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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

St. Mary Our Mother Church  
Horseheads, New York  
Rev. Bartholomew J. O'Brien, Pastor  
Rev. William Laird, Associate  
Rev. Francis Blighton, Associate

St. Patrick's Church  
Elmira, New York  
Rev. Daniel Holland, Pastor  
Rev. Joseph McCaffrey, Associate

The Cantata Singers take pleasure in presenting their concerts without admission charge. The continuation of this practice is dependent largely upon your contribution at each concert.

# THE CANTATA SINGERS

St. Mary our Mother Church  
W. Broad Street  
Horseheads, New York

December 6, 1981

St. Patrick's Church  
W. Clinton at N. Main Street  
Elmira, New York

December 13, 1981

A SACRED CHORAL CONCERT

For  
THE SEASON OF ADVENT

*Left Channel spotted by RF Interference*

Processional

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel . . . . . Gregorian

I THREE MOTETS

1:35 Heilig . . . . . Felix Mendelssohn  
3:25 Alma Redemptoris Mater . . . Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina  
3:30 Ave Maria . . . . . Tomas Luis da Vittoria

II SECHS GEISTLICHE LIEDER . . . . . Hugo Wolf

16:00

1:10 Aufblick  
2:20 Einkehr  
4:35 Resignation  
2:45 Letzte Bitte  
3:15 Ergebung  
2:30 Erhebung

Offertory

III THE CHRISTMAS STORY, OP. 10 . . . . . Hugo Distler

38:30

Evangelist - Edmund Dana, Tenor  
Angel - Paul Holland, Tenor  
Elizabeth - Kathy Lovell, Soprano  
Mary - Kay Wack, Mezzo-Soprano  
Simeon - Richard Wack, Baritone  
Herod - Thomas Strain, Bass

*Opening Chorus 3:25  
Closing Chorus 5:00*

SOLI DEO GLORIA

THE CANTATA SINGERS

William O. Payne III, Musical Direction

SOPRANO

Susan Amisano Jennifer Jack Sr. Juliana O'Hara  
Ruth Bruning Kathy Lovell Betsy Roll  
Debbie Courtney Naomi Markle Marylou Strong  
Linda Harrison Laura McGrath Kay Kennedy Wack  
Dorothy Hoos Marcy Moonschein Deborah Wald

ALTO

Nancy Basil Judith Feitner Cora Range  
Eunice Bowers Claudia Hamlin Phoebe Rice  
Millicent Chaney Patricia Hauser Lou Sand  
Barbara Cunningham Wendy Roe Hovey Florence Suffern  
Carla B. Cunningham Kathleen Lovell Bernice G. Wickham  
Gwendolyn Egan Carol Wright

TENOR

Claude Cornwall Paul Holland William Wickham  
Edmund Dana Richard Perry Richard Wack

BASS

Richard Bauer Marc Lovell Thomas Strain  
David Hauser Sidney Reed Michael Wald  
James Sanderson

REHEARSAL ACCOMPANIST

Judith Feitner



## PROGRAM NOTES

- I. In his all-too-brief creative life-span, Felix Mendelssohn, the German master of the early nineteenth century, gave the world some of its richest choral treasures. From the great oratorios "Elijah" and "St. Paul" to the smaller but equally magnificent "Heilig" which opens this evening's program, we hear sacred choral music which has few equals in musical history. If one were required in only one word to define Mendelssohn's sacred music, that single word would have to be "strength". For throughout his compositions the listener becomes keenly aware that this is music of the highest religious convictions. The "Heilig" is a setting for double SATB chorus, a cappella, which from its quiet, almost whispered, beginning builds to a most exuberant close.

The choral works of the Italian Renaissance master, 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 masters 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", has the flavor and rhythmic character of the Spanish folk song and dance.

- II. The "Sechs Geistliche Lieder" or "Six Holy Songs" of Hugo Wolf carry no opus number but merely are dated from the spring of 1881. These songs are the product of the young man struggling for recognition in the then musical capitol of the world, Vienna. They are also the work of the composer who had come out four-square on the side of Richard Wagner in the endless battle between the supporters of Wagner and those of Johannes Brahms. A marked reference to Wagner can be heard in some of these settings of the von Eichendorff poems. These six settings are actually six short prayers and, however brief, are extremely intense. In using the utmost economy of text, Wolf is able to explore the full breadth of Wagnerian romanticism largely through the use of rich chromaticism and abrupt modulations to very distant tonalities. The ultimate success of the composer's efforts can be seen as having provided a direct link between the established choral compositional techniques of the Romantic era with the new ground that was soon to be broken by Wolf's successors, Gustav Mahler and Arnold Schoenberg.

