

CORO

§ The Sixteen Edition



## MESSIAH Handel

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The Sixteen

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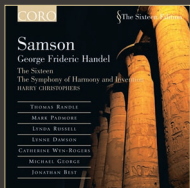
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CORO

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## CORONATION ANTHEMS G. F. Handel

The King shall rejoice

My heart is inditing

Zadok the Priest

Let thy hand be strengthened

The Sixteen  
HARRY CHRISTOPHERS

THE VOICES OF  
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COR16066

# CORONATION ANTHEMS

George Frideric Handel

Handel is one of only a handful of composers who was truly multi-faceted - a master of orchestral and vocal textures, both triumphant and profound. Simply compare the bustling, joyous activity of the *Arrival of the Queen of Sheba* with the dark, anxious apprehension of the Overture to *Jephtha*, and you will know exactly what I mean.



However, it is majestic grandeur, alongside moments of exquisite tenderness, which overridingly pervade the *Coronation Anthems* and characterise all the works on this disc. Handel's choice of texts is quite frankly inspired. *My heart is inditing* would have been heard at the coronation of Queen Caroline and its second movement is full of feminine eloquence. It is Handel at his best as he gently caresses us with sumptuous phrases and sensual harmonies. And then later you will experience pure theatre - the opening to *Zadok the Priest* has to be one of the greatest moments of suspense and sheer anticipation in music.

Not only did the 1727 Coronation have great music specifically written for it, but also an organ was constructed for the occasion. I thought therefore that it would be appropriate to include in this recording a rather interesting version of his F major Opus 4 organ concerto. It was first performed as part of his oratorio *Athalia* and here it ended with an Alleluia chorus, replete with horns. Handel was an exceptional organist and possessed an "amazing command of the instrument" along with a "copiousness of imagination". With all his years of experience as one of our country's finest continuo players, I asked Alastair Ross to don Handel's mantle. Alastair's style and imagination is second to none; unfortunately we could not have an organ constructed specially for the occasion so we did the next best thing and hired Mander's aptly named "Aquarium" chamber organ (vibrant blue in colour)!

The great historian Charles Burney wrote in 1785 that "Handel's general look was somewhat heavy and sour; but when he did smile, it was his sire the sun, bursting out of a black cloud." There is nothing in Handel's music that could ever be called "heavy and sour", but I am sure Handel would have joined with us in smiling at the glorious sounds that emanate from his uplifting music.

Harry  
Christophers,

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With thanks to The Anson Charitable Trust, John Bickley & Hilary Perrott, Harry & Veronica Christophers, Simon Gulliver, Simon Haslam, Robert Kirk, Claire Long, Richard Price, Francis Quinlan, Anthony Smith CBE, David & Stella Weatherall.

# CORONATION ANTHEMS

George Frideric Handel (1685 - 1759)

1 Arrival of the Queen of Sheba 3.06

**CORONATION ANTHEM**  
*MY HEART IS INDITING* HWV 261

2 My heart is inditing 2.47

3 King's daughters 3.25

4 Upon thy right hand 2.52

5 Kings shall be thy nursing fathers 3.01

**ORGAN CONCERTO IN F MAJOR**  
Opus 4 Number 4 (original version)

6 Allegro 4.09

7 Andante 5.29

8 Adagio 1.07

9 Allegro 5.09

10 **CORONATION ANTHEM**  
*ZADOK THE PRIEST* HWV 258 5.46

**CORONATION ANTHEM**  
*THE KING SHALL REJOICE* HWV 260

11 The King shall rejoice 2.50

12 Exceeding glad shall he be 2.50

13 Glory and worship 2.52

14 Alleluia 2.44

15 Overture to *Jephtha* 5.51

**CORONATION ANTHEM**  
*LET THY HAND BE STRENGTHENED*  
HWV 259

16 Let thy hand be strengthened 3.05

17 Let justice and judgment 3.42

18 Alleluia 2.01

19 Worthy is the Lamb (*Messiah*) 3.29

20 Amen (*Messiah*) 3.43

Total Running Time 70.06

# THE SIXTEEN

SOPRANO Julie Cooper, Sally Dunkley, Rebecca Hickey, Alison Hill,  
Elin Manahan Thomas, Charlotte Mobbs, Rebecca Outram

