

bucks county choral society

Counterpoint

spring 2007

Upcoming Events

• Handel's *Israel in Egypt*

Saturday, April 14th, 8:00pm
St. Ignatius Church
Yardley, PA

Sunday, April 15th, 7:30pm
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church
Doylestown, PA

• Annual Choral Festival Benefit Concert

Saturday, April 28th, 8:00pm
Tohickon Middle School
Doylestown, PA

• Masterworks for Choir and Organ

Spiritual Voices of Eastern Europe
Kodaly—*Missa Brevis*
Eric Plutz, organ
Sunday, June 3rd, 3:00pm
Organ Prelude 2:30pm
Trinity Lutheran Church
Lansdale, PA

Bucks County Choral Society Artistic Staff

Tom Lloyd, Artistic Director
Changho Lee, Assistant Conductor
Elizabeth Manus, Accompanist
Laura Biersmith, Fundraising Consultant
Rick Rosen, Marketing Services

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The mission of the Bucks County Choral Society is to give memorable performances of outstanding choral music and to enrich the community through the choral music experience.

Bucks County Choral Society
P.O. Box 702
Doylestown, PA 18901
www.buckschoral.org
215-598-6142

Bucks County Choral Society & Riverside Symphonia Present Handel's Masterpiece - *Israel in Egypt*

For the past few years, the relationship between the Bucks County Choral Society and Riverside Symphonia has resulted in an unbroken string of outstanding musical collaborations. Following the notable success of last season's presentations of J.S. Bach's *Mass in B minor*, the two organizations will come together on April 14th and 15th to present G.F. Handel's magnificent oratorio, *Israel in Egypt* (HWV 54).

Although it was not judged a success during Handel's lifetime, *Israel in Egypt* has since been recognized as one of the composer's greatest works. Featuring some of the most stirring and evocative writing in the Baroque era, it is filled with a dazzling array of musical effects - hailstones and lightning, buzzing flies, leaping frogs, walls of water and horsemen in hot pursuit, all brilliantly evoked for double choir and orchestra. The audience is led through the plagues of Egypt and the crossing of the Red Sea, following Moses and the children of Israel through the story of Exodus.

Handel's oratorios *Israel in Egypt* and *Saul* were both composed in 1738 and premiered

within a month of each other in 1739, three years before the better known *Messiah*. In a departure from Handel's general oratorio style, *Israel in Egypt* is made up almost entirely of choruses, with only a few solo recitatives and arias. According to his own words in the autograph manuscript, Handel started work on *Israel in Egypt* on October 1, 1738 and ended the piece exactly one month later. In its original form, it consists of three parts: *The Lamentation of the Israelites for the Death of Joseph*, *Exodus* and *Moses' Song*. All three use words taken from the Bible. Part I is a textual reworking of the *Funeral Anthem*, HWV 264. Part III, likewise a self-contained composition, was written from October 1 – 11, 1738. Handel then composed Part II from October 15 – 20, 1738, after which he undertook the final redaction of the work. BCCS and Riverside Symphonia will be presenting *Israel in Egypt* in its most popular form, which deletes Part I, and includes Part II (*Exodus*) and Part III (*Moses' Song*).

Like his contemporary Bach, Handel was one of the pillars of the Late Baroque musical period. The Baroque musical style emerged about 1600, with



G. F. Handel

composers such as Gabrieli and Monteverdi, and ended, practically, at Handel's death. Handel's output was prodigious: over 40 operas, two dozen oratorios (including, of course, *Messiah*), hundreds of anthems, cantatas, solos and songs; a hundred or more pieces of chamber and orchestral music, including the familiar *Water Music* and *Royal Fireworks* music; and several books of keyboard works. Groves, commenting on Handel's successors in England, says, "...over [the next century of effort] brooded from first to last the ... shadow of Handel..." (quoted in the *Harvard Dictionary of Music*, ed. Apel, 1960).

The glorious music of G.F. Handel and the outstanding musicianship of the Bucks County Choral Society and Riverside Symphonia will be showcased in this choral and orchestral *tour de force*, with performances at St. Ignatius Church in Yardley (April 14th) and at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church in Doylestown (April 15th).

For tickets and more information, contact BCCS at 215-598-6142 or www.buckschoral.org



The Riverside Symphonia

Singing for Seniors Flourishes in Second Year

The first Singing for Seniors Workshop with Dr. Helen Kemp, Professor Emeritus, Westminster Choir College, was held at the Manor at York Town in Jamison in the fall of 2005. More than 80 seniors attended the day-long session sponsored by Bucks County Choral Society, at which they were introduced to Dr. Kemp's innovative training and conducting methods. In the spring of 2006, BCCS sponsored a Festival of Song at the Central Bucks Senior Center in Doylestown, with 112 people from six senior choirs participating. A morning instructional session was followed by the presentation of selections by each choir, applauded by an audience of members of the Center who attended the afternoon performance.

Encouraged by the success of these first two events, the Choral Society has augmented plans for the project's second season by arranging another successful day-long workshop, held in October 2006, and

by developing plans for a second annual Festival of Song, to be held on Thursday, May 3, 2007 at the Senior Center. Individu-



Dr. Kemp

als and groups interested in participating in the Festival are encouraged to contact BCCS Singing for Seniors committee member Sue Jenkins for current information.

