

London Philharmonic Orchestra



JAMES MACMILLAN CHRISTMAS ORATORIO

MARK ELDER conductor

LUCY CROWE soprano

RODERICK WILLIAMS baritone

LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA & CHOIR

JAMES MACMILLAN

RETROSPECTIVE MODERNIST

Although the Scottish composer/conductor James MacMillan (born 1959) describes himself as a modernist, the historical past has played an equally important role in his music since the beginning of his compositional career. Three traditions in particular run through all his works like a thread: the cultural tradition of his native Scotland, the religious tradition of the Catholic Church, and the classical music tradition – from Gregorian chant to Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* to the modernists of the 20th century. 'James MacMillan: Retrospective Modernist' – the title of the 2012 dissertation by musicologist Dominic Peter Wells – sums up well the composer's emphasis on the relationship between past and present traditions.

TRADITION AND MODERNISM, POLITICS AND SPIRITUALITY

In recent decades MacMillan's personal oeuvre, infused with spirituality, has garnered great interest worldwide. With his sometimes-modal sound, his frequent use of chorales and Scottish folk music, and with titles such as *Adam's Rib*, *Vigil* and *Veni, veni, Emmanuel*, the Catholic composer may refer to the liturgy – but his multi-layered oeuvre originates more in post-war modernism. For although his work has a clear spiritual signature, it

cannot be compared to the euphony of 'neo-spiritualists' such as Arvo Pärt.

At first sight, tradition and modernism seem to contradict each other, but MacMillan sees this differently. 'I think that a composer who looks to the past is not necessarily reactionary. I understand my place in the present from the past. In that respect, tradition is like a river running through history; it is a forward-looking stream. That you can indeed look forward as a traditionalist is a Marxist view of history that I am very interested in.'

Although seemingly incompatible with spirituality, Dominic Peter Wells calls MacMillan a political composer. Wells describes his music as operating between the political-aesthetic extremes from autonomy ('art for art's sake') to *agitprop*, or political propaganda. In relation to the latter concept, the Scotsman has often been compared to the politically engaged Dutch composer Louis Andriessen, who was a major influence on the young MacMillan: 'Andriessen's music was like a fresh breeze through the contemporary music of 40 years ago. I could totally relate to the exciting, energetic nature of his compositions, although my own work is nothing like his.'

MacMillan has in the past shown sympathy for both artistic extremes, although his political views have changed considerably, and his music since 2000 has been much less politically-driven. In a more recent interview, he named the late Sir Peter Maxwell Davies as much more of a kindred spirit: 'Davies has never really been my teacher; more of a mentor who has explored similar philosophical terrain in his work.' The common body of thought to which MacMillan refers is mainly in the area of spirituality: 'As a composer, I want to understand what the last 50 years have brought us in terms of new stimuli and influences, but not take a doctrinaire or ideological position on it. The big problem for composers today is that there are so many directions available. In this situation, an artist must continue to believe in his need to communicate, without being hindered by ideological stumbling blocks.'

For MacMillan, the word 'ideology' refers to the restrictive aesthetics of Darmstadt, an 'outdated, anachronistic and narrow view of music, which still dominates many European composers.' In the British climate, therefore, he feels particularly at home, because of the multitude of directions and styles that seem to be able to coexist without difficulty.

CATHOLICISM

This open-mindedness characterises MacMillan's work, in which a myriad of techniques seems to be the vehicle for a deeper message. 'I believe that music is essentially a spiritual phenomenon. It is important for a composer to realise this. Through its directness and abstraction, music seems to have the ability to reach the soul and address the relationship between the human and the divine in a powerful, mysterious way. Regardless of where you come from or how you think about whether or not God exists, it makes you aware of the "otherness" in creation.'

So what role does Catholicism play in his music? 'It is my way of expressing universal experiences such as suffering and joy. I have a culturally determined, specifically Catholic understanding of those terms, but with that local inspiration I think I can still express something universal. You see this in artists of all times. Just look at Bach, who composed from a strongly confessional experience, but with a potential that reaches all of humanity.'

