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Seattle Children's Chorus is in its 18th season celebrating the joy of music! The Chorus performs an outstanding variety of sacred and historical choral literature that inspires each chorister to strive for vocal excellence. The lives of over 200 choristers between the ages of 7 and 18 are enriched through the vocal and choral training offered in four progressive choirs. In addition to formal arts events in Seattle and Everett areas, Arioso, the advanced treble choir, has sung throughout the Pacific Northwest and beyond. The choir has toured in Great Britain, Scandinavia, Central Europe and Canada. Arioso has sung at regional and national conventions of the American Choral Directors Association and has been featured at a choir festival at the American International Children's Choir Festival in Eugene, Oregon and the Fort Worth Children's Choir Festival in Port Townsend, Washington. Kris Mason is the Director.
The Passion According to St. Matthew
by Johann Sebastian Bach
Written in Leipzig during the late 1720s, J. S. Bach's St. Matthew Passion is one of the most famous choral works composed directly for Passover, worn threads, and strings, and continues, two SAB choruses, children's chorus, and six soloists.

Biographical Notes:
Bach was born in Eisenach on March 21, 1685, into a family that had produced church and town-band musicians for over 150 years. Orphaned at ten, he was raised by an older brother, and became a well-known Cantor and Passion music. Bach began his professional career at 18, when he was appointed organist at a church in Amstetten, and at 23, he became court organist and chamber musician to the Duke of Weimar. During his nine years in this post (1708–1727), he gained fame as an organ virtuoso and composer. From 1727 to 1733, Bach served the Prince of Anhalt-Cöthen, producing suites, concertos, sonatas for various instruments, and a set of clavichord preludes and fugues. In 1720, Maria Barbara, Bach's wife and the mother of his seven children, died, and the composer soon married Anna Magdalena, a young singer who provided her spouse not only with great support and understanding, but also with thirteen more children.

When he was 30, Bach accepted the position of Cantor of St. Thomas' Church in Leipzig, one of the most significant musical post. He married Anna Magdalena, the school and served as music director, composer, choirmaster, and organist of St. Thomas' Church. In this post, Bach produced monumental musical masterworks, though he was occupied by the needs of his large family and circle of friends and by the tasks of a busy professional life. He also suffered ongoing struggles with the officials of town, school, and church, who never recognized that they were dealing with one of the greatest musical geniuses of all time. The St. Matthew Passion, which has been called "the most noble and inspired treatment of its subject in the whole range of music," displays Bach's mastery of musical and instrumental techniques in a wide variety of musical forms, but remains consistent throughout in spiritual feeling. Bach makes frequent use of musical illustration ("tone painting") to enhance the meaning of the text, and also employs abundant tenu, to be performed in the spirit of the time and the actual performance. He also includes in his Passion the most important musical innovation of his time, the revolutionary use of the cymbals, which were previously unknown in the Western classical tradition. Bach's use of the cymbals is intended to underscore the dramatic impact of the text, and to add to the overall effect of the Passion. The Passion is indeed sublime and the text is immensely powerful emotionally, but it is the way in which Bach combines the music of the Passion with the text that distinguishes the St. Matthew Passion as the greatest sacred work ever composed. If you follow your translations, you will be better able to understand the story, and you will also gain deeper insight into the genius of Johann Sebastian Bach.

Our Soloists
WESLEY ROGERS divides his busy singing career between operas and oratorio performances. Wesley has included performances of Mendelssohn's Elijah, Handel's Messiah, Bach's Magnificat, Haydn's Creation, Honegger's King David, Kurt Weill's Seven Deadly Sins, and the world premiere of Havemeyer's Seattle. Wesley has appeared with the Seattle Choral Company, the Seattle Symphony Chorale, the Seattle Symphony, the Cascadian Chorale, the Bremerton Symphony, and Belle Arte Concerts. In March 2003, Wesley performed the role of Damon in Handel's Messiah. Wesley is an accomplished composer of Sacred Music. His operatic stage he was most recently seen in the role of Martin in Valley Center for the Arts' production of Copland's The Tender Land. Summer 2002 found Wesley returning to the Lake Champlain Bach festival where he performed the role of Eustazio in Mozart's Bach and Basilio. He performed the role of Laurie in Mark Adamo's Little Women at the Caballito festival of Contemporary Music in Santa Cruz, California. Shown after most of his operas, the Northwest, Wesley made his Seattle Opera debut in 2001 as Mephisto in Britten's Billy Budd. He returned the next season as the Fourth Jev in Strauss' Salome. Wesley has also performed roles with companies including Opera Memphis, Washington East Opera, Olympian Opera, Seattle Community Outreach Productions, and the University of Washington Opera Theatre. He recently completed his Master of Music degree from the University of Washington.

