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GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
Elmira, New York
The Rev. Peter Courtney, Rector
Dr. Kent Hill, Organist and Choir Master

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

Taft 2nd Service Plus 096
St Francis 296
Victoria 368 013
2nd Service 552
St Francis 659

THE CANTATA SINGERS

Grace Episcopal Church
Church and Davis Streets
Elmira, New York

Sunday, March 1, 1981

8:00 p.m.

A SACRED CHORAL CONCERT

I. FOUR MOTETS Tomas Luis de Victoria

Jesu dulcis memoria
O quam gloriosum
O! Domine
Vere Languores

II. SECOND SERVICE

For the Episcopal Church. James Mason Taft
Edmund Dana, Tenor

III. PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS James Mason Taft

Susan Streeter Amisano, Soprano

OFFERTORY

IV. REQUIEM, Op. 9 Maurice Durufle

8:00	Introit	8:00
8:15	Kyrie	
16:50	Domine Jesu Christe	8:35
20:45	Sanctus	3:35
24:30	Pie Jesu	3:45
28:20	Agnus Dei	4:50
33:30	Lux aeterna	4:10
38:45	Libera me	6:15
44:45	In Paradisum	5:00

Susan Streeter Amisano, Soprano

Lee Copenhaver, Cello

Dr. James Sanderson, Organ

SOLI DEO GLORIA

THE CANTATA SINGERS

William O. Payne III, Musical Director

SOPRANO

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Diane Baker
Ruth Bruning
Debbie Courtney
Linda Harrison
Jennifer Jack

Kathy Lovell
Lois McCann
Laura McGrath
Sr. Juliana O'Hara
Marianna Raho

Anna Rice
Betsy Roll
Janice Strain
Marylou Strong
Kay Kennedy Wack
Deborah Wald

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Catherine Brobst
Millicent Cheney
Claire Dana
Gwendolyn Egan

Judith Feitner
Claudia Hamlin
Patricia Hauser
Wendy Hovey
Kathy Lovell

Gretchen Padgett
Cora Range
Phoebe Rice
Lou Sand
Florence Suffern
Bernice Wickham

TENOR

Robert Badertscher
Claude Cornwall

Edmund Dana
Paul D. Holland

Richard E. Wack
William Wickham

BASS

Richard F. Bauer
David R. Hauser
Marc B. Lovell

Sidney Reed
James Sanderson

Thomas Strain
Michael K. Wald
Norman Wilcox

REHEARSAL ACCOMPANIST

Judith Feitner

ORGAN

James Sanderson

PROGRAMME NOTES

The choral works of Tomas Luis de Victoria have, for centuries, often been compared with those of his contemporary, Palestrina. The comparison has always been favorable and has resulted in placing de Victoria at the very forefront of Spanish renaissance composers. It is the differences, however, as well as the similarities between the two sixteenth century giants, that have given de Victoria this unique position in the history of Spanish musical culture.

It is interesting to note that de Victoria was a contemporary of, indeed a resident of the same city of Avila as, Spain's most venerated holy person, St. Teresa; and moreover that it was entirely possible that he was profoundly influenced by the reforming religious movement associated with her name. For in the music of de Victoria, the listener while hearing the traditional fundamentals of the Roman school of polyphony, will hear the use of unique and often folk-like motifs and choral progressions which have come to be regarded as purely the product of the Spanish countryside.

The four motets presented this evening are examples of the variations in de Victoria's compositional techniques and individual style: ranging from the sweetly tender "Jesu dulcis memoria" to the brightly exciting "O Quam Gloriosum" to the darkly brooding "Vere Languores".

James Mason Taft, a composer who resides in the greater Binghamton area, completed his "Second Service" in 1978. The work is intended to be sung as part of the liturgy of the Episcopal Church by an unaccompanied choir. The work consists of short, concise settings of the texts, each short setting being a single gem woven onto a string of continuity. The composer utilizes many vocal compositional devices with the overall effect being one of linear direction, always striving to convey the intent, as well as the words, of the text.

In sharp contrast to the rather austere "Second Service" is the "Prayer of St. Francis". Much more romantic in nature with its full scoring for solo soprano, four-part chorus and organ and its use of lush harmonies, the "Prayer" follows an anthem-like concept. The text is handled with the utmost concern for the overall effect of the words, starting with the solo voice accompanied by chorus and organ, and then moving to a statement by the full chorus until the work drives to an exciting conclusion reflecting the eternal life to be found after death.

Of the many great French organist-composers of the twentieth century, less is generally known about Maurice Durufle than any other. It is almost as though Durufle's lifestyle were chosen solely to ensure anonymity; for it appears that his life's products as ends in themselves were far more important than the fame and attendant good fortune that would surely come to him if he were to promote them actively.

The "Requiem, op. 9" is probably the best known of Durufle's works. Scored originally for solo voices, chorus and orchestra after a commission from the composer's publisher, Durand, the Requiem is being presented this evening in a reduction for solo voice, chorus and organ which Durufle made and had published at a later date.

From the very opening words of the Introit, it becomes apparent that the most important influence upon this work is that of the tradition of the Gregorian chant and plainsong in the Roman Catholic Church. Even in the passages which are scored for full chorus and organ, it usually falls to the organ to supply the rich, impressionistic harmonies and rhythms with which the composer is so strongly identified.

The one glaring exception to the rigid adherence to plainsong is

the setting of the Kyrie. In this section Durufle pays the highest homage to the rich polyphonic traditions of the past. Romantic, to be sure, this section nonetheless uses techniques and devices so strongly associated with the masters of the Renaissance.

In moving to the Domine Jesu Christe, Durufle returns to the style established in the Introit: pure declamatory plainsong. The composer continues this form throughout the Sanctus as well. The setting of the Pie Jesu, which is scored for solo soprano with 'cello obbligato and organ, is among some of the most beautiful in all contemporary French music, so simply does it state the profoundly simple text.

Durufle re-establishes the previously mentioned plainsong technique in the Agnus Dei by allowing the chorus to partake in some of the rich textures usually reserved for the instrumental accompaniment. This new approach is realized fully in the Lux aeterna in which, for long portions, all the accompaniment is given to the lower three voices of the chorus while the sopranos sing the plainsong chant.

The final two sections of the Requiem, the Libera me and the In Paradisum, are compositional unions of all the many devices Durufle previously employed. But it is in the final In Paradisum that Durufle permits his post-romantic impressionism to have full rein and carry the work to a hauntingly beautiful and technically unresolved close.