

BRISBANE CONCERT CHOIR at St Andrew's

Debra Shearer-Dirié, Musical Director

with the

SINFONIA OF SAINT ANDREW'S



HECTOR BERLIOZ
L'ENFANCE DU CHRIST

Sunday 1 December 2013


Saint Andrew's Uniting Church, Brisbane

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

In the event of fire or other emergency, walk promptly to the rear of the building and exit through the glass doors. Do not congregate in the café area, but continue walking up the footpath to ensure that the exits are not blocked.

Assemble across the road outside the Suncorp building until advised by a responsible person that it is safe to re-enter the building.

Only if access to the main glass-door exit is blocked should you attempt to leave via the door to the right of the stage.



HECTOR BERLIOZ

L'ENFANCE DU CHRIST

HECTOR BERLIOZ
L'ENFANCE DU CHRIST
(THE CHILDHOOD OF CHRIST)
A SACRED TRILOGY

Opus 25

1st Part: Herod's Dream
2nd Part: The Flight into Egypt
3rd Part: The Arrival at Saïs

English translation by John Bernhoff

ROLES

The Virgin	Sarah Crane
Joseph	Shaun Brown
Herod	Daniel Smerdon
Polydorus	Murray Smith
Centurion	Brett Gordon
Narrator	Douglas Kelly
Father	James McNicol

**There will be a short interval between Part 2 and Part 3.
A light supper will be served in the Hall after the performance.**

INTRODUCTION

Hector Berlioz (1803-69) began his professional studies in medicine. It was not long before he found himself a pupil of composer Jean-François Le Sueur and as a result of Le Sueur's teaching, entered the Paris Conservatoire in 1826.

Berlioz's most famous works, such as his *Symphonie fantastique* (1830) and his *Requiem* or *Grande Messe des morts* (1837), characteristically invest in substantial brass strength. The second movement of the *Requiem*, for example, breaks into 12 horn parts, with four brass choirs and 16 timpani.

Berlioz's *L'enfance du Christ*, Opus 25, does not employ quite so much strength in the brass section and in the version that you will hear this evening, barely makes use of the brass section. Composed in 1854, and originally in French, the work is based on the Holy family's flight into Egypt. Berlioz describes it as a sacred trilogy. Set in three parts, the first part depicts King Herod ordering the massacre of all newborn children in Judaea. The second part shows the Holy family of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus setting out for Egypt to avoid the slaughter, having been warned by angels. And the final section portrays their arrival in the Egyptian town of Saïs, where they are given refuge by a family of Ishmaelites.

The genesis of the work is rather haphazard. It apparently all began at a party, where, amongst the party activities of the 1850s, Berlioz's friend the architect



Joseph-Louis Duc asked him to write something for his album. Berlioz writes:

"I take a scrap of paper and draw a few staves, on which in a little while an Andantino in four parts for organ makes its appearance. I am struck by a certain character of naïve, rustic devoutness in the music and decide to add some words in the same vein. The organ piece disappears and turns into a chorus of Bethlehem shepherds saying goodbye to the child Jesus at the moment when the Holy Family set out on their journey to Egypt."

Thus, the 'Shepherds' Farewell' was born. Some other movements were added, but the piece was then put aside for some years while Berlioz busied himself with other writing. It was not until three years later that the work was performed in full in Leipzig. It then went under further alterations and additions and was



HECTOR BERLIOZ

L'ENFANCE DU CHRIST

eventually performed in its complete form in Paris a few months later.

The work is structured as a series of tableaux in which we are shown the various human elements of the story: the weariness of Herod as he wrestles with his constant dream revealing an 'infant fair' who shall unthroned a king, the blind passion of the soothsayers, the joys of Mary and Joseph and their undefeated attempt to find a safe place to rest, and

the welcoming of the Ishmaelite household.

The narrator acts in the same way as the narrator in one of JS Bach's Passions. He begins our story with the news of Jesus Christ's birth, Lord and Saviour, and ends it with the return of the holy family to their native land to 'accomplish the work of salvation and mercy'.

