

A close-up portrait of Barnaby Smith, a man with short brown hair and a serious expression, looking directly at the camera. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows on the right side of his face.

BARNABY SMITH

Conductor / Artistic Director / Countertenor

“...sublime performance of the B minor Mass. It’s hard to argue with two hours of Bach in all his glory when performed with the finesse shown by VOCES8 and the Academy of Ancient Music... conductor Barnaby Smith and his musicians got the Kyrie Eleison just right: portentous, magnificent, complex... Smith, conducting with relaxed gestures, never let the tension flag or forgot the overall journey.”

★★★★★ **The Times**

Bach B Minor Mass – AAM, Carolyn Sampson, Iestyn Davies, Jeremy Budd, Matthew Brook, Eleonore Cockerham

Barnaby Smith has conducted a large range of orchestral and orchestral/choral repertoire – with symphony orchestras, chamber orchestras, and in solo/direct programmes. Here are a few specific ideas for illustration. Barnaby has works written for him, VOCES8 and his choir (the VOCES8 choir), as well as his own arrangements of choral/orchestral repertoire. Barnaby frequently commissions and has worked with many well-known contemporary composers.

Below is a list of solo collaborators and large choral/orchestra works conducted – after that are a few sample ideas...

A few conducted works:

Verdi Requiem; **Haydn** Creation, Nelson Mass; **Handel** Messiah;
Bach B Minor Mass, both Passions, Christmas Oratorio, Motets;
Mozart Requiem, C Minor Mass, Figaro, Symphony No.40, The Magic Flute;
Handel Coronation Anthems, Dixit Dominus, Saul, Israel in Egypt (2026 with Freiburg Baroque), Ode to St Cecilia, Ode to Queen Anne; **Britten** Ode to St Cecilia; **Schubert** Mass in G;
Faure Requiem; **Durufle** Requiem; **Pärt** Passio; **Jonathan Dove** The Passing of the Year;
Taylor Scott Davis Requiem, Magnificat, To Sing of Love Concerto (vln/choir/orch)

Performing collaborators include:

Jacob Collier; **Paul Simon**; **Ola Gjeilo** – composer/piano; **Inon Barnatan** – piano;
Alisa Weilerstein – cello; **Jack Liebeck** – violin; **Bomsori Kim** – violin; **Sheku Kanneh-Mason** – cello;
Blake Pouliot – violin; **Roderick Williams** – composer/baritone; **Julian Bliss** – clarinet;
Nick Deutsch – oboe; **Rachel Podger** – Baroque violin; **Iestyn Davies** – countertenor;
Carolyn Sampson – soprano; **Mary Bevan** – soprano; **Bojan Čičić** – Baroque violin;
Matthew Brook – bass; **Sterling Elliott** – cello

Bach B Minor Mass

Carolyn Sampson – soprano
Eleonore Cockerham – soprano
Iestyn Davies – countertenor
Jeremy Budd – tenor
Matthew Brook – bass/baritone
VOCES8
Academy of Ancient Music
Rachel Podger – violin / guest leader
Barnaby Smith – conductor

Handel Messiah

Barnaby Smith – conductor
VOCES8 Choir & Baroque Orchestra
Bojan Čičić – Leader
Steven Devine – continuo

J.S. Bach St John Passion

Barnaby Smith – conductor
James Way – Evangelist
Hilary Cronin – soprano
Jeremy Budd – tenor
VOCES8 step-out solos
VOCES8 Choir
English Chamber Orchestra
Leader – Stephanie Gonley

Vaughan Williams The Lark Ascending arr. for Violin, Choir & Orchestra by Barnaby Smith

Barnaby Smith – conductor
Jack Liebeck – violin
VOCES8 Choir and Orchestra

Watch & Listen Links



Live From London Easter 2023: Bach Mass in B Minor



Live From London Easter 23: St John Passion (JS Bach)



Messiah 2022



The Lark Ascending – Ralph Vaughan Williams

BEETHOVEN Voices of Invention

Choir & Symphony Orchestra

Beethoven's groundbreaking decision to integrate the human voice into the symphonic framework stands as one of the most daring and transformative innovations in Western music. *Voices of Invention* celebrates this revolutionary spirit and its profound impact on generations of composers.

