

MR HANDEL'S CHRISTMAS STORY

A 'new' Christmas oratorio, created by Paul McCreesh, retelling the story of the Nativity with music from *Messiah* and reworkings of arias, choruses and hymns from Handel's greatest works.

Vocal Score with Notes – Big Choir



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Running Order (Big Choir sing numbers in bold)

Scene I - The Prophecy

1. Symphony: Overture [*Messiah*]
2. Accompagnato, Tenor: *Comfort ye* [*Messiah*]
3. Song, Tenor: *Ev'ry valley* [*Messiah*]
4. Chorus: *And the glory of the Lord* [*Messiah*]
5. Hymn: ***Lo! He comes with clouds descending*** [Madan/Cennick & Wesley] Page 5

Scene II - The Angels & the Shepherds

6. Symphony: Pifa [*Messiah*]
7. Recitative/Accompagnato, Soprano: *There were shepherds* [*Messiah*]
8. Chorus: ***Glory to God*** [*Messiah*] Page 7
- 9a/b. Song, Soprano: *Rejoice greatly* [*Messiah*]
10. Hymn: ***Shepherds rejoice*** [Saul/Watts] Page 8

Scene III - The Manger

- 11 a/b. Symphony: [*Ariodante/Jephtha*]
12. Recitative, Tenor: *And the angels went away* [newly composed]
13. Duet, Mezzo Soprano & Bass: *Rest my child/Doubt no longer* [Brockes Passion]
14. Song, Bass: *Tears, shed with tender father's care* [Deborah]
15. Song, Mezzo Soprano: *Sleep, darling boy* [Serse]
16. Chorus: *May no rash intruder* [Solomon]
17. Hymn: ***Hark! How all the welkin rings*** [Joshua & Judas Maccabeus/Wesley] Page 11

Scene IV - Herod, the Wise Men & the Holy Innocents

18. Chorus: ***For unto us a child is born*** [*Messiah*] Page 12
19. Recitative, Tenor: *Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem* [newly composed]
20. Song, Bass: *Rage, terror, sword and knife* [Theodora]
21. Recitative, Tenor: *Then was fulfilled* [newly composed]
22. Song, Soprano: *Angels, ever bright and fair* [Theodora]
23. Chorus: *Mourn, Israel* [Saul]
24. Hymn: ***Unveil thy bosom, ever faithful tomb*** [Saul & Samson/Watts] Page 14

Scene V - The Heavenly Rejoicing

25. Symphony: Battaglia [Rinaldo]
26. Recitative, Tenor: *And I saw an angel* [newly composed]
27. Song, Soprano: *Diabolical demons infernal* [La Resurrezione]
28. Hymn: ***Rejoice, the Lord is King*** [Handel original/Wesley] Page 17
29. Chorus: ***Hallelujah*** [*Messiah*] Page 18

Characters

Angel – soprano
Rachel – soprano
Mary – [mezzo] soprano
Prophet – tenor
Narrator – tenor
Joseph – bass
Herod – bass
Roles can be doubled

Chorus

S(S)ATB
Optional unison chorus for young singers

Orchestra

Strings
2 flutes
2 oboes (doubling advantageous with larger choirs)
bassoon (doubling advantageous with larger choirs)
2 horns
4 trumpets (third and fourth probably optional)
serpent (optional)
harpsichord
organ (ideally chamber organ and large organ)

Duration

Part One (Scenes I-III) c. 45 minutes
Part Two (Scenes IV & V) c. 40 minutes

Listening notes for students.

Welcome to *Mr Handel's Christmas Story*!

This is a new work put together by tonight's conductor, Paul McCreesh. It celebrates the story of Christmas with music by George Frideric Handel (1685–1759). Born in Germany, Handel spent the greater part of his working life in London and is therefore widely regarded as a British composer. With Johann Sebastian Bach, born in the same year, he is one of the most renowned composers of the first half of the 18th century – the *baroque* period in music history.

