

FUTURE CONCERTS

Date	Saturday 14th June 2008 at 8.00 pm
Event	Mostly Madrigals: A selection of part songs with summer in mind. Joyful and lighthearted, this concert will offer a feast of choral music, both recent and traditional.
Venue	Holy Trinity Church, Cookham SL6 9SN
Cantorum's Summer Concert this year will be conducted by Ian Taylor	

Date	Saturday, 4th October 2008 at 8.00 pm
Event	Vivaldi works for choir and orchestra, together with Vivaldi <i>Concerto in A Minor for Two Violins</i> , featuring nationally acclaimed local soloists Alexandra and Charlotte Reid.
Venue	All Saints' Church, Marlow SL7 2AA
Conductor	Ian Taylor

CANTORUM CHOIR would like to thank:

Our superb rehearsal pianists, Gillian Salmon
Simon Howat & Katharine May
The Clergy and Staff of All Saints' Church, Maidenhead
The Stationery Depot, Cookham Parade
And you, our audience, for your continued support.

For information visit

Website: www.cantorumchoir.org.uk
Email: info@cantorumchoir.org.uk

If you are interested in joining Cantorum Choir,
please talk to a member of the choir after tonight's performance

OR

- Contact Bridget on 01628 631942
- Apply online via our website
- Email us with your contact details.



CANTORUM CHOIR

J.S. BACH

ST JOHN PASSION

SALLY STAFFORD – Conductor

**ALL SAINTS' CHURCH,
Boyn Hill, Maidenhead**

Saturday 8th March 2008 – 8pm

CANTORUM CHOIR



Cantorum Choir is a lively, committed choir of approximately 40 mixed voices. We are based in Cookham, Berkshire, and draw our membership from a wide sector of the Thames Valley. Founded twenty five years ago, the choir has built up a reputation as one of the leading chamber choirs in the area, mixing high standards with a warm and friendly social life. We have undertaken several European tours and appeared a number of times on television and in films, notably in the first of the *Inspector Morse* adaptations. Currently, we give four or five concerts per year, at least one of them orchestral.

Sopranos

Bridget Bentley, Amy Dennison,
Jeanette Gibson, Jo Hutchins,
Jean Lewis, Valerie Snapes,
Cathy Virjee

Tenors

Phillip Martineau, John Paramore,
Richard Ratcliff, Malcolm Stork

Altos

Jill Burton, Sarah Evans,
Anne Glover, Eleanor Griffiths,
Jo Rodgers, Chiu Sung,
Lorna Sykes

Basses

Derek Beaven, John Buck,
Peter Griffiths, David Hazeldine,
Alan Steel

Inspiring Voices ~ Giving Pleasure
Cookham's Chamber Choir

SALLY STAFFORD – CONDUCTOR

Sally Stafford studied for a Music Degree at Royal Holloway College, London University, and then took a joint Music and Mathematics PGCE course at the London Institute. Her first post was as Head of Music at Burnham Grammar School in 1994. In 1996, she became an Advisory Teacher for Buckinghamshire and wrote the book *Sound Activities* designed to encourage and facilitate non-specialists teaching music activities in Primary classrooms.



She was appointed Director of Music at Dame Alice Owen's School, Hertfordshire, in 1990, where she built up the extra-curricular music to include three orchestras, two choirs and two concert bands. Lower school classes were invited to give a demonstration composition lesson in the Queen Elizabeth Hall, and her symphony orchestra performed on the South Bank in the finals for the National Festival of Music for Youth.

Sally has lectured on PGCE and B.Mus courses at Middlesex University and has particularly enjoyed tutoring PGCE students in their school placements. After having children, she returned to teaching Music and Maths at Burnham Grammar School, where she became Joint Assistant Head of Mathematics in 2004. She is now Lead Primary Teacher for Wycombe High School, working on outreach to enrich teaching and learning mathematics in the Partner Primary Schools. She also conducts the Junior and Senior Orchestras at Wycombe Music Centre, who performed at the Royal Albert Hall in May 2005.

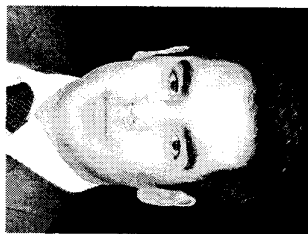
During her time with Cantorum, Sally has encouraged a wide and demanding repertoire. Concerts include Requiems by Mozart, Fauré and Rutter, the Vaughan Williams *Serenade to Music*, Elgar's *The Music Makers* and *From the Bavarian Highlands*, Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb*, Poulenc's *Sabat Mater* and *Gloria*, the Bach *Magnificat* and Haydn's *Creation*.

Richard Carr (Organist) gained an Organ Scholarship at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, graduating in 2003. He is currently Director of Music and Organist at St Michael's Church, Bishops Stortford, Herts. Richard lives in Cambridge, where he teaches piano and organ at King's College School, and continues keyboard studies of his own with John Wellington on the early instruments at the Academy of Ancient Music. Richard has performed as a soloist in keyboard recitals in the UK and in the USA, including concertos by Schumann, Bach, Alec Rowley, Walter Leigh and Poulenc, and also as an accompanist and in chamber music, recently performing the Frank Bridge Piano Quartet, the Elgar Piano Quintet, and the Schubert 'Trout' Quintet.



