

Bach: St John Passion

Presented by the Australian Boys Choral Institute

Australian Boys Choir | The Vocal Consort
Genesis Baroque (on period instruments)

Stella Horvath, Maid & Soprano Arias
Michael Burden, Peter & Alto Arias
Timothy Reynolds, Evangelist & Tenor Arias
Benjamin Glover, Servant & Tenor Arias
Oliver Mann, Pilate & Bass Arias
Nicholas Dinopoulos, Jesus & Conductor

To ensure the enjoyment of other patrons, kindly switch off all mobile devices.
We thank you for not recording or photographing today's performance.

Concert duration is approximately 140 minutes (including one 15-minute interval).
Please hold applause until the end of Part One and then the conclusion of the entire work.

Saturday 28th March 2026
Ballarat Central Uniting Church

Sunday 29th March 2026
St Andrew's Church Brighton

www.australianboyschoir.com.au

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians and Traditional Custodians of the land upon which we live, work, learn and perform today.

From the Institute Chair...

It is often said that the best things are nurtured over time. This is certainly true with regard to choral artistry, and we at the Australian Boys Choral Institute are once again delighted to be collaborating with the outstanding musicians of Genesis Baroque in this second presentation of our exciting three-year partnership.

Focusing together on the timeless music of Johann Sebastian Bach, we are now steadily nearing our planned 300th anniversary performance in 2027 of the composer's monumental *St Matthew Passion* together with international guests, the Hannover Boys Choir - an event which has been in development now for over six years.

The rest of our public offerings this season are no less exciting as we join in concert with some outstanding local and international guest artists, including UK choral supergroup *The Gesualdo Six* in their exclusive Melbourne outing this June.

Welcome to 2026 and the Australian Boys Choral Institute's 87th year. As ever, I look forward to seeing you at all of our concerts throughout the year.

Tim Staindl
Board Chair, ABCI

From the Artistic Director...

"To strip human nature until its divine attributes are made clear, to inform ordinary activities with spiritual fervour, to give wings of eternity to that which is most ephemeral; to make divine things human and human things divine; such is Bach, the greatest and purest moment in music of all time." - Pablo Casals

Around this time last year, we attempted an idea: a reconstruction of a work that no longer exists and a representation, through scholarship, of something as it may have been. In stark contrast to Bach's long-lost *St Mark Passion*, the composer's *St John Passion* is very much extant (so much so that it exists in several versions). What your ears are experiencing today continues this adventurous spirit through an oftentimes surprising approach that makes something so very old excitingly immediate, new and contemporary once again.

The piece itself is considered one of the 'Everests' of the choral repertoire. Usually the provenance of adult singers, I am not sure a performance employing a choir of men and boys (as Bach himself had) and using historical instruments has ever been attempted anywhere in the Southern Hemisphere. As evidenced by our rehearsals, and judging by the reactions of our young singers upon seeing a facsimile of this great work in Bach's own hand (a document which itself is now over 300 years old), this significance is certainly not lost on them either. It has been an immense privilege to prepare this wonderful music together with our musical collaborators Genesis Baroque, Naarm's leading period instrument ensemble.

Many of you will know that having the opportunity to conduct our singers while standing next to Bach's grave in Leipzig's famous St Thomas' Church in 2018 was one of the most moving and profound experiences of my life. Being able to continue this centuries-old tradition at the ABCI carries us towards new horizons for our next generation of singers and audiences alike.

Nicholas Dinopoulos
Artistic Director, ABCI

Program...

St John Passion, BWV 245

Johann Sebastian Bach
(Germany, 1685-1750)

PART ONE

- I – The betrayal and arrest of Jesus
- II – Jesus before the High Priest
- III – Peter denies Jesus
- IV – Jesus is questioned by Hannas
- V – Peter denies Jesus again
- VI – Jesus is brought before Pilate
- VII – Pilate tries to release Jesus

INTERVAL – 15 minutes

PART TWO

- I – Jesus is sentenced to death
- II – Pilate's inscription
- III – The soldiers mock Jesus
- IV – 'Behold thy mother'
- V – Jesus dies on the cross
- VI – The piercing with a lance
- VII – Burial in the tomb

Scan below to view the text and translation of the entire work:



This event is generously supported by the John Henry Byrne Liturgical and Sacred Music Fund, the Robert Salzer Foundation, and the Peggy and Leslie Cranbourne Foundation.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Pinchgut Opera (Sydney) for their loan of a baroque contrabassoon after Eichentopf for these performances, as well as our event partners Australian Digital Concert Hall, Ballarat Central Uniting Church and St Andrew's Brighton.

