

BUCKS COUNTY CHORAL FESTIVAL

Robert Page, Guest Conductor

**Saturday, March 24, 1990
8 P.M.**

**Zion Mennonite Church
Souderton, Pennsylvania**

BUCKS COUNTY CHORAL FESTIVAL

Hosted by

BUCKS COUNTY CHORAL SOCIETY

Elma Heckler, *Director*

Guest Conductor: Robert Page

Guest Choir: Choral Society of Montgomery County

Judith Willoughby Miller, *Director*

Soloists

Kathryn Chilcote, *Soprano*

Lorie Gratis, *Mezzo-Soprano*

Richard Troxel, *Tenor*

Wilbert Boone, *Bass*

The Lydian Chamber Orchestra

Saturday, March 24, 1990

8:00 P.M.

Zion Mennonite Church

Souderton, PA

Your cooperation is appreciated in not using cameras or tape recorders at this concert.

PROGRAM

I

Ave Verum Corpus (K. 618)..... Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

II

Serenade (K. 525) "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik"..... Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Allegro
Romanze
Minuet
Rondo

INTERMISSION

III

Requiem Mass in D Minor (K. 626)..... Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Requiem et Kyrie (Chorus, Soprano Solo)
Dies Irae (Chorus)
Tuba Mirum (Solo Quartet)
Rex Tremendae (Chorus)
Recordare (Solo Quartet)
Confutatis (Chorus)
Lacrimosa (Chorus)
Domine Jesu (Chorus and Solo Quartet)
Hostias (Chorus)
Sanctus (Chorus)
Benedictus (Solo Quartet)
Agnus Dei (Chorus, Soprano Solo)

Soprano: Kathryn Chilcote
Mezzo-Soprano: Lorie Gratis
Tenor: Richard Troxel
Bass: Wilbert Boone

PROGRAM NOTES

Ave Verum Corpus (K. 618)

In its 46 measures, *Ave Verum Corpus* embodies the loftiest of Mozart's compositional talents according to many musicologists. Written in 1791, the year of Mozart's death, it was composed for a school teacher in Baden, near Vienna. Familiar as it is and so often performed, it is filled with harmonic pitfalls which belie its seeming utter simplicity. It is in this brief motet that Mozart expressed his personal religious feelings in an unforgettable and touching manner: compressed beyond belief, with not a single extrinsic or superfluous note.

Serenade (K. 525) Eine Kleine Nachtmusik

"A Little Night Music" was composed in 1787 for a special festive event in Vienna. Scored for string orchestra, this Serenade is probably the single most popular work of Mozart. The inherent joyousness and buoyancy of this spirited composition is matched only in his divertimenti. The four movements are classically organized, with thematic materials presented clearly and succinctly. The first movement is a sonata allegro form, the second a Romanze in three-part song form, the third movement a minuet, and the final movement a rondo, with a free fantasia in the middle.

Requiem Mass in D Minor (K. 626)

The Mozart *Requiem* was performed on January 19, 1964 in Boston's Holy Cross Cathedral by the Boston Symphony Orchestra with Chorus, as part of a Solemn Pontifical Mass of Requiem in memory of John F. Kennedy. For the program, the Reverend Daniel J. Honan, poet and pastor of St. Joseph's Church in Brewer, Maine, wrote a long and perceptive article on the meaning of the work and its relevance to the occasion, from the Roman Catholic viewpoint. An excerpt is quoted:

I have said that much of Mozart's church music dances and sings with a gaiety which is centrally Catholic. The *Requiem Mass* is an exception. If it is a dance, it is a dance of death, and its song is a threnody, a gigantic lamentation and an agonizing appeal... One feels painfully in this music the physical sickness of the doomed man, the torment of his spirit, too, confronting the dissolution of his flesh. But over and under all one marvels ever anew at the wizardry of the musical intellect and the unkillable vivacity of the man fated to make music.

PROGRAM NOTES (CONTINUED)

Historically, the work is the first in a great line of Romantic requiems. One thinks of the subsequent works of Cherubini, Berlioz, of Verdi, of Dvorak. Yet Mozart's work remains the most intensely lyrical of any, the most personal, the most poetic. Here – despite the paradox of incompleteness – we hear Mozart's own voice, begging God for mercy in his extremity, the brass and tympani sounding the collapse of his body, the quartet of soloists aspiring to the serenity of paradise...

