



Guerrero Conducts HANDEL'S MESSIAH

with the Nashville Symphony & Chorus

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, AT 7 PM

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20 & 21, AT 8 PM

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22, AT 2 PM

NASHVILLE SYMPHONY & CHORUS

GIANCARLO GUERRERO, *conductor*

TUCKER BIDDLECOMBE, *chorus director*

MARY WILSON, *soprano*

ANDREW FOSTER-WILLIAMS, *bass*

GARRETT SORENSON, *tenor*

*Mezzo soprano and tenor soloists
to be announced*

*This concert will last 2 hours and 40 minutes,
including a 20-minute intermission.*

GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL Messiah – **2 hours, 40 minutes**

Sinfonia

PART I

Accompagnato: Comfort ye, my people

Air: Ev'ry valley shall be exalted

Chorus: And the Glory of the Lord

Accompagnato: Thus saith the Lord

Air: But who may abide the day of
His coming

Chorus: And He shall purify

Accompagnato: Behold, a virgin
shall conceive

Air and Chorus: O thou that tellest good
tidings to Zion

Accompagnato: For behold, darkness shall
cover the earth.

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NASHVILLE
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

*This weekend's performances of the Nashville
Symphony Chorus are underwritten in part by
Mr. & Mrs. James W. White.*

Air: The people that walked in darkness

Chorus: For unto us a Child is Born

Pifa (Pastoral Symphony)

Recitative: There were shepherds abiding
in the field

Accompagnato: And lo, the angel of the
Lord came upon them

Recitative: And the angel said unto them

Accompagnato: And suddenly, there was
with the angel

Chorus: Glory to God in the Highest

Air: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion

Recitative: Then shall the eyes of the blind
be open'd

Duet: He shall feed His flock like
a shepherd

Chorus: His yoke is easy, and His
burthen is light

PART II

Chorus: Behold the Lamb of God

Air: He was despised

Chorus: Surely He hath bourned our griefs

Chorus: And with His stripes we are healed

Chorus: All we like sheep have gone astray

Accompagnato: All they that see Him,
laugh Him to scorn

Chorus: He trusted in God

Accompagnato: Thy rebuke hath broken
His heart

Arioso: Behold and see if there be if there
be any sorrow

Accompagnato: He was cut off out of the
land of the living

Air: But Thou didst not leave His
soul in Hell

Chorus: Lift up your heads

Air: How beautiful are the feet of them

Air: Why do the nations so furiously
rage together

Chorus: Let us break their bonds asunder

Recitative: He that dwelleth in Heaven

Air: Thou shalt break them with a
rod of iron

Chorus: Hallelujah

PART III

Air: I know that my Redeemer liveth

Chorus: Since by man came death

Accompagnato: Behold, I tell you a mystery

Air: The trumpet shall sound, and the dead
shall be rais'd

Recitative: Then shall be brought to pass

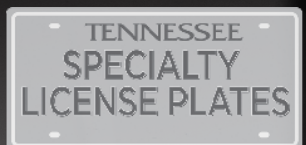
Duet: O death, where is thy sting?

Chorus: But thanks be to God

Chorus: Worthy is the Lamb that was slain

Chorus: Amen

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GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL

Messiah

Born on February 23, 1685,
in Halle, Germany

Died on April 14, 1759,
in London, England

Composed:

Handel composed the first version of *Messiah* in just a little over three weeks, between August 22 and September 14, 1741, but continued to make revisions to the score — in some cases adding new arias — for subsequent revivals of the work.



Estimated length:

2 hours and 40 minutes

First performance:

April 13, 1742, in the Great Music Hall in Dublin, with the composer conducting.

First Nashville Symphony performance:

December 15, 1963, with Music Director Willis Page.

Overall, the career of George Frideric Handel resembles that favorite symbol of 18th-century England: the wheel of fortune. The man who was born Georg Friedrich Händel to a barber-surgeon in Halle (less than 100 miles from J.S. Bach's birthplace) settled in London in 1712 and made England his home until he died. Handel found admiring royal and aristocratic patrons there but also enjoyed success as a musical entrepreneur, managing the production of a prolific series of Italian operas which he wrote for the London stage. Then, after his reputation and fortune soared, fashions changed and Handel came close to the brink of ruin. It was through his cultivation of the English oratorio — essentially, opera in disguise, without the costumes — that he turned his luck around once more.