- III. "The Christmas Story", op. 10, is without doubt the best-known and most popular of the works of Hugo Distler. Completed in 1933, the work has enjoyed a constant success since its first performance in Germany. Whether it is performed in its original German or in translation (as with this evening's English version) "The Christmas Story" proves to be a work of immediate beauty.

Sir George Grove assesses Distler and his music most accurately when he says: "Distler's affinities are with the Reformation period. In his work archaistic leanings are united with a predilection for the pentatonic scale and for free melismatic writing. His choral music has at times an impressionistic sensibility and beauty of harmony that recalls the modern French school. His choral writing, which frequently makes play with the contrast between the chanting of the soloists and the skillful polyphonic imitation of the chorus, is at once subtle and austere".

The composer sets the familiar story of the Nativity for soloists and unaccompanied mixed chorus. Of large proportions, the work is unified by Distler's brilliant construction of seven choral variations on the chorale "Lo, How a Rose e're blooming". There is a real sense of drama created by the insertion of declamation as sung in recitative by the soloists and the exciting choruses for all the voices. The composer uses the choral variations and their succeeding verses to make timely comment upon the narrative.

When considered as a whole, this work becomes a glorious example of early twentieth century choral composition and also serves to remind us of the tremendous loss to mankind due to the greatly premature and tragic death of a brilliant modern composer, Hugo Distler.



HEILIG

Heilig, heilig, heilig ist Gott der Zebaoth!  
Alle Lande sind seiner Ehre voll. Hosanna  
in der Hoh. Gelobt sei der da kommt im  
Namen des Herrn. Hosanna in der Hoh.

ALMA REDEMPTORIS MATER

Alma Redemptoris Mater, quae pervia coeli  
porta manes, et stella maris, succurre  
cadenti. Surgere qui curat populo: Tu  
quae genuisti, natura mirante, tuum  
sanctum Genitorem, Virgo prius ac poster-  
ius, Gabrielis ab ore Sumens illud Ave.  
Peccatorum miserere.

AVE MARIA

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus  
tecum  
benedicta tu in mulieribus,  
et benedictus fructus ventris tui,  
Jesus.  
Sancta Maria, mater Dei,  
ora pro nobis peccatoribus nunc  
et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen

SIX SACRED SONGS FROM POEMS BY JOSEPH VON EICHENDORFNo. 1 AUFBLICK

Vergeht mir der Himmel vor Staube schier,  
Herr, im Getummel zeig' dein Panier!

Wie schwank' ich sundlich, lasst du von mir;  
Unuberwindlich bin ich mit dir!  
Herr, im Getummel zeig' dein Panier!  
Unuberwindlich bin ich mit dir!

No. 2 EINKEHR

Weil jetzo alles stille ist und alle  
Menschen schlafen,  
Mein' Seel' das ew'ge Licht begrusst ruht  
wie ein Schiff im Hafen.

Der falsche Fleiss, die Eitelkeit, was  
keinen mag er laben,  
Darin der Tag das Herz zerstreut, liegt  
alles tief begraben.  
Ein andrer Konig wundergleich mit  
Koniglichen Sinnen,  
Zieht herrlich ein im stillen Reich,  
besteigt die ew'gen Zinnen.

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Holy, holy, holy is God the Lord Sabaoth!  
All the nations are full of Thy renown.  
Sing hosanna, sing on high. Give praise  
to Him who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Sing hosanna, sing on high.

LOVING MOTHER OF THE REDEEMER

Loving mother of the Redeemer, gate of  
heaven, star of the sea, assist your  
people who have fallen yet strive to rise  
again. To the wonderment of nature you  
bore your Creator, yet remained a virgin  
after as before. You who received Gabri-  
el's joyful greeting have pity on us poor  
sinners.

HAIL MARY

Hail, Mary, full of grace, the  
Lord is with thee;  
Blessed art thou among women,  
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb,  
Jesus.  
O Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
Pray for us sinners now and in the  
hour of our death. Amen.