Ralph Vaughan Williams

Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis
adaptation by Barnaby Smith to include choir
or

Ralph Vaughan Williams

The Lark Ascending (arr. Barnaby Smith)
Choral adaptation for Vln, choir and orchestra

I N T E R V A L

Ludwig van Beethoven

Choral Fantasy

Ralph Vaughan Williams

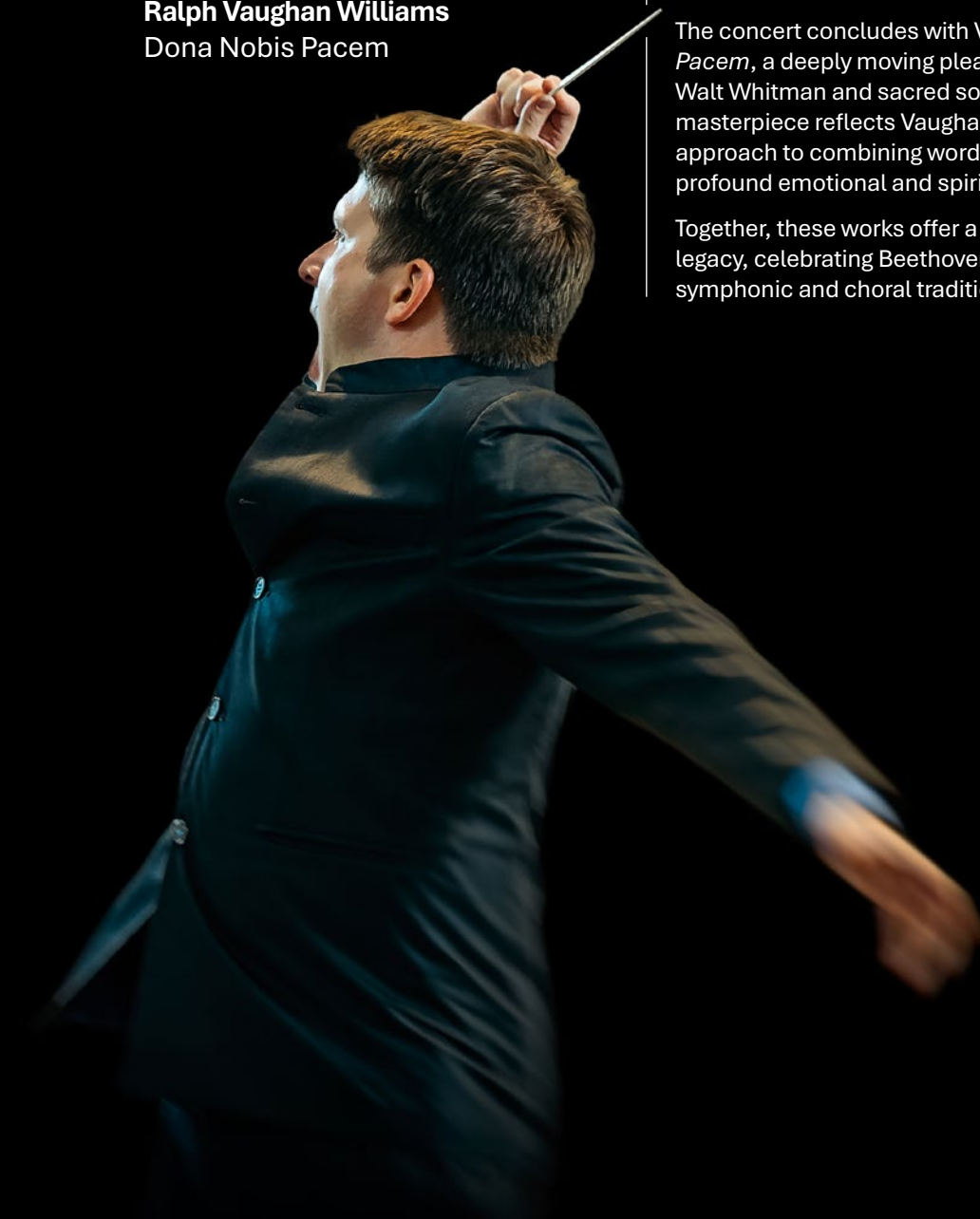
Dona Nobis Pacem

Opening with a newly adapted version of Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis* (or *The Lark Ascending*, adapted for voices and orchestra). This iconic work, rooted in English musical traditions, gains new depth and resonance as the original choral inspiration is interwoven into the orchestral textures. This creative reinterpretation pays homage to Beethoven's integration of voices into instrumental forms.