Messiah belongs to this pivotal turning point in Handel's career, when he was shifting his focus away from the genre of tragic opera (opera seria) that had become a central preoccupation of his London career. In fact, it was with opera (*Rinaldo*, in 1711) that Handel scored his first hit in London. Opera seria involved setting librettos in Italian which recounted stories from mythology or history. It was a genre calculated in part to showcase the star singers of the era, often with spectacular special effects as part of the staging. By the late 1730s, the high costs of

production were making it an unsustainable business model. What's more, significant changes in the English public's musical taste could not be ignored. After *Messiah*, Handel ceased writing Italian operas altogether and concentrated mostly on oratorios in English.

Handel cultivated an English variation on the older oratorio idea, cleverly mixing a sense of moral uplift with the entertainment value of opera, minus the expense, costumes, and overpaid egos. Oratorio had an additional appeal, in that it seemed more acceptable to emerging middle-class audiences wary of the scandal-tinged world of opera. But this association with the sphere of secular performance generated some initial resistance to *Messiah*.

After producing a highly successful subscription series of both oratorios and operas in Dublin in the 1741-42 season, Handel chose to conclude it by presenting the world premiere of *Messiah* in the spring of 1742. Despite the praise the new work won from its Dublin audiences, back in London — where Handel cautiously introduced *Messiah* under the title "New Sacred Oratorio" in 1743 — it became the subject of controversy as a debate raged in the press. *Messiah*'s method of setting actual scriptural texts, as well as its delineation of Jesus within a genre that could be performed "for diversion and amusement," even triggered charges of blasphemy, although

these were leveled against the secular context of the performances rather than Handel's music itself.

The fretting subsided within a few years, although the only times Handel led *Messiah* in a non-secular space were in his last years, when he gave midday performances in the newly built chapel of the Foundling Hospital. (The composer donated proceeds from *Messiah* concerts to charitable causes.) During his last decade, Handel conducted annual performances that became a highlight of the season. These were always given in the spring, at Eastertide. It was only after his death that the association of *Messiah* with the Christmas season took root.

Although we tend to think of *Messiah* as the quintessential English oratorio, its text represents an unusual approach to the genre. Librettist Charles Jennens had collaborated previously with Handel and likely compiled the book for *Israel in Egypt* (first presented in 1739) which anticipates the method of construction of *Messiah*, arranging actual texts from the bible. But the process is less straightforward in *Messiah*. Jennens — a wealthy patron who was nevertheless an outsider, disaffected with contemporary English politics — juxtaposes extracts from both the Old and the New Testaments to represent the basic narrative of Christian redemption. Rather than a biographical sketch of the life of Jesus, *Messiah* concerns the very idea of divinity becoming manifest in human history (hence the lack of the definite article — “the Messiah” — in its title).

There is very little dramatic impersonation of characters. The narrative is indirect and suggestive, and, as has been often noted, downright confusing to anyone not familiar with the implied events involving the life of Jesus. Jennens divides the libretto into three acts (although he calls them “parts”), much like the organization of a baroque opera. Part One centers around prophecy and the nativity of Jesus, ending with his miracles (this is

the part of the oratorio that is most closely tied to the Christmas season). Following its evocation of hope comes a condensed version of the Passion story of sacrifice in Part Two. Part Three concludes with the implications of Christ's redemption of humanity from the fall of Adam.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

Handel's musical expression homes in on the universal emotions that underlie each stage of the Christian redemption narrative. Handel was above all a man of the theater, and his operatic genius for establishing the mood to suit a given situation is everywhere apparent. But in opera, Handel typically accomplishes this through a lengthy chain of arias. The centrality of the chorus in *Messiah* allows for greater diversity. Part One establishes a pattern of recitative, aria, and chorus, which then allows for further variation in the other two parts.

Handel moreover draws on the gamut of international styles of his era, mixing highly wrought, thrillingly complex Northern European counterpoint alongside straightforward, Italianate lyricism, majestic French rhythms, and homophonic choruses. He avails himself as well of an astonishing range of colors in the accompanying textures, though with a remarkable economy of instrumentation. Notice, for example, how the trumpets remain silent in Part One until “Glory to God,” and are subsequently kept in the wings until the “Hallelujah!” chorus at the end of Part Two. (Incidentally, in contrast to what is often assumed, the glory this chorus depicts refers not to the moment of Christ's resurrection but to the triumph of redemption).

