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Ensemble Concerts: The Treble Choir, December 9, 1973

Donald Armstrong Conductor

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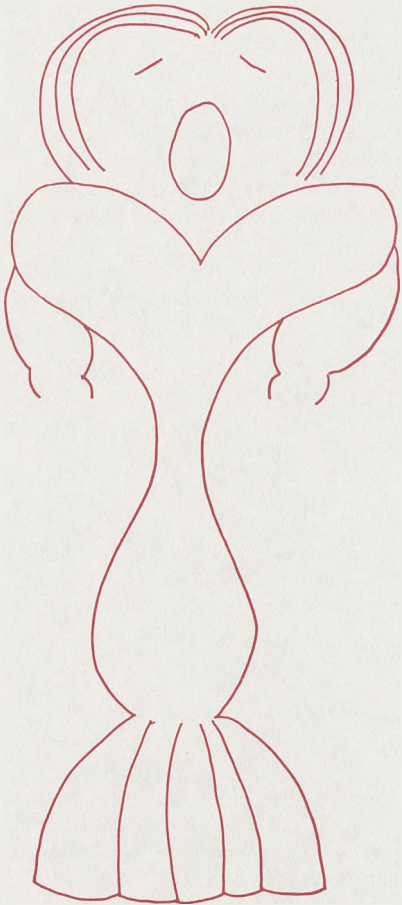
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college of fine arts
illinois state university



THE SEVENTH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CHORAL RECITAL

THE TREBLE CHOIR

Donald Armstrong, Conductor

Assisted by
Gail Finley, organist
Valerie Cribbs, harpist
Russell Daughtry, guitarist

Sunday, 9 December 1973

3:00 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran Church

PROGRAM

sung from the rear choir loft

AVE MARIA, Opus 9 (1900)

Gustav Holst
1874-1934

In anticipation of the world-wide celebration of the one-hundredth anniversary of Gustav Holst's birthday in 1974, the Treble Choir is proud to include two of his compositions on this concert. This early work is one of the rare examples of eight-part choral composition for female voices, and is a soaring, ethereal interpretation of the text from Luke.

LITANIES A LA VIERGE NOIRE (1936)

Francis Poulenc
1899-1963

Before 1936, Poulenc had given little attention to music of sacred or liturgical nature. In that year, the death of a dear friend urged him to a pilgrimage to the religious sanctuary at Rocamadour in the Dordogne. It was this pilgrimage, and the appearance of the image of the Virgin Mother in black stone, that prompted this composition, the first in a long line of outstanding liturgical and sacred choral works. The declamatory character of the choral singing, combined with the strongly dissonant and pungent organ interjections provide a vigorous and memorable penitential experience for singer and audience.

procession to the altar

A CEREMONY OF CAROLS, Opus 28 (1942)

Benjamin Britten
b. 1913

1. Procession—Hodie Christus natus est
2. Wolcum Yole!—15th c. anonymous
3. There Is No Rose of Such Vertu—anonymous
- 4a. That Yonge Child—anonymous
- 4b. Balulalow—1567, James, John and Robert Wedderburn
5. As Dew In Aprile—15th c. anonymous
6. This Little Babe—Robert Southwell, 16th c.
7. Interlude—fantasia on 'Hodie Christus natus est' for harp
8. In Freezing Winter Night—Robert Southwell
9. Spring Carol—William Cornish, 16th c.
10. Deo gracias! Adam lay ibounden—15th c. anonymous
11. Recession—Hodie Christus natus est

There is little question that this is Britten's outstanding composition for treble voices, and perhaps the most outstanding work of this century for this medium. In only thirty years, it has become a staple part of the repertoire of any treble choir. Britten's choral work has surged through many climaxes during his lifetime, most recently soaring to the peak of the War Requiem of 1962.

Soloists—Mary Watson, Linda Mack, Patricia L'Heureux

ANNUNCIATION (1972)

Lloyd Pfautsch

The composer is presently director of choral activities at Southern Methodist University, and was formerly associated with Illinois Wesleyan University. The musical setting is exceedingly simple avoiding any dramatic stress, and emphasizing the youth and simplicity of Mary at the time of the annunciation.

CANTICLES OF THE VIRGIN MARY (1965)

Michael Hurd

Soloist—Mary Watson

1. Queen of Heaven
2. Adam Lay Ybounden
3. Mary, Mother, Come and See
4. O Queen of Heaven

All the texts for this composition are from 15th century English carols edited by the composer, one of the outstanding younger-generation British choral composers. The textures and declamation are simple, but not without certain charm and effectiveness evoked by the rather archaic texts.

INTERMISSION

SEVEN PARTSONGS FOR FEMALE VOICES, Opus 44

Gustav Holst

Poems by Robert Bridges, 1844-1930

1874-1934

Soloist—Jennifer Frey

1. Say Who Is This?
2. O Love I Complain
3. Angel Spirits of Sleep
4. When First We Met
5. Sorrow and Joy
6. Love On My Heart From Heaven Fell
7. Assemble All Ye Maidens

Gustav Holst has the dubious distinction of always sharing fame and reknown with Ralph Vaughan Williams. To be sure, the two were the closest of friends and colleagues, and associated throughout Holst's life. In addition, Holst is largely unknown outside England for anything but his instrumental works **The Planets** and **St. Paul Suite**. He was however associated all his life with choral music and performing, and definitely felt a great affinity for homogeneous choral ensembles, composing numerous sets and collections for both women's and men's choirs. These partsongs display his flawless prosody and choral taste, and his unerring instinct for the correct harmonic and melodic material to fit the texts. His penchant for modality is of course evident, but never seems perfunctory.

TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS (1942)

Ken Darby

Poem by Clement Clark Moore

No Christmas poem in English is more familiar to American audiences than this poem composed by Moore for his children in 1844. The musical setting of course exploits not only the sentimental flavor of the poem, but the prevailing "popular" and "swing" musical atmosphere of the late 1930's and 1940's. The arrangement for treble voices is by Harry Simeone.

The Treble Choir is proud to offer a long-playing monophonic recording of Christmas choral music chosen from past recitals at St. John's Lutheran Church. This recording is on sale in the lobby during intermission and following the concert.

TRANSLATED TEXTS

AVE MARIA, Opus 9—Gustav Holst

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you.
Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the
Fruit of your womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, pray for us. Amen.

LITANIES TO THE BLACK VIRGIN—Francis Poulenc

Lord, have mercy upon us. Jesus Christ, have mercy upon us.
Jesus Christ, give ear unto us. Jesus Christ, hearken unto us.
God the Father, Creator, have mercy upon us.
God the Son, Redeemer, have mercy upon us.
God the Holy Ghost, who maketh all things holy, have mercy upon us.
Holy Trinity, who art one God, have mercy upon us.
Holy Virgin Mary, pray for us. Virgin, Queen and Protectress, pray for us.
Virgin whom Zachaeus the publican has made us know and love,
Virgin to whom Zachaeus or St. Amadour raised this sanctuary, pray for us.
Queen of the sanctuary which St. Martial consecrated and where he celebrated
His holy mysteries, Queen, before whom St. Louis knelt to beg for the
Safety of France, pray for us.

Queen, to whom Roland dedicated his sword, pray for us.
Queen, whose banner has triumphed in battle, pray for us.
Queen, whose hand has set the captives free, pray for us.
Our Lady, whose pilgrimage is made rich by special favours,
Our Lady, whom impiety and hate have often wished to destroy,
Our Lady, whom the peoples visit as in years gone by, pray for us.
Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, forgive us our sins.
Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, hearken unto us.
Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.
That we may be worthy of Jesus Christ.