The Singing for Seniors program objective is to stimulate, through motivational workshops, more choral opportunities for sen-

iors, with funding to start new groups and support existing ones. This is a laudable goal in view of the growing population of seniors in the area. BCCS Artistic Director Tom Lloyd notes, "More and more, studies show that singing keeps you healthy. It can also be an exciting pastime or a pleasant means of relaxation. No one is better suited to instruct people how to sing well and enjoy it than Helen Kemp."

Dr. Helen Kemp, Professor Emeritus, Westminster Choir College, has had a career of more than 60 years as a singer, teacher, director and composer. She is best known nationally and internationally for her work as a master teacher of children's choirs, employing her innovative methods and philosophy grounded in Body, Mind, Spirit, Voice. She finds many of her techniques equally effective with seniors, with their emphasis on the benefits of singing to one's physical and psychological well-being. 🎵

Bon Voyage, BCCS!

You might have noticed a worldly travel theme to our season's materials, and with good reason. This July, BCCS will embark on its 6th international tour with a ten-day visit to Eastern Europe. The tour will include at least 4 performances, plenty of sight-seeing, and an unforgettable chance to experience the rich cultural heritage of Romania, Hungary and Slovenia. From



Transylvanian castles to Alpine villages, a group of over 50 singers, spouses and friends will explore the region and share their music. Performances have been arranged for Bucharest and Timisoara (Romania), Budapest (Hungary), and Ljubljana (Slovenia).

"As with our prior trips to Europe, we hope to be ambassadors of good will through our musical collaboration and interaction with other choirs," comments Lois Moore,



chairperson of the BCCS travel committee and organizer of this trip. "Several musical tour companies we spoke with suggested Romania and Hungary as countries that have a great appreciation for classical choral music."

The trip will begin with a tour of Bucharest, including the Arch de Triumph and former Royal Palace. The group will then travel through exciting Transylvania visiting the 14th century Black Church and Dracula's Castle Bran. A performance is planned on day 5 in Timisoara, Romania, "the city of parks and gardens." Next on the itinerary is Budapest, Hungary, the artistic and musical center of Eastern Europe, where the

group will spend two days touring and performing. Then it's on to Slovenia to visit Ljubljana's old Baroque town with its famous Three Bridges. The trip will culminate with a day trip to the Bled Castle at the foot of the Julian Alps and a final choral performance.

For those remaining stateside, BCCS will present its tour repertoire in the final concert of this season on Sunday, June 3 at 3pm at Trinity Lutheran Church in Lans-



dale, PA. The program, entitled "Spiritual Voices of Eastern Europe," will feature *Missa Brevis* by Hungarian composer Zoltan Kodaly.

Watch our website this summer for pictures and memories from the tour. Bon voyage, BCCS! 🎵

Choral Society Co-Hosts Benefit Concert for Community Conservatory of Music

The voices of the Bucks County Choral Society will once again be heard, along with several area choirs, at the Fifth Annual Choral Festival



Benefit Concert, to be held at 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 28 at Tohickon Middle School

in Doylestown. Proceeds from concert ticket sales benefit the charitable outreach programs of Doylestown's Community Conservatory of Music.

Founded by BCCS and the Community Conservatory to celebrate the vitality of choirs in the general Bucks County area, the Annual Choral Benefit concert offers a diverse mixture of music presented by the benefit hosting school choir and a selection of area church, children's, senior, and independent choirs. This year's program is no exception to the rule - the Fifth Annual Benefit Concert includes music from BCCS, as well as another return performance by the popular and inspiring Kardon Institute for Arts Therapy Chorale. Additional choirs for this year's concert include Tohickon Middle School, Second Baptist Church of

Doylestown Mass Choir, The Manor Singers, Council Rock High School South Vocal Ensemble, and Rush Elementary School Choir.

Ticket prices for the Fifth Annual Choral Festival Benefit Concert are \$15.00 for adults, \$12.00 for seniors (65+), \$5.00 for ages 7-18, and free for 6 and under. A pre-concert reception package hosted at a private home from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. is also offered, which includes entertainment, food and drink, and preferred seating at the concert. The cost for this event is \$60 per person.

Tohickon Middle School is located at 5051 Old Easton Road in Doylestown. For tickets or more information, please contact the Community Conservatory of Music at 215.348.8514 or online at www.communityconservatory.org

BCCS Returns To Lansdale

The Choral Society returns to Trinity Lutheran Church in Lansdale to present our annual Masterworks for Choir and Organ concert on Sunday, June 3. The site of many memorable performances from the days when previous Artistic Director Elma Heckler conducted the group, Trinity Lutheran and its unique organ are ideally suited for this performance.