ALTO Ian Aitkenhead, David Clegg, William Missin, Christopher Royall

TENOR Simon Berridge, Jeremy Budd, Mark Dobell, David Roy

BASS Jonathan Arnold, Ben Davies, Eamonn Dougan, Robert Evans

VIOLIN I Walter Reiter (leader), Jean Paterson, Simon Jones,  
Andrea Morris, Claire Duff, Sarah Moffatt

VIOLIN II Miles Golding, Theresa Caudle,  
Hannah Tibell, Ellen O'Dell, Claire Mera-Nelson

VIOLA Stefanie Heichelheim, Emma Alter

VIOLONCELLO Joseph Crouch, Imogen Seth-Smith

DOUBLE BASS Jan Spencer

OBOE Anthony Robson, Hilary Stock

BASSOON Sally Jackson, Siona Spillett

HORN Anneke Scott, Clare Penkey

TRUMPET Robert Farley, Christopher Pigram, John Hutchins

TIMPANI Charles Fullbrook

THEORBO Eligio Quinteiro

HARPSICHORD Benjamin Bayl

ORGAN Alastair Ross (solo)

## GLORY & GREAT WORSHIP

The First Grand Musical Performance in the Abbey was at the Coronation of King George the Second'. Thus William Boyce, at the time of the coronation of King George III in 1761, described the music at the previous comparable event, the coronation of King George II and Queen Caroline in Westminster Abbey on 11 October 1727, in which he may have participated as a young singer. He continued: 'Mr Handel, who composed the music, often lamented his not having part of the altar taken away, as he, and all the musicians concerned, experienced the bad effect it had by that obstruction'. With performers distributed around the coronation area in different galleries, and without the benefit of modern communication technology, it is perhaps not surprising that the Archbishop of Canterbury wrote in his Order of Service against the words of the first of Handel's anthems, 'The Anthem in Confusion: All irregular in the Music'. However, there may have been a particular reason for the confusion at this point. The printed Order of Service for the coronation differs from the record of the music performed on that occasion that was written into the 'Cheque

Book' of the Chapel Royal choir, so the performers may have received conflicting instructions. They may have even begun two different pieces simultaneously for the first anthem, necessitating a pause while the situation was sorted out and the anthem was recommenced.

The uncertainty about the order of the anthems in 1727 may be traced to the circumstances that led up to the coronation, following the death of King George I in June 1727. The senior regular Chapel Royal composer, William Croft, also died a couple of months later and Maurice Greene was appointed as his successor at the beginning of September. Croft had composed the orchestrally-accompanied anthem *The Lord is a sun and a shield* for the coronation of George I in 1714. This had been during Handel's early years in London, but since then Handel's status had changed in two relevant ways: he had been given a court title as Composer for the Chapel Royal in 1723, and he had become a British subject by naturalisation in February 1727. He probably began work on the anthems while plans for the coronation ceremony were being developed during August and September, but representations may have been made on behalf of Greene as the newly-appointed Chapel Royal composer:

according to a rather sour memorandum written in later years by George III, in 1727 the King himself insisted that Handel and not Greene should provide the anthems.

The coronation ritual was a historical one, with a liturgy deriving from mediaeval times, but each of the previous coronations had been different in some way. That of George I in 1714 was the first coronation of a King of Great Britain, following the Act of Union, and there was no queen; Queen Anne in 1702 had a consort (Prince George of Denmark) who did not qualify for a coronation in his own right; in 1689 Mary II had been crowned as joint monarch with William III, not as Queen Consort. For the combination of King and Queen Consort you had to return to James II and Mary of Modena in 1685, but on that occasion the traditional liturgy had been curtailed because the King, although constitutionally head of the Anglican church, regarded himself as a Roman Catholic. Few people in 1727 would have remembered the 1685 coronation, but its ceremonial had been the subject of a book that went through several subsequent published versions. Handel almost certainly referred to the 1685 account, which included the full texts of the anthems for that occasion, before he started composing his anthems in the summer of

1727. When the Archbishop's official Order of Service was delivered to him, he would have found that some of the anthems were distributed differently, and the texts were also different in various details. According to a later anecdote, Handel had had the words sent to him by the Bishops, for the anthems; at which he murmured, and took offence, as he thought it implied his ignorance of the Holy Scriptures: 'I have read my Bible very well, and shall chuse for myself'. More likely, he had already 'chosen', by taking or adapting the texts from the 1685 liturgy, and composing accordingly.

