum conductor at St James Church King Street for several months, and is currently a member of the choir at that historic Sydney church. More recently he has sung in the 'Australian Brandenburg Orchestra' Choir in the Coronation and Noël! Noël! series.

Derek has sung various solos in services, concerts and in recordings for ABC radio. These include verse anthems by Byrd and Gibbons, the Allegri *Miserere* and the Scarlatti *Stabat Mater*. In 1996 he was a soloist in Arvo Pärt's *Passio*, sung in the presence of the composer. He was also a member of the Tudor Four, a chamber choir specialising in sacred music, which won all open choral awards in the 1996 McDonald's Performing Arts Challenge. More recently, he was the alto soloist in performances of Handel's *Messiah* in 1998 and 2000 and, with the Sydneian Bach Choir, the Bach St John Passion and B Minor Mass.

## **Simon Gilkes, Tenor**

Simon Gilkes attended Sydney Grammar School, where he sang a number of solos with the Schola Cantorum and Grammarphones. He earned his A.Mus in 2003, and is currently studying singing with Barry Ryan at the Sydney Conservatorium as part of his Bachelor of Music course. While at Grammar, Simon sang the role of Aeneas in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. He is a foundation member of Back in Black, a men's a cappella group that recently performed on a tour to Europe and America.

Simon has performed a number of Bach solos with Grammar ensembles and the Sydneian Bach Choir, including tenor solos in the Magnificat and the B Minor Mass, as well as the Monteverdi Vespers. In January 2005, he completed a course in German language and singing in Vienna.

## **Nathan Gilkes, Tenor**

An Old Sydneian, Nathan recently completed a Bachelor of Music at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. Nathan has studied voice with Barry Ryan and has performed with many choral groups in and around Sydney including the Sydneian Festival Choir, the Willoughby Symphony Choir, Springwood Choral Society, St Swithun's Church Choir, Pymble, the choirs of SCEGGS Darlinghurst, and the Georgian Singers; in works such as *Messiah*, Vaughan Williams' *Mass in G Minor*, Brahms' *Liebeslieder Waltzes*, and Stainer's *Crucifixion*. He has performed tenor solos in Bach's B Minor Mass and the Monteverdi Vespers with the Sydneian Bach Choir.

Nathan graduated from NIDA in music theatre in 2002. His stage roles include Tony in *West Side Story*, Albert Peterson in *Bye Bye Birdie* and Alfred/Sam in *Romance/Romance*, as well as serving as musical director and conductor for several other productions, as well as serving as Music Director of the a cappella group Back in Black. Nathan is a teacher of singing and acting in music theatre, at the Julie Melrose School of Dance, and at his own studio. He conducts the choir at Sydney Grammar School's St Ives Preparatory School and North Sydney Boys' High School.

## **Theodore Piekos, Baritone**

A senior member of the teaching staff of Sydney Grammar School, Theodore Piekos has been associated with a wide range of musical organisations in Sydney for over three decades. He was the conductor of the Sydney University Musical Society and worked for many years with Peter Seymour both at Grammar and with the Sydney Philharmonia Choirs in preparing choristers for such conductors as Sir David Willcocks, Richard Bonyngé and Sir Charles Mackerras. Theodore has sung with many choirs in Sydney, and holds a master's degree from the University of New South Wales.

Currently the School's Registrar, Theodore has served as Acting Music Master on a number of occasions, and is Subject Master Emeritus. He performed the role of Pontius Pilate in Bach's St John Passion with the Sydneian Bach Choir in 2001. He gave the opening lecture for the inaugural Sydney Grammar School Bach Festival in 2001, and will do so again in 2005.



## **Christopher Shepard, Conductor**

Foundation conductor of the Sydneian Bach Choir, Christopher Shepard is Director of Music at Sydney Grammar School, and

holds degrees in Music Education (piano) and Choral Conducting from the Hartt School of Music and Yale University. He has studied conducting with Marguerite Brooks, James Jordan and Helmuth Rilling, and Baroque performance practice with Jaap Schroeder, Paul Brainard and Roslyn Tureck.

Before moving to Sydney in 1996, Chris was Head of Fine and Performing Arts at the Taft School (USA), as well as conducting many choirs and orchestras in the greater New York metropolitan area. He has conducted the SBS Youth Orchestra on several occasions, including the Brahms German Requiem and a televised broadcast of Bernstein's Chichester Psalms. With the Sydneian Bach Choir, he has conducted several Bach works, including the St John Passion and B Minor Mass.