This piece is in the form of an *oratorio* – a work which tells a story, usually on a religious or moral subject, with solo singers, chorus and instrument ensemble. The form is closely related to opera, but oratorios are not staged. Handel wrote about thirty oratorios, mostly in English, the most famous of which, *Messiah*, describes the life of Christ and the principles of Christian belief. *Mr Handel's Christmas Story* starts with a selection of music from *Messiah* – the parts which concern the prophecy and the birth of Christ. Elsewhere, this new oratorio draws from Handel's most famous pieces, which have been re-worded to tell the story of the Nativity.

Oratorios present the narrative of a story through a variety of musical forms.

The soloists have a variety of songs - *arias* - which reflect the emotions of the characters at various points in the story. Here we have brilliant music for a soprano *Angel*, more delicate music for a mezzo-soprano *Mary* and bass *Joseph*, a beautiful lament for another soprano *Rachel*, and a fiery rage aria for *Herod*. The tenor sings the roles of the *Prophet* and the *Narrator*. Many of these arias are short, but some are more elaborate, known as *da capo* arias – arias in three sections, ABA form, where the first A section is repeated, often with extra improvised ornamentation. *Da capo* simply means 'go back to the beginning'.

You will also hear *recitative*, usually accompanied by a solo cello and the harpsichord. This is music very close to speech – the singer recites the text, one note for each syllable. The *Narrator* sings in recitative – it's a very good way of advancing the dramatic action quickly. *Accompagnato* – orchestrally accompanied recitative – is halfway between song and recitative.

There is only rarely a chorus in baroque opera, but in oratorio the chorus plays a very important part, sometimes taking a role (angels, a mourning nation) or amplifying emotions at various points on the story. Handel wrote the most magnificent choruses, sometimes in grand ceremonial style, but also choruses of great delicacy and poignancy, with brilliant use of the accompanying orchestra. *Mr Handel's Christmas Story* contains some of his finest choruses.

The orchestra is the 'standard' orchestra at this time: strings (first and second violins, violas, cellos and double basses) with a harpsichord, and often with additional oboes and bassoons. Horns, trumpets, drums, flutes and recorders also appear in baroque orchestras, but these instruments are generally used more for special effects and to add colour at special moments. The organ usually plays in choruses to support the choir. We have also added a serpent, an instrument found in military bands, which Handel used occasionally in the bass section.

Five hymns are included, one at the end of each scene. Although English oratorios didn't include hymns, they were certainly part of the German oratorio tradition. Handel himself wrote only three original hymns, composed after meeting hymn-writer Charles Wesley. We will sing a version of their most famous hymn, *Rejoice, the Lord is King*, in the final scene. There are, however, many examples of Handel's most popular melodies being adapted for sacred use.

Scene One – The Prophecy

The birth of a Saviour who would come to save the world was long foretold by prophets and sages in the Old Testament of the Bible. All the music here, apart from the final hymn, is taken from the opening of *Messiah*.

1. Overture

An orchestral introduction - an *overture* - sets the scene. It is in two parts: a stately slow section *grave* followed by a livelier *allegro moderato* all in the solemn key of E minor. Notice how the main theme of the fast section is passed around the orchestra, sometimes in the higher instruments, sometimes in the lower. This type of writing is known as a *fugue*.

2. Accompagnato: Comfort ye – Prophet

The tenor soloist sings the famous opening of *Messiah*. After the overture, the key changes to a warm and glowing E major, as the prophet promises that the coming of Christ will be of comfort to mankind and bring peace to warring nations. The singer stops immediately after the first two words *Comfort ye*, inviting the audience to reflect on the importance of these words.

Comfort ye my people, saith your God; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, 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.

3. Song: Ev'ry valley – Prophet

The lively song which follows allows the tenor to show off his skills in long passages of fast notes. This is known as *coloratura* – colouring – and this form of vocal gymnastics is an important part of baroque singing. Listen to how the music paints the words – *crooked* has wide-leaping intervals and *straight* has long sustained notes. This is called *word painting* and you'll hear many examples of this throughout the oratorio.

Ev'ry valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill made low, the crooked straight and the rough places plain.

