

GABRIELI CONSORT AND PLAYERS

The Gabrieli Consort and Players were founded by Paul McCreesh in 1982 and gained prominence in their first decade with mould-breaking reconstructions of music for the great historic occasions of the Baroque. Since then, they have captivated audiences with their bold interpretations of a wide range of masterpieces from the 17th and 18th centuries. The ensemble's distinctive style, coupled with Paul McCreesh's expertise in authentic performance practice, has given Gabrieli's music-making a powerful appeal to 21st century audiences throughout the world.

The Gabrieli Consort and Players have made numerous television and radio appearances in a wide variety of roles, and are regular visitors to leading festivals and concert halls throughout Europe. They have also undertaken five major tours to the USA, performing works ranging from Gabrieli to Praetorius. The Gabrieli Consort and Players record exclusively with market leader, Deutsche Grammophon Archiv (DG Archiv) and their first release on this label, Venetian Vespers, won the 1993 Gramophone Award and was nominated for a Grammy. Subsequent recordings for DG Archiv of music by Palestrina and Praetorius, Morales, Purcell and others have won several major European prizes (including Diapason D'Or, Deutschen Schallplatten Preis, and Edison).

The Gabrieli Consort and Players released their first Handel oratorio recording - Messiah - in 1998. Since then they have become firmly established as leading interpreters of his works. Their 1999 recording of Solomon (with the celebrated German counter-tenor, Andreas Scholl, singing the title role) was voted 'Classic CD of the Year' and Theodora the following year was nominated for a Gramophone Award. Their next Handel release, the magnificent oratorio, Saul, was recorded in autumn 2002 with a cast including Susan Gritton, Nancy Argenta, Neal Davies, Paul Agnew and Andreas Scholl, and is scheduled for release later in 2003.

Gabrieli have also become known for their vivid and moving readings of the Bach masterworks. The ensemble commemorated the 250th Anniversary of the death of JS Bach in spring 2000 with a European tour and recording of his Easter Oratorio and Magnificat. Their new recording of the St Matthew Passion using just eight voices - Deborah York, Magdalena Kozena, Mark Padmore, Peter Harvey, Julia Gooding, Susan Bickley, James Gilchrist and Stephan Loges D was released in April 2003 to instant critical acclaim, including nomination as Gramophone magazine's 'Recording of the Month' for May.

Performance plans for the remainder of 2003 include tours of Bach's St John Passion, Easter Oratorio and Magnificat, and Gluck's Paride ed Elena, together with an Albert Hall performance of Handel's Saul as part of the BBC Proms and participation in music festivals as far apart as Northumberland, Schleswig Holstein, Castile and Venice.

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