



ROGER WAGNER
Conductor

PAUL SALAMUNOVICH
Assistant Conductor

MARY RAWCLIFFE
Soprano

NANCY O'BRIEN
Mezzo Soprano

KENNETH WESTRICK
Tenor

PAUL HINSHAW
Baritone

JACOB KRACHMALNICK
Concertmaster

ROBERT HUNTER
Organist

THE HANDBELL CHOIR
of the
NEIGHBORHOOD CHURCH
OF PALOS VERDES
Mark Slegers, Director

The Los Angeles Master Chorale and Sinfonia Orchestra are now in their tenth season of presenting great choral masterworks in the Music Center. The organization was formed by Roger Wagner and the Los Angeles Junior Chamber of Commerce and became a resident company at the Center in 1964. Dr. Wagner has been music director for the Chorale and Orchestra since its formation. Through the continued dedication of the directors and members of the SCCMA, Dr. Wagner, the Master Chorale Associates, and the superb musicians of the Chorale itself, Los Angeles has had annual seasons of the greatest choral works of the past and present. No other city has such a cultural privilege.

SATURDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 15, 1973, AT 8:30 P.M.

DOROTHY CHANDLER PAVILION

LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE AND SINFONIA ORCHESTRA

ROGER WAGNER, Music Director

CHRISTMAS WITH THE CHORALE

O MAGNUM MYSTERIUM (a 4 voci)

Tomas Luis de Victoria
(c. 1548-1611)

*O great mystery and wonderful sacrament that
animals should see the Lord born and lying in
a manger. O Blessed Virgin, whose womb merited
bearing the Lord Jesus Christ, Alleluia.*

SINGT IHR LIEBEN CHRISTEN ALL! (a 7)

Michael Praetorius
(1571-1621)

*Sing, beloved Christians!
On this day He has appeared
As foretold by Gabriel.*

REJOYCE IN THE LORD ALLWAY (a 11)

Henry Purcell
(1659-1695)

CHRISTEN AETZET DIESEN TAG (Kantate, S. 63, a 17)

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

I Christen ätzet diesen Tag (Chorus)

II O sel'ger Tag! (Recitative)
MISS O'BRIEN

III Gott, du has es wohl gefüget (Duet)
MISS RAWCLIFFE and MR. HINSHAW

IV So kehret sich nun heut' das bange Leid (Recitative)
MR. WESTRICK

V Ruft und fleht den Himmel an (Duet)
MISS O'BRIEN and MR. WESTRICK

VI Verdoppelt euch demnach (Recitative)
MR. HINSHAW

VII Hochster, schau' in Gnaden an (Chorus)

INTERMISSION

HYMN TO ST. CECILIA, Op. 27

I In a garden shady this holy lady

II I cannot grow

III O ear whose creatures cannot wish to fall

JAN PAYNE, soprano

Benjamin Britten

(b. 1913)

ALL NIGHT VIGIL, Op. 37

I Glory be to God

II Ave Maria

Sergei Rachmaninoff

(1873-1943)

THE SHEPHERD'S CAROL

William Billings

(1746-1800)

THE COVENTRY CAROL

Arr. by Salli Terri

MY DANCING DAY

Arr. by Alice Parker
and Robert Shaw

PATAPAN

Arr. by Walter Schumann

JUST FOR TO-DAY, a prayer

Blanche Ebert Seaver
(b. 1891)

Arr. by Roger Wagner

MASTERS IN THIS HALL

Arr. by Alice Parker
and Robert ShawSWEET LITTLE JESUS BOY
MR. WESTRICKRobert MacGimsey
Arr. by Roger Wagner

MIDST THE DEEP SILENCE

Arr. by Judy Hunnicutt

NOEL, NOEL, BELLS ARE RINGING

Wilbur Chenoweth
(b. 1899)GOOD KING WENCESLAS
THE HANDBELL CHOIR

Arr. by John Klein

DING DONG MERRILY ON HIGH

Arr. by T. Fredrick H. Candlyn

ALLEN DIGITAL COMPUTER ORGAN from GOULD MUSIC CO., PASADENA

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 and Performing Arts Commission.

The performing arts in Los Angeles reflect the City's commitment to the highest standards of artistic, scientific, educational, and industrial achievement. We are pleased to contribute this 10th Anniversary season to the City's cultural resources.

Latecomers will not be seated until the first convenient pause in the performance. / Invited guests are welcome backstage after the performance; use performers' entrances: Grand Ave. side of Plaza for Pavillon, corner of Temple & Grand for Ahmanson, and rear of theatre for Forum. / Use of tape recorders and/or cameras prohibited in auditorium. / Your use of a ticket constitutes acknowledgement of willingness to appear in photographs taken in public areas of The Music Center and releases The Music Center Operating Co., its lessees and all others from liability resulting from use of such photographs. / Program and artists subject to change. / Patrons cannot be paged during a performance. Individuals expecting emergency calls must leave their seat numbers with the House Manager.

LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE

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NOTES BY ARTHUR F. EDWARDS

Program Annotator,
Los Angeles Master Chorale

Christmas with the Chorale — I

The contemplative and bittersweet motet a 4, *O magnum mysterium* of Tomas Luis de Victoria (c. 1548-1611) was written for the Feast of the Circumcision on January 1. This feast, with its ritual shedding of blood, "has always been recognized as a less joyous feast than Nativity. Because Circumcision foreshadows Crucifixion, it is entirely appropriate for Victoria's *O magnum mysterium* to link with his thrice-famous *Vere languores* (Maundy Thursday)." (Robert Stevenson: *Spanish Cathedral Music in the Golden Age*, p. 438).

In complete contrast is *Singt ihr lieben Christen all!* of Michael Praetorius (1571-1621). This infectiously bubbling motet for double chorus, a 7 (SS/SATBB) is a German derivative of the XIV century chant *Resonet in laudibus*. The four treble parts constantly tumble over each other's entrances in their eagerness to announce the glad tidings that *He has appeared!*

England of the Restoration is the source of *Rejoyce in the Lord allway . . . A verse Anthem for 3 voices, wth Symphonys & commonly call'd ye Bell Anthem*. Composed by Mr. Henry Purcell one of ye Organists to King Charles ye 2d And of St. Peters Westminster. Purcell (1659-1695) probably wrote it in 1684, a year before Charles II died.

The *Prelude*, with its decending basso *ostinato* and parallel triads in the upper strings, evokes a pealing of bells at Westminster Abbey. The *Anthem*, for ATB favorite, SATB *ripieno*, strings and continuo, has many felicitous moments. Of particular charm is the dotted rhythm in the instrumental *symphonies* and (in contrast to the prevailing triple time) the sensitive setting in duple time of the blessing: *And the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ, our Lord.*

Christen ätzet diesen tag, S. 63

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Bach became Cantor of Leipzig in the summer of 1723. Although some authorities consider Cantata 63 to date from Bach's sojourn at Weimar (1708-1717) or possibly even to have been specifically composed as a "trial" cantata for his visit to Halle in 1713, it is generally agreed that, if not a new work, its first Leipzig performance was on Christmas Day, 1723. It was sung during the morning service at the Nikolaikirche (probably, according to Spitta, followed after the sermon by the *Sanctus* in C major, S. 237). "In the evening the cantata was repeated by the same choir in the Thomaskirche; and after the sermon the hymn of the Virgin was sung, set in its Latin form and in an elaborate style. For this purpose Bach wrote his great *Magni-*

ficat [S. 243]." (Spitta: Vol. II, p. 369).

Cantata 63 is Bach at his most brilliant, joyous and expansive. It is scored for 4 trumpets, tympani, 3 oboes, bassoon, strings and organ continuo. The form of the cantata is quite atypical. It not only opens but closes with a brilliant *da capo* (ABA form) chorus. There are two duets and three recitatives all of which, in greater or lesser degree, expand into *arioso* form. (This unusual structure is one of the reasons given for attributing the work to the Weimar period).

The opening chorus, "Christians, engrave this day in gold and marble" utilizes all forces in a movement of surpassing brilliance. The middle section exhorts the listener to hasten to the manger to which he is guided by the Star. An extended alto recitative contemplates the blessings of the holy day and with particular emphasis dwells melodramatically on the believer's deliverance from Satan. A leisurely duet for soprano and bass (actually a quartet with the addition of the obligato oboe and continuo) continues in a mood of quiet thanksgiving.

The solo tenor rejoices in the appearance of David's great Descendant and is joined by the solo alto in a rollicking duet exhorting the faithful to join the dance. The strings, moving in parallel chords, delight the ear of the listener as much as they may dismay the purist of the traditional harmony books.