DEBRA SHEARER-DIRIÉ
Musical Director

SYNOPSIS

Part 1

Polydorus and his friend, a Roman centurion, discuss Herod's mad fears. Herod longs for sleep, but is tormented by the visions appearing to him in his dreams. Polydorus announces the arrival of the soothsayers (the wise men from Judea). Herod tells of the vision in his dream of a child destined to overthrow him, and seeks the soothsayers' counsel. The soothsayers consult the spirits and confirm that Herod's vision is true. They advise that if he is to avoid his doom, Herod must kill every new-born child. Meanwhile, Mary and Joseph, tending to the baby Jesus in Bethlehem, are visited by an angel who tells them they must flee with their baby to Egypt.

Part 2

The shepherds, assembled before the manger in Bethlehem, bid farewell to the

holy family. The family sets off, and rest at the roadside along the way.

Part 3

Eventually, weary and dying of thirst, they arrive at the Egyptian city of Saïs. Joseph pleads for shelter and rest, but is twice turned away. At a third house, the father of the house welcomes in Mary and Joseph, instructing the young Ishmaelites and their servants to bring soothing treatments and prepare a cradle for the baby. After the holy family have been tended to, they arrange with the father of the house to remain there while Jesus grows to manhood. Two young Ishmaelites take up their instruments, and the household then bids good rest to Mary and Joseph, who thank the father for his kindness. The Narrator concludes by telling of Jesus' return to his native land ten years later.

DEBRA SHEARER-DIRIÉ MUSICAL DIRECTOR



Originally from Perth, Dr Debra Shearer-Dirié maintains an active career as a choral conductor, music educator, clinician and scholar. She holds a Master of Music Education degree and Doctor of Music degree in Choral Conducting from Indiana University. During her time there she directed the Indiana University Children's and Youth Choir, was assistant director to maestro Paul Hillier with the Pro Arte Singers, and Director of the International Vocal Ensemble at Indiana University for two years. From 2000 to 2001, she conducted the Northwest Girlchoir in Seattle, which performs frequently with the Seattle Symphony Orchestra.

Debra has received numerous invitations to present at national conferences both abroad and in Australia, including the National Conference of the American Choral Director's Association in New York in 2003, and has been invited to present at each Australian National Choral Association (ANCA) Choralfest since she has returned to Australia in 2003.

Upon arriving in Brisbane mid 2003, she conducted the Queensland Young Conservatorium Chamber Choir. In 2005, she was appointed Musical Director of Brisbane Concert Choir, and in 2006 founded Vox Pacifica Chamber Choir. In 2009 she founded *Fusion*, a semi-professional adult a capella ensemble. She continually searches for opportunities to collaborate with other musical groups, composers, dancers, visual artists and cultural groups. Debra's most recent vocal ensemble is Vintage Voices, a program for older people in the community to join in song. She began leading this group 18 months ago.

Debra has lectured at the Queensland Conservatorium, The University of Queensland School of Music, and in 2013 will be teaching at the Australian Catholic University and serving as editor of the ANCA journal *Sing Out*, and on the National Council for ANCA. Debra is in demand as an adjudicator, clinician and conductor for festivals and eisteddfods throughout Australia and the Asia-Pacific region.

SARAH CRANE SOPRANO

Brisbane soprano Sarah Crane is the winner of several prestigious competitions, including Opera Foundation Australia's German Operatic Award and The Australian Regional Final of the Metropolitan Opera Award.

Sarah graduated with a Post Graduate Diploma in Opera Performance from the Queensland Conservatorium of Music and was a recipient of a Brisbane City Council Lord Mayor's Performing Arts Fellowship as well as receiving an American Institute of Musical Studies Award from Opera Foundation Australia which gave her the opportunity to study in Graz, Austria.

