REVERENCE

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2004 – 7:00 PM
S. MARK TAPER AUDITORIUM – BANAROYA HALL

Catherine Haight, soprano
Carla Hilderbrand, mezzo-soprano
Stephen Rumph, tenor
Charles Robert Stephens, baritone

ORCHESTRA SEATTLE

SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS

George Shawrow, conductor

LUDWIG van BEETHOVEN (1770 – 1827)
Mass in C Major, Opus 86

Kyrie
Gloria
Credo
Sanctus—Benedictus
Agnus Dei—Dona Nobis Pacem

Catherine Haight, soprano
Carla Hilderbrand, mezzo-soprano
Stephen Rumph, tenor
Charles Robert Stephens, baritone

— Intermission —

W. HUNTLEY BEYER (b. 1947)
Concerto for Flute and Orchestra – “Foot Swept” [WORLD PREMIERE]*

I. remember me
II. you’re funny
III. be thine
IV. kick it
V. be sweet

Jeffrey Cohan, flute

GIUSEPPE VERDI (1813 – 1901)

ACT TWO: Grand Finale

Gloria all’Egitto, ad asile
Grand March
Ballet
Ven, o guerrero vindice

*The commissioning of this work was made possible by the Cultural Development Authority of King County and Hotel/Motel Tax Revenues.
ACT II: News of Ethiopia’s defeat arrives. Victory is celebrated. In a ceremony, Radamès is borne in and crowned with a victor’s wreath. Captured Ethiopians follow, among them Amonasro, Aida’s father, who signals her not to betray his identity as king.

-notes by Stephen Wall

POLOPO
Glory all’Egitto, ad taide Che il tuo nome si fa in Italia! Ah che il Delta regge inni festosi alziam! Gloria! Gloria! Gloria! Gloria! al Re!

ORCHESTRA SEATTLE
VIOLIN
VIOLE
Ayraud Don
Jim Lurie
Katherine McWilliams*
Håkan Olson
Robert Shangrow

CELLO
Paul von
Julie Reed*
Katie Sauter Messick
Arnie Roberts
Karen Thompson

STRING BASS
Jo Hansen*
Geoff Larson
Steve Messick
Doug Pierson
Chris Simison

FLUTE/PICCOLO
Jena Calixto
Shari Müller-Ho*
Melissa Underhill

OBUE
Brent Hayes*
John Dimond

TROMBONE
Paul Bogart
Moc Escobedo*
David Holmes

TIMPANI
Jeff Eldridge
Judith Lawrence*

PERCUSSION
Don Ole*
Maren Vonsaatrd
Lacey Brown
Krisla Zimmermann

SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS
SOPRANO
Nancy Shasten
Liesel van Cleef
Pat Vetelion

ALTO
Carolyn Cross Avery
Jane Blacknell
Ann Erickson
Deanna Fyhrle
Ellen Kälse
Thomas Leutz
Adrienne McCoy
Suzi Meines
Laurie Medill
Christine Richert
Bridget Savage

TENOR
Ronald Carson
Ralph Cobb
Peter Garbes
Gunnar Goertz
Alvin Koon
Rod Lando
Dan Lee
Timothy Lunde
David Meands
Thom Hasbitt

BARITONE
Jerry Sams

BASS
Stephen Brady
Greg Caron
Steve Carl
Daniel Dankich
Douglas Duraffo
Paul Frost
Dennis Moore
John Stentz
Jeff Thiloway
Richard Wycoff
Beethoven’s Mass in C Major, Op. 86

“Music is the mediator between intellectual and sensuous life... the one spiritual entrance into the higher world.”