The differences in the placing of the four anthems that received Handel's attention were not very great, because two of them were specific to particular moments in the coronation service: *Zadok the Priest* accompanied the anointing ceremony, and *My heart is inditing* was the anthem for the coronation of the Queen, which followed that of the King. Assuming that the Chapel Royal manuscript is an authoritative record of what was sung, *The King shall rejoice* came at the Crowning of the King, and *Let thy hand be strengthened* at the 'Recognition' quite early on in the service when the King was presented to, and acclaimed by, the congregation. This explains why *Let thy hand be strengthened* is the only one of

the four anthems without trumpets: for the Recognition, the players had had to leave the main body of performers in order to play fanfares.

A coronation was always a special occasion in the routine of court music-making, because it was probably the only occasion during a reign when the full complement of singers from the Chapel Royal and string players from the King's Musicians had to be on duty: otherwise, they served as smaller groups in alternate 'months of waiting'. People with long memories might have been able to recall Henry Purcell's magnificent setting of *My heart is inditing* from 1685, or more recently William Croft's anthem from 1714. Yet there was some defence for Boyce's description of Handel's music as 'The First Grand Musical Performance' at a coronation, for in these anthems Handel resumed the grand style that he had introduced with the 'Utrecht' *Te Deum* and *Jubilate* in 1713, works that decisively changed the style for English ceremonial church music, away from the previous Purcellian model. In 1727 he took this style a stage further by writing entirely 'full' works for chorus and orchestra, with no movements for soloists. (For practical reasons in the Abbey, groups of semi-chorus voices may have taken the initial leads for a few bars in some

movements.) A large number of additional instrumentalists and voices were brought in to supplement the musicians from the court institutions: one report of a rehearsal even claimed a total of 40 voices and 160 players. Whatever the actual figures, the occasion saw the largest gathering of professional singers and players in London during the first half of the eighteenth century. Handel's *Coronation Anthems* were also probably the first pieces of English church music in which timpani were added to an orchestra of trumpets, woodwind and strings: they enhance the jubilation. Equally remarkable is Handel's effective use of the full choir-and-orchestra texture without trumpets and drums for gentler contrasted movements such as 'Upon thy right hand did stand the Queen', 'Exceeding glad shall he be', and 'Let justice and judgment'. The famous opening of *Zadok the Priest* still retains its magic, even for the listener who knows what is coming: the effect on those who heard it for the first time at the service or the rehearsals in 1727 can only be imagined. Beyond the first of Handel's anthems in the service, the Archbishop made no further comments on the performance of the music, and there is no reason to believe that *Zadok* suffered 'confusion'. In 1784 the music made its mark again with the massive forces assembled

at the beginning of the first concert of the Handel Commemoration in Westminster Abbey when, according to Charles Burney, 'every hearer seemed afraid of breathing, least it should obstruct the stream of harmony in its passage to the ear'. Considering the numbers of performers involved in 1727 and in 1784, it is perhaps surprising that not a single page of the music from which they played and sung has survived, but Handel's autograph score (on which he headed the anthems with references to the biblical texts) is almost completely intact, and there are several early manuscript copies. One curious feature is that in *The King shall rejoice* these copies have the words 'Glory and great worship' where Handel wrote 'Glory and worship': we shall never know for certain which was performed.

When Handel first introduced an English oratorio into his opera programme with *Esther* at the King's Theatre, Haymarket, in May 1732, the advertisements in the newspapers described the set-up of the performers with reference to a recollection of the coronation seven years before:

There will be no Action upon the Stage, but the House will be fitted up in a decent Manner, for the Audience. The Musick to be disposed after the Manner of the Coronation Service.

'Musick' here refers to the musicians,

but for these performances Handel also expanded his previous score of *Esther* using movements from the *Coronation Anthems*, and added other chorus movements in the same style. The incorporation of such chorus movements was one of the defining characteristics of Handel's new genre of theatre oratorio: as the preface to the libretto of *Samson* expressed it in 1743, the oratorios combined the 'Solemnity of Church-Musick' with 'the most pleasing Airs of the Stage'. In March and April 1735, in the course of a season at Covent Garden Theatre, Handel gave his first substantial run of oratorios, with fourteen performances and a repertory of three works (*Esther*, *Deborah* and *Athalia*), supplementing them with the innovative attraction of organ concertos. Mostly the concertos were performed at the start of the Acts or Parts of the oratorios, but in the case of *Athalia* Handel composed an organ concerto to round off the work, and the last movement ran into a 'Hallelujah' chorus, thereby combining the two particularly novel elements of the oratorio performances. The concerto itself, subsequently published as Opus 4 Number 4 (without the chorus section), is the most carefully-composed of Handel's pieces in the new genre from the 1735 season.

