



Image: Jean-Philippe Ballet

A Perfect Match

Philippe Herreweghe tells us about three of his favourite pieces of music

Not only is Philippe Herreweghe one of the world's most admired early music conductors, he was also offered an enviable opportunity at this year's Festival. 'Jonathan Mills asked me to choose the three works that I find the most beautiful' he explains. 'I'm 66 now, so I try to play only music that I find truly great.'

The three pieces that Herreweghe chose – Lassus's *Tears of St Peter*, Bach's B minor Mass and Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms* – stray way beyond the early repertoire for which he's best known. Stravinsky's psalm settings Herreweghe considers a 20th-century masterpiece, and he performs it alongside some of Bruckner's touchingly

prayerful choral motets. But be prepared for something altogether lighter and brighter than the traditional accounts of those pieces. 'I think Bruckner has been over-Romanticised,' says Herreweghe. 'Our Bruckner is quite different from what you hear with big, Romantic choirs.'

Bach's sublime B minor Mass is one of the cornerstones of Western music, 'I've been conducting it since I was 20,' he says, 'but each time, you have to think afresh about the music.'

It's Lassus's *Tears of St Peter* that may be least familiar to Festival audiences. 'It's incredibly moving music,' says Herreweghe, 'and also meditative in some ways.' **David Kettle**

Collegium Vocale Gent

Tuesday 12 August 5.45pm
Greyfriars Kirk
eif.co.uk/collegiumvocale

Supported by **The Government of Flanders**

Bach's Mass in B minor

Saturday 16 August 7.30pm
Usher Hall
eif.co.uk/bachmass

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Collegium Vocale Gent Scottish Chamber Orchestra

Wednesday 20 August
7.30pm; Usher Hall
eif.co.uk/collegium-sco

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