



James Gilchrist

Tenor

James Gilchrist began his working life as a doctor, turning to a full-time career in music in 1996. His musical interest was fired at a young age, singing first as a chorister in the choir of New College, Oxford, and later as a choral scholar at King's College, Cambridge. Gilchrist's extensive concert repertoire has seen him perform in major concert halls throughout the world with conductors including Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Sir Roger Norrington, Bernard Labadie, Harry Christophers, Harry Bicket, Masaaki Suzuki and the late Richard Hickox.

A master of English music, he has performed Britten *Church Parables* in St Petersburg, in London and at the Aldeburgh Festival, *Nocturne* with the NHK Symphony in Tokyo and *War Requiem* with the San Francisco Symphony and the National Youth Orchestra of Germany. Equally at home in Baroque repertoire, appearances include Handel *L'Allegro il Penseroso ed il Moderato* with Stuttgart Bachakademie and at Teatro Real, Madrid, *Solomon* with Les Violons du Roy, *Semele* with Concerto Köln, *Elijah* with the Orquesta y Coro Nacionales de España, Madrid, Göteborgs Symfoniker and Bach Collegium Japan, all under the baton of Masaaki Suzuki, *Hercules* with the English Concert, *Ode to St Cecilia* with Basel Chamber Orchestra and *Messiah* with Boston Handel & Haydn Society and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Bach *Christmas Oratorio* and the *St John* and *St Matthew Passion* feature prominently in his schedule, and he is celebrated as perhaps the finest Evangelist of his generation; as one review noted, 'he hasn't become a one-man Evangelist industry by chance'.

In the 2024-25 season, Gilchrist will reprise of the role of Rev. Horace Adams in Deborah Warner's acclaimed production of Britten *Peter Grimes* in his house debut at the Opera di Roma. Concert highlights this season include Bach *Mass in B Minor* with the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra, Handel *Messiah* with Finland's Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra, Handel *Israel in Egypt* with the Karol Szymanowski Philharmonic Orchestra in Krakow, Poland, *Messiah* and *Christmas Oratorio* at London's St John's Smith Square with Polyphony and Stephen Layton and a tour of Bach *St Matthew Passion* to the Netherlands with De Nederlandse Bachvereniging. In recital, he appears with pianist Anna Tilbrook at the Oxford International Song Festival, Canterbury Music Club, Bayle Music Folkstone, Carwithen Music Festival, Wensleydale Concert Series and the Three Choirs Festival. Gilchrist and Tilbrook will also be joined by horn player, Ben Goldscheider, to present a trio programme at Sherborne Abbey Festival and at Champs Hill.

On the opera stage, Gilchrist has performed the role of Rev. Adams with Bergen Philharmonic and Edward Gardner at the Bergen and Edinburgh International Festivals, and later at Den Norske Opera, Oslo, Grieghallen in Bergen and the Royal Festival Hall, London. He subsequently sang the role in Deborah Warner's production in his company debuts at the Opéra national de Paris, Teatro Real Madrid (cond. Ivor Bolton), and at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (cond. Sir Mark Elder).

Other recent concert highlights include a European tour of Bach's cantatas, Mass in B Minor and *St John Passion* with Bach Collegium Japan and Masaaki Suzuki, *Christmas Oratorio* with Stephen Layton and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Britten *Serenade for Horn, Tenor and Strings* with the London Mozart Players, *Messiah* with Tenebrae, Mendelssohn *Elijah* with the Orquesta Sinfónica de Galicia, a live in-concert recording with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales performing works by Warlock, Dowland and Judith Bingham, Haydn *Creation* with Dallas Symphony Orchestra and for a staged production with Garsington Opera and Ballet Rambert, as well as appearances with Aarhus Symphony Orchestra, Rotterdams Philharmonisch Orkest, a collaboration with the Academy of Ancient Music on a programme of Bach & Purcell, and a celebrated performance of *St Matthew Passion* at King's College Cambridge as part of Stephen Cleobury's final Easter week as Director of Music. Recent engagements in the US have included B minor Mass with Philharmonia Baroque in a tour of California, Bach's Easter Oratorio with Music of the Baroque in Chicago, and the *St John* and *St Matthew Passions* as part of the Oregon Bach Festival. Steering away from familiar styles, Gilchrist recently worked with Eddie Parker's Debussy Mirrored Ensemble with performances in York, Bristol and London. With a fusion of jazz, classical and improvisation the work was a celebration and creative response to Debussy's work in the centenary of the composer's death.

In 2022, Gilchrist celebrated 25 years of collaboration with pianist Anna Tilbrook, commemorating the anniversary with a recital at the Oxford Lieder Festival. Recent performances together include recitals 'Time's Cruel Hand' at the Wigmore Hall, 'Around the World in 30 Songs' at St John's Smith Square, and a recital trilogy project for the Wigmore Hall - 'Schumann and the English Romantics', pairing Schumann song cycles with new commissions from leading composers Sally Beamish, Julian Philips and Jonathan Dove. Following the release of their disc *Solitude* in July 2020, JamGilchrist and Tilbrook returned to the Wigmore Hall for an exclusive performance of the programme broadcast live online. The disc, released on Chandos Records, includes Jonathan Dove's *Under Alter'd Skies*, commissioned by and premiered at the Wigmore in 2017 for the Schumann song cycle project. Their latest recording of the songs of Roger Quilter was released on Chandos Records in 2024.

Gilchrist's impressive discography also includes recordings of *Albert Herring* (title role) and Vaughan Williams *A Poisoned Kiss*, *St John Passion* with the AAM, the Finzi song cycle *Oh Fair To See*, the critically-acclaimed recordings of Schubert's song cycles for Orchid Classics and a disc of Schumann song cycles for Linn Records. More recently he has released *Songs of Travel* for Chandos, alongside Anna Tilbrook, and *100 Years of British Song*, a three-part recording project focussing on 'The Art of British Song', in collaboration with pianist Nathan Williamson, on Somm Recordings. This season, Gilchrist again collaborates with Nathan Williamson in a recording of the songs of Thomas Pitfield on the Divine Art label.

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