

The Shepherd Society

presents

the Eighth Annual

MESSIAH SING-ALONG

December 8, 1987

St. Paul's United Methodist Church

5501 South Main Street

8:00 P.M.

Shepherd School Symphony Orchestra

Luke Douglas Sellers, conductor

Shepherd School Student Soloists

RICE UNIVERSITY

the
Shepherd
School
of Music



PROGRAM

Messiah

George Friedrich Handel
(1685-1759)

PART I

Sinfonia (Overture)

*Recitative and Air for Tenor: Comfort ye my people
Every valley shall be exalted*

Dixon Printz

Chorus: And the glory of the Lord

*Recitative and Air for Bass: Thus saith the Lord
But who may abide the day of his coming?*

Richard Teaster

Chorus: And he shall purify

*Recitative and Air for Alto: Behold, a virgin shall conceive
O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion*

Alyssa Clark

Chorus: For unto us a child is born

Pifa ("Pastoral Symphony")

*Recitative for Soprano: There were shepherds abiding in the field
And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them
And the angel said unto them
And suddenly there was with the angel*

Laura Overstreet

Chorus: Glory to God

Air for Soprano: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion

Lisa Long

*Recitative and Air for Soprano: Then shall the eyes of the blind
He shall feed his flock*

Johanna Bonno

Photographing and sound recording are prohibited. We further request that audible paging devices not be used during the performance. Paging arrangements may be made with the ushers.

PARTS II & III (selections)

Chorus: Behold the Lamb of God

Recitative and Air for Tenor: Thy rebuke hath broken his heart

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow

Stephen Bomgardner

Chorus: Hallelujah

Air for Soprano: I know that my redeemer liveth

Laura Overstreet

Chorus: Since by man came death

Recitative and Air for Bass: Behold, I tell you a mystery

The trumpet shall sound

Richard Teaster

Chorus: Worthy is the Lamb that was slain

Conductor Luke Douglas Sellers is Assistant Conductor of the Shepherd School Symphony Orchestra and Music Director of the Bay Area Youth Symphony.

SHEPHERD SCHOOL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Violin I

*Justine Watts
Rodica Oancea
William Chandler
Kristina LaCombe
Denise Couch*

Violin II

*Jennifer Leshnower
Mihaela Oancea
Teodor Tetel
Tanya Schreiber*

Viola

*Rifat Qureshi
Timothy Young
John Randolph*

Cello

*Peter Kempter
Aaron Stambler
Brett Nelsen*

Bass

*Josée Deschênes
Kenneth Harper*

Oboe

*Grace Tice
Rubena Buerger*

Bassoon

John DeGruchy

Trumpet

*Michael Cox
Bobby Moss*

Timpani

J. Riely Francis

Organ

Marcus St. Julien

Harpsichord

Phillip Kloeckner

NOTES

Perhaps no other choral work is so loved and so often performed by both amateur and professional musicians than Messiah. But the work has a "checkered" past. Having failed three times to make his Italian operas a financial success in London, Handel adapted his gift for bel canto and dramatic orchestral writing to the oratorio, of which Messiah was his sixteenth effort.

Intended for a charity concert in Dublin, Messiah was first performed before a large audience on April 13, 1741. Irish audiences gave the work high praise, but in London, it was not a success. Not until it was revived nine years later did the oratorio receive critical acclaim. Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, the work became a permanent fixture in the repertoires of choral societies, Protestant churches, and music schools.

Because of this special position, Messiah has gained its own mystique. It is widely known that the work was composed in only twenty-four days, but it should be noted that not all the music was newly composed. For example, such pieces as "For unto us" and "All we like sheep" originally were Italian madrigals, and the fugue subject for "And with his stripes" was well known elsewhere. While such borrowings do not diminish Handel's achievements, they reveal the composer as a practical craftsman who, like his contemporaries, was loth to discard older ideas that suited his purpose.

Contrary to many textbooks, Messiah is atypical of Handel's total musical opus. In his day, Handel was known for his secular music for the organ or the stage, not for his piety. Even among his other oratorios, Messiah is unusual because it contains no plot with dramatic characters and all of its texts are drawn from the Bible.

Instead, Messiah is divided into three parts that revolve around the life of Christ: the prophesies and birth, the death, and the resurrection. Handel still relies upon the old musical conventions of the opera with its recitatives and arias, but he imbues the old forms with new drama. Most effective are his work for the chorus—the oratorio's real protagonist. Drawing from the traditions of the German cantata, English anthem, and Italian oratorio, Handel allows the chorus to reflect the emotions of Everyman to the Bible's story.

Today we feel the same drama and devotion that a journalist described at the work's first performance:

The sublime, the grand, and the tender, adapted to the most elevated, majestic and moving words, conspired to transport and charm the ravished heart and ear.

THE SHEPHERD SOCIETY was inaugurated December 1, 1977 "... for the purposes of supporting the Shepherd School of Music in the achievements of its goals, of providing scholarship support to the talented students of the Shepherd School, of contributing to the insights and pleasures of our members, of honoring worthy practitioners and students of the art of music, its teaching or performance, and of undertaking such other action as we may deem desirable in supporting the cause of music at Rice University and in Houston."

The Shepherd Society's next event is the Young People's Concert on January 16, 1988, at 11:00 a.m. in Hamman Hall. There is no admission charged and the concert is open to Houston children of all ages. Refreshments will follow the program. If you desire further information on the Shepherd Society, please call 527-4047.