4. Chorus: And the glory of the Lord

This is the first chorus of *Messiah* and is in a cheerful triple time - three beats in a bar - which exudes real confidence and joy. The musical phrases are in constant dialogue between the voices. The words of God, *for the mouth of the Lord*, are announced as sustained unison long notes to represent the idea of truth.

And the glory of Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together; the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

5. Hymn: Lo! He comes with clouds descending

This is a famous hymn for the season of Advent, the period before Christmas, and it is still sung in churches today. This is the only music which is not by Handel, as the tune was written by Martin Madan, who Handel almost certainly knew. The words are by John Cennick and Charles Wesley, a prominent leader of the Methodist movement and, apparently, the writer of over 6,000 hymns!

5. Hymn: Lo! He comes with clouds descending

SOPRANO
ALTO



1. Lo! He comes with clouds des - cen - ding, Once for fa - vour'd
2. Mount - ains, vales and seas un - bound - ed At His word shall
3. Yea, a - men! Let all a - dore Thee, High on Thy e -

TENOR
BASS



4



sin - ners slain; Thou - sand, thou - sand saints at - ten - ding,
pass a - way; Ev' - ry mor - tal shall, con - foun - ded,
ter - nal throne; Sa - vi - our, take the pow'r and glo - ry,



7



Swell the tri - umph of His train: Hal - le - lu - jah,
Hear the trump pro - claim His sway. Hal - le - lu - jah,
Claim the king - dom for Thine own. Hal - le - lu - jah,



10



hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu - jah! God ap - pears on earth to reign.
hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu - jah! Has - ten then to Judge - ment Day.
hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu - jah! Ev - er - last - ing God, come down!



Scene Two – The Angels and the Shepherds

This scene tells the story of the angels appearing to the shepherds and all the music, again with the exception of the final hymn, is taken from *Messiah*.

6. Symphony: Pifa

This short instrumental piece sets a pastoral scene as the shepherds are guarding the sheep in the fields at night. It is in the style of a simple rustic dance which Handel asks to be played quite softly. The sustained bass notes evoke the sound of a bagpipe or musette, instruments traditionally played by shepherds. The title *Pifa* comes from the Italian word *pifferari* – folk musicians who still play in the villages of Italy and who often come to big cities at Christmas.

7. Recitative and accompagnato: There were shepherds – Angel

An angel appears to the shepherds singing initially in *recitative* – music that follows the shape of speech, usually accompanied by a single cello and harpsichord. This allows the text to be heard very clearly. Then Handel adds the string instruments – known as *accompagnato* – to create more energy. After another section of *recitative* the strings suddenly return at a much faster tempo as the host of angels breaks forth in the sky. This leads straight into the next chorus.

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then I, an angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. And with gladness said I 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 Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And suddenly appeared in the heavens, a multitude of th'angelic host, praising God and saying,

8. Chorus: Glory to God

You might expect a big lively chorus with loud instruments, but Handel creates a much more exciting picture; the angels appear first from afar and then approach the shepherds. This is the first time you will hear the trumpets play, but Handel asks them to play softly, off-stage, as if from a distance. Listen for the brilliance of the fast violin passages, which really sound like the fluttering of angels' wings. The music changes at *and peace on earth*, with long notes at a low pitch painting the meaning of the words. At the end of the chorus the music fades away, ever higher, as the angels fly back to heaven, leaving the shepherds gazing upwards in awe.

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

9. Song: Rejoice greatly – Angel

This famous song celebrates the world's joy at the birth of Jesus. It's characterised by a fast tempo, lively rhythms, a great sense of energy, and many opportunities for the singer to show off skill in *coloratura* singing, with long lines of fast notes to one syllable. The music winds down as the text describes the Saviour bringing peace to the world. Handel wrote two versions of this song: the early version is in 12/8 time, in a style of a jig, which would be danced at weddings. A later version is in 4/4 with more elaborate ornamentation. Which do you prefer?

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion. Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy King cometh unto thee: He is the righteous Saviour and He shall speak peace unto the heathen.

10. Hymn: Shepherds, rejoice

This hymn, which celebrates the rejoicing of the shepherds, reworks a beautiful solo song from another Handel oratorio *Saul*.

