

12/13/70

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 Mr. and Mrs. Keith Calkins
 Mr. and Mrs. Edmund L. Dana Jr.
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 The Rev. and Mrs. Samuel W. Hale Jr.
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(6)

THE
 CANTATA
 SINGERS

SACRED CHORAL CONCERT

December 13, 1970

Brass Quartet

Procession: 182 O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Invocation

MESSA III by Claudio Monteverdi

Scripture

Advent Prayer

Organ Offertory

UNE CANTATE DE NOEL by Arthur Honegger

Procession

Benediction

SOLI DEO GLORIA

Special appreciation goes to:

Mrs. James Reinsmith and the Center Street
Elementary Chorus of Horseheads
The Brass Quartet: Mike Santone, Steve Squires,
David Stanton and David Asher

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor - Donald Mills

Associate Pastor - Robert Markham III

Organist - Choir Director - Dr. Richard Shaw

THE CANTATA SINGERS

Fred M. Thayer, conductor

Mrs. Charles Davis, accompanist

SOPRANO

Mrs. Joseph Amisano
Miss Nancy Beatty
Mrs. Hobart Burch
Mrs. Keith Calkins
Miss Mary-Ellen Earl
Miss Alice Flaum
Miss Kathy French
Mrs. Robert Goodling
Miss Sarah Grant
Mrs. Donald Holtz
Mrs. John Hoos
Mrs. Karl Krech
Miss Peg Moss
Sister Juliana O'Hara SSJ
Mrs. Pierre Peltier
Mrs. James Reinsmith
Mrs. Richard Sheasley
Mrs. Earl Stanton

ALTO

Miss Truuke Ameigh
Miss Margret Andrew
Miss Mary Andrew
Mrs. Albert Clark
Mrs. Donald Guile
Mrs. Robert Harder
Mrs. David Hauser
Mrs. David Heimel
Mrs. Edward Horner
Mrs. Terrell Kirk
Mrs. Donald Monroe
Miss Virginia Sale
Sister Mary Sayles SSJ
Miss Patricia Smith
Mrs. John Tetz
Mrs. Fred Thayer
Miss Virginia Treu
Miss Barbara Tucker
Miss Jean Ellen Verity
Miss Mimi Welliver
Miss Deborah Zaccarine

BASS

Duke Campbell
Leon Constanzer
Thomas Costello
Leonard Criminale
William Davis
David Hauser
David Heimel
Edward Horner
James Keck
Frederick Petrie
Sidney Reed

TENOR

Kimber Billow
Keith Calkins
Edmund Dana
Robert Harder
Edward Kowalski
Donald Monroe Jr.
Richard Sheasley
Gary Worden

Return to: Keith Calkins
122 Glen Ave
Elmira, NY 14905

UNE CANTATE DE NOËL (1953)
Arthur Honegger (1892-1955)

Honegger, whose affections and career were divided between France and Switzerland, was a prominent member of the "Groupe des Six" (including such other names as Darius Milhaud and Francis Poulenc) who created considerable stir in the Paris musical scene immediately following World War I by moving away from more conservative forms. His "radical" pieces are chiefly curiosities today; with them he also wrote much that is essentially romantic in nature and touched with a strong vein of mysticism and interest in Catholicism--features the Cantate shares. Notable compositions, on which his present fame rests, are the oratorio King David, the stage work Jeanne d'Arc au Bûcher, and the Liturgical Symphony. The Cantate is the only finished portion of another projected oratorio, Jeu de la Passion (1940-41). The completed portion was reworked as a separate cantata and first presented in 1953 in Bale.