We also are extremely thankful for our Bach sponsors at the time of printing this concert program including Christine Collingwood, Diana Fan, Michael Fulcher, Sarah Moller & Thepul Seekkuge.

The Vocal Consort

"The Vocal Consort sang superbly...a rich, seamless blend"
The New York Times

Originally formed in 1984 to complement the work of the Australian Boys Choir, The Vocal Consort has gone on to establish a distinct musical life of its own as arguably the country's finest all-male vocal ensemble.

Most members of the Consort gained their early training through the Australian Boys Choir and now provide inspiring role models for the boys in a repertoire ranging from plainchant and sacred polyphony through to various contemporary styles.

The Vocal Consort has toured internationally eight times encompassing tours across Europe, Asia and North America. They regularly perform throughout regional Australia, and in 2008 were a featured ensemble of the Hobart Festival of Voices.

TVC has released three CDs to date, the most recent of which was launched in April 2012.

Genesis Baroque

"Genesis Baroque, a young group formed in 2017, could scarcely be more impressive. They produce a rich, sonorous sound, disciplined ensemble and a beautifully nuanced mutual understanding..." Sydney Morning Herald

Founded in 2017, Genesis Baroque brings together some of Australia's preeminent historically informed musicians, presenting intimate, dynamic performances across Melbourne and regional Victoria.

The ensemble performs variably as a chamber orchestra at full forces, through to small chamber ensemble, focusing on the repertoire of the 17th and 18th Centuries, but also exploring Classical, Romantic, and early 20th Century repertoire on period instruments.

As early music specialists with a rich and varied range of experience in music of the Renaissance and Baroque, Classical and Romantic, folk and commissioned new music, the musicians bring together their unique creative skills into an imaginative, magnetic performance style.

Genesis Baroque has a particular focus on providing a platform for local and expatriate Australian guest musicians and soloists. The ensemble released its first studio album of Corelli's Concerti Grossi Opus 6 in August 2020 with principal guest director, Sophie Gent, and founding music director, Lucinda Moon. The recording debuted as the highest selling Australian album on the ARIA classical album charts and received critical acclaim.

Concertmaster: Tim Willis | Violin: Jennifer Kirsner, Meg Cohen, Cameron Jamieson, James Armstrong, Lachlan MacLaren | Viola: Anna Webb, Susanna Ling | Viola d'Amore: Tim Willis, Jennifer Kirsner
Viola da Gamba: Reidun Turner | Cello: Edwina Cordingley, Natasha Kraemer | Double Bass: Miranda Hill
Flute: Mikaela Oberg, Meredith Beardmore | Oboe: Adam Masters, Kailen Cresp | Bassoon: Ben Hoadley
Contrabassoon: Sim Walters | Theorbo: Samantha Cohen | Organ: Donald Nicolson

[www.genesisbaroque.com.au]

Stella Horvath, soprano

Stella is a Melbourne-born soprano and a performance student at The University of Melbourne under the guidance of Dr Stephen Grant. Whilst a student at Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School, she was a founding chorister of the St Paul's Cathedral Girls' Voices, and Head Chorister in 2020. She won a choral scholarship to Trinity College in 2023 and has toured nationally and internationally with its choir. Stella debuted as soprano soloist in the St Paul's Cathedral performance of Handel's *Messiah* in September 2024 collaborating with Genesis Baroque, as well as being an Emerging Artist for Genesis Baroque in 2025. Stella was a soprano for the Song Company's Emerging artist program in September 2025.

Michael Burden, countertenor

Michael Burden is a Sydney-based countertenor, who enjoys a varied career of operatic and concert performance. Operatic roles include Rosencrantz (Cover) in *Hamlet* (Brett Dean) for Opera Australia, Ottone in *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (Monteverdi), Oberon in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Britten), Summer/Secrecy in *Fairy Queen* and Sorceress/Second Witch/The Spirit in *Dido and Aeneas* (Purcell), Une Scythe in *Iphigénie en Tauride* (Gluck) and Hyacinthus in *Apollo et Hyacinthus* (Mozart). Chorus credits include *Orfeo ed Euridice* and *Iphigénie en Tauride* (Gluck), and *Fairy Queen* and *Dido and Aeneas* (Purcell).

