

SATURDAY, APRIL 9, 1977, AT 8:30 P.M.

DOROTHY CHANDLER PAVILION



Roger Wagner
Conductor

Mary Rawcliffe
Soprano

Bonnie Hurwood
Mezzo-soprano

Byron Wright
Tenor

David Pittman Jennings
Baritone

Dorothy Wade
Concertmaster

Bess Karp
Harpsichordist

Thomas Harmon
Organist

LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE AND SINFONIA ORCHESTRA

ROGER WAGNER, Music Director

HANDEL Messiah

PART I

SINFONY

RECITATIVE (Tenor)

AIR (Tenor)

CHORUS

Recitative (Bass)

AIR (Contralto)

CHORUS

RECITATIVE (Contralto)

AIR (Contralto) and CHORUS

RECITATIVE (Bass)

AIR (Bass)

CHORUS

PIFA

RECITATIVES (Soprano)

CHORUS

AIR (Soprano)

RECITATIVE (Contralto)

AIR (Soprano and Contralto)

CHORUS

Comfort ye my people

Ev'ry valley shall be exalted

And the glory of the Lord

Thus saith the Lord

But who may abide the day of his coming?

And he shall purify

Behold, a virgin shall conceive

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth

The people that walked in darkness

For unto us a child is born

There were shepherds abiding in the field

And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them

And the angel said unto them

And suddenly there was with the angel

Glorify to God

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion

Then shall the eyes of the blind be open'd

He shall feed his flock

Come unto him all ye that labour

His yoke is easy, and his burthen is light

INTERMISSION (10 minutes)

PART II

CHORUS

AIR (Contralto)

CHORUS

CHORUS

CHORUS

RECITATIVE (Tenor)

CHORUS

RECITATIVE (Tenor)

ARIOSO (Tenor)

RECITATIVE (Tenor)

AIR (Tenor)

CHORUS

RECITATIVE (Tenor)

CHORUS

AIR (Contralto)

CHORUS

DUET and CHORUS

Behold the Lamb of God

He was despised and rejected of men

Surely he hath borne our griefs

And with his stripes we are healed

All we like sheep have gone astray

All they that see him laugh him to scorn

He trusted in God that he would deliver him

Thy rebuke hath broken his heart

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow

He was cut off out of the land of the living

But thou didst not leave his soul in hell

Lift up your heads, O ye gates

Unto which of the angels said he at any time

Let all the angels of God worship him

Thou art gone up on high

The Lord gave the word

How beautiful are the feet

Break forth into joy

(continued on next page)

ARIOSO (Tenor)
AIR (Bass)
CHORUS
RECITATIVE (Tenor)
AIR (Tenor)
CHORUS

Their sound is gone out into all lands
Why do the nations so furiously rage together?
Let us break their bonds asunder
He that dwelleth in heaven
Thou shalt break them
Hallelujah

INTERMISSION (10 minutes)

PART III

AIR (Soprano)
CHORUS
RECITATIVE (Bass)
AIR (Bass)
RECITATIVE (Contralto)
DUET (Contralto and Tenor)
CHORUS
AIR (Soprano)
CHORUS
CHORUS

I know that my redeemer liveth
Since by man came death
Behold, I tell you a mystery
The trumpet shall sound
Then shall be brought to pass
O death, where is thy sting?
But thanks be to God
If God be for us who can be against us?
Worthy is the Lamb that was slain
Amen.

Allen Organ courtesy of Gould Music Company.

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.



Mezzo-soprano **BONNIE HURWOOD**, a fourth-generation Californian, won the San Francisco Youth Symphony auditions in 1959 and that same year enrolled as a scholarship student at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where she sang Dora-bella in Mozart's *Così fan tutte* and the wife in Milhaud's *La Pauvre Mamelotte*. After two years of study with Dr. David Scott at California State University Northridge, she entered and won the Metropolitan Opera Western Regional Auditions and in New York was a winner in the National semifinals. While at Cal State Northridge, Miss Hurwood sang in many opera productions, including the title role in Bizet's *Carmen*. With the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Miss Hurwood has performed both at Hollywood Bowl and in the Music Center, and she has completed several tours as alto soloist with the Roger Wagner Chorale.

