

** MEDIA RELEASE **

BEL A CAPPELLA CHAMBER CHOIR



Presents

BACH'S ST JOHN PASSION

Saturday 29 March, 8pm Tickets \$30/\$25 Conc
The Church of St Mary Immaculate
45a Victoria Street, Waverley

On March 29, Sydney-siders will be treated to a memorable performance of one of Bach's most profound and darkly dramatic works, the *St John Passion*, presented by the Glebe-based chamber choir Bel A Cappella.

The performance will feature a chamber orchestra comprising some of Sydney's most talented young players. Many will be using *original Baroque instruments* and have performed with Australia's leading Baroque ensembles such as the Brandenburg Orchestra. The team of soloists includes a number of Sydney's brightest young singers, including several who are already a part of Opera Australia's company.

The all-important role of the chorus will be performed by Bel a Cappella, a chamber choir that is dedicated to the delivery of diverse, high quality music. Established in 1995, this excellent vocal ensemble has thrilled concert audiences with masterpieces ranging from a stunning performance of Mozart's Requiem to challenging contemporary works such as Aaron Copland's "In the Beginning" and the famous "Chichester Psalms" by Leonard Bernstein. Other concert highlights include Benjamin Britten's "Hymn to St Cecilia", Haydn's "Mass in the Time of War", the luscious Rachmaninoff Vespers and an Australian first with Bruckner's "Mass No.1 in D-minor".

This performance of the St John Passion will be directed by Russell Ger, musical director of Bel a Cappella since 2004. Russell's conducting debut took place at the Sydney Opera House in 2003, when he directed a fund-raising event featuring the finale from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Since graduating in 2005 with First Class Honours in Music, Russell has worked with many of Australia's top professional ensembles through his involvement with Symphony Australia, including the Adelaide, Melbourne, Queensland and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras.

The Passion is an enduring story of sacrifice and redemption and stands at the very core of the Christian faith. Bach's intimate setting is darkly powerful. He captures all the drama and pathos that surrounds Christ's final hours and conveys it in a manner that is directly accessible by the audience of today.

This is a rare opportunity to hear an authentic performance of this mighty work by a composer of fundamental importance to the development of western music.

For bookings and other enquiries please ring 0412 833 958 or contact us at enquiries@bel.org.au