At the heart of the evening lies Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy*, a work that can be seen as the precursor to his monumental Ninth Symphony. Combining piano, choir, and orchestra, the fantasy showcases Beethoven's genius for uniting diverse musical forces. Its final theme, celebrating joy and human connection, foreshadows the universal themes later explored in the *Ode to Joy*.

The concert concludes with Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem*, a deeply moving plea for peace. Drawing on texts by Walt Whitman and sacred sources, this choral-orchestral masterpiece reflects Vaughan Williams' own innovative approach to combining words and music in the service of profound emotional and spiritual expression.

Together, these works offer a journey through invention and legacy, celebrating Beethoven's enduring influence on the symphonic and choral traditions.



THE LOST BIRDS: AN EXTINCTION ELEGY *or* BRITTEN'S BIRDS

Choir & Symphony Orchestra

"The wonder of our seas and oceans was brought out in the many colours of this marvellous soundscape by the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, under the baton of Barnaby Smith, who conducted with abundant energy and great attention to detail" Queensland Symphony Orchestra – ★★★★★ **ArtsHub**

"For singing till his heaven fills, 'Tis love of earth that he instils."

—George Meredith, *The Lark Ascending*

Felix Mendelssohn
Hebrides Overture

Caroline Shaw

'and the swallow' (arr. Christopher Moore)
(Jack Liebeck and VOCES8 a cappella)

Vaughan Williams

The Lark Ascending

(arr. Barnaby Smith)
(Choral adaptation for Vln, choir and orchestra)

I N T E R V A L

Christopher Tin

The Lost Birds

choir and orchestra

or – alternative first half:

Vaughan Williams

The Lark Ascending

(arr. Paul Drayton, adapted by Barnaby Smith)
(Choral adaptation for Vln, Choir and Orchestra)

Taylor Scott Davis

'To Sing of Love: A Triptych'

(Concerto for violin/choir/orchestra)

or – alternative first half:

Benjamin Britten

Rejoice in the Lamb

(orch. Imogen Holst)

Eric Whitacre

Sleep

(orch. by Jim Clements)
(new version with small orchestra)

Rebecca Dale

The Cloths of Heaven

(orch. Ian Farrington)

The Lost Birds celebrates a flight of firsts inspired by nature and our relationship with birds and the natural world. At its heart is Grammy Award-winning composer Christopher Tin's *The Lost Birds* (released on Decca Classics), a sweeping and elegiac tribute to the soaring flocks that once filled our skies. The combined choir and orchestra give voice to the feathered beauty and symbolism of birds as messengers of hope, peace, and renewal.

Vaughan Williams' beloved *The Lark Ascending* is presented in a brand new adaptation for soloist, choir, and orchestra. George Meredith's now famous poem is woven into the orchestral score, enhancing soloist Jack Liebeck's "beguiling silvery tone" with a cinematic shimmer that enriches the work's ethereal beauty.

Alongside these works are Mendelssohn's stormy *Hebrides Overture, Op. 26* (Fingal's Cave), a vivid evocation of the wild Scottish seascape, and the premiere of a new choral/orchestral arrangement by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Caroline Shaw. Her piece *and the swallow* includes a violin solo that responds intimately to *The Lark Ascending*, creating a rich dialogue between the works.

Together, this programme offers a soaring palette of colour and a reflective space to consider how we can support our world and its avian population as we look towards the future.

Barnaby Smith – conductor

Jack Liebeck – violin

Voices Your choir, or VOCES8 plus your choir,
or the VOCES8 Choir

Watch & Listen Links

-  The Lost Birds
-  To Sing of Love
-  LIVE From London – Hebrides Overture, Lark and The Lost Birds
-  The Lark Ascending
-  The Lost Birds
-  The Lark Ascending



SUNRISE or ACROSS THE VAST ETERNAL SKY

Choir & Chamber Orchestra

A programme of popular, mesmeric works by super-star Norwegian composer and pianist **Ola Gjeilo**, featuring Ola's famous Sunrise Mass – newly recorded for Decca Classics by Barnaby and his VOCES8 Choir and Orchestra for release in 2026.