In addition to his work in Sydney, Chris is Music Director of the Hotchkiss Summer Chamber Program, an intensive chamber music program for advanced young players and singers from around the world, held each July in America's Berkshire Mountains. As Director of the program, he conducts the chamber orchestra and teaches alongside several guest musicians, including the Tokyo String Quartet, Ying Quartet and the Philadelphia Singers.



### Sydneian Bach Choir

The Sydneian Bach Choir was formed in 2000 as part of the Sydneian Festival Choir, in order to raise money for local charities

#### Sydneian Bach Choir

##### Soprano I

Eleanor Babcock  
Janet Bagnall\*  
Georgina Bitcon  
Shamistha De Soysa  
Jodie McGuren\*

##### Soprano II

Elizabeth Barrett  
Katherine Bartlett  
Robin Carter  
Rachel Dulson  
Sally Glover  
Jane Phillips

##### Alto

Jane Boyd  
Robyn Bradley  
Fiona Charlton  
Ricky Davis  
Lisa Dow  
Prue Gibbs  
Su-Lin Leong  
Sandy Libling  
Helen Pedersen  
Robyn Tupman

##### Tenor

Marcus Bartley Johns, OS  
Nicholas Bartz, VI  
Christopher Bradley, OS

Nicolas Chen, OS  
Christopher Davidoff, OS  
Antony Freeman, VI  
Nathan Gilkes, OS  
Philip Moore, OS  
Christopher Nobbs, OS  
Roger Pitcher\*  
Mathew Roberts, OS

##### Bass

Peter Gilkes, OS  
Greg Howard\*  
Daniel King, OS  
Robert Marks  
Christopher May, OS  
Peter Phillips, OS  
Dan Potts  
Daniel Tess  
Charles Voyagis, OS

##### Répétiteurs

Fiona McCabe  
Sally Glover  
Robin Carter

through fundraising concerts. Although their repertoire is wide and varied, the fifty voice Bach Choir uses the choral music of J.S. Bach as its touchstone. In residence at Sydney Grammar School, the choir performs the closing work of the School's biennial Bach Festival, including Bach's St John Passion and B Minor Mass. They have also performed the music of Schütz, Taverner, Mendelssohn, Whitacre and many others, and gave the Australian premiere of Shostokovich's Rayok as part of a new music festival at the University of Sydney. Each year, the choir commissions new works from Australian composers, including Anna Jacobs, Richard Charlton and James Humberstone.

In combination with the Sydneian Festival Choir, they have performed several large works for choir and orchestra, including the Brahms Requiem and Orff's Carmina Burana. The Bach Choir sang Mozart's Mass in C Minor with the Nova Chamber Orchestra in 2003, and performed the Monteverdi Vespers (1610) in 2004 as part of the Organ Festival inaugurating Sydney Grammar School's new Mander organ.

In December 2004, the Bach Choir travelled to Venice, where they performed sections of the Monteverdi Vespers at San Marco; to Leipzig, where they performed in Bach's churches; and to America, where they met with renowned Bach expert Christoph Wolff of Harvard University. In addition to the BACH 2010 project, they will also join forces with the choirs of Sydney Grammar School for a performance of Benjamin Britten's Saint Nicolas at the Sydney Opera House in September 2005.

#### Sydneian Bach Orchestra

##### Flute

Rebecca Steel\*  
Aditya Vyas, OS

##### Oboe

Leisa Radford  
Emmanuel Cassimatis, IV

##### Cor Anglais

Andrew Malec\*  
Timothy Lee, V

##### French Horn

Philip Wilson\*  
Catherine Moth\*

##### Trumpet

Andrew Evans  
David Pye\*  
David Wilton, V

##### Timpani

Atticus Dow, VI

##### Solo Organ

Robert Wagner, OS\*

##### Continuo Organ

Fiona McCabe

#### Harpichord

Christopher Berensen

#### Violin I

Carolyn Watson\*  
Andrew Luboski, OS  
Benjamin Chan, VI  
Victor Tiong, VI

#### Violin II

Trevor Addison\*  
Robert Knight, V  
Jeremy Chew, IV  
Jehan Kanga, OS

#### Viola

Georgina Price\*  
Kim Waldoock\*

#### Cello

Patricia McMeekin\*

#### Double Bass

David Campbell, OS\*

\* SGS staff

OS indicates Old Sydneian  
(old boy) Roman numeral  
indicates Form in School