—Beethoven

Though his home in Bonn was overshadowed by destitution, discord, and distress, and his first music teacher was his harsh and violent alcoholic father, Ludwig van Beethoven somehow persevered to pour into his remarkable music his pain, his hunger for peace and for happiness, and the strength of will that helped him survive a tumultuous and tortured life. Settling in Vienna in 1792, he was for a time the unhappy music pupil of Franz Joseph Haydn, from whom he claimed to have learned nothing, and made a living by giving music lessons and by playing the piano at the private homes and palaces of the music-loving Viennese aristocracy, where his dynamic, emotionally-charged performances began to attract attention. He moved increasingly from a career as a virtuoso pianist toward one as a composer, writing piano concertos and sonatas, chamber works for winds and strings, and then symphonies. But though by 1800 his musical prestige was considerable and his material fortunes were blossoming, he became aware that his hearing was deteriorating, and deafness soon threatened not only his musical life, but his social and personal life as well. He became increasingly morose, withdrawn, and distrustful, and contemplated suicide in 1802, even writing a testament, addressed to his two brothers, describing his unhappiness over his affliction in terms suggesting that he believed that death was imminent; only art, and his faith that he had much of importance yet to express musically, withheld him from ending his life. This document reveals not only how distraught, but also how determined a man Beethoven was: “Such incidents drove me almost to despair; a little more of that and I would have ended my life - it was only my art that held me back. Ah, it seemed to me impossible to leave the world until I had brought forth all that I felt was within me. So I endured this wretched existence...” Beethoven not only endured, but, with his resolution strengthened, he entered a new creative period during which he wrote the Mass in C major and produced other works that established his reputation as the premiere composer of his time.

Each year, the Hungarian Prince Nicholas Esterházy II, whose family Joseph Haydn had served for many years as music master, had a new choral mass performed to celebrate his wife’s name day. In 1807, Beethoven was commissioned to compose this mass, and wrote to the Prince: “I shall deliver the Mass to you with timidity, since you are accustomed to having the inimitable masterpieces of the great Haydn performed for you.” His hesitancy indeed appears to have been warranted: he had never before composed a mass, he procrastinated for months, and then he produced a work that his patron and audience found unsatisfactory, since it was much humbler and more spiritual than the grand symphonic masses to which Prince Esterházy and the Viennese musical establishment had become accustomed. It is said that Beethoven first survived a singer rebellion led by chorus master Johannes Hummel, who did not enjoy working with a “hearing-impaired” conductor. Then at the public reception following the work’s first performance, Prince Esterházy offended the composer with the somewhat cryptic comment, “My dear Beethoven, what is it you have done here?” and he later remarked that he found the mass “unbearably ridiculous and detestable.” Beethoven therefore refused to dedicate the mass to the prince and never gave him the manuscript. The composer instead began negotiating with his publishers for the printing of the mass as a part of various packages that included his more popular fifth and sixth symphonies, but it was several years before the Mass in C Major was published. Beethoven did not write another mass until he composed the mighty Missa Solemnis some fifteen years later.

Though Beethoven followed Haydn’s general plan for a mass, including fugal settings for “cum Sancto Spiritu” in the Gloria, “et vitam venturi” in the Credo and “Osanna in excelsis” in the Sanctus, his interpretation seems quite individual. The mass contains no solo arias, and the solo quartet and choral parts are employed to provide contrasts of color, texture, and dynamics rather than to form separate musical sections. The use of juxtaposed dynamic extremes, of wide leaps (frequently of an octave, especially in the Credo) in the vocal lines, of contrapuntal passages contrasted with chordal and unison plainchant-like sections, and of sometimes startling harmonic changes, seem to express, musically, Beethoven’s inner struggles and desire for mercy and peace.

“The general character of the Kyrie,” said Beethoven, “is heartfelt resignation, whence comes a deep sincerity of religious feeling.” It features alternating passages for chorus and four soloists, with the central Christe eislen being written in a key a third higher than the C major opening and closing sections. In the Gloria, joyful choral outbursts surround a central section in which chorus and soloists offer their petitions. In the Credo, the soloists do not participate until the middle section, in which Beethoven paints significant texts using such devices as key changes and unusual harmonies, chromaticism, descending motives for Jesus’ incarnation and suffering under Pontius Pilate, and rising motives for the resurrection and ascension. The opening section of the Sanctus, in A major, is tranquil, reverent, and chant-like, while the “pleni sunt coeli” is more lively and contrapuntal. The relatively lengthy Benedictus, in F major, is begun by the soloists, who are soon joined and accompanied by the chanting chorus. The same A major fugal Osanna that concludes the Sanctus reappears to close the Benedictus. The prayerful minor-mode Agnus Dei is characterized by key and tempo contrasts; its pained pleas for mercy give way to a soaring “Dona nobis pacem.” Beethoven brings the Mass to a close with the same gentle music that opens the Kyrie, thus providing the work with a satisfying unity as the listener accompanies him at last into the spiritual peace of the “higher world.”

