

# Handel's Messiah

staged in costume with 12 professional opera singers

The moment twelve apparently unconnected characters are seen entering the church it becomes clear that this production of Handel's *Messiah* is like no other. There is no staging, nor any special lighting, just the church as it stands. The singers move throughout the building, sometimes sitting with the audience, or leaning against a pillar. Through the music of the oratorio they come to an understanding of how to cope with the doubts and worries they have brought with them. They discover they are not isolated and begin to form an understanding of each other's predicaments. By the end of the performance they can face the future with some degree of hope.

*“That was the Messiah I have waited all my life to hear” -  
Wallingford 2011*



*“A powerful and affirming performance.....a delight.  
Bringing the singers out from behind their scores brought  
out the human character of this music” - Opera Now*

*“One of the most inspirational things I have ever  
seen” – Staplehurst 2014*

*“I wish I had brought our music-loving friends along and have  
since told people it was life affirming & stunning, - absolutely  
stunning” – Henley 2013*

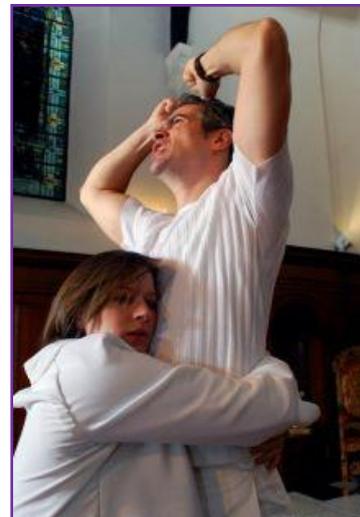
*“‘Extraordinary’ was the word that kept coming to me amidst tears and smiles; it was a truly  
inspired, uplifting, innovative and spiritually rich experience.” – Faversham 2014*

*“I have never been to a concert before where the entire  
audience stood and cheered at the end” – Bath 2012*

*“Imaginative new staging ... worked beautifully ... creating a  
wall of sound with the power to move every spectator” -  
British Theatre Guide*

*“Thank you for opening my eyes to how opera can be such a  
fundamentally moving experience” – Bath 2012*

*“Divine voices in such an intimate setting” - Oxford 2011*



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*"Completely outstanding, wonderful singing and organ playing and commitment ....you were simply magnificent"*  
- Saffron Walden 2011

**"Immediate and full of real emotion and passion" – Diss 2013**



## Thanet Gazette – Eileen O'Brien

Heavenly, just heavenly. If you wanted to experience what music must be like in the hereafter, surely the Merry Opera Company's rendition of Handel's Messiah must come close. Goosebump-inducingly good, it was a stunning example of originality and experimentation that paid off. Out went the staid choir holding telephone book-sized music scores. In came 12 vibrant, passionate performers that ran, danced, grieved, exalted and LIVED the magnificent work throughout the church – even bringing humour in parts. Director John Ramster, no fun of staged productions normally, wrote in the programme that he had approached the oratorio as a "meditation on faith, what it means to believe" from the converse aspect: the absence of conviction.

**"Going to a traditional performance of Messiah will never be the same again" - Bath 2012**