

SATURDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 24, 1968 AT 8:30 P.M.



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
CHORAL MUSIC  
ASSOCIATION

LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE  
AND SINFONIA ORCHESTRA

ROGER WAGNER, Music Director



**ROGER WAGNER**, Conductor

**ISRAEL BAKER**, Concert Master

**POULENC**  
(1899-1963)

Mass in G major

Kyrie  
Gloria  
Sanctus  
Benedictus  
Agnus Dei

**HINDEMITH**  
(1895-1963)

Six Chansons

La Biche  
Un Cygne  
Puisque tout passe  
Printemps  
En Hiver  
Verger

**SCHOENBERG**  
(1874-1951)

Friede auf Erden

**INTERMISSION**



drama à la mood . . .

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IVES  
(1874-1954)

Psalm 90

WEBERN  
(1883-1945)

Entflieht auf leichten Kähnen

STRAVINSKY  
(b. 1882)

Anthem

DEBUSSY  
(1862-1918)

Trois Chansons

Dieu! qu'il la fait bon regarder!

Quant j'ai ouy le tabourin

Yver, vous n'êtes qu'un villain

GINASTERA  
(b. 1916)

Lamentaciones de Jeremias Propheta

O vos omnes qui transitis per viam

Ego vir videns paupertatem meam

Recordare Domine quid acciderit nobis

The Musical presentations on this program are made possible, in part, through the sponsorship of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and the Los Angeles County Music Association.

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## PROGRAM NOTES

by ARTHUR F. EDWARDS

Tonight's concert presents music in transition: ranging from tonality to atonality; from simple triads to complex harmonic constructions of over twenty simultaneous notes; from the coloristic impressionism of Debussy to the cerebral atonality of Stravinsky; from the rugged, *carte blanche* experimentation of Ives to the finely honed *chansons* of Hindemith; from the early striving of Webern at 25 to the mature reflections of Stravinsky at 80; from the complex chromaticism of the young Schoenberg to the stark harmonic simplicity of Ginastera.

"In the course of the last hundred years, the concept of harmony has changed tremendously through the development of chromaticism. The idea that a root or fundamental note dominated the construction of chords and regulated their sequences — the concept of tonality — was first transformed into that of extended tonality. Very quickly it became doubtful if such a fundamental note was still really the center to which every chord and sequence must relate. Wagner's harmony had promoted a change in the logic and constructive power of harmony. One result of this was the so-called *impressionist* use of harmony, made above all by Debussy. His harmonies, deprived of constructive significance, often serve a *coloristic* purpose; they try to express moods and pictures. These, though of extra-musical origin, now become constructive elements and finally take on musical functions. This produces a sort of emotional comprehensibility. In this way tonality becomes already dethroned in practice, if not in theory. At the same time there took place a development which ended in what I call *the emancipation of dissonance*. The ear had progressively become familiar with a great number of discords. One no longer expected the preparations of Wagner's discords, nor the resolutions of those of Strauss; one was not upset by the non-functional harmonies of Debussy, nor by the dissonant counterpoint of some more recent composers. This led to a free use of dissonance. By the phrase *the emancipation of dissonance* I mean that the comprehensibility of the discord is equal to the comprehensibility of the concord. A style based on this premise treats discords like concords and denies the supremacy of a tonal center. By avoiding the establishment of tonality, one leaves behind the idea of modulation, as modulation means leaving one established tonality in order to establish another." (Excerpts from a lecture given at the University of California in 1939 by Arnold Schoenberg.)

*The Messe en Sol Majeur* (Mass in G Major), written in 1939, utilizes the impressionistic vocabulary of Debussy and Ravel with a strength and subtlety typical of Poulenc. There is great rhythmic variety. Rollo Myers has described this composer's works as "oscillating between sophistication and simplicity, playfulness and gravity with over all a flavor of *vieille France* that is not the least of its charms."

*Six Chansons on Original French Poems by Rainer Maria Rilke* were set to music by Hindemith in 1939, the year he decided to settle in the United States. He had tentatively flirted with atonality during his earlier "neo-classic" period. But by this time he had definitely turned his back on it in favor of what could be described as chromatic tonality. In keeping with his theories, set forth in his book on the *Groundwork of Musical Compositions (Unterweisung im Tonsatz)*, there are no key signatures, although each *chanson* revolves around a particular tonal center (*a, e, g, a flat, e flat, g*). Partial translations (by Elaine de Sincay) follow:

*La Biche*. O thou doe, what vistas of secular forests appear in thine eyes reflected! What confidence serene affected by transient shades of fear.

*Un Cygne*. A swan is breasting the flow, all in himself enfolded like a slow-moving tableau. And so, at some time or place, a loved one will be molded to seem like a migrating space.

*Puisque tout passe*. Since all is passing, retain the melodies that wander by us. That which assuages when nigh us shall alone remain.

*Printemps*. O song that from the sap art pouring, and through the sounding-board of all this greenwood art soaring, amplify our brief tone.

*En Hiver*. With the winter, Death, grisly guest through the doorway steals in.

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*Elizabeth Arden*



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(continued on p. 42)

Verger. The earth is nowhere so real a presence as mid thy branches, O  
orchard blond.

*Friede auf Erden* (Peace on Earth), opus 13 of Arnold Schoenberg, was  
written in 1907. In this work Schoenberg "carried chromaticism to the limits  
of tonality, both by chromatic alteration and by the use of the wandering  
(*schwebende*) chords, like the augmented triad, which are equally at home  
in all keys" (Humphrey Searle). Although Schoenberg wrote instrumental  
parts which double the voices, he preferred that the work be performed  
a *cappella*.