On the difference between the music of the neo-spirituals and his own work, he says: 'That is a difference

of the concept of spirituality. I think it takes place in the here and now, as a commitment to human suffering. Composers like Pärt start from a purity; I like that very much, but I could never write in such a mono-dimensional way. My character and theological viewpoint call for conflict. After all, the heart of Christian thinking is the sacrificial story: an inspiring, but also disturbing metaphor that I have expressed in various works. The God I am interested in is that of silence. God as companion, as a silent witness who is with us while we suffer. That can be the reason for some people to turn away. But believing in such a God who is always with you – even in the face of Auschwitz and the Third Reich, the depths of human degradation – gives a fascinating picture of what the divine is. Adorno said that no more poetry could be written after Auschwitz. But for artists, it is most important to look into that abyss and say something about the nature of suffering in the modern world, and to bring a sense of spiritual healing.'

THE CHRISTMAS ORATORIO

In the works MacMillan composed from the 1990s onwards, starting with *Veni, veni Emmanuel*, he showed a particular fascination for the events around Easter and the Passion of Christ: the three works of his 'Easter triptych' *Triduum* (*The World's Ransoming*, the Cello Concerto, and the symphony *Vigil*); his response to the Stations of the Cross in *Fourteen Little Pictures*; the poetic *Seven Last Words from the Cross* and the text of the *Stabat Mater* he incorporated in his first opera *Inés de Castro*; the adoration of the Cross on Good Friday in *Kiss on Wood*; plus works on the theme of the Resurrection such as *Visitatio Sepulchri*, *They saw the stone had been rolled away*, *Lumen Christi* and *Exsultet*. MacMillan returned to the subject with the *Tenebrae Responses* in 2006, the much-discussed *St John Passion* the following year and the *St Luke Passion* in 2012.

In his *Christmas Oratorio* (2019), MacMillan for the first time takes the birth of Christ as his starting point. The work has a strict, cathedral-like structure that seems to refer to Bach's oratorios. At the same time the music exudes the direct eloquence of Gregorian chant, powerful layering in the instrumental parts and folk-

music-like simplicity. MacMillan says: 'For me, Palestrina and Bach remain the most influential figures of the past. There is a powerful instinctive, emotional, and spiritual power in their music that made the very first listeners think they were in heaven when they heard it. It is also music that is very complex – complexity and emotional power are not necessarily contradictions.'

The *Christmas Oratorio* consists of two parts, each divided into seven segments, a biblical number. In both parts MacMillan uses similar segments: Sinfonia (instrumental), Chorus (choir and orchestra), Aria (soloist and orchestra), Tableau (soloist, choir and orchestra), Aria, Chorus and Sinfonia. This creates a layered palindromic structure in the diptych, reminiscent not only of Bach but also of the work of composers such as Webern and Nono.

Programme note © Anthony Fiumara

The *Christmas Oratorio* was commissioned by the London Philharmonic Orchestra with the generous support of The Boltini Trust, NTR ZaterdagMatinee, Radio 4's concert series in The Concertgebouw Amsterdam, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic Orchestra.

World premiere: 16 January 2021, NTR ZaterdagMatinee, Concertgebouw, Amsterdam. Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra & Choir, Mary Bevan (soprano), Christopher Maltman (baritone), James MacMillan (conductor).

JAMES MACMILLAN

ON HIS CHRISTMAS ORATORIO



© Philip Gatward

My Christmas Oratorio was written in 2019 and is a setting of assorted poetry, liturgical texts and scripture taken from various sources, all relating to the birth of Jesus. It is structured in two parts, each consisting of seven movements.

Therefore the music of each part is topped and tailed by short orchestral

movements (four in all), creating a palindromic structure. The Choruses are mostly Latin liturgical texts (although the last one is a Scottish lullaby), the Arias are settings of poems by Robert Southwell, John Donne and John Milton, and the two central Tableaux are biblical accounts from the Gospels of St Matthew in Part One, and St John in Part Two.

The soprano and baritone soloists have two arias each, and sing in the two Tableaux along with the choir. The orchestra is of modest size, using double woodwind, brass and percussion, plus a harp and celeste.