In roughly five hundred measures, Honegger brings into play no fewer than seven familiar Christmas tunes and portions of liturgical text for which he provided original music. The whole has an intensely dramatic organization and is sometimes overwhelming in effect. A somber, mysterious accompaniment opens the piece, and the chorus joins on a wordless vocalization, much like a lament, that leads to the Latin Psalm 130, De profundis clamavi ("Out of the depths have I cried"). This section, a plea to God from all mankind in its suffering, grows in intensity and returns to more vocalization leading to a climactic setting of the text "O come, O come Emmanuel" (to Honegger's music rather than the traditional plainsong). Whether in quotation of the text only, or in the statement of text and melody together, Honegger usually employs only the opening phrases of borrowed liturgical and carol material. "O Come Emmanuel" is dramatically followed by angels (children's voices) in the German carol "Freu dich, O Israel" ("Rejoice, O Israel"). Mankind refuses to accept the message and repeats the cry "O come Emmanuel." Again the angel voices announce the birth, followed by a single angel voice (as baritone solo) who brings the good news "Be not afraid." The work then becomes one of rejoicing through a fascinating contrapuntal pattern of popular French and German carols. The children's voices introduce the German "Es ist ein Reis entsprungen" ("Lo, how a Rose is blooming"), which then alternates with the French "Il est né, le divin enfant" ("He is born, the Holy Child"), sung by altos and basses, and the Latin "Gloria in excelsis Deo," sung by sopranos and tenors. The carols are sung in their original languages. Still other German carols, "Von Himmel hoch" ("From heaven on high") and "O du Fröliche" ("O how joyfully") are added, to climax in the well-known "Stille Nacht" ("Silent Night"). The carols interplay among the voices in a magnificent interweaving. In a final section, the first strains of the Latin chant "Laudate Dominum omnes gentes" (Psalm 117, "Praise the Lord, all nations") are sung by children, with the baritone intervening with a repeated "Gloria in excelsis Deo." The plainchant melody is sung by the children, but the chorus takes up the "Laudate" in a vigorous arrangement with percussive accompaniment. After final Amens, the accompaniment recapitulates melodies and finally dies away into the same sense of mystery with which it began.

Honegger worked on the Cantate in 1953 already hospitalized and probably influenced by his approaching death. In his book, I Am a Composer, he speaks of his 1918 optimism: "We thought that another war was impossible, that the world would move towards science, art, and beauty." The end of his career was one of pessimism: "I believe that we are living the last instants of our civilization; these last instants are necessarily painful. . . Social progress regiments each individual into a concentration-camp kind of life. It makes the existence of an independent being almost impossible. . . What can possibly be left over for the arts and for music?" In a sense, the Cantate summarizes his thinking. His strong religious feeling and Catholic tradition emerged triumphant, as does each Christmas.

--Leonard R. Criminale

MESSA III A 4 VOCI DA CAPPELLA (published 1651)
Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

1 Kyrie	3 Credo	5 Benedictus
2 Gloria	4 Sanctus	6 Agnus Dei

The foremost of Italian musicians of his time, Monteverdi, sometimes called "the creator of modern music," is known for his contributions to the madrigal, the opera, and sacred music. The Messa III (one of three surviving masses) corresponds to his years as "maestro di cappella" at St. Mark's in Venice, where he planned the intensive work of a choir of thirty and an orchestra of twenty.

He was a master of polyphony, as it had evolved in the sixteenth century, but developed the new style of homophony, a type of music known at the time as Prima Prattica, described by Monteverdi's brother Giulio Cesare as "one that turns on the perfection of the harmony, that is, the one that considers the harmony not commanded, but commanding, not the servant, but the mistress of the words." In the Messa III there is much of the stile antico of Palestrina flavor, but the work is invigorated by the use of sequence, chromaticism, and madrigal part-writing--and even occasional independence of the organ bass line. A strong characteristic of the work is its consciously thematic musical development of two root motives and their offshoots, one a descending tetrachord (as in Kyrie I, "Kyrie eleison," beginning the mass, or the opening of Agnus Dei), the other a chromaticized sequence figure (as in the Kyrie, "Christe eleison," or in "Benedictus qui venit"). This same "Christe" initiates the madrigalian nature of much of the music. The Kyrie II introduces frequent patterns of lively cross-rhythms. In the Gloria, "Qui tollis" has madrigalian contrasts of registers, followed by an imitative build-up to a homophonic climax at "deprecationem nostram." The "Crucifixus" of the Credo has real pathos; it is followed by an interesting dovetailing of "sepultus est" with a triple-time "et resurrexit," an advanced technique for the time. This sudden change from common time to triple rhythm for dramatic effect also appears in the "Osanna in excelsis."

Hans Redlich, editor of the text used this evening, has further stated: "Elements of plainsong and expansive chromatism are here working together to establish a unity of style all the more admirable as not everywhere achieved in Monteverdi's religious music. The amazing variety of choral effects: faux bourdon, Canto fermo polyphony, Palestrinian homophony, Canonic imitation, madrigalian chroma--speak eloquently for Monteverdi's unsurpassed mastery as first and greatest musical colourist of his century."

There is some evidence that the Messa III was intended as a festival piece in St. Mark's to celebrate the end of the terrible plague that visited northern Italy during the equally terrible days of the Thirty Years' War that laid waste so much of Germany and Italy during the seventeenth century. If so, the Messa shares with Honegger the theme of mankind's liberation from sadness to the joy that Christmas brings.