A seasoned concert performer, Michael's solo credits include Vivaldi's *Nisi Dominus* with Adelaide Baroque; *Gloria* with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, and *Stabat Mater*. Handel's *Messiah*, *Nisi Dominus*, *Dixit Dominus* with Royal Melbourne Philharmonic, Didymus in *Theodora* and Joad in *Athalia*. Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* and *Magnificat*; Charpentier's *Messe de Minuit*, and numerous Bach cantatas. He has worked throughout Australia with ensembles including Bach Akademie, Adelaide Baroque, and the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra; and with conductors including Tim Anderson, Tahu Matheson, Erin Helyard, Paul Dyer, and Elizabeth Scott.

Michael holds a Master of Music Studies (Opera Performance) from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, supported by the Donald Lionel Edgerton Scholarship, and completed with the guidance of Dr David Greco.

Benjamin Glover, tenor

Ben Glover is a Melbourne-based tenor regularly engaged as a concert, oratorio and opera singer. A graduate of the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music where he attained his Master of Music (Opera Performance) in 2021, Ben is quickly emerging as a soloist in Melbourne's concert singing circuit. An "intricately textured tenor" with "impressive timbre and range", Ben performs across the spectrum of classical vocal genres.

As a concert singer Ben has various credits, notably having performed the tenor solo in Mozart's *Requiem* in D minor with the Royal Melbourne Philharmonic in April 2023. With Victoria Chorale he performed in Saint-Saëns' *Oratorio de Noël* in December 2022, and in August 2025 he was the soloist in Ariel Ramirez's *Misa Criolla*. Ben joined The Geelong Chorale in May 2022 as a soloist in Vaughan Williams' *Mass in G minor*, and in August 2023 he joined The Chorale a second time for Mozart's *Requiem*. Ben also sings as a soloist with the St Francis' Choir on feast days throughout the liturgical year.

Ben has also had success as a competition singer. He was a finalist in the Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Aria Competition in both 2022 and 2023, where he was awarded the Conductor's Encouragement Award in 2022. Ben placed second in the Classical Vocal

Championship at the Boroondara Eisteddfod in 2024, and he was a finalist in the Melbourne Welsh Male Choir Singer of the Year 2024. Ben is equally at home on the operatic stage as on the concert platform. His major roles to date have included Tamino in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, Rinuccio in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*, Laurie in Adamo's *Little Women*, and the title role in Offenbach's *Orphée aux enfers*. Ben is also a member of the Melbourne Opera chorus, where most recently he performed in Puccini's *La Bohème* in September 2024.

Timothy Reynolds, tenor

Timothy Reynolds is a versatile performer who enjoys working in a broad range of styles as both a soloist and ensemble member, across oratorio, opera and chamber music groups. At home in Melbourne/Naarm, Timothy also teaches at the selective arts school The Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School.

A passionate ensemble performer, Timothy is the principal tenor for The Song Company and a principal (and founding) member of both the Consort of Melbourne and the Melbourne Octet, and performs with e21 and Canberra's Luminescence Chamber Singers amongst many other groups. He has appeared with Australia's finest early music ensembles, including Pinchgut Opera, the Bach Akademie Australia, Ludovico's Band, the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, Adelaide Baroque Orchestra, Genesis Baroque, The Melbourne Baroque Orchestra, La Compañia and the Melbourne Bach Choir.

A regular performer of the works of Bach - including the *Johannes Passion* and *Matthäus Passion* - Timothy performs with the above-mentioned Bach Akademie Australia, is a frequent guest at St John's Southgate for their Bach Cantata program as well as with the Canberra Bach Ensemble. With a strong interest in contemporary music, Timothy's modern-music performances outside of The Song Company include Brett Dean's *The Last Days of Socrates* and Elliot Carter's opera *What Next*.

Timothy has appeared with some of Australia's major orchestras and ensembles including the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Victorian Opera, Royal Melbourne Philharmonic, Melbourne Chamber Orchestra and the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra.

While overseas, Timothy understudied a number of roles at Oper Stuttgart in Germany, performed with The Bach Akademie Stuttgart, Opera Holland Park, Hampstead Garden Opera, The Gesualdo Consort Amsterdam, Philharmonischer Chor Esslingen, and at the Edinburgh Fringe.