There are various characteristic elements and moods throughout, from the ambiguous opening which mixes resonances of childhood innocence with more ominous premonitions, pointing to later events in the life of Jesus. There are also intermittent moments of joyfulness and the childhood excitement and abandon of Christmas at various points, especially in the choral *Hodie Christus natus est* and in some of the orchestral interludes.

Sometimes we hear the 'dancing' rhythms associated with some secular Christmas carols. There is also, at points, a sense of narrative when the chorus take the role of the Evangelist as he tells the Nativity story. The 16th- and 17th-century English poems provide opportunities for reflection in the four solo Arias, firmly based in the oratorio tradition.

There is also at points a sense of mystery in both orchestral and choral textures, such as in the setting of the *O Magnum Mysterium* text in Part Two. The oratorio ends reflectively in Sinfonia 4 with the orchestra alone, highlighting a small ensemble of string soloists amid the larger textures.

CD1

CHRISTMAS ORATORIO PART ONE

1 SINFONIA 1 (ORCHESTRA)

2 CHORUS 1 *Chorus*

O Oriens, splendor lucis æternæ, et sol justitiæ:
veni, et illumina sedentes in tenebris, et umbra mortis.
Great 'O' antiphon for 21 December

... in unum Dominum Jesum Christum, Filium Dei
unigenitum et ex Patre natum, ante omnia sæcula.
Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine,
Deum verum de Deo vero,
genitum, non factum, consubstantialem Patri:
per quem omnia facta sunt.
Qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem
descendit de cælis,
et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine, et
homo factus est.
From the Credo

Virgo prius ac posterius, Gabriëlis ab ore sumens illud
Ave, peccatorum miserere.
From *Alma Redemptoris Mater*, Marian antiphon for the
office of Compline

*O Radiant Dawn, Splendour of eternal Light, Sun of
Justice: come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and
the shadow of death.*

*... in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of
God, born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation he came down from
heaven,
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.*

*Virgin both before and after childbirth, who received
from Gabriel's mouth that 'Hail', have mercy on us sinners.
Translation: Edward Tambling*

3

ARIA 1

Soprano solo

Behold a silly tender babe,
 In freezing winter night,
 In homely manger trembling lies:
 Alas! a piteous sight.
 The inns are full; no man will yield
 This little pilgrim bed;
 But forced He is with silly beasts
 In crib to shroud His head.
 Despise Him not for lying there,
 First what He is inquire:
 An orient pearl is often found
 In depth of dirty mire.
 Weigh not His crib, His wooden dish,
 Nor beasts that by Him feed;
 Weigh not His Mother's poor attire,
 Nor Joseph's simple weed.
 This stable is a Prince's court,
 This crib His chair of state;
 The beasts are parcel of His pomp,
 The wooden dish His plate;
 The persons in that poor attire
 His royal liveries wear;
 The Prince Himself is come from heaven,
 This pomp is prizèd there.
 With joy approach, O Christian wight,
 Do homage to thy King;
 And highly praise this humble pomp
 Which He from heaven doth bring.

Robert Southwell (1561–95)

4

TABLEAU 1

Chorus

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him.' When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written by the prophet:

Soprano & baritone soli

“And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you will come a ruler who will govern my people Israel.”

Chorus

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star appeared; and he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.' When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshipped

him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way. Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said:

Soprano & baritone soli

'Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.'

Chorus

And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

Soprano & baritone soli

'Out of Egypt have I called my son.'

Chorus

Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time which

he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

Chorus (simultaneous with soli)

Vox in Rama audita est,
ploratus et ululatus,
Rachel plorans filius suos,
et noluit consolari, quia non sunt.

'A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more.'

Communion motet for the feast of Holy Innocents.

Chorus

But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying:

Soprano & baritone soli

'Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead.'

Chorus

And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he

withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled:

Baritone solo

'He shall be called a Nazarene.'

