



LYNN SJOLUND
director

Gregory Smith
accompanist

NOVEMBER 21, 1974

8:00 P.M.

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
Medford

NOVEMBER 25, 1974

8:00 P.M.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
Grants Pass

Lynn Sjolund

Lynn Sjolund, director of the Rogue Valley Chorale, is well known to Southern Oregon audiences for his work with the Medford Senior High School Choir. He has been affiliated with the Medford schools since 1956. In addition to work with local groups, he has directed many music festivals and clinics including the Pacific University "Music in May" chorus and the Montana All-State Choir. Mr. Sjolund's music degrees are from the University of Oregon. In addition, he spent a year studying near Stuttgart, Germany.

Mr. Sjolund has served as president of the Oregon Music Educators Association and is active in Medford with the Community Concert Association.

Greg Smith

Greg Smith, pianist and organist for the Rogue Valley Chorale, is a graduate of the University of Oregon. He also attended Oberlin Conservatory in Oberlin, Ohio, and has studied both piano and organ locally. He is presently working toward an advanced degree in education and literature at Southern Oregon College.

Charles Ives (1874 - 1954)

An extraordinary man and artist was Charles Ives, who studied music with his father and later at Yale University, and then pursued a long and successful career in the insurance business. But Ives also led a kind of secret life, not wholly revealed until after his death. Very successful as an executive, he spent his free moments composing some of the most striking music of our times. He composed songs, symphonies, sonatas, and chamber and choral works in great numbers, many of them saturated with Americana. Ives seemed not to care that little of his work was published or even heard during his lifetime. Most incredible of all was his technical daring. He began using extreme dissonance and even polytonality before Stravinsky and Schoenberg. As music historians are re-evaluating the composers of the first half of the twentieth century, the works of Charles Ives continue to become more highly thought of. However, much of his work remains a fascinating mystery still to be explored.

The choral music on the program spans works from his earliest compositions until he was at the height of his powers. Turn Ye, Turn Ye, written while Ives was in his teens, shows typical musical ideas of the turn of the century. Easter Carol is also a part of his early development, but begins to show some interesting chromaticism. The Psalm 67 is an example of bi-tonality; the men sing in the key of G minor, while the women's parts are written in C major. Psalm 90 is considered to be Ives' most perfect piece of choral music. In it he thoughtfully paints tone pictures of wrath, evil, destruction, etc. The continuous pedal tone "C" that is heard from the beginning to the end is a unifying factor. It also represents eternity and continuity of life.

Heinrich Schütz (1585 - 1672)

Heinrich Schütz, composer of the "Deutsches Magnificat", was a learned musical scholar who studied under Giovanni Gabrieli in Venice. It seems clear that throughout his life as a composer he was heavily influenced by the brilliance and warmth of his studies there. In the "Magnificat", he constructs a fine example of writing for double chorus. Often one chorus will echo another; sometimes the choruses will alternate or continue a musical idea. This work was written in 1671 and was a fitting crown for his many superb compositions.

Johannes Brahms (1833 - 1897)

Most of Brahms' choral writing was done when he was from twenty-five to fifty years old. From the very beginning his compositions show a strength and assurance.

Abendstänchen (Op. 42, No. 1) speaks of "the flute sounding where cooling waters glisten". It asks us to listen silently. The feeling is like two groups answering from a distance, as the women's voices form one chorus and the men's another.

All meine Heragedanken (Op. 62) (All My Heart's Thankfulness) uses some similar feeling of answering from one group to another, but here the lovely text speaks of a constant love that will last for all eternity.

Brausten alle Berge (Op. 104) alternates between furious rage over vanishing youth and quiet longing for its return.

Benjamin Britten (1913 -)

Benjamin Britten is considered to be England's finest modern composer. Part of his genius lies in selecting beautiful texts. The "Hymn to St. Cecilia" is a paen to the Goddess of Music. The music was written at sea in 1942 as Britten returned to England from New York. An interesting sidelight to the performance of this work is that November 22 is not only the birthday of Britten, but also the day on which the Church honors St. Cecilia, the patroness of music.

Hymn to St. Cecilia

I

In a garden shady this holy lady
With rev'rent cadence and subtle psalm,
Like a black swan as death came on
Pour'd forth her song in perfect calm:
And by ocean's margin this innocent virgin
Constructed an organ to enlarge her prayer,
And notes tremendous from her great engine
Thunder'd out on the Roman air.
Blond Aphrodite rose up excited,
Moved to delight by the melody,
White as an orchid she rode quite naked;
In an oyster shell on top of the sea;
At sounds so entrancing the Angels dancing
Came out of their trance into time again,
And around the wicked in Hell's abysses
The huge flame flicker'd and eased their pain.
*Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire:
Translated Daughter, come down and startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.*

I cannot grow;
I have no shadow to run away from,
I only play.

I cannot err;
There is no creature
Whom I belong to,
Whom I could wrong.

I am defeat
When it knows it
Can now do nothing
By suffering.

All you liv'd through,
Dancing because you
No longer need it
For any deed.

I shall never be
Diff'rent.
Love me.

*Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire:
Translated Daughter, come down and startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.*

III

O ear whose creatures cannot wish to fall,
O calm of spaces unafraid of weight,
Where Sorrow is herself, forgetting all
The gaucheness of her adolescent state,
Where Hope within the altogether strange
From every outworn image is released,
And Dread born whole and normal like a beast
Into a world of truths that never change:
Restore our fallen day; O re-arrange.

O dear white children casual as birds,
Playing among the ruined languages,
So small beside their large confusing words,
So gay against the greater silences
Of dreadful things you did: O hang the head,
Impetuous child with the tremendous brain,
O weep, child, weep, O weep away the stain,
Lost innocence who wished your lover dead,
Weep for the lives your wishes never led.

O cry created as the bow of sin
Is drawn across a trembling violin.

O weep, child, weep, O weep away the stain.
O law drummed out by hearts against the still
Long winter of out intellectual will.

That what has been may never be again.

O flute that throbs with the thanksgiving breath
Of convalescents on the shores of death.

O bless the freedom that you never chose.

O trumpets that unguarded children blow
About the fortress of their inner foe.

O wear your tribulation like a rose.

*Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire:
Translated Daughter, come down and startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.*

PROGRAM

Deutsches Magnificat Heinrich Schütz
(for double chorus)

Three Brahms Choruses Johanness Brahms
All meine Herzgedanken
Abendstänchen
Brausten alle Berge

Hymn to St. Cecilia Benjamin Britten
(text by W. H. Auden)

INTERMISSION

A Centennial Commemoration Charles Ives
Turn Ye, Turn Ye1889
Easter Carol1895
Psalm 671898
Psalm 90 recomposed 1923

Folk Song Arrangements Robert deCormier
Suliram Indonesian
Wayfaring Stranger American
Bella Bimba Italian
A La Claire FontaineChadian
Who Killed Cock RobinEnglish
Free My Lord, Free at Las' American