Sarah was engaged as a member of the Opera Studio at the Cologne Opera as well as a Young Artist with the Opéra National du Rhin in Strasbourg, France, where she performed the roles of Gretel in Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* and of The Female Chorus in Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*. Sarah then took up residency as a full time soloist with the Freiburg Opera in Germany. Roles included Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*; Ginevra in Handel's *Ariodante*; Janthe in *Der Vampyr* by Marschner; Marzelline in *Fidelio*; the title role in Bernedetto Marcello's *Arianna*; and Micaela in Bizet's *Carmen*, as well as the soprano solo in Bruno Maderna's *Hyperion*. Sarah also made guest appearances in the role of Pamina for the Basel Opera in Switzerland.

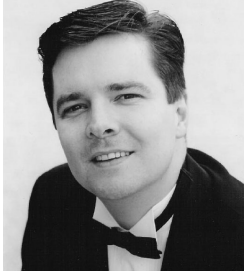
Upon her return to Australia, she has sung Juliette in *Romeo et Juliette*, Pamina in *The Magic Flute*, Marzelline, Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Valencienne in *The Merry Widow*, Anna in *Nabucco* and Echo in *The Love of the Nightingale* for Opera Queensland and performed First Lady in *The Magic Flute*, First Wood Sprite in *Rusalka*, Oberto in *Alcina*, Sophie in *Werther*, First Lady, Pamina, Angelica in *Orlando* and Micaela for Opera Australia.

Concert engagements include Brahms' *Requiem*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Handel's *Messiah* for The Queensland Orchestra and Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, Martin's *Maria-Triptychon* as well as the *Stabat Mater* by Szymanowski with the Philharmonic Orchestra Freiburg.

Sarah is now a vocal lecturer at the University of Queensland, also lecturing in stagecraft and German and French phonetics. Upcoming engagements include the role of Sharon in *The Perfect American* by Phillip Glass with Opera Queensland.



SHAUN BROWN BARITONE



Studying voice with Joseph Ward OBE at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, Griffith University Shaun graduated with Graduate Diplomas in Opera and Vocal Performance and a Bachelor of Education, Shaun was the recipient of the first Lord Mayor's Performing Arts Fellowship (which led to vocal and language studies in England, Germany and Italy), winner of the Italian Opera Award (1999, which led to study at the Teatro Comunale di Bologna), and National Liederfest German-Australian Lied Prize (2005, which led to performing at Lieder concerts in Wiesbaden and numerous concerts throughout Germany).

He has many opera roles to his credit such as Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, Sid in *The Girl of the Golden West*, Vicomte Cascada in *The Merry Widow*, Fiorello in *The Barber of Seville*, Masetto in *Don Giovanni*, Herald in *Otello*, Notary in *Don Pasquale*, Schaunard in *La bohème*, Belcore in *L'elisir d'amore*, Dancaïre and Moralès in *Carmen*, Antonio in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Count Paris in *Romeo and Juliet*, and Doctor Falke in *Die Fledermaus*. He has performed for many major festivals including Elijah in *Elijah – the Opera* (1995 Brisbane Biennial), Pilgrim in *Pilgrim's Progress* (Brisbane Festival); Riff in *West Side Story* (2004 Riverfestival), Mobic in *The Miracle of Brisbane* (Brisbane Festival), The Fisherman in Opéra de Lyon's production of *The Lindbergh Flight* (New Zealand International Arts Festival).

On the Concert platform Shaun has numerous solo parts to his credit including the *Mozart Requiem*, *Britten's War Requiem*, *Durufle Requiem*, *Faure Requiem*, *Brahms Requiem*, Haydn's *The Seasons*, Bach's *St John* and *St Matthew Passions*, Handel's *Messiah*, Orff's *Carmina Burana* and the forthcoming role of *Joseph* in Berlioz's *L'enfance du Christ*. Other engagements in the future include *Marullo and Marcello for Opera Q in 2014*.