The Gospel according to Matthew, Chapter 2,
entire Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition

5 ARIA 2

Baritone solo

Immensity, cloistered in thy dear womb,
Now leaves His well-belov'd imprisonment,
There He hath made Himself to His intent
Weak enough now into the world to come;
But O, for thee, for Him hath the inn no room?
Yet lay Him in this stall, and from the Orient,
Stars and wise men will travel to prevent
The effect of Herod's jealous, general doom.
Seest thou, my soul, with thy faith's eyes, how He
Which fills all place, yet none holds Him, doth lie?
Was not His pity towards thee wondrous high,
That would have need to be pitied by thee?
Kiss Him, and with Him into Egypt go,

With His kind mother, who partakes thy woe.

John Donne (1572–1631), *Nativity*

6 CHORUS 2

Chorus

Hodie Christus natus est:

Hodie Salvator apparuit:

Hodie in terra canunt Angeli,

lætantur Archangeli.

Hodie exsultant justi, dicentes:

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Alleluia.

Today Christ is born.

Today a saviour has appeared.

Today the angels sing on the earth,

and the archangels rejoice.

Today the just rejoice, saying:

Glory to God in the highest.

Alleluia.

Magnificat antiphon at Vespers on Christmas Day.

Translation: Edward Tambling

7 SINFONIA 2 (ORCHESTRA)

CD2 CHRISTMAS ORATORIO PART TWO

1 SINFONIA 3 (ORCHESTRA)

2 CHORUS 3 *Chorus*

O magnum mysterium
et admirabile sacramentum,
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum,
jacentem in præsepio!
Beata Virgo, cujus viscera meruerunt
portare Dominum Jesum Christum.
Alleluia!

Responsory at Matins on Christmas Day

*O great mystery
and wonderful sacrament,
that animals should see the new-born Lord
lying in a manger!
Blessed is the Virgin, whose womb
was worthy to bear Christ the Lord.
Alleluia!*

3 ARIA 3 *Baritone solo*

This is the month, and this the happy morn,
Wherein the Son of Heav'n's eternal King,
Of wedded Maid, and Virgin Mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing,
That he our deadly forfeit should release,
And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

It was the winter wild,
While the Heav'n-born child,
All meanly wrapp'd in the rude manger lies;
Nature in awe to him
Had doff'd her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathise:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the Sun, her lusty paramour.
No war, nor battle's sound
Was heard the world around;
The idle spear and shield were high uphung;
The hookèd chariot stood
Unstain'd with hostile blood;
The trumpet spake not to the armed throng;
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by
But wisest Fate says no:
This must not yet be so;
The Babe lies yet in smiling infancy,
That on the bitter cross
Must redeem our loss,
So both himself and us to glorify:
Yet first to those ychain'd in sleep,
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through
the deep
But see, the Virgin blest

Hath laid her Babe to rest
Time is our tedious song should here have ending;
Heav'n's youngest-teemèd star
Hath fix'd her polish'd car,
Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attending;
And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harness'd Angels sit in order serviceable
John Milton (1608–74), from *On the Morning of Christ's
Nativity*

4 TABLEAU 2

Chorus

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.

In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Soprano & baritone soli

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him.

He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light.

The true Light that enlightens every man was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not.

He came to his own home, and his own people received him not.

But to all who received him, who believed in his name,

he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood nor the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Chorus

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory as of the only Son from the Father.

(John bore witness to him, and cried, 'This was he of whom I said: "He who comes after me ranks before me, for he was before me."')

And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

For the law was given through Moses, grace and truth [came] through Jesus Christ.

No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known.

The Gospel according to John, Chapter 1: 1-18
Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition

5 ARIA 4
Soprano solo

As I in hoary winter's night stood shivering in the snow,
Surpris'd I was with sudden heat which made my heart to glow;
And lifting up a fearful eye to view what fire was near,
A pretty Babe all burning bright did in the air appear;
Who, scorched with excessive heat, such floods of tears did shed
As though his floods should quench his flames which with his tears were fed.
'Alas!' quoth he, 'but newly born, in fiery heats I fry,
Yet none approach to warm their hearts or feel my fire but I!
My faultless breast the furnace is, the fuel [the] wounding thorns,
Love is the fire, and sighs the smoke, the ashes shame and scorns;
The fuel Justice layeth on, and Mercy blows the coals,
The metal in this furnace wrought are men's defiled souls;
For which, as now on fire I am to work them to their good,
So will I melt them into a bath to wash them in my blood.'
With this he vanish'd out of sight and swiftly shrunk away,
And straight I call'd unto mind that it was Christmas Day.
Robert Southwell (1561–95), *The Burning Babe*