—notes by Lorlette Knowles

Toot Sweet: A Concerto for Flute and Orchestra

This piece is a valentine to the flute, with its florid, sweet, graceful sound: toot sweet. This piece is an ode to the immediacy of music and to the enjoyment of life now, right away: tout de suite. This concerto is a series of 5 song and dance movements: a toot suite. This music is as traditional as Valentine’s Day, with its memorable rhythms and tunes, its familiar harmonic language, its ideal of beauty. This piece is a valentine to what is relational, and the movement titles are personal sayings from non-existent candy hearts: remember me, you're funny, be thine, kick it, be sweet.
Triumphant March Scene from *Aida* by Giuseppe Verdi

The construction of a European-style opera house in Cairo, Egypt was initiated in the 1860s by Ismail Pasha, the Khedive of Egypt, as part of his mission to attract western tourists (and their money) to Egypt. Ismail had used the Egyptian cotton crop, enormously enhanced in value by the American Civil War, to build credits with foreign financiers for grandiose schemes including the construction of the Suez Canal, and the extension of Egyptian rule in Sudan. He offered a commission to Verdi to write an opera of an Egyptian national character and cultural nature. Verdi, now basking in the glory of international celebrity, and virtually worshipped in Italy as an artistic and political leader, accepted the commission. At his request he received from the Pasha, a sketch prepared by Mariette Bey, the French Egyptologist, based on historical and archaeological details of a very powerful and novel story. Verdi was impressed by its potential as a grand opera. Du Locle prepared the libretto, with much intervention by Verdi himself.

The world premiere of *Aida* was on December 24, 1871, in the lavish new Opera House in Cairo and received unanimous praise from the public and critics alike. Subsequently *Aida* was rapidly premiered in all of the cultural centers of Western civilization. The opera’s blend of grandiose pageantry and the masterful vocal writing for four memorable characters caught in a web of jealousy, power and passion has contributed to its enduring popularity. Verdi was successful at telling an intimate story of star-crossed lovers whose love extended across cultural and political boundaries. He creates a memorable portrait of the scorned princess, her wrath and her revenge. Verdi utilizes all of his mature writing styles for the singing voice to tell these stories as well as the agony *Aida* suffers, forced to choose between her loyalty to father and country and her love of Radamès. “O patria mia, quanto mi costo” (O my country, how much you have cost me). Verdi sets these private quarrels against an enormous backdrop of spectacle and pageantry.

Verdi’s efforts to create an Egyptian musical vocabulary were minimal when compared to the elaborate lengths his successor, Puccini, would go to create an exotic palette of sound for the cultures of Japan, China, and the American Wild West thirty years later. Verdi lived in an age when descriptive accounts of the characteristics of foreign cultures were less available than in our current information age. (The first issue of *National Geographic* did not appear until 1888.) So if Verdi told us that this is what Egyptian music sounded like, we had little choice but to concur. The flute obligato accompanying Radames’s Act 1 aria is vaguely Middle Eastern in sound when played alone out of context, but when heard with the vocal melody and other elements of the accompaniment it is completely traditional. The ballet music is savagely energetic, suggesting an open exoticism which would have been absent from polite European culture. But it is safe to say that Verdi probably did not wander the streets of Cairo jotting down musical phrases from the Nubian street musicians playing various improvisatory drums and double reed clarinet-like instruments. In any case *Aida* is an important step in Verdi’s development as a composer as he moves away from traditional *bel canto* with its set numbers towards a more thru-composed style. Verdi would have denied that his German rival, Richard Wagner, influenced this change in style. However, members of Verdi’s inner circle knew that he had studied Wagner’s scores at length, while never confessing any admiration for Wagner’s music.
SOPRANO CATHERINE HIGHT is a favorite of Seattle audiences, having performed with a variety of Northwest musical groups over the past fifteen years. In June of 2003 she was privileged to appear as a soloist along with Jane Glidden and Vinson Cole as a part of the gala program that officially opened McCaw Hall, Seattle’s new opera house. Mrs. Hight has been a featured soloist with Pacific Northwest Opera, in their productions of Carl Orff’s Carmina Burana for over ten years and these performances have taken her to the Kennedy Center and Melbourne, Australia, where she received glowing reviews. Mrs. Hight is affiliated with the Baroque repertoire, having performed most of the major works of Bach and Handel, but she is equally at home with the composers of the Classical and Romantic eras. A frequent performer with OSSCS, her most recent collaboration with the ensemble was a performance of Kia Sam’s Earthmakers in February of this year. She has made three recordings, including Messiah, with OSSCS and conductor George Shangraw. Mrs. Hight is a member of the voice faculty at Seattle Pacific University.