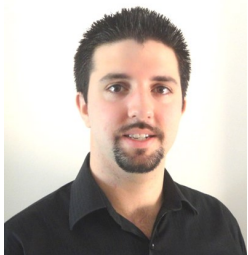
Since his return from overseas Shaun is in demand as an adjudicator for both choral and vocal Eisteddfods and Competitions around South East Queensland. He has taken up a position as the Vocal and Stagecraft lecturer at the University of Queensland, School of Music.

**DOUGLAS KELLY** TENOR

Douglas Kelly has recently completed his fourth year at the Qld Conservatorium of Music, majoring in classical voice as a student of Gregory Massingham. In his second year, Douglas performed the role of Gherardo in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* and also played the role of Puck in Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*. In addition, he performed at the Bangalow Music Festival of 2011 performing in both *A Soldiers Tale* by Stravinsky, playing the part of the soldier, and the sailor in a concert performance of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. In his third year Douglas performed excerpts from Mozart's *La Finta Giardiniera* and later that year understudied the role of the Auctioneer in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*.

In 2013 Douglas has performed as tenor soloist in Handel's *Messiah* and Basilio in *The Marriage of Figaro* (Opera New England) as well as covering the tenor role in Britten's *War Requiem* at the Queensland Conservatorium.

In 2010 and 2012, Douglas won the Margaret Nickson Prize for piano and vocalist, performing songs by Faure, Schubert, Purcell and Handel, and in 2011 won the Donald Penman prize for ensemble or pair, performing duets by Mozart, Schumann and Mendelssohn.

DANIEL SMERDON BASS

At 23, Daniel Smerdon is currently completing his Master of Music Studies in Opera performance at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, having completed an Undergraduate degree in Cello performance in 2011.

Over an 18 month period, Daniel has achieved much success on home soil and abroad. Some noteworthy performances include performing the role of The Count in a production of *Le Nozze di Figaro* as part of the 2013 Conservatorium's Opera Series, and understudying the role of "TruLove" whilst performing in the chorus in a production of Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* the previous year.

He has also joined with the Opera Queensland Chorus, performing in productions of Bach's Oratorio *St Matthew's Passion* and Verdi's *Otello*. He has also appeared as a bass soloist in performances of Bach's *G minor Mass*, Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy* and Requiems by Duruflé and Fauré.



BRISBANE CONCERT CHOIR



The Brisbane Concert Choir at St Andrew's is an auditioned adult mixed voice choir. Formed in 1996 by Dr Guy Jansen, the Choir has established an excellent reputation for its performances of diverse repertoire ranging from a cappella pieces to full symphonic works.

Performances have included appearances with The Queensland Orchestra, Queensland Pops Orchestra and in prestigious festivals such as Brisbane Cathedrals Week and the 4MBS Festival of Classics. The Choir toured the North Island of New Zealand in 1999 and in June 2002, following the release of its first CD, *Journey*, the Choir embarked on a very successful tour to north Queensland.

2008 saw the release of a second CD, *Radiance*, and a first European tour which visited Prague, Salzburg and Vienna. The Choir toured to Italy in September 2011, where it was very well received and in December of that year, the Choir released a CD of music for the festive season, entitled *Rejoice!*

The Choir has recorded performances for broadcast on ABC TV and 4MBS Classic-FM.

HECTOR BERLIOZ

L'ENFANCE DU CHRIST

SOPRANO

Stephanye Bendell
Susan Burrows Prilick
Katherine Chan
Jane Deighton
Helen Fredericks
Mary Gough
Andrea Hall-Brown
Amy Jelacic
Stella Jenks
Janet McKeon
Suzana Milosevic
Elizabeth Yee

ALTO

Milly Blakeley
Amanda Dee
Sorcha Delaney
Amelia Fotheringham
Sue Gray
Kyla Hayden
Grete Hindsberger
Melissa Hutchinson
Nicolie Jenkins
Barb Lamb
Barbara Levien
Barbara Maenhaut
Joan Mooney
Jane Oliver
Judy Shepherd
Kathy Teakle