Consider, too, the compelling psychological range Handel explores, encompassing in Part One alone the fathomless darkness associated with the period of universal waiting for a savior; the oasis-like calm of the purely

instrumental “Pastoral Symphony,” with its evocation of the music of shepherds; and the dancing exuberance of “Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion.” Handel continually finds freshly inventive ways to “paint” the words through music (witness the “straying” lines of “All we like sheep”) but subtler surprises are often hidden within his settings as well. In that same chorus, Handel engineers a detour from the cheerful mood that predominates into the tragic minor when the consequences of human failure are suggested.

Amid all this variety, by the end of Part Three Handel has taken us on a journey that will later become familiar in the symphonies of Beethoven — the passage from darkness to enlightenment and final victory. The

“Hallelujah!” chorus may seem unbeatable, yet somehow Handel manages to follow it with still more glorious music: the soaring certainty of “The trumpet shall sound” and the progression of the choral finale, with its fugal setting of “Amen.” As the voices weave their threads together, that final word becomes a serene chant, all-encompassing in its resonance.

In addition to four vocal soloists and four-part chorus, the version of Handel’s scoring for Messiah used in these performances calls for an orchestra of 2 oboes, bassoon, 2 trumpets, timpani, strings, continuo and organ.

— Thomas May is the Nashville Symphony’s program annotator.

PART ONE

SINFONIA

ACCOMPAGNATO: *Comfort ye, my people (Tenor)*
Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem; and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplish’d, that her iniquity is pardon’d. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord: make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

AIR: *Ev’ry valley shall be exalted (Tenor)*
Every valley shall be exalted, and ev’ry mountain and hill made low, the crooked straight and the rough places plain.

CHORUS: *And the glory of the Lord*
And the glory, the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

ACCOMPAGNATO: *Thus saith the Lord (Bass)*
Thus saith the Lord of Hosts; Yet once, a little while, and I will shake the heav’ns and the earth, the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all nations; and the desire of all nations shall come. The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, ev’n the messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.

AIR: *But who may abide the day of His Coming (Countertenor)*

But who may abide the day of His coming, and who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner’s fire.

CHORUS: *And He shall purify*
And He shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

ACCOMPAGNATO: *Behold, a virgin shall conceive (Countertenor)*

Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his name Emmanuel, “God with us.”

AIR AND CHORUS: *O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion (Countertenor)*

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain; O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

ACCOMPAGNATO: *For behold, darkness shall cover the earth (Bass)*

For Behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

AIR: *The people that walked in darkness (Bass)*

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light. And they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

CHORUS: *For unto us a Child is born*

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace!

PIFA (PASTORAL SYMPHONY)

RECITATIVE: *There were shepherds abiding in the field (Soprano)*

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

ACCOMPAGNATO: *And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them (Soprano)*

And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid.

RECITATIVE: *And the angel said unto them (Soprano)*

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.

ACCOMPAGNATO: *And suddenly there was with the angel (Soprano)*

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heav'nly host, praising God, and saying:

CHORUS: *Glory to God in the highest*

Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, goodwill towards men.

AIR: *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion (Soprano)*

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is the righteous Savior, and He shall speak peace unto the heathen.

RECITATIVE: *Then shall the eyes of the blind be open'd (Countertenor)*

Then shall the eyes of the blind be open'd, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.

DUET: *He shall feed His flock like a shepherd*

(Soprano & Countertenor)

He shall feed His flock like a shepherd, and He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

CHORUS: *His yoke is easy, and His burthen is light*
His yoke is easy, and His burthen is light.

PART TWO

CHORUS: *Behold the Lamb of God*

Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.

AIR: *He was despised (Countertenor)*

He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.

CHORUS: *Surely, He hath borne our griefs*

Surely, He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him.

CHORUS: *And with His stripes we are healed*
And with His stripes we are healed.

CHORUS: *All we like sheep have gone astray*

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned ev'ry one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

ACCOMPAGNATO: *All they that see Him, laugh Him to scorn (Tenor)*

All they that see Him, laugh Him to scorn; they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying:

CHORUS: *He trusted in God*

He trusted in God that He would deliver Him, let Him deliver Him, if He delight in Him.

ACCOMPAGNATO: *Thy rebuke hath broken His heart (Tenor)*

Thy rebuke hath broken His heart; He is full of heaviness: He looked for some to have pity on Him, but there was no man, neither found He any to comfort Him.