As the bass sings, "Be doubled ye passionate flames of devotion," Bach indulges in one of his delightfully literal gestures and doubles the usual four-part harmony of the recitative to a full eight parts of double reeds and strings. The final chorus, also in *da capo* form, alternately displays choirs of brass, woodwinds, strings, and voices. A most unusual feature of this final movement is an imitative section for chorus without any accompaniment. In the middle section the propulsive momentum is suddenly halted for a solemn prayer against temptation and the snares of Satan. The "style of the work unmistakably approaches that of oratorio, and this it is which makes it especially remarkable among Bach's cantatas, although it has a very considerable amount of intrinsic musical value." (Ibid. Vol. II, p. 368)

Hymn to St. Cecilia, Op. 27

Benjamin Britten (b. 1913)

The poetry of Wystan Hugh Auden (1907-1973) fascinated Britten and he often utilized his esoteric treasures. "Words are an immediate stimulus to Britten's imagination . . . [They] seem not merely to stimulate but to challenge his ability to absorb intractable verbal stuff into music . . . [including] Auden's skirmishes on the frontiers of unintelligibility . . . [Britten] owed it to himself to write a *Hymn to St. Cecilia* since he was born on [November 22,] St. Cecilia's Day." (Frank Howes: *Grove's* Vol. I, pp. 949, 951)

Hymn to St. Cecilia is in the form of three set pieces, each followed by a refrain. Britten's musical setting (for unaccompanied chorus) reinforces Auden's structure. The theme of the first scene, from which everything else is developed, begins on a high pitch, gradually descends an octave and rises again to close as it began.

*In a garden shady this holy lady
With reverent cadence and subtle psalm,
Like a black swan as death came on
Poured forth her song in perfect calm:*

Auden goes on to describe *Blonde Aphrodite, the angel's dancing, and the wicked in Hell's abysses*, all entranced by the Saint's music making. A hushed *mezza voce* ushers in the refrain:

*Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire:
Translated Daughter, come down and startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.*

The second tableau is a *scherzo* on a theme that is a free inversion of the first theme (i.e. beginning on a low note, rising up an octave, and returning to the first low note) in a A A B B A A' form. "Another distinctive feature of Britten's way with words is his treatment of them in rapid patter to produce the equivalent in vocal music of the *scherzo* in symphonic . . . Words are his servants." (Ibid. p. 950)

*I cannot grow;
I have no shadow
To run away from,
I only play . . .
I shall never be
Different. Love me.*

The refrain surges and dies away.

The final, extended scene is based on a variant of the first theme which evokes the mood of plainsong in a manner reminiscent of Respighi's similar archaism. It is developed in a free, rhapsodic structure first with a wholly choral invocation, closing with *Restore our fallen day; O rearrange*. The Saint is then personalized by a solo soprano:

*O dear white children casual as birds, . . .
Weep for the lives your wishes never led.
Instruments are invoked:
O cry created as the bow of sin
Is drawn across our trembling violin.*

*O weep, child, weep, O weep away
the stain.*

*O law drummed out by hearts against
the still
Long Winter of our intellectual will.*

That what has been may never be again.

*O flute that throbs with the
thanksgiving breath
Of convalescents on the shores of death.*

*O bless the freedom that you
never chose.*

*O trumpets that unguarded
children blow
About the fortress of their inner foe.*

O wear your tribulation like a rose.
The final refrain sinks serenely into timelessness.

Christmas with the Chorale II

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943) wrote fifteen numbers for the Russian "Combined Prayer Service," or "All Night Vigil," which consisted of the Vesper and Matin services linked together for the nights of vigil preceding the great holidays. This work was written in 1915 shortly before the composer left Russia for the United States. Two selections are heard tonight, both characterized by rich textures brought about by a multiplicity of parts and the mystical, warmly-subjective approach of the Russian choral tradition.

Four delightful carols follow: The announcement of the angels to the shepherds by the unique American primitive, William Billings; the haunting *Coventry Carol*; another English carol in which the Infant tells the story of His birth; and a Christmas confection for children of all ages.

The timeless prayer setting of Blanche Ebert Seaver is followed by a strongly archaic French noël and Robert MacCimsey's meditative *Sweet Little Jesus Boy*.

For the third consecutive season the Chorale is joined by the golden, tintinnabulary sonorities of The Handbell Choir; and for at least the fourth season we are pleased to feature a work by Wilbur Chenoweth. This group of carols begins with a lovely Polish carol of the shepherds. Following the Chenoweth work The Handbell Choir is heard in a charming old English carol. Our festive concert concludes with another example of the vast treasury of French noëls. As is typical of true folk songs which develop spontaneously, this noël bears a familial resemblance to the popular *Angels We Have Heard on High* that had developed in another area of France.

A joyous Christmas and a peaceful New Year!



