



Release of first complete recording of Paul Spicer's magnificent *Easter Oratorio*

Birmingham, 12 December 2005.

The two-hour *Easter Oratorio* is the result of a collaboration between composer **Paul Spicer** and librettist **Tom Wright**, Bishop of Durham. First performed at the Lichfield Festival in July 2000, Paul Spicer's inspired and thrilling setting of Tom Wright's powerful resurrection narrative has already been performed in five different venues in the UK as well as in the USA, and extracts have been recorded for the BBC.

Stunningly recorded by Ninth Wave Audio in the glorious surroundings of Hawksyard Priory, Staffordshire, and conducted by the composer, the **Birmingham Bach Choir**, the **English Symphony Orchestra**, **Lichfield Cathedral Choristers** and the **Lichfield Cathedral Special Choir** (the "congregation" in the Easter hymns) together with soloists Rachel Nichols, Philip Salmon (Evangelist), Nathan Vale and Jonathan Gunthorpe have combined to make the first complete recording of this inspirational work. The result is a triumph in musical, recording and presentational terms.

The *Oratorio* begins where the Passion story ends, with Christ's body in the tomb. It is structured, as are Bach's great *Passions*, by interweaving the gospel story with choruses, arias, chorales and hymns that reflect the story from different angles. It is principally designed as two large paragraphs of music either side of an interval: the first describing the new creation unveiled at Easter, and the second, more reflectively, exploring the challenge of the new calling for the disciples.

'Extremely accessible, musically attractive and tunefully uplifting'

The Birmingham Post

'A major contribution to the choral repertoire'

The Independent

The *Easter Oratorio* CD is being principally sold online at www.easteroratorio.com but it is also available from Farringdon Records, Symphony Hall, Broad Street, Birmingham B1 2EA (+44 (0)121 200 2382). The **two-CD** set is competitively **priced at £15.50** plus £1.50p&p (UK) or £3 (abroad) More information is available at www.birmingham.bachchoir.com and www.paulspicer.com