Princeton University principal organist Eric Plutz joins BCCS in a program entitled "Spiritual Voices of Eastern Europe". Prior to coming to Princeton, Plutz was organist and director of music at the Church of the Epiphany in Washington, D.C. He earned a bachelor of music degree, magna cum laude, from Westminster Choir College in 1989 and a master of music degree from the Eastman School of Music in 1991. He

has recently studied organ with David Higgs, chair of Eastman's organ department, and with Marie-Louise Langlais, researching the major organ works of Cesar



Eric Plutz

Franck. A seasoned concert artist, Plutz has been invited to play organ concerts in distinguished locations across the United States.

The Choral Society and Plutz will present Zoltan Kodaly's *Missa Brevis*, a new work for choir and organ by BCCS artistic director Lloyd and a collection of Eastern European anthems and additional music the Choral Society will be singing during our July, 2007 tour of Eastern Europe.

Trinity Lutheran Church is located at 1000 West Main Street in Lansdale. The Masterworks performance begins at 3:00 p.m., with an organ prelude by Mr. Plutz, at 2:30 p.m. As with all BCCS concerts, tickets can be purchased by calling 215.598.6142, or online at www.buckschoral.org. 🎵

BCCS Welcomes New Assistant Conductor

The Choral Society is pleased to announce the appointment of a new assistant conductor, Mr. Changho Lee. Changho comes to us from Temple University, where he is currently working on his Master of Music degree in choral conducting. Changho has already completed a Master of Music degree in oboe performance at Temple, and his Bachelor of Music degree, also in oboe performance, comes from Kyungpook National University in South Korea.

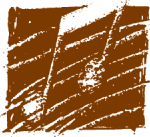
Changho's conducting experience includes work as the assistant conductor of the Temple University Chorale, University Singers, and Concert choir. He was also con-

ductor of the Korean Air Force Military Band. As an instrumentalist, Changho was the principal oboist for the Baroque Orchestra and the Civic Youth Orchestra in Taegu, South Korea. He currently teaches oboe as part of the Department of Music faculty at Haverford & Bryn Mawr Colleges, and also serves as music director at Cherry Hill Presbyterian Church, Cherry Hill, NJ.

"I'm having a really good time and enjoy working with BCCS," comments Lee. "This is a great group and a great opportunity - I will continue to give my very best!" 🎵



Changho Lee



BUCKS COUNTY
CHORAL
SOCIETY
ESTABLISHED 1973

Thomas Lloyd, Artistic Director

P.O. Box 702
Doylestown, PA 18901
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April 14th & 15th
Handel's *Israel In Egypt*
Call now for tickets!

Save the date: Sunday, June 3, 2007 at 3:00pm
Masterworks for Choir and Organ
Trinity Lutheran Church, Lansdale

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Savor BCCS with the Sounds of Spring

It will be an evening to savor - the tastes, the sights, the experience, the company. And most of all, you will savor the sound.

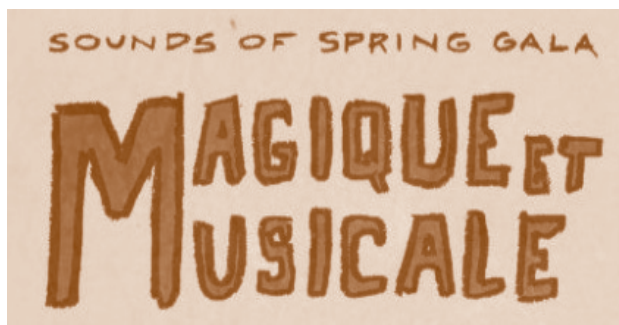
It will be BCCS as you've never heard before: a chance to enjoy the individual talents that make up our great sound.

On Saturday, May 19, 2007, BCCS will host the inaugural "Sounds of Spring Gala: Magique et Musicale" at Occasions at Union Square in New Hope, Pennsylvania. The evening will include cocktails, dinner, silent auction and musical entertainment, all benefiting and furthering the mission of the Choral Society.

Our very own singers will be the highlight of the evening, sharing their various individual musical talents in cabaret-style entertainment. Vocal soloists and small ensembles will perform selections including "Hush-a-bye, don't you cry" and "When I have sung my songs", "Unforgettable", "You're timeless to me" and "Chanson D'Amour". Instrumental music will be provided by the Eric

Mintel Quartet and BCCS accompanist Beth Manus. The varied sounds are sure to delight those attending the gala.

"Sounds of Spring" is the largest event of this kind ever produced by BCCS, and it comes at a good time for the organiza-



tion. Our choral concerts are attracting some of the largest audiences ever. We are enjoying organizational growth and an increase in donor involvement - not only concert-goers, but a variety of arts enthusiasts who are discovering and supporting the breadth of our organization.

"The gala event seeks to attract more new friends and supporters by showcasing the Choral Society beyond the success of its concerts," says BCCS Fundraising Consultant Laura Biersmith. "And the hope is that the gala will become an anticipated event in years to come, not only delighting listeners, but increasing and diversifying the income for the organization in order to advance its artistic goals."

We are, of course, proud of our success, but when you get right down to it, well, we just love to sing. And this love of singing is what brings us together, and what moves us to share the live performance experience with our audiences. We savor every opportunity. And now you can savor BCCS in a whole new way. For more information about the "Sounds of Spring Gala: Magique et Musicale," or to receive an invitation, please visit our website, or call 215-598-6142. ♪