ARIOSO: *Behold, and see if there be any sorrow (Tenor)*

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow!

ACCOMPAGNATO: *He was cut off out of the land of the living (Tenor)*

He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of Thy people was He stricken.

AIR: *But Thou didst not leave His soul in hell (Tenor)*

But Thou didst not leave His soul in hell; nor didst Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption.

CHORUS: *Lift up your heads*

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory.

AIR: *How beautiful are the feet of them (Soprano)*

How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.

AIR: *Why do the nations so furiously rage together (Bass)*

Why do the nations so furiously rage together: why do the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His anointed.

CHORUS: *Let us break their bonds asunder*

Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yokes from us.

RECITATIVE: *He that dwelleth in heaven (Tenor)*

He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn; the Lord shall have them in derision.

AIR: *Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron (Tenor)*

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

CHORUS: *Hallelujah*

Hallelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever. King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. Hallelujah!

PART THREE

AIR: *I know that my Redeemer liveth (Soprano)*

I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And tho' worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep.

CHORUS: *Since by man came death*

Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

ACCOMPAGNATO: *Behold, I tell you a mystery (Bass)*

Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be chang'd in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.

AIR: *The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be rais'd (Bass)*

The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be chang'd.

RECITATIVE: *Then shall be brought to pass*

(Countertenor)

Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

DUET: *O death, where is thy sting?*

(Countertenor & Tenor)

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.

CHORUS: *But thanks be to God*

But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHORUS: *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain*

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.

CHORUS: *Amen*

Amen.



NASHVILLE SYMPHONY CHORUS

TUCKER BIDDLECOMBE, *Chorus Director*

SOPRANO	Beverly Anderson [†]	Kacie Dunham	Jennifer Lynn	Clair Susong
	Katie Arata	Allison Espada	Alisha Austin Menard	Marva A. Swann
	Esther Bae	Becky Evans-Young	Jean Miller	Marjorie Taggart
	Amie Bates	Amy Frogge	Jessie Neilson	Angie Thomas*
	Jill Boehme	Kelli Gauthier	Angela Pasquini Clifford	Ashley Vance
	Stephanie Breiwa	Rebecca Greer	Samantha Petry	Jan Staats Volk [†]
	Christine Brosend	Grace J. Guill [†]	Kristine Phillips	Camille Winton
	Daphne Bugelli	Ally Hard	Beth Pirtle	Sylvia Wynn
	Sara Jean Curtiss	Stacey Haslam	Renita J. Smith-Crittendon	Callie Zindel
	Claire Delcourt	Vanessa D. Jackson*	Ashlinn Snyder	
	Katie Doyle	Katie Lawrence	Paige Stinnett	
ALTO	Carol Armes	Erin Elgass	Leah Koesten	Debbie Reyland
	Kathy Bearden	Cara Frank	Stephanie Kraft	Anna Lea Ritchie
	Tessa Berger	Dana Purser Gary	Emily Longenecker	Allie Senyard
	Mary Bond	Katherine Gillett	Shelly McCormack	Hannah Sims
	Vinéecia Buchanan	Elizabeth Gilliam [†]	Asha Moody	Anjali Sivaaikaran
	Mary Callahan*	Debra L. Greenspan	Jessica Moore	Madalynne Skelton
	Cathi Carmack [†]	Bevin Gregory	Stephanie Moritz	Caroline Kimbrey Talbert*
	Kelsey Christian	Judith Griffin	Shelia Mullican	Deanna Talbert
	Lisa Cooper [†]	Leah Handelsman	Valerie Nelson	Kathryn Whitaker
	Helen Cornell	Sidney Hyde	Lisa Pellegrin	Maggie Zeillmann
	Carla M. Davis [†]	Liza Marie Johnston	Annette Phillips	
	Amanda Leigh Dier	Valerie Kamen	Stacy L. Reed	
TENOR	Anthony R. Barta	Kory Henkel	John Perry	Benjamin Tyrrel
	Robert Bennett	William F. Hodge [†]	Keith Ramsey	Richard Colby White
	Eric Boehme	Ron Jensen	David M. Satterfield**	Richard Wineland
	Kevin Brenner	Mitchell Lane	Zach Shrout	Scott Wolfe
	Brett Cartwright	Scott Lee	Daniel Sissom	John Logan Wood
	Taylor Chadwick	Lynn McGill	Eddie Smith	Jonathan Yeaworth
	Joe A. Fitzpatrick	Don Mott	Stephen Sparks [†]	
	Fred Garcia	Devin Mueller	Joel Tellinghuisen	
	Danny Gordon*	Ryan Norris	Christopher Thompson	
BASS	Gilbert Aldridge	Duane Hamilton	Adam Mamula	William E. Squires
	James Cortner	Andrew Hard	Bruce Meriwether	Larry Strachan
	Nick Davidson	Luke Harnish	Andrew Miller	David B. Thomas**
	Dustin Derryberry	Richard Hatfield [†]	Christopher Mixon	Alex Tinianow
	Frank Ellsworth	Carl Johnson	Chandler Montgomery	Brian Warford*
	Mark Filosa	Kenneth Keel	Steve Myers	Eric Wiuff
	Ian M. Frazier	Justin Kirby	Alec Oziminski	Hunter Yates
	Stuart Garber	William Loyd	Steve Prichard	
	George Goetschel	Taylor Lucy	Daniel Silva	
	Tim Goodenough	Rob Mahurin	Merv Snider	

