

What Sweeter Music John Rutter (b. 1945)

Hodie Christus Natus Est Jan Sweelinck (1562-1621)

Three Christmas Poems John Speck

The Oxen
Nowell Sing We
Epiphany

Dancing Day arr. by John Rutter

Prelude
Angelus Ad Virginem
Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day

Harpist: Ellen Grafius

Audience Carols

Go Tell It On The Mountain arr. by Mark Hayes

Tenor: Andrew McLemore

Deep River arr. by Marvin Gaspard

Tenor: Will Mahoney

O Holy Night arr. by Gerald Grey

Tenor : Michael Zamora

Baritone : Matt Begale

Les Chansons des Roses Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943)

Contre Qui, Rose
Dirait-on

Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella arr. by Robert Shaw and Alice Parker

Sing We Now of Christmas arr. by Fred Prentice

In loving memory, this concert is dedicated to Helen Bartlett

PROGRAM NOTES

Mass in D Minor by Joseph Haydn: The Mass in D Minor was written in the summer of 1798, about five years before ill health forced an end to Haydn's composing. He had just completed his premier oratorio, *The Creation*, inspired by the works of Handel, heard on his London visits. The title, *(Lord) Nelson Mass* was applied to this music by others after 1800, probably because the work was among those performed for Lord Nelson and Lady Hamilton when they visited Prince Esterhazy at Eisenstadt Castle in September of 1800. Ironically, the Battle of Aboukir, in which Nelson's fleet took the French victoriously by surprise, occurred while Haydn was at work on the Mass; Haydn, however, could not have known of Nelson's victory until weeks after the Mass was finished, and apparently never sanctioned naming the mass for the English hero. The Mass has also been known in some venues as the "Coronation" or "Imperial" mass.

Given Haydn's own title, Mass in D Minor, it is puzzling that this composition does not exhibit an obvious character of sorrow, stress, or fear. Much of the work, to the casual listener, evokes joy and feelings of hope, which seem unrelated to the somber title. It must be remembered that Haydn's assignment, for all six of the last masses, was to write such works for the name day of Princess Esterhazy, this one in September, 1798. Obviously, one does not celebrate such an important event with somber music, and that probably accounts for the overall cast of this work.

John Speck, Three Christmas Poems: These poems, chosen for these choral settings, span all of Christmas, from Christmas Eve to The Adoration of the Magi (Epiphany). This is wonderful poetry: in Thomas Hardy's "The Oxen," one of Hardy's favorite poems, there is the poignant telling of a child's belief in the oxen's kneeling on Christmas Eve; in the anonymous, medieval "Nowell Sing We," which must have been composed by an English religious (monk, nun, priest), we find a joyous celebration of the coming of the Prince of Peace; in Robert Fitzgerald's lovely, one-sentence "Epiphany" there is a message of hope.

Morten Lauridsen, Les Chansons des Roses (1993): Tonight's selections of two songs from a set of five are from "Les Chansons des Roses" and were first performed by the Chorale in 2002. Their melodic and harmonic beauty is in keeping with the beauty of the poetry itself. **Ranier Maria Rilke (1875-1926)** is considered one of Germany's greatest 20th century poets, yet he wrote nearly 400 poems in French! Lauridsen has achieved a place as one of our foremost composers of choral music and said of these Rilke texts: "His poems on roses struck me as especially charming, filled with gorgeous lyricism, deftly crafted and elegant in their imagery. These exquisite poems are primarily light, joyous and playful and the musical settings are designed to enhance these characteristics and capture their delicate beauty and seriousness."

"**Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella**" is a Christmas carol which originated from the Provence region of France in the 16th century. It tells the story of two milkmaids, Jeanette and Isabella, who went to milk their cows in a manger in Bethlehem, only to find the baby Jesus sleeping in the hay. The two girls ran to town to tell the village of the coming of Christ, and the townspeople came with their own torches to view the sight for themselves. However, they had to keep their voices down so little Jesus could enjoy his dreams. To this day in the Provence region, children dress up as shepherds and milkmaids, carrying torches and candles to Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, while singing the carol.