One of the most frequently performed choral composers today, Ola's works paint the colours of his homeland in luminous hues, his cinematic and evocative sound blending elements of classical, jazz, and film music with lush, harmonious textures.

Barnaby and Ola are frequent and fond collaborators, most recently performing together for the BBC Proms. A programme could feature Ola as a pianist, mixing some of his choral/piano works with some of his larger choral/orchestral works, characterised by their emotional depth and melodic beauty.

Since Ola has been based in California for a number of years, Barnaby also has a beautiful, 'sounds of America' twist to the programme which might also include choral/orchestral arrangements he's commissioned of famous works by other US choral greats including Eric Whitacre, Caroline Shaw, Taylor Scott Davis and Jocelyn Hagen...

Ola Gjeilo works might include:

Sunrise Mass 32 mins

SATB, string orchestra

The Road c. 16'30

SATB, piano, harp, string orchestra

Dreamweaver 20 mins

SATB, piano, string orchestra

Sheet Music Links

Ola Gjeilo

olagjeilo.com

Barnaby Smith – conductor

Ola Gjeilo – piano

Voices Your choir, or VOCES8 plus your choir, or the VOCES8 Choir

Shorter music for piano & string quartet but with the double bass part easily available on request for string orchestra includes:

Dark Night of the Soul 14'00

Luminous Night of the Soul 9'00

Dark & Luminous Night 7'45

Across the Vast, Eternal Sky 4'30

The Rose 3'30

Ecce Novum 4'15

The Ground 3'30

Tundra 3'30

Lux Beata Trinitas 3'45

Iam Sol Recedit 2'15

Possible encores:

Ubi Caritas or **Alleluia**

BEETHOVEN The Innovator and His Legacy

Symphony Orchestra

Celebrating Beethoven as a revolutionary force in classical music and explores the profound influence his work had on future generations of composers.

Johannes Brahms

Academic Festival Overture

Ludwig van Beethoven

Piano Concerto No. 4 in G major

I N T E R V A L

Ludwig van Beethoven

Symphony No. 5 in C minor

The evening begins with Brahms's *Academic Festival Overture*. This jovial work, based on student songs, offers a spirited tribute to the tradition of symphonic writing Beethoven helped define. Brahms, often seen as Beethoven's musical heir, captures both humour and grandeur, reflecting the breadth of inspiration he drew from his predecessor.

Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No. 4 in G major* follows, a piece that redefined the concerto genre. In its opening, the piano enters alone, a daring departure from convention. The concerto balances lyrical introspection with dramatic intensity, culminating in a radiant finale that embodies Beethoven's capacity to innovate within classical forms.

After the interval, *Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 in C minor* takes centre stage. From its iconic opening motif to its triumphant conclusion, this symphony represents a journey from darkness to light, encapsulating Beethoven's revolutionary approach to form, structure, and emotional expression.

Through this programme, we witness Beethoven's transformative genius and the indelible mark he left on composers like Brahms, who carried his legacy into the Romantic era and beyond.



ON THE WINGS OF LIGHT

Choir & Small Orchestra

On the Wings of Light combines the ancient chant of Hildegard von Bingen with choral and orchestral works, guiding the listener through themes of divine inspiration, human connection, and spiritual ascent. The programme moves from sacred meditations to contemporary reflections, exploring the power of music to bridge time and tradition. With voices and instruments intertwined, the music invites a journey of light, renewal, and transcendence.

On the Wings of Light II unites the luminous voices of VOCES8's Choir with rich strings in a programme that transcends musical boundaries. Iconic masterpieces by Vaughan Williams and Barber are reimaged with the addition of voices, offering fresh perspectives on these timeless works. Complementing these masterpieces are contemporary arrangements and original pieces, from the spiritual *Deep River* to the atmospheric *Fjótavík* and the haunting *Pyramid Song*. Together, they create a journey through light, nature, and the profound connection between voice and instrument. This collaboration celebrates music's power to uplift and transform, inviting listeners to experience the familiar anew and embrace the beauty of innovation.