Carla Hilderbrand received a BA in Music and Sociology from Seattle Pacific University and studied for her Master of Music in Vocal Performance at the University of Illinois. She has performed extensively in the Seattle area as an ensemble member of Orchestra Seattle, Seattle Chamber Singers, Epiphany Parish Choral and Seattle Opera Outreach Chorus. Carla also appeared as a soloist in Bach’s Mass in B Minor and Handel’s Messiah in addition to singing the role of Hansel in Giselle.

Stephen Rumpf, recently arrived in Seattle, has already established himself as a leading tenor in both opera and oratorio. Solo engagements this year include Rachmaninoff’s The Bells with Tacoma Symphony, Dvorak’s Stabat Mater with the Bach Festival Chorale and Handel’s Messiah with the Seattle Chamber Chorus. His recent performances include the role of the Thespian in The Rake’s Progress with the San Francisco Opera, a role he has sung in both San Francisco and Seattle. His upcoming engagements include the role of Zdenek Zdopp in the world premiere of the opera The Thespians by the Seattle Opera and the role of the Duke in Donizetti’s Don Pasquale with the Seattle Opera.

ACT III. News of Ethiopia’s defeat and victory is celebrated. In a ceremony, Radames is born in and crowned with a victorious spear. Captured Ethiopians follow, among them Amneris, Aida’s father, who signals her not to betray his identity as king.

NOTE: The role of Aida has been sung by a variety of singers in the United States, including Aymeline de La Salle, Maryla Buczkowska, and Patricia Racette. The role of Amneris has been sung by a variety of singers in the United States, including Christine Goerke, Jennifer Larmore, and Patti LuPone. The role of Radames has been sung by a variety of singers in the United States, including Richard Crocheron, James Morris, and Jose Cisneros. The role of Amonasro has been sung by a variety of singers in the United States, including Richard Crocheron, James Morris, and Jose Cisneros. The role of Amonasro has been sung by a variety of singers in the United States, including Richard Crocheron, James Morris, and Jose Cisneros. The role of Amonasro has been sung by a variety of singers in the United States, including Richard Crocheron, James Morris, and Jose Cisneros. The role of Amonasro has been sung by a variety of singers in the United States, including Richard Crocheron, James Morris, and Jose Cisneros. The role of Amonasro has been sung by a variety of singers in the United States, including Richard Crocheron, James Morris, and Jose Cisneros.
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SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS

George Shangrow, conductor

**LUDWIG van BEETHOVEN (1770 -1827)**
Mass in C Major, Opus 86

Kyrie
Gloria
Credo
Sanctus–Benedictus
Agnus Dei–Donum Nobis Pacem

Catherine Haight, soprano
Carla Hilderbrand, mezzo-soprano
Stephen Rumph, tenor
Charles Robert Stephens, baritone

**INTERMISSION**

W. HUNTLEY BEYER (1947)
Concerto for Flute and Orchestra – “Foot Sweet” [WORLD PREMIERE]

I remember me
Il tu’re funny
Ill be thin
IV. Kick it
V. be sweet

Jeffrey Cohan, flute

GIUSEPPE VERDI (1813-1901)
ACT TWO: Grand Finale

Galia all’Egitto, ad Iside
Grand March
Ballet
Ven, o guerriero vindice

*The commissioning of this work was made possible by the Cultural Development Authority of King County and Hotel/Motel Tax Revenues.*