TENOR

Simon Burgess
Ian Clarkson
Brett Gordon
Paul Kennedy
Allen Kloeden
John Holmes
Shan Ma
Michael Scott
Stuart Szigeti

BASS

Malcolm Alexander
Robert Bray
Mike Dalley
Ian Maurer
Mark McKeon
Jim McNicol
Murray Smith
Chris Whight

MUSICAL

DIRECTOR

Debra Shearer-Dirié

REHEARSAL

ACCOMPANIST

John Woods

MANAGEMENT

Chairman

James McNicol

Secretary

Stella Jenks

Treasurer

Janet McKeon

Committee

Sorcha Delaney

Sue Gray

Melissa Hutchinson

Librarian

Melissa Hutchinson

THE SINFONIA OF ST ANDREW'S

The Sinfonia of St Andrew's was formed in 1995 for a performance of Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise* conducted by Mansel Jones. Since then it has promoted its own orchestral concerts as well as appearing regularly with the Brisbane Concert Choir. The orchestra is an interesting mix of professional players, who perform regularly for the Queensland Orchestra and Queensland Pops Orchestra alongside students from the Conservatorium, University of Queensland and Queensland Youth Orchestra.

FIRST VIOLIN

Chen Yang (leader)
Matthew Gillett
Lucy Bignall
Elisha Harrison
Mafumi Ishii

SECOND VIOLIN

Katy Sillar
Maree Williamson
Kuang Chan
Leslie Levy

VIOLA

Anna Jack
Maira Lambert
Josephine Ford

CELLO

Ngaio Toombes
Catherine Stewart
Meg Robson

DOUBLE BASS

Murray Gay

FLUTE

Deborah Cox
Sandy Chu

OBOE

Natasha Kalous

COR ANGLAIS

Bernard Girard

CLARINET

Graham Evans
Kate Jones

BASSOON

Trevor Williamson
Malcolm Ezzy

FRENCH HORN

Armin Terzer
Robyn Cole

TRUMPET

Malcolm Liddell
Lindon Weise

TROMBONE

Adrian Head
Jamie Kennedy
Sam Nolan

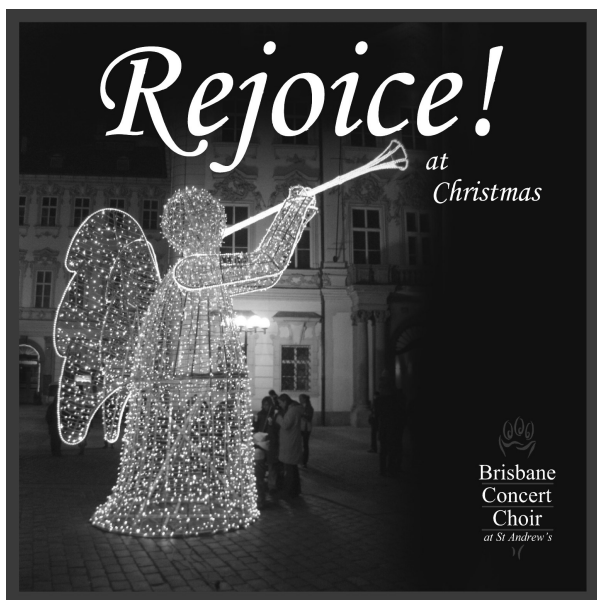
TIMPANI

Ross Dovey

KEYBOARD

John Woods*

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SIMON CARRINGTON

'GLORIES OF THE RENAISSANCE'

PUBLIC CHORAL WORKSHOP

25 JANUARY 2014



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visit www.brisbaneconcertchoir.com for details.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT



The Choir appreciates the ongoing generosity shown by St Andrew's Uniting Church and its congregation in providing a home for the Choir and allowing us to use their beautiful, heritage listed building.

The background features large, stylized, overlapping letters 'B' and 'C' in shades of gray, creating a modern and abstract design.

Brisbane Concert Choir at St Andrew's Inc.

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