In this programme other orchestral pieces

by Handel introduce two of the Coronation Anthems: perhaps a comparison with the setting of jewels in a crown is not entirely inappropriate. Like *Zadok the Priest*, the lively movement known as the 'Arrival of the Queen of Sheba' has proved amazingly resilient to the effects of accidental popularity (in this case, largely initiated by a famous recording conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham) and frequent repetition. Handel performed it as the opening to Part Three of his oratorio *Solomon* (1749), where indeed it prepares for the entrance of the visiting Queen at Solomon's court. (The original manuscript libretto says simply 'Sinfony'.) It may spoil the fun to know that Handel originally composed the movement for another context in a different oratorio, though it was never performed there, but it is entirely appropriate to its moment in *Solomon*, and indeed also as a prelude to Handel's anthem for the coronation of the British Queen. *Jephtha* was Handel's last original oratorio, composed in difficult circumstances during 1751 as his activities were gradually impaired by blindness. As an introduction to the oratorio Handel used a piece in the conventional two-movement 'French Overture' form that he had written, along with other music, over the turn of 1749-50 for a production of Tobias Smollett's play *Alceste* that never

came to production: the rather serious tone of the minor-key movements suited the new context in *Jephtha* admirably.

Unlike most of Handel's English oratorios, *Messiah* is reflective rather than dramatic, proceeding mostly by narrative and commentary rather than by the direct representation of events. The final chorus movements sum up the message of the oratorio: the good news of redemption through the Messiah. The three sections of 'Worthy is the Lamb' follow a similar pattern to the movements of *Zadok the Priest*, beginning with a grand statement which then becomes an introduction, leading onwards in a cumulative manner. In this case, the conclusion is 'the sound of a grand Amen', at the same time solemn and joyous, in which the simple musical materials of a scale-figure evolve into a wondrous contrapuntal web at the climax. Below the final bars Handel wrote, in a characteristic jumble of different languages, 'S[oli] D[eo] G[loria]' (the glory be to God alone), 'Fine dell' Oratorio', 'G. F. Handel' (the English form of his name) and, in German, the date 12 September 1741. The 'Amen' was the last music that he would have heard performed, in *Messiah* at Covent Garden theatre on 6 April 1759, eight days before his death.

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## TEXTS

### CORONATION ANTHEM: **My heart is inditing**

- ② **My heart is inditing** of a good matter;  
I speak of the things which I have made unto the King.
- ③ **Kings' daughters** were among thy honourable women.
- ④ **Upon thy right hand** did stand the Queen in vesture of gold  
and the King shall have pleasure in thy beauty.
- ⑤ **Kings shall be thy nursing fathers**  
and queens thy nursing mothers. (After Psalm 45:1, 10, 12 and Isaiah 49:23)

### ⑩ CORONATION ANTHEM: **Zadok the Priest**

**Zadok the Priest** and Nathan the Prophet anointed Solomon King.  
And all the people rejoiced, and said:  
God save the King, long live the King, God save the King!  
May the King live for ever, Amen, Alleluia. (After 1 Kings 1:39-40)

### CORONATION ANTHEM: **The King shall rejoice**

- ⑪ **The King shall rejoice** in thy strength, O Lord.
- ⑫ **Exceeding glad shall he be** of thy salvation.

13 **Glory and worship** hast thou laid upon him,  
Thou hast prevented him with the blessings of goodness,  
And hast set a crown of pure gold upon his head.

14 **Alleluia.** (Psalm 21: 1, 2, 3, 5)

### CORONATION ANTHEM: **Let thy hand be strengthened**

16 **Let thy hand be strengthened** and thy right hand be exalted.

17 **Let justice and judgment** be the preparation of thy seat!  
Let mercy and truth go before thy face.