Oliver Mann, bass-baritone

Oliver Mann works across various musical strands and languages, the Melbourne bass-baritone's output is defined by its adherence to the classical canon as much as its re-imagining. While steadily building a reputation within an early music and operatic context – including various roles with Opera Australia, the MSO and Victorian Opera – it's the coalescence between Mann's classical work and wider musical expressions that make his oeuvre so intriguing. His wanderings into arcane folk and experimental song-writing craft – which have brought about four acclaimed full-length albums, *Oliver Mann Sings* (2005), *The Possum Wakes at Night* (2008, Preservation Records), *Slow Bark* (2013), *Precious Moments* (2022, Eastmint Records - with Italian guitarist Stefano Pilia) and international tours – are cues to his artistry as much as his body of work in Baroque repertoire.

Nicholas Dinopoulos, conductor

Nicholas Dinopoulos studied singing at The University of Melbourne under Merlyn Quaife AM. He maintains a busy performance schedule, consisting of various concert, recital and operatic engagements, most notably as a core member of Songmakers Australia.

Opera credits include Caronte / Plutone (*L'Orfeo*), Ercole (*Il Giasone*), Un Scythe / Le Ministre du Sanctuaire (*Iphigénie en Tauride*), Bartolo / Antonio (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Leporello (*Don Giovanni*), Martino (*L'Occasione fa il Ladro*), L'Apparizione / Il Medico (*Macbeth*), Mars (*Orphée aux Enfers*), The Goldsmith (*The Juniper Tree*) and Cimarosa's *Maestro di Cappella*.

He has been heard frequently in national live-to-air broadcasts on ABC Classic, 3MBS FM and Australian Digital Concert Hall, and his performances have been recorded by both the Chandos and Pinchgut Live labels. He has also given the world premiere performances of several significant new works from among the rising generation of Australian composers.

Engagements as a guest soloist have spanned the Bach *Coffee Cantata* and Grainger *Tribute to Foster* for the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, El Cantor (*María de Buenos Aires*) for Victorian Opera, Polyphemus (*Acis & Galatea*) for Genesis Baroque, Christus in the *St. Matthew Passion* with the Melbourne Baroque Orchestra, Keeper of the Madhouse (*The Rake's Progress*) for Auckland Philharmonia, *Winterreise* with pianist Andrea Katz, the Schubert *Schwanengesang* for Art Song Canberra, the Buxtehude *Membra Jesu Nostri* for the Melbourne Festival, Michael Haydn *Requiem* with the Australian Haydn Ensemble, the Verdi *Requiem* for Camberwell Chorale, four successive invitations to the Peninsula Summer Musical Festival, several return appearances for Bach Musica NZ and the Sydney Cantata Project, plus recitals with Songmakers Australia at the Port Fairy Spring Music Festival, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Melbourne Recital Centre and for Musica Viva Australia.

As a conductor and educator, he has held positions at The University of Melbourne (Music Director, Melbourne Conservatorium Chamber Choir, 2019-present) and the Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music (Music Director, Monash University Singers & Sessional Voice Teacher, 2014-2020). He was also resident vocal consultant to the National Youth Choir of Australia for four consecutive seasons from 2015-2018 and has served as guest chorus director for several large-scale projects with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Australian Chamber Orchestra. In 2024 he commenced his tenure as Artistic Director of Western Australia's premier chamber choir, the Giovanni Consort, founded in 1995.

A specialist in the field of changing voice and young men's singing, he has also served on the staff of the Australian Boys Choral Institute since 2007. He is only the fifth Artistic Director appointed in the Choir's 87-year history. [www.nickdinopoulos.com]

Join the Conductor's Circle...

Like most major arts organisations, the Australian Boys Choral Institute is a not-for-profit organisation that cannot rely on income earned through tuition and performance fees to meet all its financial obligations.

All donations of \$2 or more are tax-deductible and will assist in promoting and improving the Australian Boys Choir's commitment to excellence. Donate \$50 or more to join the Conductor's Circle.

If you would like to find out how you can assist, please visit www.givenow.com.au/australianboyschoir or phone the Choir on (03) 9818 4818.

Support of this kind plays a vital role in maintaining and furthering our work. Thank you.

The Australian Boys Choral Institute

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Season 2026...

Crossing the Bar

23 June 2026

with The Gesualdo Six (UK)

St. Andrew's Brighton

Antiphons & Anthems

26 July 2026

with Fiore Chamber

St. John's Camberwell

Songs & Stories

3 October 2026

with pianist Timothy Mallis

St. John's Camberwell

Sweet & Low

10 October 2026

The Vocal Consort

St. Mary's Geelong

A Ceremony of Carols

12 December 2026

with harpist Delyth Stafford

Melbourne Recital Centre

Further regional & touring dates to be announced.

Tickets available via www.australianboyschoir.com.au/concerts.