8. Chorus: Glory to God (big choir version)

Allegro

25

SOPRANO

TENOR
BASS

Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God in the high - est,

29

(ALTO)

and peace on earth, good - will to - ward men, to - - ward

(TENOR)

and peace on earth, good - will to - ward men, to - ward

35

S.A.

omit if too high

good - will, good - will, good - will, good - will to - ward men, _____

T.B.

good - will, good - will, good - will, good - will to - ward men, _____

40

good - will to - ward men.

— good - will to - ward men.

7

7

10. Hymn: Shepherds, rejoice

SOPRANO
ALTO

1. Shep - herds, re - joice, lift up your eyes, And cast your
 2. Je - sus, the God whom an - gels fear, Comes down to
 3. No gold, nor pur - ple swad - dling bands, Nor roy - al
 4. Seek, shep - herds, where the in - fant lies, Ac - claim the

TENOR
BASS

(Instru)

6

fears a - way; News from the re - gions of the
 dwell with you; This day he makes his en - trance
 shin - ing things; A man - ger for his cra - dle
 bles - sed boy; With grate - ful won - der in your

11

skies, Our Sav - iour's born to - day.
 here, But not as mon - archs do.
 stands And holds the King of Kings.
 eyes, Now kiss the child with joy.

15

(1-4.) Let us with joy - ful an - gels sing. Wor - ship the new - born King!

Scene Three – The Manger

This scene imagines Mary and Joseph and the newborn child Jesus in the stable at Bethlehem, surrounded by animals – the picture on a thousand Christmas cards!

11. Symphony

A gently rocking orchestral movement paints a pastoral scene as Mary and Joseph rest in the stable. Much like the *Pifa* in Scene Two, this music evokes the folk music of country people.

12. Recitative: And the angels went away – Narrator

This recitative is newly-composed, in the style of Handel. The words tell the story directly and the harmonic chords are used to punctuate and support the singer's narration.

As the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another; let us go now unto Bethlehem and see that which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

13. Duet: Rest my child / Doubt no longer – Mary and Joseph

This beautiful duet is a dialogue, where each singer sings a different text. Mary is anxious as she looks lovingly at her newborn child; Joseph reassures her, telling her to trust in God.

*Mary: Rest my child, my heart's dear gladness, though thy destiny I fear.
Joseph: Doubt no longer, God is near, banish ev'ry care and sadness.*

14. Song: Tears, shed with tender father's care – Joseph

Joseph was by tradition an older man. In this song he sheds tears of love and joy, as he looks at the Christ-child, knowing that the boy is the Saviour of the world. The gentle rocking figures in this slow song are given to violins and flutes, which add warmth to the orchestral sound, while the smooth vocal line exudes calm and tenderness. Notice how Handel creates an amazing atmosphere in such a very short song, marked *Largo e pianissimo* – broadly and very softly.

*Tears, shed with tender father's care, warm from my joyful eyes descend.
The grace of God my son will share and all mankind with love befriend.*

15. Song: Sleep, darling boy - Mary

Absolutely one of Handel's most famous songs, *Ombra mai fu*, which opens the opera *Serse*, became known simply as *Handel's Largo*. It's another very short song, with a glorious melody and a gentle, pulsating accompaniment for strings, in triple time. Here it's sung as a lullaby:

Sleep, darling boy, child ever-treasurable! God's love immeasurable bestows all joy.

16. Chorus: May no rash intruder

This chorus is from the oratorio *Solomon* and is another brilliant example of Handel's genius in using musical figures to paint a vivid and poetic picture. Flutes imitate the actual song of the nightingale, while *zephyrs* - warm breezes from the west – are represented by a gentle, oscillating figure in the strings. The chorus parts are often used in groups – sometimes upper voices, sometimes lower voices – and two soprano parts give a richer texture. Finally, the music fades away as Mary, Joseph and the child are lulled to sleep.

May no rash intruder disturb their soft hours, as angels watch o'er them from heav'nly bow'rs. Ye zephyrs, soft breathing, their slumbers prolong, while nightingales lull them to sleep with their song.