18 **Alleluia.** (Psalm 89: 13-14)

### 19 **Worthy is the Lamb** *chorus (from Messiah)*

**Worthy is the Lamb** that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his blood,  
to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength,  
and honour, and glory, and blessing.  
Blessing and honour, glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne  
and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. (Revelation V: 12-13)

### 20 **Amen** *chorus (from Messiah)*

**Amen.**



**Harry Christophers** is known internationally as founder and conductor of The Sixteen as well as a regular guest conductor for many of the major symphony orchestras and opera companies worldwide. He has directed The Sixteen choir and orchestra throughout Europe, America and the Far East gaining a distinguished reputation for his work in Renaissance, Baroque and twentieth century music. In 2000 he instituted the 'Choral Pilgrimage', a national tour of English cathedrals from York to Canterbury in music from the pre-Reformation, as The Sixteen's contribution to the millennium celebrations. It raised awareness of this historic repertoire so successfully that the Choral Pilgrimage in the UK is now central to the annual artistic programme.

In 2008 Harry Christophers was appointed Artistic Director of Boston's Handel and Haydn Society, he is also Principal Guest Conductor of the Granada Symphony Orchestra as well as enjoying a very special partnership with the BBC Philharmonic with whom he won a Diapason d'Or. He is also a regular guest conductor with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields and the Orquestra de la Comunidad de Madrid he has also conducted the Hallé, the London Symphony Orchestra and San Francisco Symphony.

Increasingly busy in opera, Harry Christophers has conducted Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse*, Gluck's *Orfeo*, Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, Purcell's *King Arthur* and Rameau's *Platée* for Lisbon Opera. After an acclaimed English National Opera debut with *The Coronation of Poppea* he has since returned for Gluck's *Orfeo* and Handel's *Ariodante*, as well as conducting the UK premiere of Messager's opera *Fortunio* for Grange Park Opera. He also conducts regularly at Buxton Opera.

Harry Christophers was awarded the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Music from the University of Leicester in 2008.





# § The Sixteen

HARRY CHRISTOPHERS

After three decades of world-wide performance and recording, The Sixteen is recognised as one of the world's greatest ensembles. Comprising both choir and period instrument orchestra, the group's special reputation for performing early English polyphony, masterpieces of the Renaissance, Baroque and early Classical, and a diversity of twentieth century music, all stems from the passions of conductor and founder, Harry Christophers.

The Sixteen tours throughout Europe, Japan, Australia and the Americas and has given regular performances worldwide at the major concert halls and festivals. At home in the UK, The Sixteen are "The Voices of Classic FM" as well as Associate Artists of Southbank Centre, London. The group also promotes The Choral Pilgrimage, an annual tour of the UK's finest cathedrals, bringing music back to the buildings for which it was written.

The Sixteen's period orchestra has taken part in acclaimed semi-staged performances of Purcell's *Fairy Queen* in Tel Aviv and London, a fully-staged production of Purcell's *King Arthur* in Lisbon's Belem Centre, and new productions of Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse* at Lisbon Opera House and *The Coronation of Poppea* at English National Opera.

Over one hundred recordings reflect The Sixteen's quality in a range of work spanning the music of five hundred years, winning many awards. In 2008, The Sixteen featured in the highly successful BBC Four television series, *Sacred Music*, presented by Simon Russell Beale.

**Alastair Ross** is artistic director of Concerto delle Donne, a three-soprano group whose other members are Donna Deam, Faye Newton and Alastair's wife Gill. Their second CD, *Music for the Virgin Mary* (music for convents by Charpentier), was released by Signum Records in 2006.

Alastair was an organ scholar at New College, Oxford, where he gained a First in Music. He then spent a year studying the organ in New York. He was Organist and Choirmaster at High Wycombe Parish Church for ten years and Director of Music at St. Margaret's Westminster for six years.

He is principal keyboard player with the Academy of Ancient Music and The Sixteen where he has played with the Orchestra of The Sixteen for many years and will be performing the organ concerto on this CD throughout The Sixteen's thirtieth anniversary Choral Pilgrimage.

He also plays regularly with the Adderbury Ensemble and directs their choral concerts at Easter and at Christmas. For five years he coached the choir and solo singers at Aestas Musica, the International Summer School of Baroque Music and Dance in Varaždin, Croatia.



RECORDING PRODUCER: Mark Brown      RECORDING ENGINEER: Mike Hatch (Floating Earth)  
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 HARPSICHORD supplied and tuned by Malcolm Greenhalgh  
 FIVE STOP CONTINUO ORGAN known as 'The Aquarium' supplied and tuned by N P Mander Ltd.  
 COVER IMAGE: Copyright - Dean and Chapter of Westminster  
 DESIGN: Andrew Giles - agd@aegidius.org.uk

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