Tonight's
String Quintet is drawn from members of
The Cantorum Orchestra

SOLOISTS



Ben Thapa (Tenor) is a postgraduate student at the Royal College of Music in London, where he studies with David Maxwell Anderson. After graduating from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in 2004, Ben spent three years as a member of the chart-topping crossover group G4. As an ensemble singer, Ben is greatly in demand and has sung with most of the major UK consort. Concert repertoire includes Handel *Messiah* and *Judas Maccabeus*, Haydn *Creation*, Mozart *Requiem*, Rachmaninov *Vespers* and all of the mainstream Bach Evangelists. Future plans include chorus for Garsington Opera in the summer, as well as a return to the Britten Pears Young Artist programme in Aldeburgh. In addition he will be covering the role of Belmonte in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at Opera de Bauge.



Andrew Stafford (Bass) studied singing at the Guildhall with the distinguished basso cantante William Parsons and the tenor Stuart Kale. He has been a chorister in several well known London Church choirs. His repertoire includes the bass solos in Handel *Messiah*, and *Samson*, Haydn *The Nelson Mass*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, the Mozart, Duruflé and Fauré *Requiem*s, Vaughan Williams' *Five Mystical Songs*, *Serenade to Music* and *Hodie*, Finzi's *In Terra Pax* and Schubert's *Die Schöne Müllerin* and *Die Winterreise*. His most recent solo appearance with Cantorum was for Haydn's *Creation* in June 2005. This Easter, as well as this performance of the *St John Passion*, he will be singing the bass solos in Stainer's *Crucifixion* in Marlow.

Leonie Cormack (Soprano) last sang with Cantorum for our Mozart C Minor Mass concert in October 2007. Her solo oratorio experience includes Verdi *Requiem*, Mozart *Coronation Mass*, Handel *Messiah* and many other major works. Opera work includes Purcell *Dido & Aeneas* and Blow *Venus & Adonis*, both with *New Chamber Opera Studio*, and participation in masterclasses with Sir John Elliott Gardner for both of the above operas. Since 2004, she has been a member of the renowned specialist Contemporary 20th Century Music choir *Commotio*, with whom she recently recorded a CD of music for choir and cello. Leonie is currently a part-time teacher of music at Sir William Ramsay School in High Wycombe. She grew up locally and attended Sir William Borlase Grammar School in Marlow, where she returned last year as a teacher of Music and German on a graduate teacher programme.



JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685-1750)



Three great Passion settings by Bach are known definitely to have existed: the St John, the St Matthew and the St Mark (now lost). The St John, first given at Leipzig for the Easter of 1724, is the first composed of these, although Bach reworked the score several times in later years. Smaller than the St Matthew, the St John Passion is no less astonishing in musical scope, and, with its dramatic trial scenes and choral effects, is perhaps the more daring of the two.

The origins of the sung Passion lie deep in the history of Catholic Europe, where drama and music were used to instruct those who could not understand the Latin version of the Bible. Bach's tradition is, of course, Protestant, but Luther himself saw no objection to, and even encouraged, the musical development of the Passion in German; and so in Bach's hands the form reaches its highest development. In essence, it is the straight Biblical text sung by an Evangelist (St John) in a series of recitatives over a *continuo* (moving chord accompaniment). Key characters in the narrative are added, notably Jesus himself. Then the crowd scenes provide choral opportunities, the mob howls for blood through the most extraordinary chromatic fugues, and the Chief Priests manipulate their supporters with the polyphonic equivalent of tabloid self-righteousness. There is musical irony, too, as in the triumphal mockery of Jesus wearing his crown of thorns and purple robe. Over all this float several gorgeous solo arias and *ariosos*, where one *bel canto* voice examines the personal implications of an action we've just witnessed. Always, though, we are returned to simplicity by the chorales. These are points of emotional anchorage with the congregation, in which Bach takes the same Lutheran hymn tune, and harmonises it in a seemingly infinite variety of ways. The result is stunning.

Hard as it is for us to imagine, Bach's music fell out of fashion after his death. Almost unbelievably, the St John Passion was virtually unknown in Britain until the 1870s. Now, of course, it is a much loved and well-established element in the Passiontide canon. Probably written for small musical forces, it is admirably suited to a chamber performance – of the kind we take great pleasure in offering you tonight.

Tonight's Concert is given in aid of All Saints' Church Spire Restoration Fund. All Saints' Church is regarded by many as Maidenhead's premier architectural site. Inspired by the high church Oxford Movement of the mid-nineteenth century, the building's patterned brickwork is designed to echo that of the cathedrals and mediaeval hilltop churches of Italy's walled towns. Here, too, in Maidenhead, the architect's original walled micro-community of houses, sensitively restored during the 1980s, is still in place – as though under the spire's protection. A very worthwhile cause, we think you'll agree.

