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HOLLANDIA

NOVA *Detecta A° 1644*MAP: Johannes van Keulen *Oost Indien (detail) c1689*

ANTIPODES (æn'tipɒdiz) : is a sub-label of ABC Classics devoted to the historically informed performance of music from the Renaissance, Baroque and Classical periods.



handel messiah

a sacred oratorio

cantillation

orchestra of the antipodes

macliver ♦ sherman ♦ field

mcmahon ♦ rhodes

walker



George Frideric Handel 1685-1759
Highlights from Messiah, HWV56

Part the First

1	No. 1 Sinfony	3'05
2	No. 2 Accompanied Recitative (Tenor): Comfort ye	3'14
3	No. 3 Air (Tenor): Ev'ry valley	3'22
4	No. 4 Chorus: And the glory of the Lord	2'19
5	No. 5 Accompanied Recitative (Bass): Thus saith the Lord	1'25
6	No. 6 Air (Countertenor): But who may abide	4'35
7	No. 12 Chorus: For unto us a child is born	3'34
8	No. 14 (a) Recitative (Soprano): There were shepherds	0'21
9	No. 14 (b) Accompanied Recitative (Soprano): And lo, the angel of the Lord	0'22
10	No. 15 Recitative (Soprano): And the angel said unto them	0'41
11	No. 16 Accompanied Recitative (Soprano): And suddenly there was with the angel	0'17
12	No. 17 Chorus: Glory to God	1'53
13	No. 18 Air (Soprano): Rejoice greatly	4'36
14	No. 19 Recitative (Alto): Then shall the eyes of the blind	0'26
15	No. 20 Duet (Alto, Soprano): He shall feed His flock	5'51

Part the Second

16	No. 23 Air (Alto): He was despised (da capo)	10'31
17	No. 24 Chorus: Surely He hath borne our griefs	1'34
18	No. 40 Air (Bass): Why do the nations	2'25
19	No. 41 Chorus: Let us break their bonds asunder	1'30
20	No. 44 Chorus: Hallelujah!	3'31

Part the Third

21	No. 45 Air (Soprano): I know that my Redeemer liveth	6'30
22	No. 47 Accompanied Recitative (Bass): Behold, I tell you a mystery	0'46
23	No. 48 Air (Bass): The trumpet shall sound	8'34
24	No. 53 Chorus: Worthy is the Lamb	3'25
25	No. 54 Chorus: Amen	3'58

Total Playing Time 78'45

Sara Macliver *soprano*
Alexandra Sherman *alto*
Christopher Field *countertenor*
Paul McMahan *tenor*
Teddy Tahu Rhodes *bass*

Cantillation
Orchestra of the Antipodes *on period instruments*
Antony Walker *conductor*

On a Tuesday afternoon in Dublin in the spring of 1742, an audience of prominent ladies and gentlemen attended a special concert – special, they thought, because it was to benefit a local hospital. But the audience could not have known the full significance of this concert: they were about to witness the first performance of a tremendous musical masterpiece.

Since that first performance, *Messiah*, by George Frideric Handel, has become a cornerstone of classical music. Not a year has gone by since that spring of 1742 without *Messiah* being performed, and to an ever-growing number of admirers. It is held in awe, respected, and prized by all who love music. Today, thousands gather every Christmas to sing and experience it, and its most famous moment, the Hallelujah Chorus, has become an expression of rejoicing the world over.

Messiah is a richly complex work, full of symbols and allusions, yet transparent and simple in its central message of eternal comfort. It is possibly the greatest story ever told: the story of how God so loved the world that he sent a Saviour, a Messiah, to bring everlasting peace.

The greatness of *Messiah* begins with the words it contains, because the words are from no ordinary source. For learned people

around the world, regardless of their faith, the Bible remains an extraordinary piece of literature. Almost every word in *Messiah* is taken from the Bible, fashioned into a sacred drama. As befitted this unique subject, Handel set these words to his most inspired and exultant music. Like an opera, the drama of *Messiah* unfolds through music as sung by a cast of solo voices and a chorus. Unlike an opera, however, the singers are not characters, but messengers representing the words of the prophets, saints and other extraordinary people in the telling of this remarkable story.

Messiah begins with a promise: the promise that one day, the people of the world will be saved from their sufferings. “Take comfort, my people,” says that prophet Isaiah, for a Saviour will come. And at the first Christmas, this prophecy comes true: the Saviour is born. All nature rejoices. “Come unto him,” says St Matthew, “and he will give you peace.” This promise is the message of Part I of *Messiah*.

As the Messiah begins his teachings on earth, he is met with resistance. The people had expected the Messiah to be a mighty military leader, not the humble son of a carpenter. And so in their prejudice and rejection, they crucify him. But as the Messiah sacrifices himself on the Cross, he takes

from the world all its sufferings. Thus the Mission of the Messiah is fulfilled – he truly is the Saviour of the world. To the wonder of the people, he is miraculously Resurrected, and his teachings enter all the lands. The world rejoices with the magnificent chorus ‘Hallelujah’, which means ‘praise be to God’. The promise is fulfilled – this fulfilment is the message of Part II of Handel’s *Messiah*.

With the Hallelujah Chorus, the drama of *Messiah* has come to an end. The third and final part of Handel’s *Messiah* is a triumphant celebration – a celebration that the Messiah’s gift of peace will conquer all the earth. His gift is greater than pain, greater than death, greater than any suffering. “If God is for us, who can be against us?” says St Paul. The message of everlasting peace – the central message of the whole work – is jubilantly delivered in Part III of Handel’s *Messiah*.

Recognising the profound effect that *Messiah* and its message would have on his audience, Handel dedicated its use to charity. For the rest of his life, he continued to perform *Messiah* to benefit the needy. The Foundling Hospital in London, Handel’s favourite charity, still owns to this day a copy of the music that he left them in his will. “*Messiah*,” as one of Handel’s contemporaries put it, “has fed the hungry and fostered the orphan.”

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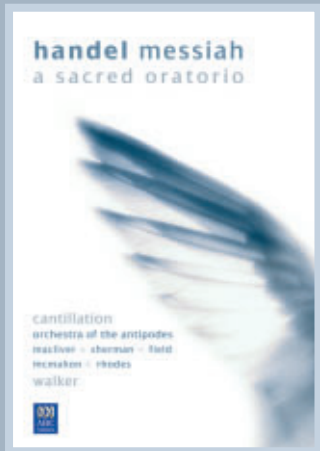
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handel messiah
(Complete) DVD 472 604-9

- Filmed at historic St Patrick's Estate in Manly, Sydney
- Extra Features: Artist Interviews and Biographies
- 5.1 Surround Sound Audio



handel messiah
(Complete) 2-CD set 472 601-2

Sara Macalver



Alexandra Sherman



Christopher Field



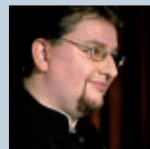
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