ROGER WAGNER, during his long and illustrious career, has received a plethora of signal honors from his city and county, the nation, and throughout the world. In 1953, Wagner and his Chorale were invited to participate at the coronation festivities of Elizabeth II in London. In 1959, and again in 1964, he and the Chorale were selected to represent the United States in concerts throughout Latin America. In 1966, the United States State Department, through its Cultural Exchange Program, again sent the Chorale on tour to the Middle East, Turkey, Yugoslavia, France

and Italy. In Rome, he and the Chorale had the honor of singing for Pope Pius VI at an audience in St. Peter's Basilica — the first non-Italian choir to do so in twenty-five years. In January, 1973, Roger Wagner shared the podium with Eugene Ormandy to conduct the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Los Angeles Master Chorale at the Inaugural Concert at Kennedy Center. In May, 1973, Dr. Wagner served as guest conductor of major symphonies during a month-long tour of the major capitals of South America, and in July, he conducted the Los Angeles Philharmonic and his Chorale in Bach's *B Minor Mass* at the Hollywood Bowl. He has just returned from the first of three tours scheduled for this season.

BLANCHE EBERT SEAVER (Mrs. Frank Roger Seaver) came to Los Angeles from Chicago, her native city, in 1912. Her early, active, and successful career as concert pianist, accompanist, and composer was put in the background upon her marriage to Frank Roger Seaver in 1916. Her songs were featured by leading concert artists of the day, including Madame Ernestine Schumann-Heink, Edward Johnson of the Metropolitan Opera, John McCormack, John Charles Thomas, Elizabeth Rethberg, Kathryn Meisle, Armand Tokatyan of the Metropolitan, Alma Gluck, Jose Mojica, and others. In 1924, when the Seavers were in Mexico City, Mrs. Seaver received a poem, *Just For Today*, by Sybil F. Partridge (who later became Sister Xavier) with a request that she compose a musical setting for this beautiful prayer to be performed at a Christmas Mass at St. Vibiana's Cathedral in Los Angeles with Archbishop John J. Cantwell officiating. This was many years ago, and, as Mrs. Seaver has put it, "This Prayer, in song, just keeps going on." *Just For Today* was a great favorite of John McCormack, who sang it on all of his concert programs for twelve years, and was one of six songs sung by him in his film, *Song O' My Heart*. It was the last song of his final recital, a Command Performance of the Queen, in Albert Hall. It was also sung repeatedly by John Charles Thomas. Mrs. Seaver is Honorary President of the Master Chorale Associates and a member of the Board of Directors of the Southern California Choral Music Association. Her gracious generosity in making possible the festive Bach Cantata featured in tonight's concert is merely the latest evidence of her continuing encouragement to Dr. Wagner and the Chorale. Since the death of

her husband nine years ago, Mrs. Seaver has devoted a great deal of time and astonishing energy continuing his philanthropic activities in the educational field.

MARY RAWCLIFFE received her musical training at Lawrence Conservatory in Wisconsin and at the University of Illinois. After graduation she continued her studies in London where she was a member of the London Bach Society. Since coming to Los Angeles the soprano has been heard in Opera Workshop productions at UCLA and in the Opera Guild production of *The Magic Flute*. She has toured the United States and Canada as soloist with the Roger Wagner Chorale and has been heard with the Los Angeles Philharmonic under Zubin Mehta and Lukas Foss. She recently returned from London where she made her solo recital debut in Wigmore Hall.

NANCY O'BRIEN received her musical training at UCLA and is currently a Teaching Assistant in piano. Two years of study at Tanglewood and appearances with the Boston Symphony brought her new solo credits. She has been a soloist on tour with the Young Americans, the Roger Wagner Chorale, and the UCLA A Cappella Choir. She has been a member of the Master Chorale for three years and was heard as soloist last season with the Master Chorale Chamber Singers.

KENNETH WESTRICK was born in Detroit, Michigan, but was raised in the Los Angeles area. He began his vocal career early — in the fourth grade. A graduate of UCLA, he was soloist with the UCLA A Cappella Choir under the direction of Roger Wagner on their European tour and has been featured with the Roger Wagner Chorale in recent tours of the United States and Canada. He is active in many facets of the musical life of the Southland and is presently Minister of Music at Brentwood Presbyterian Church. He has taught music in Pico Rivera schools for six years.

PAUL HINSHAW is a native Californian and a graduate of USC. He received a scholarship at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia where he studied with Richard Bonelli and the late Herbert Graf. He has toured extensively as a soloist with the Roger Wagner Chorale on five National tours and on two tours sponsored by the U.S. State Department. He has been a member of the Los Angeles Master Chorale since its inception.

Our next concert

GLORIES OF THE RENAISSANCE

Saturday, January 19, 8:30 p.m.

Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE AND SINFONIA ORCHESTRA

ROGER WAGNER, Music Director

Multiple choirs of voices and instruments stationed throughout the Pavilion
resound with the magnificent splendor of this glorious era.

This will be our annual Choir Night, so make your plans early.

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