

The Shepherd Society

presents
the Seventh Annual

MESSIAH SING-ALONG

December 9, 1986
St. Paul's United Methodist Church
5501 South Main Street
8:00 P.M.

Shepherd School Symphony Orchestra
Blanton Alspaugh, conductor
Shepherd School Student Soloists

RICE UNIVERSITY

the
Shepherd
School
of Music



PROGRAM

Messiah

George Friedrich Handel
(1685-1759)

PART I

Sinfonia (Overture)

Recitative for Tenor: Comfort ye my people

Stephen Bomgardner

Air for Tenor: Every valley shall be exalted

David Cole

Chorus: And the glory of the Lord

Recitative for Bass: Thus saith the Lord

John Krueger

Air for Bass: But who may abide the day of his coming?

Michael Jones

Chorus: And he shall purify

Recitative and Air for Alto: Behold, a virgin shall conceive

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion

Diane Barrett

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

Lisa Long

Chorus: Glory to God

Recitative and Air for Alto: Then shall the eyes of the blind

He shall feed his flock

Lisa Inman

Air for Soprano: Come unto him

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: Surely he hath borne our griefs
Recitative and Air for Tenor: He that dwelleth in heaven
Thou shalt break them

Jack Sanchez

Chorus: Hallelujah
Air for Soprano: I know that my redeemer liveth

Melanie Smith

Chorus: Since by man came death
Recitative and Air for Bass: Behold, I tell you a mystery
The trumpet shall sound

Roman Rebilas

Chorus: Worthy is the Lamb that was slain

Conductor Blanton Alspaugh is Assistant Conductor of the Shepherd School Symphony Orchestra; Assistant Conductor of the Houston Youth Symphony Orchestra; and Associate Conductor of the Victoria Bach Festival, Victoria, Texas.

SHEPHERD SCHOOL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Violin I
Fung Wong
Connie Sunday
Denise Couch
Teodor Tetel

Violin II
Kris LaCombe
Tanya Schreiber
Jerry Wang
Amy Chang

Viola
Penelope Meitz
Renate Vaughn
Benjamin Feigert

Cello
Aaron Stambler
Suzi Carter
Lisa Hollibaugh

Bass
Josee Deschenes
Anna Cone

Oboe
Alan Juza
Eileen Whalen

Bassoon
John DeGruchy

Trumpet
Kevin Tarrant
Susan Purcell

Timpani
Guillo Rodriguez

Organ
Gary Smith

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 17, 1987, 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.