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**The Cantata Singers**

*Will Wickham, Director*



A program of

**Psalms**

*featuring*

**The Chichester Psalms**

*by Leonard Bernstein*

*and works by Schutz, Bruckner,  
Nygard, Brahms, and Mendelssohn*

**4 pm, Sunday, May 20, 2001**

**St. Mary Our Mother**

**Roman Catholic Church**

**Horseheads, New York**



## THE MUSIC OF THE PSALMS

*Will Wickham, Director*

*Cathy Ponzi, Organist*

**Unsere Väter** (Psalm 22:5-6; Psalm 29:11)..... Johannes Brahms  
*with the St. Mary Our Mother Church Choir*

**Chichester Psalms**..... Leonard Bernstein

*Kelly Stone, soloist*  
*Barbara Dechario, Harpist*  
*Gerald Wolfe, Organist*  
*Kevin Bleiler, Percussionist*

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### *Intermission*

*A free will offering will be taken*

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**Festival Psalm** (Psalm 67)..... Ronald Arnatt  
*with Trumpets*

**Jauchzet dem Herren** (Psalm 100)..... Heinrich Schütz  
*with Brass Ensemble*

**Sing to the Lord** (Psalm 100)..... Felix Mendelssohn

**Os Justi meditabitur sapientiam** (Psalm 37: 30-31)..... Anton Bruckner

**Offertorium** (Psalm 45: 14-15)..... Anton Bruckner  
*with Trombones*

**Psalm 86**..... Carl J. Nygard, Jr.

**O, Clap Your Hands** (Psalm 47)..... Ralph Vaughan Williams  
*with the St. Mary Our Mother Church Choir*

*&*  
*Brass Ensemble*

## BRASS ENSEMBLE

### Trumpet

Scott Kelley  
Jeff Stempien  
Jason Stewart

### Trombone

Sarahjane Harrigan  
Matt Jones

### Bass Trombone

Craig Harrigan

### Tuba

Christian Carichner

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## ST. MARY'S CHURCH CHOIR

### SOPRANO

Sarah Gronski, Kathy Healy, Maria Kurniawan, Connie O'Herron,  
Kimberly Wayman, Clara Young

### ALTO

Carol Abderhalden, Ellen Baker, Karen Hagan, Judy Hambruch,  
Brenda Hayner, Charlene M. Hayner, Katie Leipold

### TENOR

Joe Antos, Rudy Kurniawan, Ted Kozlowski, Judy McInerney, Justin  
Swackhamer, Sean Treacy

### BASS

Tom Abderhalden, Ed Gronski, Mark Hagan, Mike Jones, Ryan Miller,  
Tom Stantz

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## CANTATA SINGERS PERSONNEL

### SOPRANO

Marylee Ashby, Ruth Bruning, Robin Fitzgerald, Dorothy Hoos, Kelly  
Stone, Susan Tanner, Jane Tucker, Katie Wickham

### ALTO

Ostara Bedo, Loueda Bleiler, Amy Chrabaszcz, Lucy Cunnings, Sharon  
Gublo, Pat Hauser, Frances McLaren, Jane Poliseo, Cora Range, Ginny  
Shippy, Florence Suffern, Meg Wickham

### TENOR

Charles Eckhart, Thomas J. McCloskey, Lydia Wickham

### BASS

Jim Fink, David Hauser, Rick Schockner, Michael Wald

*Program Cover and Poster Design by David Ashby*  
*Special thanks to Father Tom Burr, Father Robert MacNamara, and the*  
*parishioners of St. Mary Our Mother Church for hosting this concert.*



## PROGRAM NOTES

**Johannes Brahms** (1833-1897), studied piano and composition from an early age, gaining experience as an arranger for his father's light orchestra. Though well known as a pianist he had trouble finding recognition as a composer, largely owing to his outspoken opposition to the aesthetic principles of Liszt and the New German School. He finally won a position of influence in 1863-4, as director of the Vienna *Singakademie*, concentrating on historical and modern a cappella works.

Brahms' choral music drew heavily from Renaissance and Baroque polyphony, uniting old methods with contemporary language in works that represent a peak in musical historicism. His Opus 109, *Fest und Gedenksprache (Festive and Commemorative Pieces): Four Songs for Eight-part Chorus a cappella*, which includes *Unsere Väter*, was inspired by the compositions of Schütz and consisted of celebratory pieces for the commemoration of the German national festivals and holidays. All the Opus 109 works reveal Brahms' fear of the divisions between the "Volk" and the "Reich" classes at the time. In the case of *Unsere Väter*, simple choral singing that represents the common people juxtaposed with the more learned and esoteric responses of the ruling class during the first part of the work suggest this separation in the social order. The conclusion of the work unifies the two choirs in a chorale suggesting a strong and unified society blessed by the Lord with peace.

**Leonard Bernstein's Chichester Psalms** has proven popular because of its tunefulness, dance-like rhythms, and carefully-wrought form. *Chichester Psalms* was Bernstein's only completed work during his 1964-1965 sabbatical leave from the New York Philharmonic.