WHO'S WHO



MARY RAWCLIFFE received her early musical training at Lawrence Conservatory in Wisconsin and the University of Illinois. She continued her studies in London where she was a member of the London Bach Society. In Los Angeles she has participated in the Opera Workshop at UCLA and sung

the Queen of the Night in the Opera Guild production of *The Magic Flute*. Her debut with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl in 1972 was followed in December of the same year by her Music Center debut, where as a result of a soloist's illness, on a few hours' notice she sang portions of the *Messiah* with the Philharmonic.

Miss Rawcliffe made her debut in London in 1973 with a solo recital in Wigmore Hall. She has sung for several years with the Roger Wagner Chorale and was featured soloist on the tours. She also soloed with the Los Angeles Master Chorale on its State Department sponsored tour of the Soviet Union a few seasons ago.



Tenor **BYRON WRIGHT** was a 1975 winner in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Western Regional Auditions finals. He has been studying in the California State University at Northridge Master's program, concentrating on vocal performance. He has been soloist at Immanuel Presbyterian Church of Los Angeles and with the Irvine Master Chorale, has performed at the Carmel Bach Festival, in opera productions at CSUN, and with the Euterpe Opera Association in Los Angeles and Guild Opera. He has been soloist on several tours with the Roger Wagner Chorale including the tour of Israel in 1976.



DAVID PITTMAN JENNINGS has appeared professionally with the San Antonio Grand Opera Association, the Los Angeles Guild Opera, the Euterpe Opera Club of Los Angeles, the Tulsa Civic Opera, the UCLA Opera Theater, and many others, most recently having signed a two-year contract to sing with the Graz (Austria) Opera Company, after winning first prize in the Loren Zachary Society Auditions.

His credits include many oratorio roles: *St. John Passion*, *Messiah*, *The Creation*, *St. Matthew Passion*, and *Elijah* (which he sang with the Master Chorale last season on a few days' notice). His opera credits are most impressive, ranging in scope from Britten to Zador. He has also performed many major works of Bach, Brahms, Haydn, and Stravinsky.

Roger Wagner, during his long and illustrious career, has received a plethora of signal honors from his city, 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 Paul 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. In May, 1974, he conducted a triumphal tour of the Soviet Union with the Master Chorale, where "he made a notable impact on the Soviet musical world." In July, 1976, Dr. Wagner conducted the New Philharmonic Orchestra and the Chorale of Radio France in concerts in Paris, during the Festival Estival de Paris. The prestigious Paris publication "Le Monde" wrote "under his dynamic direction, Roger Wagner emerged extremely precise, devoid of all stiffness and complaisance." Roger Wagner and his Chorale were invited to participate in the Israeli Festival in August, 1976. The Chorale was critically acclaimed for its performances in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Caesarea, and Haifa. In commemoration of the Chorale's outstanding participation in the Israeli Festival, Wagner was awarded the Knesset silver medal of the State of Israel. Dr. Wagner holds a full professorship in the Music Department at UCLA. He has made numerous recordings and received the Grammy Award for his Album *Virtuoso*.



The Los Angeles Master Chorale and Sinfonia Orchestra is now in its thirteenth season of presenting great choral masterworks in the Music Center and the Hollywood Bowl. The organization, which was formed by Roger Wagner and the Los Angeles Junior Chamber of Commerce, became a resident company of the Music Center in 1964. Dr. Wagner has been music director for the Chorale and Orchestra since its formation. Each year a series of important choral programs is presented in the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, marking Los Angeles as the only city in the country which supports its own professional resident chorus presenting an annual choral season. One hundred twenty-five of the Southland's finest singers have been admitted to the select membership in the ensemble. The Sinfonia Orchestra membership is drawn from professional ranks in the Los Angeles area and is one of the finest in the United States.

No choral masterpiece in history has won such universal acclaim from non-musician and musician alike as Handel's *Messiah*. Premiered April 13, 1742, in Neale's Music Hall, Fishamble Street, Dublin, before an audience of 600, it caused "exquisite delight" and at the same time raised 400 pounds for the release of 142 prisoners. Handel continued directing annual performances in London from 1750 through 1759 to raise funds for his favorite charity, the Foundling Hospital. Thirty years after his death Charles Burney wrote that it was continuing to "feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and foster the orphan."

In 1852 Lowell Mason (1792-1872), composer of the tune for "Joy to the World" (1839) "adapted from Handel" and many of Charles Ives's other favorite tunes, heard *Messiah* at the Birmingham Festival — thereafter ecstatically reporting that a single morning performance raised the equivalent of \$13,500 "for the succoring of the orphan, comforting of the widow, and relief of the distressed." He continued by equating Handel with Shakespeare and claiming that after a century *Messiah* was "still as fresh and new" as in 1742: adding that "indeed the more it is heard the better it is appreciated."