17. Hymn: Hark! How all the welkin rings

This well-known tune was originally a song of triumph after a battle. It was hugely popular in Handel's day and was soon paired with Charles Wesley's joyful Nativity hymn, inspired by bells ringing on Christmas morning. *Welkin* is an old poetic word for the skies or the heavens above. The slightly wild sound of natural horns adds a thrilling colour to the orchestra.



17. Hymn: Hark! How all the welkin rings

SOPRANO
ALTO

1. Hark! How all the wel - kin rings, Hail th'al -
 2. Veiled in flesh, the God - head see, Hail th'in -
 3. Hail, the heav'n - ly Prince of Peace! Hail the
 4. Mild, he lays his glo - ry by, Born that

TENOR
BASS

6

-migh - ty King of Kings. Peace on earth, and mer - cy
 -car - nate de - i - ty, Pleased as man on earth t'ap -
 Sun of Right - eous - ness! Light and life to all he
 man no more may die, Born to raise the sons of

12

-mild, God and sin - ners re - - con - ciled.
 pear, Je - sus, our Em - man - - uel here.
 brings, Ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.
 earth, Born to give them sec - ond birth.

17

Hark! How all the wel - - kin rings,

21

Hail th'al - migh - ty King of Kings!

18. Chorus: For unto us a child is born (big choir version)

Andante allegro ($\text{♩} = 112$)

32

f

SOPRANO
ALTO

Won-der-ful, Coun-sel-lor, the Might-y God, the

TENOR
BASS

32

f

36

Ev - er - last - ing Fa - ther, the Prince of Peace.

11

11

49

f

Won-der-ful, Coun-sel-lor, the Might-y God, the Ev - er - last - ing Fa - ther, the

f

53

Prince of Peace.

14

f

Won-der-ful, Coun-sel-lor,

14

f

70

the Might-y God, the Ev - er - last - ing Fa - ther, Prince of Peace.

12

12

85

f

Won-der-ful, Coun-sel-lor, the Might-y God, the Ev - er - last - ing Fa - ther, the

f

89

Prince of Peace, the Ev - er - last - ing Fa - ther, the Prince of Peace.

8

8

Scene Four – Herod, the Wise Men and the Holy Innocents

This scene includes the arrival of the wise men with their gifts, and then one of the more surprising elements of the Christmas story, King Herod and the 'slaughtering of the innocents'.

18. Chorus: For unto us a child is born

This chorus is from *Messiah* and celebrates the birth of Jesus as the Son of God and Prince of Peace. Handel arranged it from an earlier Italian duet, which partly explains the rather fast-moving vocal parts and the dialogue between different vocal parts. The bouncy rhythms and bright major key create a feeling of excitement and celebration.

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.

19. Recitative: Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem – Narrator

Another new recitative, describing the arrival of the wise men at the stable bearing gifts, and the incipient jealousy of King Herod.

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came three wise men from the east to Jerusalem. And lo, a star, which they saw in the east, went before them, and it came and stood over the place where the young child lay. Rejoicing with exceeding great joy, they fell down and worshipped him, and opening their treasures, presented unto him gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh. When Herod had heard these things, he was sorely troubled. He sought the child to destroy him and slew all young boys around the town of Bethlehem.

20. Song: Rage, terror, sword and knife – Herod

The *rage aria* was popular in baroque opera and oratorio, very often sung by basses. Here King Herod sings of his plans to slaughter all young boys, lest this 'new-born King' grow up to challenge his authority. The vocal line is vigorous and intimidating, and the accompaniment has many notes marked with strong accents, to represent the thrusts of a sword or knife.

*Rage, terror, sword and knife shall smite all infant life that threatens majesty.
No gushing tears, nor ardent pray'rs, shall thwart my firm decree.*

21. Recitative: Then was fulfilled – Narrator

The narrator tells us that this episode of slaughter was foretold by the prophet Jeremiah. The vocal line becomes more lyrical and expressive when recalling the grief of Rachel, a mother whose children were murdered by Herod's henchmen.

*Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying,
'In Rama was heard lamentation, wailing and great mourning; Rachel weeping for her children
would not be comforted, as they were no more.'*

22. Song: Angels, ever bright and fair – Rachel

Rachel laments the loss of her children and prays that angels will carry them heaven. The simplicity of this song, with the repetition of the phrase *take them*, makes it especially moving.

*Angels, ever bright and fair, take, O take them to your care.
Speed to your own courts their flight, clad in robes of virgin white.*

24. Hymn: Unveil thy bosom ever faithful tomb

**SOPRANO
ALTO**

**TENOR
BASS**

1. Un - veil thy bo - som, ev - er faith - ful tomb, Em - brace these trea - sures kind - ly to thy trust. And
 2. No pain nor grief, no tears nor anx - ious fear In - vade thy bounds; no cares nor mor - tal woes Can

5

give these bless'd and sa - cred re - lics room To slum - ber, si - lent, in the gloom and dust.
 reach the love - ly sleep - ers cra - dled here, As shelt - 'ring an - gels guard their soft re - pose.

9

Or shake
And bid

Why do we mourn our dear de - part - ing friends Or shake in doubt and fear at death's a - larms? 'Tis
 Then shall the last and dread - ful trum - pet sound And bid our kin - dred breth - ren swift - ly rise. A -

13

but the call our lov - ing Sav - iour sends To draw His chil - dren to His ten - der arms.
 wake ye saints now slumb - 'ring un - der ground, As - cend in glo - ry to the a - zure skies!

23. Chorus: Mourn, Israel

This chorus, from the oratorio *Saul*, expresses the grief of a nation confronting the loss of its youth. The bassline moves continuously, while long notes on each repetition of *mourn* sound just like a cry or moan. The ending gets quieter and quieter, as if the chorus, overwhelmed by sadness, can sing no more; the last phrase is left to the organ alone.

*Mourn, Israel, mourn thy children lost. Thy fairest slain by impious hand.
How have thy brightest hopes been crossed. Thy sons lie slaughter'd, scatter'd o'er the land.*

24. Hymn: Unveil thy bosom, ever faithful tomb

This hymn is a version of Handel's *Dead March*. Sad music is almost always written in a minor key, but Handel breaks the rules and writes in C major, theoretically the brightest key of them all. He achieves a feeling of solemnity with a slow tempo and a skilful use of the orchestra, contrasting low brass and strings with ghostly flutes, organ, and funereal, off-beat drums. The text is a careful reworking of two eighteenth century funeral hymns by Isaac Watts (another famous hymn-writer), expressing the Christian belief that the grave is the start of a new life in the arms of God.

Scene Five – The Heavenly Rejoicing

The final book of the Bible - the 'Book of Revelation' – relates the birth of Jesus Christ as part of the cosmic battle between good and evil. The Devil's dragon is at last slayed by the might of an all-powerful and benevolent God. Imagine a great triumphant celebration in heaven – an excuse for a real angelic party!

25. Symphony: Battaglia

This brilliant orchestral movement calls for four trumpets, evoking the world of the battle.

26. Recitative: And I saw an angel – Narrator

A recitative describing the triumph of the Angel over the Devil, with much word painting.

And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is Satan, the Devil. He bound him for a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, that he should deceive nations no more. For this purpose was the Son of God made manifest, that He might destroy the works of the Devil.

27. Song: Diabolical demons infernal – Angel

This is a truly spectacular song, fast and furious, with elaborate *coloratura* ornamentation for the singer who sings over a wide range. It is scored for a full orchestra, including trumpets, and a solo oboe frequently joins the soprano in duet. This is the opening aria to an Easter oratorio which Handel wrote in 1708 as a young man in Rome and it's full of Italianate brilliance. It is in the traditional *da capo* form, ABA, where the opening section returns after a contrasting middle section; the singer would embellish the repeat with further ornamentation. We use the term *virtuoso* to describe music like this - music which needs extreme skill to perform.