6 CHORUS 4
Chorus

My love and tender one are you,
My sweet and lovely son are you
You are my love and darling you,
Unworthy, I of You
Haleluia
Your mild and gentle eyes proclaim
The loving heart with which you came,
A tender, helpless, tiny babe
With boundless gifts of grace
Haleluia
King of Kings, most holy one,
God a son, eternal one
You are my God and helpless son,
My ruler of mankind
Haleluia.

Melody: trad. Words: after Scottish Gaelic by Fr Ranald Rankin (1811–63), *The Christ-Child's Lullaby*

7 SINFONIA 4 (ORCHESTRA)

MARK ELDER CONDUCTOR



© Benjamin Ealovega

Sir Mark Elder has been Music Director of the Hallé since 2000 and Principal Guest Conductor of the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra since 2022. He was previously Music Director of English National Opera (1979–93) and Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

He has enjoyed long relationships with the London Philharmonic and London Symphony orchestras, as well as working with leading symphony orchestras throughout the world. He is a Principal Artist of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and has

appeared annually at the BBC Proms for many years, including – in 1987 and 2006 – the internationally televised Last Night.

He has enjoyed a long association with the Royal Opera House and has appeared at many other prominent theatres including the Metropolitan Opera, Opéra de Paris, Bavarian State Opera, Zürich Opera House, Dutch National Opera, Chicago Lyric Opera, San Francisco and Glyndebourne Festival Opera. He was the first English conductor to conduct a new production at the Bayreuth Festival.

From 2011–19 he was Artistic Director of Opera Rara, and he has made many award-winning recordings in a wide repertoire with the Hallé, including a complete *Ring* Cycle, *Parsifal*, and the three great Elgar oratorios.

Sir Mark Elder was appointed a Companion of Honour in 2017, knighted in 2008 and awarded the CBE in 1989. In 2006 he was named Conductor of the Year by the Royal Philharmonic Society, and in 2011 he was awarded Honorary Membership of the Royal Philharmonic Society. He is International Chair in Conducting at the Royal Northern College of Music and Barbirolli Chair at the Royal Academy of Music.

LUCY CROWE

SOPRANO



© Victoria Cadisch

Lucy Crowe studied at the Royal Academy of Music, where she is a Fellow.

With repertoire ranging from Purcell, Handel and Mozart to Donizetti's *Adina*, Verdi's *Gilda* and Janáček's *Vixen*, she has sung with opera companies throughout the world including the Royal Opera House, Glyndebourne Festival, English National Opera, Teatro Real Madrid, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Bavarian State Opera and Metropolitan Opera, New York.

In concert, she has performed with the world's finest conductors and orchestras including the City of

Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic, Vienna Philharmonic, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Monteverdi Orchestra, Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia and London Symphony Orchestra. In recital she has appeared at the Concertgebouw, Carnegie Hall, the Edinburgh, Mostly Mozart and Salzburg festivals and the BBC Proms. Her fast-growing discography includes her debut solo disc for Linn Records released in 2021, featuring Berg, Strauss and Schoenberg.

RODERICK WILLIAMS

BARITONE

© Benjamin Ealovega



Roderick Williams is one of the most sought-after baritones of his generation with a wide repertoire spanning baroque to contemporary, which he performs in opera, concert and recital.

He enjoys relationships with all the major UK opera houses and has sung opera world premieres by David Sawer, Sally Beamish, Michel van der Aa, Robert Saxton and Alexander Knaifel, as well as performing major roles including Papageno, Don Alfonso, Onegin and Billy Budd. He also performs regularly with leading conductors and orchestras throughout the UK, Europe, North America and Australia, and his many festival appearances include

the BBC Proms, Edinburgh, Cheltenham, Aldeburgh and Melbourne.

