

Bach's Christmas Oratorio in Hereford Cathedral

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On Saturday 28 January at 7 pm in Hereford Cathedral there is a rare opportunity to hear a complete performance of Bach's Christmas Oratorio. This great work consists of six parts, originally intended to be sung separately on the six principal feast days between Christmas and Epiphany.

The performance will be given by forces similar to those which Bach would have envisaged: the boys and men of Hereford Cathedral Choir, and the period-instrument orchestra Marches Baroque, led by Kelly McCusker. The soloists are Lucy Bowen (soprano), Patrick Craig (countertenor), Nicholas Mulroy (tenor) and Giles Underwood (bass). The performance is directed by Geraint Bowen, Hereford Cathedral's director of music.

Geraint Bowen said: 'It's very exciting to be preparing the Christmas Oratorio with the cathedral choir once again. Along with the choir's annual Holy Week performances of Bach's St John Passion and St Matthew Passion, this is now an established part of the musical calendar in Hereford. It's an equally wonderful piece which is more rarely performed, especially in its entirety. It combines some of Bach's most festive and jubilant writing for choir and orchestra, complete with trumpets and kettledrums, with more intimate reflective numbers for the soloists.'

Tickets for the performance are £22 and £16 and available from the Cathedral Shop or The Outback, Church Street, Hereford. You can also telephone 01432 374261 to book and pay for your tickets in advance. Doors open at 6.15pm and there may be a limited number of tickets available to buy at the St John's Door of the Cathedral on the night.