



Review

Concert offers new music

By MARY ANN CAMPBELL
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The standard musical works often crowd out the music of contemporary composers because performers believe audiences prefer to hear the old familiar tunes. This spring's concert by the Rogue Valley Chorale provides a welcome change from the usual program.

Director Lynn Sjolund, who has brought several innovative works to local audiences over the past years, continued the tradition of presenting some interesting new music in Friday evening's concert.

The program consisted of works by Knut Nystedt, a Norwegian composer; the Englishman R. Vaughan Williams, the American Norman Della Joia, and Heinz Werner Zimmermann and Miklos Rosza.

It will be repeated at 4 p.m. today in the Congregational Church, 1801 E. Jackson St., Medford.

The major work on the program was a Psalmkonzert by the 20th century German composer Heinz Werner Zimmermann. It requires addition to the regular chorale of a baritone soloist, additional choral voices, a strong bass, three trumpets and a vibraphone. Gregory Fowler, who was in excellent voice, provided the solo parts. Paula McFadden accompanied on a plucked string

bass with Robin Lawson at the vibraphone. Trumpeters were Larry Hudson, Eric Morgan and Richard Dramer.

The composition is performed in five sections, each written in the jazz idiom, with strong string bass accompaniment and syncopation throughout, which made the music vivid and exciting to hear. The additional chorus was provided by the Rogue Valley Children's Choir, directed by Doris Sjolund.

The children sang a section of their own, three English pieces. Mrs. Sjolund explained that only about two-thirds of the choir was present, as the missing voices had other plans this weekend. However, the smaller number did not hurt the choir's performance. In the Psalmkonzert, their fresh, young voices blended sweetly with the adults' in the soaring final section.

Their own section consisted of "An Invitation" and "The Singers" by Ralph Vaughan Williams and John Rutter's setting of the 19th century poem, "All Things Bright and Beautiful." The children enunciate clearly and they showed some nice phrasing. Mrs. Sjolund should be thanked for her part in adding the children's choir to the musical life of the Rogue Valley.

Walt Whitman would have loved Della Joia's exciting, dissonant setting of his "Song of the Open Road" and the chorale's

stirring performance of the work. The music is strong and energetic, evoking Whitman's dream of an America open to an expanding frontier. The trumpet solo passages, played by Larry Hudson, triumphantly echo the words, "For here is space and here a great deed has room" and "For here is the test of a wisdom, a wisdom that is of the soul."

The final work, "To Everything There Is a Season," a setting of the third chapter of Ecclesiastes with organ accompaniment by Marilyn Scudder, gave the chorale singers an opportunity to show the fine interplay of their voices. The stately music provides contrasts between mournful and joyous phrases, all written to emphasize the work's reverent quality.

At the conclusion, as the voices rose to great heights of feeling, the church's vaulted ceiling filled the air with echoing resonance.

The program opened with three a cappella anthems, "Sing and Rejoice," "Song of Praise" and "Praise to God," by Knut Nystedt. These also are dramatic religious compositions, introducing such vivid expressions of feeling as jangling tamborines at the end of the "Song of Praise."

Admission is \$3 for adults and \$2 for students and seniors. Tickets are available at the door.