

Spring 2023 Review – Bach St John Passion



‘It was a wonderful, wonderful performance, and must have placed high demands on chorus, players, and soloists. Daniel Barrett's moving of the piece to a 'semi-staged' style was (as the newly appearing Pilate) a dramatic triumph, and part of a commanding performance by him. Sam Harris's Evangelist was an inspired and assured performance; not a note or a consonant out of place, though I noted the odd differing lyrics between the varying editions that the soloists were using.

The chorus was performing at a level not routinely expected of amateur choirs in England; I cannot imagine the hours of work which went into last night's performance and having heard the St John Passion numerous times (including in Leipzig, Dresden and in Erfurt), I found MK Chorale's sensitive singing of the piece fully equal to these renditions of it. To have been able (with those such very young soloists!) —at that stage of the piece— to still add the necessary conviction, solemnity, and devotional feeling to the 'Ruht wohl, Ihr heiligen Gebeine' chorus was truly wonderful to experience, and was a huge tribute to their (and the soloists, and the instruments) hard work, and—it goes without saying—to that of their Musical Director; more Bach, please?’