Nor has its fame abated in 1977. In 1975 when the BBC conducted a survey of listeners' top ten favorites in the religious-text category, only Handel entered the list twice — with the Hallelujah Chorus that ends Part II of *Messiah* and "I know that my Redeemer liveth" that begins Part III occupying third and fourth slots. By contrast, Bach entered the list once — with the selection now known as "Jesu, joy of Man's desiring" from Cantata 147 (1716) taking eighth place.

Various explanations have been given for the uniqueness of *Messiah*. The more romantically inclined enjoy repeating Sir Newman Flower's unconfirmed story of Handel's having been swept aloft into other worldly ecstasy while in the white heat of putting the score on paper between August 22 and September 14, 1741. Other expositors rank *Messiah* as unique because all the music in it was his own original creation: none of it arranged from Carissimi, Urlo, Erba, or their ilk, and only the four duet choruses

"And He shall purify," "For unto us a Child is born," "His yoke is easy," and "All we like sheep" being adaptations of his own Italian duets composed July 1 and 3, 1741. That Handel himself regarded *Messiah* as unique is also argued from the fact that, contrary to his frequent habit, he later on adapted none of it for use in subsequent works.

Still other commentators ascribe the uniqueness of *Messiah* to the grandeur of the Biblical texts selected and linked together with consummate tact and skill by Charles Jennens (1700-1773), the librettist of not only *Messiah* but also of *Saul* (1735), *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* (1740), and *Belshazzar* (1745). Then again, there is the obvious fact that of Handel's 17 English oratorios spanning the two decades from *Esther* (1732) to *Jephtha* (1752), only *Messiah* treats of the central figure of the Christian religion. None of the rest treads on New Testament ground. All the others having been composed for London, where the figure of Christ was kept off theatre boards, perhaps *Messiah* (disguised with *A Sacred Oratorio* as its title when produced at Covent Garden in 1743) would not even have been allowed an absolute premiere there, as a theatre piece. Nonetheless, once produced, its subject drew the public as did none of the subjects of his dramatic oratorios. Winton Dean, the outstanding authority on his dramatic oratorios, even goes so far as to assert in his 1973 *Encyclopedia Americana* article on Handel that its unique present-day popularity rests squarely on its uniquely appealing subject.

Ironically, the bulk of the texts come from the Old, not the New Testament. Among the 56, 52, or 47 numbers (depending on which recitatives are counted as separate numbers), the book of Isaiah is the scriptural source of ten items in Part I treating of the Promise and the Coming of the Messiah, and of five numbers in Part II dealing with Christ's Rejection and Sufferings. The book of Psalms accounts for eleven items in Part II. Haggai 2:6-7, Malachi 3:1-3, and Zechariah 9:9-10 supply texts for four items in Part I. Job 19:25-26 furnishes the opening lines of the inefably beautiful aria with which Part III on the Conquest of Death begins: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; And though worms

destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." The rest of the texts in Part III duplicate the scriptural passages read in the Church of England Burial Service.

All told, Jennens supplied Handel with 31 numbers quoting Old Testament texts. With great discretion, he chose not only passages that allow for contrasting recitatives and arias, solos and choruses, but also he now and then slightly altered the wordage (not the meaning). Above all, he "showed great skill in the choice of sentences and words peculiarly susceptible of smooth musical declamation. For the first time in musical history, the mighty drama of human redemption was treated as an epic poem. Jennens translated the facts of Christ's life into exalted symbols of human destiny. Logically, Handel's masterpiece should be called *Redemption*, for the texts celebrate the *idea* of Redemption rather than the merely temporal events in Christ's life" (R. M. Myers: *Handel's Messiah* [New York, 1948], 57, 59-60).

To account for the libretto, one 19th-century debunker invented out of whole cloth a secretary named Pooley who did most of the compiling (William Hone: *The Every-Day Book* [London, 1827], III, part 2, column 651). But Handel himself always acknowledged Jennens as solely responsible. So also did Jennens's funeral orator, the Reverend George Kelly, who in preaching the obituary sermon January 2, 1774, justly remarked: "As long as the Love of Taste and genuine Harmony prevail, so long should his Memory meet with a due Regard for that judicious arrangement of Words we find in the sacred performance of the *Messiah*."