In 2016 Roderick Williams won the prize for Best Choral Composition at the British Composer Awards. From the 2022/23 season he takes up the position of Composer in Association of the BBC Singers. He was awarded an OBE in 2017 and was nominated for Outstanding Achievement in Opera in both the 2018 and 2019 Olivier Awards.

LONDON PHILHARMONIC CHOIR

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR: NEVILLE CREED



© Louise Kragh

The London Philharmonic Choir was founded in 1947 as the chorus for the London Philharmonic Orchestra. It is widely regarded as one of Britain's finest choirs and consistently meets with critical acclaim. Performing regularly with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the London Philharmonic Choir also works with many other orchestras throughout the United Kingdom and makes annual appearances at the BBC Proms.

The Choir has performed under some of the world's most eminent conductors – among them Marin Alsop, Pierre Boulez, Semyon Bychkov, Mark Elder, John Eliot Gardiner, Edward Gardner, Bernard Haitink, Neeme Järvi,

Vladimir Jurowski, Kurt Masur, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Roger Norrington, Andrés Orozco-Estrada, Simon Rattle, Georg Solti, Nathalie Stutzmann and Klaus Tennstedt.

The London Philharmonic Choir has made numerous recordings for CD, radio and television. The Choir often travels overseas and in recent years it has given concerts in many European countries, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Australia.

The Choir prides itself on achieving first-class performances from its members, who are volunteers from all walks of life. lpc.org.uk

LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

The London Philharmonic Orchestra is one of the world's finest orchestras, balancing a long and distinguished history with its present-day position as one of the most dynamic and forward-looking ensembles in the UK. This reputation has been secured by the Orchestra's performances in the concert hall and opera house, its many award-winning recordings, trailblazing international tours and wide-ranging educational work.

Founded by Sir Thomas Beecham in 1932, the Orchestra has since been headed by many of the world's greatest conductors, including Sir Adrian Boult, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti, Klaus Tennstedt and Kurt Masur. In September 2021 Edward Gardner became the Orchestra's Principal Conductor, succeeding Vladimir Jurowski, who became Conductor Emeritus in recognition of his transformative impact on the Orchestra as Principal Conductor from 2007–21.

The Orchestra is based at the Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall in London, where it has been Resident Orchestra since 1992. Each summer it takes up its annual residency at Glyndebourne Festival Opera where it has been Resident Symphony Orchestra for over 50 years. The Orchestra performs at venues around the UK and has made numerous international tours, performing to sell-out audiences in America, Europe, Asia and Australasia.

The London Philharmonic Orchestra made its first recordings on 10 October 1932, just three days after its first public performance. It has recorded and broadcast regularly ever since, and in 2005 established its own record label. These recordings are taken mainly from live concerts given by conductors including those with LPO Principal Conductors from Beecham and Boult, through Haitink, Solti, Tennstedt and Masur, to Jurowski and Gardner.

lpo.org.uk



JAMES MACMILLAN (b. 1959)

94:10 CHRISTMAS ORATORIO

44:48 Part One

01	04:14	Sinfonia 1	<i>Orchestra</i>
02	06:56	Chorus 1	<i>Chorus & orchestra</i>
03	05:31	Aria 1	<i>Soprano solo & orchestra</i>
04	12:25	Tableau 1	<i>Soli, chorus & orchestra</i>
05	06:09	Aria 2	<i>Baritone solo & orchestra</i>
06	05:07	Chorus 2	<i>Chorus & orchestra</i>
07	04:12	Sinfonia 2	<i>Orchestra</i>

49:22 Part Two

01	04:10	Sinfonia 3	<i>Orchestra</i>
02	05:12	Chorus 3	<i>Chorus & orchestra</i>
03	07:15	Aria 3	<i>Baritone solo & orchestra</i>
04	11:59	Tableau 2	<i>Soli, chorus & orchestra</i>
05	08:43	Aria 4	<i>Soprano solo & orchestra</i>
06	05:55	Chorus 4	<i>Chorus & celeste</i>
07	05:57	Sinfonia 4	<i>Orchestra</i>

Recorded at the Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall on 4 December 2021

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