

The City of London Choir
presents
J. S. Bach - St Matthew Passion

City of
London
Choir

Hilary Davan Wetton – conductor
The Hanover Band
Andrew Staples – *Evangelist* / Marcus Farnsworth – *Christus* / Roderick Williams – *Baritone*
Angharad Gruffydd Jones – *Soprano* / Katherine Nicholson – *Contralto*

St John's, Smith Square
Sunday 25th March 2012, 6.30pm
Tickets: £12 - £30
Box Office: 020 7222 1061

In March 2012, the **City of London Choir** presents Bach's masterpiece in the perfect Baroque setting of St John's, Smith Square. The choir will be joined by one of the finest period instrumental orchestras in the world, The Hanover Band, and an impressive line-up of soloists including baritone Roderick Williams, Andrew Staples as the Evangelist and Marcus Farnsworth as Christus.

A Ripieno Chorus for London 2012

The St Matthew Passion was first performed with a Ripieno chorus of boys from the Thomasschule at St Thomas's Church in Leipzig where Bach was Kapellmeister (1723 – 1750). For this concert in 2012, the Ripieno chorus will be provided by fifty children from three inner city London primary schools – the Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School (City of London), St Jude's Church of England Primary School (Southwark) and Queensbridge Primary School (Hackney).

The schools choir is an extension of the work of the **Classical Roadshow** which, like the City of London Choir, has Hilary Davan Wetton as its Musical Director. It is an organization which provides remarkable opportunities for children – whose schools' musical activities are always limited by curriculum, time and money – to perform with professional orchestras. This enhances the children's experience of music as an immersive art form rather than something to be enjoyed only passively.

With support from the Worshipful Company of Grocers and M&G Investments, the fifty children taking part in this concert will receive intensive vocal coaching in their schools – an experience they are unlikely to have had before. In addition, soloists Roderick Williams, Andrew Staples and Marcus Farnsworth will visit the schools and help the children to prepare fully for the concert. The central aim is for the children to be completely familiar with the music of the Passion and to understand their crucial role in the performance.

The essence of this challenging project is something that Hilary Davan Wetton says he has been "*striving for throughout my whole career – choosing not to put people in categories as 'amateurs' or 'professionals', just musicians who are going to work together and produce their personal best*".

The thrill of learning Bach's glorious music and of performing in a historic London building with world class musicians is an experience the organisers hope the children will carry with them for the whole of their lives.

'the youthful City of London Choir under its director Hilary Davan Wetton... proved that magic could be kindled'

BBC Music Magazine, November 2010

'The City of London Choir, perhaps our finest amateur singers'

Sunday Telegraph, December 2011