No. 1 UPWARD GLANCE

If I lose sight of Heaven in all the dust,  
Lord, in all the tumult, show your banner!

How sinfully I waver if you abandon me;  
With you I am unconquerable!  
Lord, in the tumult, show your banner!  
With you I am unconquerable!

No. 2 CONTEMPLATION

Since all is now still  
And everyone is sleeping,  
My soul greets the eternal light,  
Rests like a ship in harbor.

False busy-ness, frivolity refreshing  
to no one --  
However the day distracts the heart  
Is now completely buried.  
Like a miracle, another King, with Kingly  
mind and senses,  
Moves in grandly and occupies this quiet  
realm,  
Ascends the eternal battlements.

No. 3 RESIGNATION

Komm, Trost der Welt, du stille Nacht!  
Wie steigst du von den Bergen sacht,  
die Lufte alle schlafen;  
Ein Schiffer nur noch wandermud',  
Singt ubers Meer sein Abendlied zu Gottes  
Lob im Hafen.

Die Jahre wie die Wolken gehn und lassen  
mich hier einsam steh'n,  
Die Welt hat mich vergessen.  
Da trat'st du wunderbar zu mir,  
Als ich beim Waldesrauschen hier gedan-  
kenvoll gesessen.

O Trost der Welt, du stille Nacht!  
Der Tag hat mich so mud' gemacht,  
Das weite Meer schon dunkelt  
Lass' ausruh'n mich von Lust und Not,  
Bis dass das ew'ge, Morgenrot den stillen  
Walt durchfunkelt.

No. 4 LETZTE BITTE

Wie ein todeswunder Streiter,  
Der den Weg verloren hat,  
Schwank' ich nun und kann nicht weiter,  
Von dem Leben sterbensmatt.

Nacht schon dekkt alle Muden,  
Und so still ist's um mich her,  
Herr, auch mir gib endlich Frieden,  
Denn ich wunsch' und hoff' nichts mehr.

No. 5 ERGEBUNG

Dein Wille, Herr, geschehe!  
Verdunkelt schweigt das Land.  
Im Zeig der Wetter sehe  
Ich schauernd deine Hand.

O, mit uns Sundern gehe erbarmend in's  
Gericht!  
Ich heug' im tiefsten Wehe,  
Im tiefsten Wehe zum Staub mein Angesicht!  
Dein Wille, Herr geschehe!  
Er geschehe!

No. 6 ERHEBUNG

So lass' herein nun brecken, wie sie will,  
Du darfst ein Wort nur sprechen, so wird  
der Abgrund still.

Und bricht die letzte Brucke,  
Zu dir der treulich steht,  
Hebt uber Not und Glucke mich einsam  
das Gebet.

No. 3 RESIGNATION

Come, solace of the world, you quiet night!  
How softly you descend from the mountains.  
The breezes are all asleep;  
Only a seaman, travel weary,  
Yet sings in harbor his evening song  
Across the sea, in praise of God.

The years go by like the clouds  
And leave me standing here alone;  
The world has forgotten me.  
You came so wonderfully to me  
As I was sitting, thoughtful, here in  
rustling woods.

O, solace of the world, you quiet night.  
The day has made me so weary,  
The wide sea is already darkening.  
Let me rest from longing and need,  
Until the eternal dawn glistens through  
the quiet wood.

No. 4 LAST PRAYER

Like a fighter, who wounded to death,  
Was lost his way,  
I stagger now, and can go no farther,  
Tired to death.

Night now covers all the weary,  
How silent it is around me.  
Lord, give me, too, peace at last,  
For I wish and hope for nothing more.

No. 5 SUBMISSION

Thy will, Lord, be done.  
The darkened land is still.  
In the procession of the weather  
I see Thy hand, and shudder.

Oh, with us sinners be merciful,  
Merciful in judgment.  
I bow my face in deepest woe,  
In deepest woe down to the dust.  
Thy will be done, Thy will, Lord.  
May it be done. May it be done.

No. 6 ELEVATION

So let the surf come breaking in as it  
wishes -  
You need speak only a word to calm the abyss.

And if the last bridge breaks,  
To thee, who stands firm, will I be raised  
Above misery and success alone by prayer.