

Encounters with Mr Handel

Saturday 25 May at 5:00pm, St James' Church



Handel's L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato: 'The Cheerful, the Thoughtful, and the Moderate Man'

The Choir of St James' and BachBand@StJames', directed by Warren Trevelyan-Jones, with soloists, Amy Moore (soprano) and Richard Butler (tenor), present a rare performance of George Frideric Handel's beautiful pastoral ode. Handel had immersed himself in London life, moving away from composing Italian Opera which was in crisis at the time. John Milton's poetry was wildly popular in 18th century London, and Handel was considered the finest composer the world had ever known. A plan was hatched to bring these two greats together; with a pair of allegorical poems by Milton, *L'Allegro* ('the cheerful') and *Il Penseroso* ('the thoughtful'), providing the basis for Handel's new English work. To complement these explorations of extrovert (cheerful) and introvert (thoughtful) states of personality, librettist Charles Jennens provided a 'moderating' text, skilfully weaving it into the ode to create a balanced, enlightened insight into the states of man. What transpires is an exquisite tapestry of human emotions and delight for the natural world, carried by solo arias, duets, and choruses—possibly Handel's most ravishing music of extraordinary freshness and beauty to express man's place in the world.

The Choir of St James', directed by Warren Trevelyan-Jones, enjoys a reputation of being one of the finest choirs in Australia. It is one of the oldest musical establishments in Australia and is linked to the earliest days of the colony of New South Wales; some of its early members were convicts. The Choir maintains a schedule of regular weekly choral services, Sunday Cantata Services, Orchestral Masses, and its own Subscription Concert Series. It has a large and varied repertoire encompassing music from the Middle Ages to the contemporary, and it is committed to supporting new Australian works, including compositions written by past and present members of the Choir. Past collaborations include working with Paul McCreesh and the Gabrieli Consort & Players, The Tallis Scholars, The King's Singers, Opera Australia, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Australian Baroque Brass, The Australian Haydn Ensemble, and soloists Yvonne Kenny, Greta Bradman and Teddy Tahu Rhodes.

The Choir also undertakes a comprehensive programme of recording, broadcasting and touring, interstate and overseas. In 2018, it returned to Gallipoli and sang at the ANZAC Day Dawn Service, as well as performing to critical acclaim at the Coriole Music Festival in Adelaide, and in Hobart at Festival of Voices.

BachBand@StJames' is one of Sydney's newest Baroque ensembles, whose membership comprises the most sought-after Baroque instrumentalists in the city. It performs regularly with The Choir of St James' in concerts and services, such as the Cantata Series, where Cantatas by J. S. Bach are performed liturgically in the Lutheran style.

Music at St James' presents The Choir of St James', BachBand@StJames', Amy Moore, and Richard Butler, directed by Warren Trevelyan-Jones in *Encounters with Mr Handel*, Saturday 25 May, 2019, 5:00pm at St James' Church, 173 King Street, Sydney.

Tickets \$50/\$45 | To book call (02) 8256 2222 or visit www.cityrecitalhall.com

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