TRANSLATIONS

Hodie, Christus natus est **J. P. Sweelinck**

Hodie, hodie Christus natus est.
Hodie, hodie Salvator apparuit:
Hodie, **hodie** in terra canunt angeli
Laetantur archangeli:
Hodie, hodie exultant just dicentes
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Alleluia.

Today Christ is born:
Today the Savior appeared:
Today on Earth the Angels sing,
Archangels rejoice:
Today the righteous rejoice, saying:
Glory to God in the highest.
Alleluia.

Angelus Ad Virginem **Arranged by John Rutter**

Angelus ad virginem
Subintrans in conclave
Virginis formidinem
Demulcens inquit 'Ave'
Ave regina virginum;
Caeli terraque Dominum
Concipies et paries intacta
Salutem hominum
Tu porta caeli facta
Medela criminum.

Th'angel to the Virgin said,
Ent'ring into her bower,
For dread of quaking of this maid,
He said, 'Hail' with great honour.
'Hail' be thou queen of maidens mo.
Lord of heaven and earth also
Conceive thou shalt
And bear withal the Lord of might,
Heal of all mankind.
He will make the gate of heaven bright,
Med'cine of all our sin.

Quo modo conciperem
Quae virum non cognovi?
Quaeliter infringerem
Quod firmamente vovi?

How will I conceive
I have not known man?
How will I break that which
I have firmly vowed?

Spiritus Sancti gratia
Perficiet haec omnia
Netimeas sed gaudeas,
Secura quod castimonia
Manebit in te pura
Dei potentia.

By the grace of the Holy Spirit
All of these things will be
made perfect in you.
Do not fear but rejoice.
That which is chaste in you
will remain pure
by the power of God.

Contre Qui, Rose
Rainer Maria Rilke, from Les Roses

Contre qui, rose, avez-vous adopté
ces épines?
votre joie trop fine vous a-t-elle forcée
de devenir cette chose armée?

Against whom, rose, Have you assumed
these thorns?
Is it your too fragile joy that forced you
To become this armed thing?

Mais de qui vous protège
Cette arme exagérée?
Combien d'ennemis vous ai-je enlevés
Qui ne la craignaient point?
Au contraire, d'été en automne,
Vous blessez les soins
Qu'on vous donne.

But from whom does it protect you,
This exaggerated defense?
How many enemies have I lifted from you
Who did not fear it at all?
On the contrary, from summer to autumn, you
wound the affection
That is given you.

Dirait-on
Rainer Maria Rilke, from Les Roses

Abandon entouré d'abandon,
tendresse touchant aux tendresses. . .
C'est ton intérieur qui sans cesse
se caresse, dirait-on;

Abandon surrounding abandon,
tenderness touching tenderness. . .
Your oneness endlessly
caresses itself, so they say;

se caresse en soi-même,
par son propre reflet éclairé.
Ainsi tu inventes le thème
du Narcisse exaucé.

self-caressing
through its own clear reflection.
Thus you invent the theme
of Narcissus fulfilled.

Three Christmas Poems
John Speck

The Oxen (Poem by Thomas Hardy): Christmas Eve and the twelve of the clock. "Now they are all on their knees," An elder said, as we sat in a flock by the embers in hearthside ease. We pictured the meek mild creatures where they dwelt in their strawy pen. Nor did it occur to one of us there To doubt they were kneeling then. So fair a fancy few would weave in these years. Yet, I feel, if someone said on Christmas Eve, "Come see the oxen kneel In the lonely barton by yonder coomb Our childhood use to know," I should go with him in the gloom, Hoping it might be so.