On the Wings of Light – Version I

Flowering of Genius

Hildegard Chant

Tallis Spem in Alium*

Hildegard Chant

Bach Cantata BWV150

Threads of Light

Hildegard Chant

Ken Burton A Prayer

(for choir and orchestra)

arr. Matthew Lynch Deep River

arr. Geoff Lawson Pyramid Song*

Sigur Rós arr. Geoff Lawson Fljótavík*

Flight of the Soul

Hildegard Chant

Caroline Shaw arr. Moore

and the swallow

*(with solo violin)**

Ralph Vaughan Williams

arr. Barnaby Smith

The Lark Ascending*

On the Wings of Light – Version II

Ralph Vaughan Williams arr. Barnaby Smith

Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*

(with choir added – RVW text 'Why Fum'th in fight' from the hymn, the melody of which RVW used for the fantasia)

Ken Burton A Prayer

(for choir and orchestra)

arr. Matthew Lynch Deep River

arr. Geoff Lawson Pyramid Song*

Sigur Rós arr. Geoff Lawson Fljótavík*

Christopher Tin

Intermezzo from 'The Lost Birds'

Samuel Barber Agnus Dei

*(for choir and orchestra)**

Caroline Shaw arr. Moore and the swallow

*(with solo violin)**

Watch & Listen Links

 The Lark Ascending

 and the swallow

* arrangements either made by or for
Barnaby Smith, so not available elsewhere



REFLECTIONS & ETERNITY: THE SPIRIT OF MOZART

Choir & Symphony Orchestra

Exploring the range of Mozart's compositional mastery, from the structural clarity and dramatic nuance of his instrumental works to the profound spirituality evident in his sacred music. It features the overture to *The Magic Flute*, exemplifying his skill in dramatic expression. The *Ave Verum Corpus* exemplifies Mozart's sacred writing with serene simplicity and devotional intensity, while the *Clarinet Concerto in A major* blends lyrical warmth and instrumental elegance to create an intimate reflection. The *Requiem* in D minor concludes the programme, embodying Mozart's engagement with themes of mortality and transcendence, and standing as a lasting testament to his artistic and spiritual vision.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Overture to *The Magic Flute*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Ave Verum Corpus, K. 618

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Clarinet Concerto in A major, K. 622

I N T E R V A L

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Requiem in D minor, K. 626

Watch & Listen Links



Overture to *The Magic Flute*





A CHRISTMAS CRACKER *or* **A CHORAL CHRISTMAS** Choir & Symphony Orchestra

“...gorgeous sound, impeccable ensemble and intense responsiveness to text, harmony and melodic shape is all of the highest quality. Hearing them sing is a joy.” —*BBC Music Magazine*

Programme could include:

Dimitri Shostakovich Festive Overture

Thomas Hewitt Jones

A Christmas Cracker

Lowell Mason arr. Taylor Scott Davis

Joy to the World

Leroy Anderson Sleigh Ride

Taylor Scott Davis Magnificat

Trad. arr. Jim Clements

Gabriel's Message

Anon arr. Taylor Scott Davis

O Come, O Come Emanuel

Anon arr. Taylor Scott Davis

I Saw Three Ships

Franz Xaver Gruber arr. Taylor Scott Davis

Silent Night

Trad. Arr. Christopher Moore

The Sussex Carol

Adrian Peacock Venite Gaudete

Arr. Thomas Hewitt Jones

Christmas POPS Medley

Arr. Taylor Scott Davis

Away in a Manger

Arr. Taylor Scott Davis

O Come All Ye Faithful

Capturing the essence of Christmas and packed full of choral/orchestral premieres and starry new arrangements of favourite carols by rising-star US composer and VOCES8 Composer-in-Residence, Taylor Scott Davis – this programme breathes new life into Holiday classics, and lend a luxurious, and contemporary cinematic sparkle to your festive season. Inspired by Barnaby's album for Decca, 'A Choral Christmas' (2023) and concert production 'A Christmas Cracker' (*film link below*), the evening could be crafted to suit your audience and needs.

Conducted by Barnaby Smith with optional solos/guest leadership by Jack Liebeck, suggested fun-filled favourites include Leroy Anderson's 'Sleigh Ride' and Thomas Hewitt-Jones' medley 'A Christmas Cracker' as well as arrangements by Jim Clements, Adrian Peacock and Christopher Moore. Works might include territory premieres (Magnificat and new carol arrangements), alongside consort gems such as Bob Chilcott's *The Sleeping Child* composed for VOCES8. Many of the new arrangements were commissioned by Barnaby for him and his VOCES8 Choir and Orchestra. All could be wrapped up with seasonal readings by Richard Leaf and Tamsin Greig. Cheers!

