

## Biography:

### **Monteverdi Choir & Orchestras**

*Founder Sir John Eliot Gardiner*

For the past half a century, the Monteverdi Choir, English Baroque Soloists and Orchestre Révolutionnaire and Romantique have set new standards, shaped opinions and breathed fresh energy into both forgotten and established repertoire. Their founder and conductor John Eliot Gardiner has devoted more than 50 years to the study of period instrument performance practice from the baroque to romantic repertoire.

The **Monteverdi Choir** was established in 1964 for a groundbreaking performance of Monteverdi's *Vespers* at King's College Chapel, Cambridge. Ever since the Monteverdi Choir has proven to be a powerhouse for young choral singers as many former members have moved on to successful solo careers. Memorable was also their recorded live performance of Monteverdi's *Vespers* at St. Mark's Basilica in Venice in 1989 marking the choir's silver anniversary. For their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2014, the Choir went back to King's College to revive their first concert in a live broadcast on BBC Radio 3.

The **English Baroque Soloists** were founded in 1978 and have - together with John Eliot Gardiner - always sought to challenge preconceptions of Baroque and early Classical music. Combining the untamed sound of period instruments, with passionate and virtuosic playing, they have set the benchmark for period instrument performance that has shaped performance practice for the last three decades. Their current leader is Kati Debretzeni.

A towering achievement for the Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists was marking Bach's 250th anniversary in 2000 by performing and recording all 198 of JS Bach's sacred cantatas on the appropriate feast day in more than 60 churches across Europe. Subsequently the Monteverdi Choir & Orchestras set up the company's record label, *Soli Deo Gloria*, to release the entire cycle which was hailed as "*one of the most ambitious musical projects of all time*" by Gramophone magazine. In 2014, Sir John Eliot Gardiner brought out a new biography on Bach entitled "*Music in the Castle of Heaven*".

All three ensembles have also been a fertile training ground for generations of performers who have gone on to shine internationally. In 2007, the **Monteverdi Apprenticeship Programme** was established to further develop future generations. The Choir and English Baroque Soloists have over 150 recordings to their name and have won numerous prizes. The Financial Times described their most recent album together, Bach's B Minor Mass, as "*Bach at its most glorious and uplifting*".

Sir John Eliot Gardiner was appointed President of the Bach Archive in Leipzig in 2014 and has recently received the Concertgebouw Award in Amsterdam.

<http://www.monteverdi.co.uk>

**Twitter: @mco\_london**

The Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists are under the grateful patronage of HRH the Prince of Wales

**Nicky Thomas Media**

[info@nickythomasmedia.com](mailto:info@nickythomasmedia.com) | [www.nickythomasmedia.com](http://www.nickythomasmedia.com)

+44 20 3714 7594 | +44 20 7258 0909