The poem, by Conrad Ferdinand Meyer, is in four stanzas. The first stanza  
reminds us of the shepherds who were told by an Angel of the Mother and  
the Child; and who heard the heavens ringing with the glad tidings: "Peace!  
Peace on earth!" The music is of a simple anthem-like quality.

The mood changes in the second stanza, and the music becomes agitated  
at the thought of the "many bloody deeds" that have occurred since the  
Angel spoke. A sudden *pianissimo* ushers in the second part of the stanza;  
during all this time the heavenly choir has continued to plead for "Peace,  
peace upon the earth!"

The third stanza brings the belief that a time will come when the earth  
will finally seek peace (*Das den Frieden sucht der Erde*); and the final stanza  
triumphantly envisions peace on earth as an accomplished fact.

In 1945, Schoenberg jotted down these words:

"There is a great man living in this country — a composer.

He has solved the problem of how to preserve one's self and to learn.

He responds to negligence by contempt.

He is not forced to accept praise or blame.

His name is Ives."

According to Ives' wife, *Psalm 90* (written about 1901) was the only one  
of his compositions that satisfied him. The poem has a Mosaic majesty, and  
the whole setting, in C major, is undergirded by a constant low C, like an  
eternal presence. The chords of the introduction outline a symbolic vocabu-  
lary: the first chord labeled *The Gods Eternities*; the second, *Creation*; the  
third, *God's wrath and punishment against sin (Floods, etc.)*; the next phrase  
*Prayer and Humility*; and the last part of the introduction as *Rejoicing in the  
Beauty and Work*. This last phrase anticipates and combines the four bell  
phrases which will join in the final verses of the *Psalm*.

Anton Webern and Alban Berg were students of Schoenberg at a critical  
phase when, according to Erwin Stein, "they actually experienced the abso-  
lute necessity that gave birth to a new music, and could therefore not help  
making Schoenberg's style their own." *Entflieht auf leichten Kähnen*, opus 2  
of Webern, was written in 1908. It is technically in the key of G major —  
the first three notes and the last chord are definitely in that key — but the  
body of the work is already beyond the limits of tonality. The rather enig-  
matic poem, by Stefan George, is given here in a translation by Peter Bank:

"Flee in light skiffs from enraptured sunny worlds, so that ever milder tears  
may reward your flight. Behold the unfolding of this whirl of blonde, light  
blue visionary forces and intoxicating bliss without ecstasy — lest the sweet  
thrill may cloak you in new sorrow. Let it be the quiet grief that may fill this  
springtime."

In *Anthem* (1962), Stravinsky explores the possibilities of the tone row:  
*d, f sharp, e, g, a, a sharp, c, b, c sharp, d sharp, g sharp, f*. In line with the  
practices of the duodecuple composition, Stravinsky uses the tone row in  
its original form, inverted (upside down), retrograde (backwards), and retro-  
grade inverted and transposed an augmented fourth. Webern might not have  
approved of the occasional repeated notes, but Schoenberg is on record as  
follows: "It should be mentioned that in my opinion, in the formula: the  
method of composing with 12 tones, the accent does not lie so much on  
12 tones, but on the art of composing." (Letter to Humphrey Searle, January  
6, 1950.)

The poem is by T. S. Eliot:

"The dove descending breaks the air with flame of incandescent terror  
of which the tongues declare the one discharge from sin and error. The only  
hope, or else despair, lies in the choice of pyre or pyre to be redeemed from  
fire by fire. Who then devised the torment? Love is the unfamiliar name  
behind the hands that wove the intolerable shirt of flame which human



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pow'r cannot remove. We only live, only suspire, consumed by either fire or fire."

Claude Debussy wrote *Trois Chansons* in 1908 to poems by Charles, Duc d'Orléans. The result is vintage Debussy. Partial translations by Nita Cox follow:

*Dieu! qu'il la fait bon regarder!* Lord, lovely hast thou made my dear! A graceful, good and winsome creature.

*Quant j'ai ouy le tabourin.* Whene'er the tambourine I hear that sounds to call us all to May, snug lie I at the break of day, from the pillow lift not my head.

*Yver, vous n'estes qu'un villain!* Cold winter! Villain that thou art! How sweet to see along my way the tokens of April and May... But thou, cold winter, mak'st us smart with snowstorm, wind, hail, all the day. Fain would I exile thee for aye.

*Lamentaciones de Jeremias Propheta* was written by the Argentine composer Alberto Ginastera in 1946. The text, in the Latin of the Vulgate, is selected from the Book of Lamentations (possibly written by the Prophet Jeremiah). These words have traditionally been used during the Office of Holy Week. The musical setting is stark, strong and, in the first and third sections, quite rhythmic. The middle section is reminiscent of a Renaissance motet.

*O vos omnes qui transitis per viam.* All you who pass by the way, look and see whether there is any suffering like my suffering, which has been dealt me when the Lord afflicted me on the day of His blazing wrath.

*Ego vir videns paupertatem meam.* I am a man who knows affliction from the rod of His anger, one whom He has led and forced to walk in darkness, not in the light... He has left me to dwell in the dark like those long dead.

*Recordare Domine quid acciderit nobis.* Remember O Lord, what has befallen us; look, and see our disgrace. Lead us back to you, O Lord, that we may be restored. You, O Lord, are enthroned forever.

