



EMMANUEL MUSIC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Patricia Krol
(617) 536-3356
music@emmanuelmusic.org
www.emmanuelmusic.org

EMMANUEL MUSIC PRESENTS BACH ST. MATTHEW PASSION

Emmanuel Music, led by Acting Artistic Director John Harbison and Associate Conductor Michael Beattie, presents J.S. Bach's towering masterpiece, *St. Matthew Passion*. Written for Good Friday vesper services, the *St. Matthew Passion* tells the familiar story in new ways, using a large chorus and orchestra to express the enormity of the drama and solo arias to express very personal responses to it.

Conductor John Harbison explains, "The gigantic opening chorus invites the listeners as witnesses. The piece then shifts to intimate scenes that establish the dramatic characters before expanding to points of climax that achieve exceptional expression." The varied, supple libretto supports a range of musical styles appropriate to the range of dramatic expression needed to tell the story of the Passion. Tenor Charles Blandy is the Evangelist, Bach's principal storyteller in the piece. Bass Donald Wilkinson performs the role of Jesus.

Prominent musicologist and Bach scholar Christoph Wolff will present a **pre-concert lecture** one hour before each performance.

A **special program** in cooperation with the Emmanuel Center will complement the performances. Held on Sunday, April 5 at 12:30 PM in the Parish Hall, *The Passions of the Passion* will discuss the complex historical contexts, theological interpretations and ethical challenges surrounding the Gospel narratives of the death of Jesus of Nazareth. The panelists include The Rev. Pamela L. Werntz, Priest-in-Charge, Emmanuel Church; Howard Berman, Rabbi, Boston Jewish Spirit; and Charles Blandy, Evangelist, *St. Matthew Passion*.

Program: J.S. Bach: *St. Matthew Passion*
Performers: Charles Blandy, Evangelist
Donald Wilkinson, Jesus
Orchestra and Chorus of Emmanuel Music
Date & Time: Friday, April 3, 2009, 7:30 PM
Sunday, April 5, 2009, 3:00 PM
Pre-concert talk by Christoph Wolff one hour before each performance
The Passions of the Passion, panel discussion, Sunday, April 5, 12:30 PM
Prices: Tickets are priced from \$125 - \$25; Students \$10; purchase by phone or through website
Place: Emmanuel Church, 15 Newbury Street, Boston

Emmanuel Music is the Ensemble-in-Residence at Emmanuel Church

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15 Newbury Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116 T 617.536.3356 F 617.536.3315 www.emmanuelmusic.org