Not only did Dublin provide the necessary commission for *Messiah* and the needed permission for an "Entertainment" based on Christ's mission, but also Paul Henry Lang argues in his monumental *George Frideric Handel* (New York, 1966), chapter XIII, that Handel while composing *Messiah* kept constantly in mind the more modest vocal and instrumental resources likely to be met in Ireland. Rather than an established Italian diva it was to be the actress of small voice but large dramatic instinct, Susanna Cibber (Arne's sister), who sang the mezzo soprano air "He was despised" at the Dublin premiere on April 13 and repetition on June 3, 1742. The soprano soloists were Christina Maria Avoglio "who appeared from nowhere in Lon-

don in 1740 and just as suddenly disappeared without a trace four years later" and the otherwise unknown Mrs. Maclean whom Handel met with her organist husband at Chester en route to Ireland; the alto soloists were William Lambe and Joseph Ward, the tenor soloists James Baileys and John Church, the basses John Mason and John Hill. All the men soloists and choristers were recruited from Dublin church choirs. Two soloists to a part means that one sang some of the airs in his range, the other the rest. The combined choirs of Christ Church and St. Patrick's Cathedral furnished the 16 men and 16 boys that sang the choruses. Those from St. Patrick's sang with the reluctant permission of the now half-mad dean, Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), victim of his own Gulliver fancies.

The choruses in Handel's autograph 138-folio score for Dublin (at the British Library — British Museum since 1957 with call-number R.M. 20.f.2 [obl. 4to.]) are all accompanied by strings and continuo, augmented in "Glory to God" with two trumpets, in "Their sound is gone out" with two oboes, in "Hallelujah," "Worthy is the Lamb," "Blessing and honor," and "Amen" with trumpets and kettle-drums. Four oboes were used at London performances (after 1750 and possibly earlier) to bolster the boy sopranos in 14 choruses, two bassoons to double the basso continuo in the Overture and Pastoral Symphony. Because even for London performances Handel's instrumentation was by later standards considered sparse (56 English performances were given in his lifetime), Mozart was commissioned by Baron Gottfried van Swieten (1734-1803) to provide "additional accompaniments" for Viennese performances directed by Mozart March 6 and April 7, 1789. In such numbers as "The people that walked in darkness" (Isaiah 9:2) Mozart went so far as to defeat Handel's express intentions by adding counterpoints to his dramatically stark unisons. Other later fattenings of Handel's instrumentation fall even wider of the mark, sullyng the transparencies that he intended. However, since any one performance that he himself directed always took careful account of the singers and instrumentalists available for that specific occasion, any pretended "authentic" *Messiah* must recognize the variants sanctioned by Handel himself.

The concertmaster of the Dublin orchestra (mostly strings and continuo, with oboes and trumpets sparsely indi-

cated in the score and timpany held in reserve until the Hallelujah Chorus) was Matthew Dubourg (1703-1767). A London-born pupil of Geminiani who at 25 was appointed to lead the vice-royal music at Dublin, he returned to London to play a violin solo and lead the orchestra at the London premiere of *Messiah*, March 23, 1743, when (as on the following March 25 and 29) it was disguised as merely *A New Sacred Oratorio* to avoid offending those who resented the Covent Garden theatre environment for a commercialization of Christ's activities.

Among changes for London, the last soprano aria in Part I, "Rejoice greatly" (Zechariah 9:9-10) — in the autograph for Dublin a *da capo* aria in 12/8 lasting 204 measures — was advantageously thinned to the 108 measures of 4/4 now universally preferred, the rhythms all being muscularly tightened during the revision. In the Dublin version, the duet immediately following "Rejoice greatly" was for two sopranos and in B flat throughout. But in London versions he divided "He shall feed his flock" between an alto singing the first section in F and a soprano singing the rest in B flat. Numerous other smaller and greater changes force our concluding that even his thoughts during the memorable 24 days when the heavens were opened before his eyes and he saw the Lord God sitting on His throne later proved susceptible of improvements.

No other paramount composer is now so exclusively remembered by an achievement of his 56th year. No other masterpiece has so consistently retained its hold on the public. None other more effectively bridges the gap between the masses and the classes. No prior composer did so much to democratize great music. As his reward, none other's fame and name have been so steadily enshrined for two centuries.

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