Barnaby Smith – conductor

Voices Your choir, or VOCES8 plus your choir, or the VOCES8 Choir

Tamsin Greig, Richard Leaf – narrators, or a narrator of your choice

Watch & Listen Links



A Choral Christmas on Decca inc. Taylor Scott Davis Magnificat (premiered at Carnegie Hall) & carol arrangements



A Christmas Cracker featuring Tamsin Greig, Richard Leaf and Jack Liebeck



BACH ALTO CANTATAS *or* HANDEL ARIAS *or* PERGOLESI STABAT MATER

Barnaby Smith (countertenor/ director) with the Illyria Consort (dir. Bojan Čičić)

Scholl/Basel-trained countertenor Barnaby Smith has released notable Bach and Handel albums featuring collaborators Mary Bevan and the Illyria Consort – Pergolesi Stabat Mater will be released in 2026.

Below is a sample Bach Cantatas programme. Listen below to Barnaby opening Bach Festival de Lausanne with this, live on Swiss Radio in 2024.

Doch Der Sünde", BWV 54

- I. Aria "Widerstehe Doch Der Sünde"
- II. Recitativo "Die Art Verruchter Sünden"
- III. Aria "Wer Sünde Tut, Der Ist Vom Teufel"

Harpsichord Concerto in D minor, BWV 1059r reconstructed by Steven Devine

- I. Allegro
- II. Adagio (Siciliano)
- III. Presto

Cantata "Ich habe genug", BWV 82

- I. Aria – Ich habe genug, ich habe den Heiland
- II. Recitativo – Ich habe genug! Mein Trost ist nur allein
- III. Aria – Schlummert ein, ihr matten Augen
- IV. Recitativo – Mein Gott! wann kommt das schon Nun!
- V. Aria – Ich freue mich auf meinen Tod

Approaching Bach's work has always filled me with some sense of trepidation; I'm sure most of us struggle to feel worthy of his genius and the searing humanity expressed in his works; his music feels both untouchable and yet incredibly enticing; perhaps therein lies its ultimate attraction.

I have chosen to present a cyclical programme through the liturgical year covering some of the composer's most iconic moments for the alto voice. Much of the music Bach wrote for this voice is deeply spiritual, so much so that we must wonder whether he deliberately had in mind the tradition, famously articulated by theologian Theodor Schneider in 1676, of using the alto voice as the voice of the Holy Spirit. [Read more here.](#)

I N T E R V A L

Orchestral Suite no. 3 in D major BWV 1068

- I. Overture
- II. Air
- III. Gavotte I & II
- IV. Bourrée
- V. Gigue

Cantata "Vergnügte Ruh, Beliebte Seelenlust", BWV 170

- I. Aria "Vergnügte Ruh! Beliebte Seelenlust!"
- II. Recitativo "Die Welt, Das Sündenhaus"
- III. Aria "Wie Jammern Mich Doch Die Verkehrten Herzen"
- IV. Recitativo "Wer Sollte Sich Demnach"
- V. Aria "Mir Ekelt Mehr Zu Leben"

* other programmes are available including performances of the other great Bach alto cantatas 35 and 169



▶ LISTEN



▶ LISTEN

"...a warm, easy sweetness in his upper registers, well-nigh faultless sense of both legato and phrasing in the slower arias, which are the album's chief glory... Smith, should think about giving us another solo album." —*Gramophone Magazine*

Smith's instrument is sweet, intense and bursting with colours... shapely phrases, like his blistering speed and crisp passagi in 'Venti turbini' (Rinaldo), are indebted to muscle and musicianship alike. —*BBC Music Magazine*

Watch & Listen Links



Live on Swiss Radio from the opening concert of Bach Festival de Lausanne, 2024



An Introduction to Barnaby Smith's 'BACH'



HANDEL: MESSIAH

Barnaby Smith (conductor)
VOCES8 Foundation Orchestra & Choir

Watch & Listen Links



VOCES8: 'Hallelujah' from Messiah

BACH: MASS IN B MINOR

Barnaby Smith (conductor)
VOCES8 Foundation Orchestra & Choir

Watch & Listen Links



Live From London Spring Highlights