The work was begun to Mozart in the late summer of 1791 and was continued with interruptions for other works in the autumn of that year. Left incomplete at the composer's death in December, the score was taken up by his pupil Franz Xaver Süssmayr, the missing portions filled out, completed, or – if necessary – composed, and the work was delivered through a messenger to the man who had commissioned it in July, Count Franz Walsegg von Stuppach. When the first performance took place has not been definitely established; it appears to have been in 1792, or even as late as 1793.

The many stories and romantic half-truths of the genesis of this work are rampant. It has often been told how the work was commissioned of Mozart through the appearance of “a mysterious stranger dressed in gray”, an emissary of a patron who did not wish to be identified. We now know that the latter was the Count Walsegg, who liked to perform the compositions of others under his own name. Mozart seems to have developed an obsession that the *Requiem Mass* would become his own, and his state of ill health and exhaustion was thereby aggravated. He had to put the work aside twice to write *Die Zauberflöte* and *La Clemenza Di Tito*, and was able, according to Alfred Einstein, “to finish only the *Requiem* and *Kyrie* of the commissioned work, and to sketch the eight sections from the *Dies Irae* through the *Hostias* by setting down in the score the voice parts, bass line, and hints for the instrumentation. The last three movements were completely lacking.”

In his final illness, Mozart is reported to have hummed fragments from his unfinished work in the presence of his pupil Süssmayr, who then took it upon himself to rescue the project so that the commission could be paid to the widow. Anyone who has seen the movie *Amadeus* will recall vividly the pictorial presentation of this dramatic scene.

Robert Page
February 16, 1990

ORCHESTRA

Violin I

1. Olga Konopelsky
2. Paul Reiser
3. David Reichman

Violin II

1. Barbara Jaffe
2. Judith Marlowe
3. Patricia Gott

Viola

1. Emily Muller Laycock
2. Mark Laycock

Cello

1. David Guggenheim
2. James Cooper

Bass

1. Dennis Topper

Bassoon

1. Holly Blake Timmins
2. Karin Meyer

Clarinet

1. Allison Herz
2. Sherry Apgar

Trumpet

1. John Thyhsen
2. Nancy Dowlin

Trombone

1. Robert Gale
2. Robert Hall
3. Michael Boltz

Tympani

1. Brent Kuszyk

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ELMA HECKLER

Elma Heckler, Hatfield, now in her thirteenth season with the Choral Society, holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Juniata College where she was a conducting student of Joseph Flummerfeldt. She has pursued additional study at Eastman School of Music as well as with prominent conductors including Elaine Brown, Robert Shaw, Dale Warland, and Robert Page. Mrs. Heckler was formerly Director of Music at Zion Mennonite Church and at Pleasantville United Church of Christ, Chalfont.

THE BUCKS COUNTY CHORAL SOCIETY

Now in its seventeenth season, the Bucks County Choral Society is a sixty-member choir of dedicated volunteer singers whose performances win consistent praise from critics and audiences throughout eastern Pennsylvania. Based in central Bucks County, the choir performs a three-concert series each season in addition to regular performances at churches and retirement communities. One of three American choirs selected to sing in the Salzburg Church Music Festival, the Choral Society toured Austria in the summer of 1989, singing in Salzburg, Vienna, and Wildon. Recognized for its varied programming, the Society's repertoire extends from Renaissance motets to 20th century commissioned pieces. In 1988 the choir commissioned and premiered Pennsylvania composer Richard Wargo's *Voices in the Mist*. The choir has performed with the Bucks County Symphony, the Delaware Valley Philharmonic, and the Orchestra Society of Philadelphia. Its concerts are supported by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, as well as community and business patrons.