* Section Leader

† 25+ year members

Andrew Miller, *president*

Sara Crigger, *librarian*

Jeff Burnham, *accompanist*

ABOUT THE SOLOISTS



MARY WILSON

soprano

In high demand on the concert stage, Mary Wilson has most recently performed with the Boston Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, The Cleveland Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Orchestra, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Los Angeles Master Chorale, Detroit Symphony, Delaware Symphony Orchestra, San Antonio Symphony, Jacksonville Symphony, Virginia Symphony and at the Hollywood Bowl. She has also worked with numerous conductors, including Nicholas McGegan, Bernard Labadie, JoAnn Falletta and Leonard Slatkin.

As an exciting interpreter of Baroque repertoire, particularly Handel, Wilson has appeared with Musica Angelica, American Bach Soloists, Boston Baroque, Grand Rapids Bach Festival, Bach Society of St. Louis, Baltimore Handel Choir, Florida Bach Festival and the Carmel Bach Festival.

On the opera stage, Wilson is especially noted for her portrayals of Zerbinetta in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Susannah in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Gilda in *Rigoletto*. She has created leading roles in North American and world premiere performances of Dove's *Flight* (Controller), Glass' *Galileo Galilei* (Grand Duchess Christina) and Petitgirard's *Joseph Merrick dit L'Elephant Man* (Le Colorature). Wilson has appeared most recently with Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Minnesota Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Dayton Opera, Arizona Opera, Tulsa Opera, Brooklyn Academy of Music and the Goodman Theatre.

Opera News heralded Wilson's first solo recording, *Mary Wilson Sings Handel*, stating "Wilson's luminous voice contains so much charisma," and dubbed the recording one of its Best of the Year.



ANDREW FOSTER-WILLIAMS

bass

Bass-baritone
Andrew Foster-

Williams enjoys a vibrant career on opera and concert stages, and is graced with a vocal versatility that allows him to present an extensive repertoire. His dramatic capacity has earned the respect of many acclaimed stage directors, as he "holds the attention of the audience with the energy of someone who has great experience, and with sensational vocal ability, which he uses with total freedom" (*Opéra*).

Foster-Williams' career recently found a new direction with successes as Pizarro (*Fidelio*) at Theater an der Wien and Philharmonie de Paris, as Escamillo in a new Kasper Holten production of *Carmen*, and unanimously praised performances of Telramund in Wagner's *Lohengrin*. Acclaimed performances include Kurwenal (*Tristan und Isolde*), Lysiart (*Euryanthe*), Nick Shadow (*The Rake's Progress*) and Golaud (*Pelléas et Mélisande*).

Highlights of the 2019/20 season include *Lohengrin* at the Tiroler Festspiele Erl, *Iphigénie en Tauride* with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, *La damnation de Faust* with Lan Shui and the National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra, Bach's *Weihnachts-Oratorium* with the Oslo Philharmonic, and Handel's *Messiah* with the Munich Philharmonic. He also returns to the New York Philharmonic for Mozart's *Mass in C minor* and sings the title role of Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra.

Foster-Williams' extensive discography includes Beethoven's *Cantata on the Death of Emperor Joseph II* with the San Francisco Symphony, *The Seasons* with both the London Symphony Orchestra and the Gabrieli Consort & Players, and *HMS Pinafore* with the Orchestra of Scottish Opera.