The commission came from Dr. William Hussey, dean of Chichester Cathedral for use at an annual choral festival. Hussey, in a letter about the commission, noted that "many of us would be delighted if there was a hint of *West Side Story* about the music." The resulting use of material borrowed from *West Side Story* and used whole from Bernstein's never completed musical *The Skin of Our Teeth* gives the work its distinctly Broadway sound. Bernstein admitted this to Hussey in a letter in May 1965: "It is quite popular in feeling . . . and it has an old-fashioned sweetness along with its more violent moments."

The *Chichester Psalms*, with harmonic, rhythmic, and melodic influences of other composers such as Brahms, Bruckner, Mahler, and Strauss is harmonically one of his simplest works. Bernstein admitted this when describing it in a report to *The New York Times*: "The [Chichester] Psalms are a simple and modest affair... Tonal and tuneful..."

Since the musical material existed already, Bernstein searched for texts that fit with his intent. He settled on this textual structure for the *Chichester Psalms*: Each movement contains one complete psalm plus one or more verses from another complementary psalm by way of contrast or amplification. This use of dramatic juxtapositions based upon text is a device used in many of Bernstein's works.

*Chichester Psalms* is an effective introduction to Bernstein's output. Many of his common stylistic traits, including angular melodies, asymmetric meters, dramatic juxtapositions, and motivic development, are present. The work includes both music written from the inspiration of art music and that actually meant for the Broadway stage.

"A resounding fanfare of trumpets, immediately picked up and magnified by

the notes of the Cathedral's great organ, announced the opening of the service for the installation of the Rt. Rev. Arthur Carl Lichtenberger, D.D., S/T.D., as the presiding bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. The music, a setting for Psalm 67, was composed for the January 14 service by the organist and choirmaster of Christ Church Cathedral in Bishop Lichtenberger's former See city, St. Louis, Missouri." So read the report in the magazine "The Cathedral Age" in response to the world premier performance of **Ronald Arnatt's** setting of Psalm 67, *Festival Psalm*.

A native of London, Dr. Arnatt received training from the Westminster Abbey Choir School, Cambridge, King's College and Durham University. He moved to Washington, D.C. to serve as a faculty member at the American University and became a U.S. citizen in 1947. In 1949, Dr. Arnatt founded the Washington Cantata Chorus, serving as their music director until his move to St. Louis in 1954.

During his career, Dr. Arnatt has also served as Professor of Music, University of Missouri at St. Louis, Music Director/Conductor for the St. Louis Chamber Orchestra, Music Director/Conductor of The Bach Society of Saint Louis, and Conductor/Music Director of the Kirkwood Symphony Orchestra.

Including *Festival Psalm*, Ronald Arnatt has published more than 160 compositions for organ, chorus, organ/chorus, and brass/chorus.

**Heinrich Schütz** (1585-1672) spent his youth in several places in northern Germany. When Schütz was thirteen, Landgrave Moritz of Hessen, who had spent the night at the inn owned by Schütz's father Christof, heard Heinrich sing. The Landgrave asked Christof to allow his son to attend the *Collegium Maurizianum* in the city of Kassel. His parents gave their reluctant consent.

Schütz did well at school, studying math, logic, liberal arts, Latin, Greek, French, and Hebrew. Great stress was laid on music in both theory and practice. His broad education singles him out among the masters of music.

Schütz spent three years in Venice, the center of the highest musical culture not only for Italy, but for much of Northern Europe as well. While there, he studied with Giovanni Gabrieli, during the height of the "Venetian School."

Shortly after his return from Italy Schütz was appointed second court organist in Kassel by Landgrave Moritz. His more powerful neighbor, Johann Georg I of Electoral Saxony, was so impressed with Schütz after hearing one of the choirs he conducted that he desired to secure his services. Landgrave Moritz surrendered the musician to him on a supposedly temporary basis. The appointment of Schütz as director of the electoral chapel in Dresden was finalized in 1617.

In 1628 Schütz undertook a second journey to Venice, where Claudio Monteverdi was the leading figure at the time. While stylistic similarities between Schütz and Monteverdi are recognized, it is not certain whether they had any contact with each other. Undoubtedly Schütz studied the works of the older genius, and must have heard many of these performed while in Italy.

From 1630 to 1637 the Black Death infected the city of Dresden, and death struck many of his friends and relatives. Due to the Thirty Years' War there also was a lack of funds and Schütz had trouble getting paid, so he requested and was granted a leave of absence, during which he went to work for Prince Christian at the court of Denmark. Many trips to Copenhagen followed, the last one in 1644. After the war official activities and responsibilities gave him no opportunity for retirement; as court Kapellmeister, composer, and teacher of numerous talented pupils, he was the musical authority of his century.



*Jauchzet dem Herren* was one of a collection of 26 compositions known as the *Psalmen Davids*. Written in 1619, it was the first important sacred collection Schütz published. Composed for choruses and instruments, the *Psalmen Davids* are strong evidence of his work in Italy with Gabrieli.

**Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy** (1809-1847) was born into a notable intellectual, artistic, and banking family in Berlin, where he grew up in a rather privileged environment. He studied piano theory and composition, producing his first piece in 1820; thereafter, a wealth of sonatas, concertos, string symphonies, piano quartets and *Singspiels* revealed his increasing mastery of counterpoint and form. Besides family travels and eminent visitors to his parents' salon, early influences included the poetry of Goethe (whom he met in 1821) and the Schlegel translations of Shakespeare; these are traceable in his best music of the period, including the exuberant *String Octet* (opus 20) and the vivid, poetic overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (opus 21). His gifts as a conductor showed themselves early: in 1829 he directed a pioneering performance of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* at the Berlin *Singakademie*, promoting the modern cultivation of Bach's music.

As a conductor and music organizer his most significant achievement was in Leipzig during the period from 1835-1847, where he conducted the Gewandhaus Orchestra to great acclaim, championing both historical and modern works of Bach, Beethoven, Weber, Schumann, Berlioz and others. In addition, he founded and directed the Leipzig Conservatory in 1843. Always a warm friend and valued colleague, he was devoted to his family. His death at the age of 38, after a series of strokes, was mourned internationally.

With its emphasis on clarity and adherence to classical ideals, Mendelssohn's music shows alike the influences of Bach (fugal technique), Handel (rhythms, harmonic progressions), Mozart (dramatic characterization, forms, textures) and Beethoven (instrumental technique), though with a characteristic style of his own. Among his vocal works, the highly dramatic *Die erste Walpurgisnacht* (opus 60), based on Goethe's poem greeting springtime, and the Leipzig psalm settings, which includes his setting of *Sing to the Lord* (Psalm 100), composed in November 1843 and first performed January 1, 1844, deserve special mention; the choral songs and lieder are uneven, reflecting their wide variety of social functions.

**Anton Bruckner** (1824-1896) began his musical life at thirteen under the tutelage of the monks of the monastery of St. Florian near his birthplace. His mother persuaded the prior to admit him as a chorister after his father's death so he "wouldn't have to bear the burden of supporting the family." He later served for ten years as an assistant schoolteacher there, working for part of that time as a singing instructor for the choirboys.

The motet *Afferentur regi* (*Offertorium*) was composed in the summer of 1861 during a "flurry of creative activity" following the successful completion of several years of compositional and music theory study with the Viennese master, Simon Sechter. In October of 1868, Bruckner assumed the professorship of harmony and counterpoint at the Vienna Conservatory, a post left vacant by the death of Sechter. It was while on the faculty in Vienna that he wrote *Os Justi* in 1879. Like much of his choral work, it was intended for the monastery of St. Florian.

One of Austria's foremost composers, Bruckner was affectionately known as "God's Musician." He spent most of his life in and around Linz, where he played the organ at the magnificent Old Cathedral (Alter Dom). It is still quite an

experience to visit the St. Florian Abbey near Linz, to enjoy the serene atmosphere of the monastery, walking paths that Bruckner himself would recall.

**Carl J. Nygard, Jr.**, didn't study music formally until college, but first tried to compose while a junior in high school. "When I heard a melody for the first time, my natural instinct was to try and decide what the next note was going to be...I thought that was the way all people listened to music, but since then I've found out that's not the case."

Although Nygard's first attempts were "frustrating," he was inspired by his mentor Harry Wilkinson, a member of the American Guild of Organists, to continue his musical education, eventually earning a master's degree in composition at West Chester University. He has since gone on to publish more than 100 choral compositions. His works have been performed by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, the Cleveland Symphony Chorus and the 1,400-voice Ocean Grove (N.J.) Festival Choir. His pieces have also been broadcast worldwide.

Mr. Nygard is also in demand as a conductor, and has shared the podium with English composer John Rutter. As a teacher, he has educated scores of students in the Fleetwood Area School District in Pennsylvania, where he serves as director of secondary vocal and classroom music.

**Ralph Vaughan Williams** (1872-1958) received his training from Hubert Parry and Charles Villiers Stanford, both composers heavily influenced by Brahms. Even though much of his early works show some influence of Brahms and of other composers such as Stravinsky, Debussy, Ravel and Byrd, his music still contained something absolutely original and unique. In addition, Vaughan Williams was enthralled with English folk music and was a major collector. There is much folk influence in all of his work, particularly the later music.

After a brief flirtation with French impressionism, including works such as *In the Fen Country* and *String Quartet No. 1* and some study with Ravel, who called him "the only pupil who does not write my music," he hit the ground running with his incidental music to Aristophanes' *The Wasps*, the song cycle *On Wenlock Edge*, and the classic *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*. These are the first works in which we see the "real" Vaughan Williams.

Vaughan Williams composed extensively in almost every genre but chamber music. He is one of the great setters of English poetry, and vocal music comprises a large part of his output. He wrote several operas, none of which has ever figured into any company's regular repertoire.

*O, Clap Your Hands* was written as part of a group of religious works in the early 1920's that also included the unaccompanied *Mass in g Minor*, the Revelation oratorio *Sancta civitas* and the 'pastoral episode' *The Shepherds of the Delectable Mountains*, later incorporated in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. About the shorter but exuberant *O, Clap Your Hands* one music editor and critic writes: "This...setting of part of Psalm 47, dating from around 1920...is an 'open-air' anthem...[that] makes a great noise."



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