JUDITH WILLOUGHBY-MILLER

Judith Willoughby-Miller, artistic director and founder of the Choral Society of Montgomery County graduated cum laude from Northwestern University with a Bachelor of Music degree. She continued her studies at Temple University with pianist Natalie Hinderas, receiving her Master of Music degree. Mrs. Miller has studied conducting with Elaine Brown, Michael Korn and William Smith, has concertized on the east coast and in the midwest, has been a featured performer and commentator on radio, and most recently completed studies with Dr. Edwin Gordon, at Sugarloaf. She was twice honored by Who's Who among outstanding women. Mrs. Miller is president of Pennsylvania's chapter of the American Choral Director's Association (ACDA), and is vice chair of the choral/vocal/ opera panel for the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. She is past president of the Pennsylvania Collegiate Choral Association and she is a member of the Music Educators National Conference, the College Music Society and the Musical Fund Society. She also finds time to serve on the board of the West Philadelphia Satellite of the Settlement Music School. Mrs. Miller is an associate professor of music at Montgomery County Community College where she is director of choral activities and, this year, coordinator of the school's twenty-fifth anniversary celebration.

THE CHORAL SOCIETY OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

The Choral Society of Montgomery County is a mixed ensemble, open through audition, to experienced choral singers 16 years of age and older. The Choral Society rehearses at Montgomery County Community College, its home and sponsor, on Tuesday evenings, from September through May. The Choral Society membership is heterogeneous, representing the rich diversity of Montgomery County residents. This ensemble's versatility is seen in its repertoire which encompasses the great choral masterworks through the popular 'classics' of all ages. The Choral Society gave their Philadelphia debut under the auspices of the Musical Fund Society and is committed to a strong outreach program throughout the Delaware Valley which includes concerts, workshops and cooperative ventures with other ensembles. The Choral Society is celebrating its eighth anniversary year. This concert with the Bucks County Choral Society marks the second major collaboration between these two ensembles.

BUCKS COUNTY CHORAL SOCIETY

Elma Heckler, *Director*

Sandra Carlock, *Accompanist*

1989-90 Membership

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ROBERT PAGE, Guest Conductor

Regarded as one of America's most distinguished choral conductors, Robert Page is the newly-named director of special projects and chorus activities for the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Director of the Robert Page Singers in Cleveland, he has completed nine seasons as assistant conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra, and 17 seasons as its director of choruses, as well as 15 seasons as director of the Blossom Festival Chorus. Robert Page was director of choral activities at Temple University from 1956 to 1975 and for 12 seasons was music director and conductor of the Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia, working closely with Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra for those 20 years. From 1975 to 1980 he served as chairman of the Department of Music at Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh, and is presently director of choral studies there. He became music director of the Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh in 1979.

KATHRYN CHILCOTE, Soprano

Kathryn Chilcote holds a master of music degree from the University of the Pacific and is a candidate for the degree of doctor of musical arts at the University of Oregon. She also holds a diploma in operatic interpretation from l'Accademia Musicale Chigiana, in Siena, Italy. A native of the Pacific Northwest, Miss Chilcote has sung in all genres of music, from recital and concert work to operatic roles and musical theater leads and has performed extensively on the West Coast and in Europe. She is currently a member of the Vocal-Choral Department at the School of Music at West Chester University.

LORIE GRATIS, Mezzo Soprano

Lorie Gratis completed the opera program at the Curtis Institute of Music in 1989. Prior to that she was a student at the Eastman School of Music. She has won vocal competitions and was a recipient of a fellowship to the Bach Arts Institute in Stony Brook. Ms. Gratis is presently singing with the Philadelphia Singers and is studying in New York.

RICHARD TROXELL, Tenor

Richard Troxell holds a bachelor of arts degree in theater from Shippensburg University and a master of vocal performance degree from Converse College, Spartansburg, S.C. He has sung with the professional quartet Forrest Four, making his professional operatic debut in the title role in the world premier performance of *Huck Finn* in Washington, D.C. Mr. Troxell is artist in residence at the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia.

WILBERT BOONE, Baritone

Philadelphia native Wilbert Boone first began private vocal studies as an 11-year-old boy soprano with Florence Rosario and was awarded a music scholarship to attend Indiana State University. He also received a scholarship to the prestigious Aspen School of Music and Festival, and was awarded two performance fellowships to the Bach Aria Festival, as well as an Aspen Chamber Choir Fellowship. Mr. Boone has appeared in recital at many Indiana and Philadelphia area universities and colleges.