

Rogue Valley Chorale concert

The Mass in G Minor by the celebrated English composer, Ralph Vaughan Williams, will be presented by the 75-member Rogue Valley Chorale during its series of two concerts this week.

The mass, composed in 1923, is the unchallenged masterpiece of English church music in our time, particularly appropriate at the Easter season, expressing deep spirituality, mysticism and beauty.

Two movements, the Credo and Sanctus, were sung at the coronation of Elizabeth II in Westminster Abbey. Use of antiphonal effects, common to the Elizabethan style, are used, with the chorus, divided into two distinct parts, designed to answer back and forth across the space of the cathedral and a smaller group of four solo singers providing additional contrast.

Soloists in the Rogue Valley Chorale's performances are Kathy Gordon, Doris Sjolund, Dean Tack, Brian Tingle.

The Chorale's programs are planned Tuesday, April 20 in the Music Recital Hall, Southern Oregon State College, Ashland, and Thursday, April 22 in Medford Senior High School auditorium. Both are at 8 p.m.

The program will open with the Easter Anthem by William Billings, America's first native-born composer to produce works of importance (1746-1800). The Chorale also will sing David's Lamentation, Lamentation Over Boston and Rose of Sharon, all compositions by Billings.

A Boston tanner by trade, Billings had very little musical education and relied on inspiration of thought and subject. His music is noted for its rough-hewn strength, and often is even powerful in sound.

Lynn Sjolund, director of the singing group formed in the Valley three years ago, has selected numbers by Samuel Barber as the third grouping on this week's programs.

Barber, born in Westchester, Pa., in 1910, was precocious in music, showing early abilities as an organist and educated at Curtis Institute. He exhibits a fine sense of musical design, logical development and lyric beauty and his works are picturesque and varied in subject matter.

Barber has received many honors including the Pulitzer Fellowship and the American Prix de Rome, as well as an honorary doctorate from Harvard University. His opera, Antony and Cleopatra, was performed at the opening of the new Metropolitan Opera House in Lincoln Center in 1966.

The numbers by Barber appearing on the Chorale's program include two love songs, very different in treatment and one dramatic composition, all three grouped under "Reincarnations." Texts are by James Stephens.

The Chorale will close the program with a presentation of songs expressing our Negro heritage in the form of spirituals and are interesting arrangements of familiar numbers. Solo parts will be sung by Karen Foster, Dr. William Matthews and David Franklin.

Selections are I'm Goin' to Sing, Sometimes I feel Like a Motherless Child, There Is a Balm in Gilead, I Got a Key.

Tickets for the concerts, at \$1.50, may be obtained at the door.