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Chorale honors Hadyn's 'Seasons'

By **CLEVE TWITCHELL**
of the Mail Tribune

The Rogue Valley Chorale has presented a number of major works and premieres during its 26 seasons of local performances.

That tradition continues this weekend with "The Seasons," by Franz Josef Haydn.

This 198-year-old oratorio has never before been performed in the Rogue Valley. And, because of

its importance and length, it will comprise the entire program for concerts by the Chorale at 8 p.m. Saturday and 3 p.m. Sunday.

Under the direction of Lynn Sjolund, both will be at the Craterian Ginger Rogers Theater in Medford.

Haydn (1732-1809) composed "The Seasons" late in his career, not long after his notable work "The Creation."

"The Seasons," considered a sequel to "The Creation," was first performed in Vienna on April 24, 1801.

Haydn's collaborator was Baron Gottfried van Swieten, according to program notes from the Chorale. The Baron was responsible for most of its text, loosely based on a poem of the same name by James Thompson.



Wing



Fountain

The arrangement to be performed by the Chorale is a new translation by Robert Shaw and Alice Parker, and these concerts are dedicated to the memory of the late Mr. Shaw.

As the name suggests, the work musically describes the four seasons.

The performance will feature three soloists and accompaniment by a woodwind ensemble as well as piano and organ.

The soloists are Michael Wing, baritone, playing the part of Simon, a farmer; Linda Fountain, soprano, as Hanne, his daughter, and David Gustafson, tenor, as Lukas, a young countryman.

Wing, a graduate of Medford schools and the University of Oregon, returned to the Rogue Valley last fall after 25 years in Eugene, Roseburg and Los Angeles. He sang with the Chorale back in the 1970s. He's now director of music at St. Mary's School in Medford.

Fountain is a veteran of many performances with the Chorale as well as the Rogue Valley Opera and the Southern Oregon Repertory Singers. She lives in the Rogue Valley and is a student of Ruth Dobson, Portland voice instructor.

Gustafson is from the San Francisco Bay Area where he has performed with the San Francisco Opera Guild and Donald Pippin's Pocket Opera. He also has sung with the Eugene Opera and is a University of Oregon graduate.

ON THE SCENE

What: Rogue Valley Chorale concerts, Franz Josef Haydn's "The Seasons."

When: At 8 p.m. Saturday and 3 p.m. Sunday.

Where: Craterian Ginger Rogers Theater, Medford.

Cost: Tickets are \$12 for adults, \$5 for students. Call 779-3000.