Diabolical demons infernal, see the radiant light of th'Eternal, banish darkness and brighten the earth. Rejoice ye legions of angels. Behold the King most glorious, triumphant and victorious, and hail the Saviour's birth.

28. Hymn: Rejoice, the Lord is King

This hymn was actually written as such by Handel. It is still popular today, with a strong, uplifting melody and slightly martial rhythm. The text is again by Charles Wesley, who Handel met. There are several versions of the words and further changes have been made to make it appropriate for Christmastide. The original last line makes the perfect link to the final chorus.

29. Chorus: Hallelujah

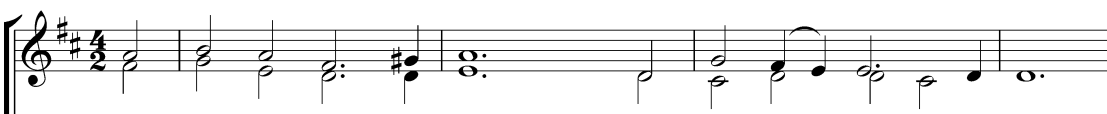
The *Hallelujah* chorus from *Messiah* is one of the most famous pieces in music. The choral and orchestral writing are as brilliant and exciting as you will ever hear; long vocal lines contrast with a short insistent rhythmic figure to the word *Hallelujah*, and there are many sections of fugal writing. The formal structure is particularly thrilling; notice how Handel uses the brass instruments to punctuate the chorus at climaxes, and the long lines of the soprano part, getting ever higher. A particularly wonderful moment occurs towards the end, when all the violins go slightly crazy, playing runs of semiquavers for the sheer joy of making noise! According to legend, after composing this chorus, Handel said 'I think I did see all Heaven before me, and the great God himself seated upon his throne, with a great company of angels'.

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 forever and ever, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. Hallelujah!



28. Hymn: Rejoice, the Lord is King!

SOPRANO
ALTO



1. Re - joice, the Lord is King! This new - born babe a - dore.
 2. Re - joice, the Sav - iour reigns, The God of truth and love.
 3. Re - joice, the Lord shall quell Our foes, and sins des - troy,
 4. Re - joice, all praise be giv'n, Our song shall pierce the skies

TENOR
BASS



5



All mor - tals praise and sing, And tri - umph e - ver - more.
 This child shall purge our stains, That we might dwell a - bove.
 And ev' - ry bo - som swell With pure se - ra - phic joy.
 And rend the vaults of heav'n As Hal - le - lu - jahs rise.



9



(1-3.) Lift up— your hearts, lift up your voice, Re - joice, a - gain I say, re - joice!
 (4.) Let mor - tals join the an - gel's voice, Sound, bra - zen trum - pets, sound re - joice!

(orch.)



29. Chorus: Hallelujah (big choir version)

Allegro (♩ = 112) **3**

4 S. A. *f*
Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah,
T. B. *f*

8
Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah!

12 S. A S. A.
For the Lord God om - ni - po - tent reign - eth, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah!
A. T. B. A. T. B.

17 A. S. A.
For the Lord God om - ni - po - tent reign - eth, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah!
T.

22 B S.
For the Lord God om - ni - po - tent reign - eth,
T. B.
For the Lord God om - ni - po - tent reign - eth,

29 A. T. (at pitch) S. A.

For the Lord God om-ni - po-tent reign - eth, Hal - le - lu - jah!

T. B.

Hal-le - lu-jah, Hal-le - lu-jah

34 **C** 7 **D** 10 **E** 16 **F** 7

[The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.]

74 *ff*

King of Kings _____ and Lord of Lords, _____ And He shall reign for ev - er, for ev - er and ev -

A.

ff

81 **G**

- er. King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and

T.

and He shall

86

He shall reign for ev - er and ev - er, King of Kings, and Lord of

reign for ev - er and ev - er and ev - er, for ev - er and ev - er, for ev - er and

90 1 2 3 4 (wait!)

Lords, Hal-le-lu-jah, Hal-le - lu-jah, Hal-le-lu-jah, Hal-le - lu-jah, Hal - le - lu - jah!

A.

T.

ev - er,