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ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH
W. Clinton at N. Main Street
Elmira, New York

Sunday, December 3, 1978

8:00 p.m.

The Program given by the Cantata Singers are given without admission charge, but are dependent largely upon your contributions at each concert.

THE
CANTATA
SINGERS

A SACRED CHORAL CONCERT
For
THE SEASON OF ADVENT

~~Choral Introit~~

~~Glory to God in the Highest Randall Thompson~~

~~Processional~~

~~O Come, O Come, Emmanuel Gregorian~~

I THE NATIVITY

3:46 Alma Redemptoris Mater Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina 3:46
3:30 Ave Maria Tomas Luis da Vittoria 7:15
Geborn ist Gottes Soehnelein. Michael Praetorius 9:33
Hodie Christus natus est Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina 12:25

II THE ANGELS AND SHEPHERDS REJOICE

Verbum caro factum est Hans Leo Hassler 15:14
Pastores, Dicite, Quidnam Vidistis? Christobal de Morales 18:24
Angelus ad pastores ait Hans Leo Hassler 21:00

III ALL THE WORLD REJOICES

Jubilate Deo, omnis terra Orlando di Lasso 22:47
Omnes de saba venient Jacob Handl 24:42
Exultate Deo Alessandro Scarlatti 27:30

~~Offertory~~

IV THE MESSAGE OF THE NATIVITY

9:55 Friede auf Erden, Op. 13 Arnold Schoenberg

Recessional

SOLI DEO GLORIA

THE CANTATA SINGERS

William O. Payne III, Musical Director

SOPRANO

Debbie Courtney	Carol King	Judy Sheasley
Jean Doherty	Sr. Juliana O'Hara	Hilda Shepard
Linda Harrison	Rita Shapiro	Mary Lou Strong
Dorothy Hoos		Kay Wack

ALTO

Nancy Basil	Claudia Hamlin	Cora Range
Eunice Bowers	Patricia Hauser	Lou Sand
Cynthia Roe Buchheimer	Wendy Roe Hovey	Florence Suffern
Diane Earle	Margaret Lembke	Helen Vincent
Gwen Egan	Patricia Merritt	Charlotte Von Hendy

TENOR

Robert Badertscher	Jonathan Guest	Richard Sheasley
Edmund Dana	Paul Holland	Richard Wack

BASS

Richard Bauer	David Hauser	James Sanderson
Stuart Finch	Sidney Reed	Thomas Strain
Jean-Pierre Fleck		Michael Wald

REHEARSAL ACCOMPANIST

Judith Feitner

PROGRAM NOTES

As in the opening concerts of the past three seasons, the Cantata Singers have chosen to open their program with the "Glory to God in the Highest" of Randall Thompson. This contemporary American work for a *cappella* chorus is a brief setting of the angels' proclamation to the shepherds on that first Christmas. It seems particularly appropriate to perform this work not only for the joyous season at hand, but also for what it conveys regarding the ultimate purpose of the concerts given by the Cantata Singers.

The choral works of the Italian Renaissance master, de Palestrina, are often ranked among mankind's greatest contributions to the Church. In the "Alma Redemptoris Mater", the composer achieves a sense of sublime serenity when he sets the text acknowledging Mary as the Virgin Mother of Christ. This work represents a striking departure from most of Palestrina's motets in that the composer uses the traditional contrapuntal polyphony very sparingly and relies upon the use of pure chordal progressions to convey a sense of calm and tranquility.

As Palestrina was to the Church in Italy, so Tomas Luis da Vittoria was to the Church in Spain. Although the two were contemporaries, each exhibits a different approach to the composition of church music. Even in setting a text as sacred as the "Ave Maria", da Vittoria was more greatly influenced by the secular music of the day, for the music which accompanies the words, "Dominus tecum, benedicta tu", has the flavor and rhythmic character of the Spanish folk song and dance.

One of the great hallmarks of all music written for the Church of the Sixteenth Century was the use of the double, or antiphonal, chorus. In the "Hodie" of Palestrina, the listener is given the opportunity to hear this compositional device in one of its most perfect applications; the vocal line is very strong and clean, with a very careful delineation made between Chorus I and Chorus II. The purity of each vocal line almost seems to indicate that the composer was fully aware that this work would be scrutinized for all time and would be found to be "text book pure"!

In the "Verbum caro factum est" of Hans Leo Hassler, the listener will detect a union of all the various styles which have preceded it this evening. A double chorus proclaims the opening text, "And the Word became as flesh." The second section is a joining of the two separate choruses which creates an organ-like beauty serving to end the work with majesty.

The "Pastores, Dicite" of Christobal de Morales displays the advances made in the Spanish school of choral composition. In setting the text which concerns the peasant shepherds at the Nativity, the composer has allowed himself free use of the peasant melodies and rhythms of which da Vittoria made but the briefest mention. It is most apparent that this work is about the common man and of his awe and inbound joy at being a part of so miraculous an event.

The "Angelus ad Pastores ait" of Hassler answers the questions posed in the text of the preceding motet. Scored for four-part mixed chorus, it too represents an amalgamation of the German, Italian, and Spanish schools. The concluding "Alleluia" is one of the loveliest and happiest settings of a single word in all choral music.

Orlando di Lasso, the great master of the Flemish Renaissance school, was without peer in his ability to write in the various choral styles. The performance of his setting of the "Jubilate Deo" this evening serves to remind us all that there are no bounds to Man's creativity when he praises God.

The setting of the "Omnes de Saba venient" is a five-part motet composed for the first vespers of the Epiphany. A traditionalist, Jacob Handl chose the well-proven choral conventions of the day in composing this work, we find no dance rhythms or melodies, but rather, the steadfast adherence to the rules and accepted choral practices of the day.

Alessandro Scarlatti's "Exultate Deo" was chosen to conclude the evening's tribute to Renaissance choral music because it represents that music which was a strong part of the choral era, and also because it represents all that music which was to come, serving as a link to its successors.

The "Friede auf Erden" of Arnold Schoenberg is considered by many to be one of the Twentieth Century's choral masterworks. Composed in 1907, the work was originally conceived for unaccompanied mixed chorus. Perhaps, owing to the tremendous vocal demands which it places on the singers, the composer subsequently scored the work for mixed chorus and small chamber ensemble, with the instruments merely doubling the voice parts.

As the text concerns the struggle of Man to find true and lasting peace, so the music conveys that same struggle and turmoil. By juxtaposing rich romantic harmonies with clashing and strident dissonances, the composer succeeds in showing the listener that it is through the birth of Christ that Man will find repose and will experience a lasting "Peace on Earth."

William O. Payne