Nowell Sing We (Anonymous): Nowell sing we, both all and some, Now Rex pacificus is y-come. Exortum est in love and lysse. Now Christ his gree he gan us gysse, And with his body brought us to bliss, Both all and some. De fructu ventris of Mary bright, Both God and man in her alight, Out of disease he did us dight: Puer natus to us was sent, To bliss us bought, fro bale us blent, And else to woe we had y-went: Lux fulgebit with love and light, In Mary mild his pennon pight, In her took kind with manly might, In her took kind with manly might: Gloria tibi, ay, and bliss, God unto his grace he us wysse, The rent of heav'n that we not miss, The rent of heav'n that we not miss: Nowell sing we, both all and some. Now Rex pacificus is y-come. Now Rex pacificas is y-come.

Epiphany (Poem by Robert Fitzgerald): Unearthly light of presage In any dark day's iron age May come to lift the hair and bless Even our tired earthliness. And sundown bring an age of gold. Forged in faery far and old An elsewhere and an elfin light, and kings rise eastward in the night.

AUDIENCE CAROLS

Joy to the World

Joy to the world! The Lord is come:
Let earth receive her King:
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

He rules the world with truth and grace:
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.

White Christmas

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas
Just like the ones I used to know.
Where the tree tops glisten and children listen
To hear sleigh bells in the snow.

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas
With every Christmas card I write.
"May your days be merry and bright
And may all your Christmases be white."

Silent Night

(accompanied)

Silent night, holy night,
All is calm, all is bright,
Round yon virgin mother and child,
Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

(a cappella)

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, loves pure light.
Radiant beams from thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Sopranos

Allison Berg
Angela Boardman
Kristin Evon
Rosemary Faiver
Lynn Fendler
Shantel Hamilton
Barbara Harris
Jean Kocher
Carole Marvin
Linda Parks
***Heather Patterson
Amy Rittenhouse
Karyll Shaw
Diane Singletary
Barbara Whitney
Kristie Wiggert

Altos

Kim Allan
Kathy Ballard
Sarra Baraily
Nancy Bieber
Lois Brennan
Maleika Faiver
Barbara Fuller
Kirsten Gonzales
Ellen Grafius
Mary James
Mimi LaLonde
Cheri Johnson
Meredith Miller
Karen Nault
Bonnie Olson
Mary Robison
Kelly Stuible

Tenors

Jamal Butler
**Zach Durlam
Dallas Henney
Kermit Johnson
Jan Krehbiel
Will Mahoney
Andrew McLemore
Ralph Putnam
Bill Ruddock
Bob Ward
Michael Zamora

Basses

Jon Allan
Dale Arnold
Sam Austin
*Matt Begale
Monty Bieber
Miguel Cabanas
Jerry Fuller
Kyle Jubenville
Tom Kaplan
Jim Kocher
Mike Lipsey
Bill McHarris
John O'Doherty
Jim Phelps
John Speck
Rob Stow
****Brad Walker

The Arts Chorale of Greater Lansing will present its next concert on Tuesday, February 24, 2008 at 8:00 p.m. at Plymouth Congregational Church. MSU Assistant Professor, Richard Fracker, will be performing on this program. Professor Fracker brings his Metropolitan Opera experience as well as his entertaining personality in performing a variety of songs. His appearance will bring a special dimension to this concert.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Arts Chorale of Greater Lansing would like to thank:

University Lutheran Church:	Concert facilities Janine Novenske Smith, Music Director
East Lansing High School:	Rehearsal facilities: Jeff English, Choral Director
Print and Copy World:	Program printing contribution

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If you wish to place an ad or contribute financially to the *Arts Chorale*, call Kathy Ballard at 332-1848 or visit our website at:

www.artschoralegl.org

The Arts Chorale has openings for experienced singers. Contact Manager Kathy Ballard at **332-1848** or Conductor Dale Bartlett at **332-4495** or email him at **bartle17@msu.edu** or for audition information.

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December 9, 2008

Arts Chorale of Greater Lansing
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Judy Kabodian, Pianist