Bass-baritone MICHAEL DELOS has won critical acclaim for his performances in a diverse repertoire of over three dozen operas and oratorios. His most recent roles include Le Nozze di Figaro and Don Giovanni, Olin Biltz in Floyd's Susannah and Nick Shadow in Stravinsky's Rake's Progress — the role of his European debut with L'Opera de Monte Carlo, Monaco. He performed the role of Pater June in Donizetti's Lucia in 1990 and is a welcome guest artist with Vancouver (BC) Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, Seattle Opera, Opera Utah, Portland Opera and Hawaii Opera Theater. A highly respected concert artist, Mr. DeLos has appeared with many major symphony orchestras, including those of Detroit, Tokyo, Osaka, Seattle, Calgary, Edmonton, Oregon, Sacramento and Spokane.

JESSICA ROBINS MILANESE, lyric coloratura soprano, is a magnetic performer who brings a natural ground to her characters and to a variety of opera roles both on and off the stage. Praised by the Seattle Times as a singer "vocally vibrant and admirably graceful...even under fire," she is a versatile artist, comfortable on the opera, concert, musical theatre, and even pops stage! Recently, Jessica performed the roles of Héro (Bastille & Béarnol), Bone (The Enführung aus dem Serail) and Lucy (The Telephone) all with the Seattle Opera. In recent operatic roles include Norma (Don Pasquale), Susanna (Le Nozze di Figaro) and Marie (Daughter of the Regiment) and Zerlina (Don Giovanni) which she performed with the 2005 Astoria Music Festival where she was named winner of the Astoria Music Festival Vocal Competition. As a preview artist for the Seattle Opera Guild, Jessica has sung the roles of Olympia (Les Contes d'Hoffmann) and Nerina (Tall稠), and received a Seattle Young Artists Program in 2004. She performed the role of Pamina in their adaptation of The Magic Flute and returned as a guest artist following the sale of the last baritona in their production of Le Nozze di Figaro. On the concert stage, Jessica has performed as a soloist with the Bremerton Symphony, Orchestra Seattle, Northwest Sinfonietta, the Yakima Symphony and the Olympia Chamber Orchestra. Jessica is an alumna of the Seattle Opera Young Artist Program and the Seattle Opera Young Artist Program in 2004. She performed the role of Pamina in their adaptation of The Magic Flute and returned as a guest artist the following season to sing the role of Barbarina in their production of Le Nozze di Figaro. On the concert stage, Jessica has performed as a soloist with the Bremerton Symphony, Orchestra Seattle, Northwest Sinfonietta, the Yakima Symphony and the Olympia Chamber Orchestra. Jessica is an alumna of the Seattle Opera Young Artist Program and the Seattle Opera Young Artist Program in 2004. She performed the role of Pamina in their adaptation of The Magic Flute and returned as a guest artist the following season to sing the role of Barbarina in their production of Le Nozze di Figaro. On the concert stage, Jessica has performed as a soloist with the Bremerton Symphony, Orchestra Seattle, Northwest Sinfonietta, the Yakima Symphony and the Olympia Chamber Orchestra. Jessica is an alumna of the Seattle Opera Young Artist Program and the Seattle Opera Young Artist Program in 2004. She performed the role of Pamina in their adaptation of The Magic Flute and returned as a guest artist the following season to sing the role of Barbarina in their production of Le Nozze di Figaro.

MELISSA PLAGEMANN, mezzo-soprano, performs frequently throughout the Pacific Northwest, and has appeared with several Pacific Northwest companies including the Seattle Opera, Tacoma Opera, and NOISE, among others. Highlights of the 2005-2006 season for Ms. Plagemann include Hansel in Humperdinck's Hansel and Gretel with Kitsap Opera, and Penelope in scenes from Monteverdi's Il Ritorno d'Ulisse with the Seattle Early Music Guild's Accademia d'Amore (led by acclaimed lutenist Stephen Stubbs). Concert engagements this season included appearances with Seattle Opera, the Seattle Chorale of Oregon and Bach's Cantata still the Town Hall Bach Festival. In March of 2005, she appeared with the Seattle Symphony in Benaroya Hall, singing the title role in several recent selections from Cantus. Other writing in women's performances have included Bach's Johannes Passion and Magnificat, Vivaldi's Gloria, and Handel's Messiah. Ms. Plagemann is also an enthusiastic and sought-after performer of early music with the Seattle Baroque Ensemble. She is dedicated to performing the works of living composers, including Sonic Lab, 16 visions/Fisher Ensemble, and the Esotico vocal ensemble. She is a founding member of the Seattle New Music Ensemble, and will represent the opportunity to perform several staples of 20th century repertoire, including Schönböck's Pierrot Lunaire and John Cage's Aria. Awards for Ms. Plagemann include first prizes in the Seattle Women's Lied Festival and the Seattle Gilbert and Sullivan Society's annual competition. She holds degrees in music from the University of Victoria, Canada, and Indiana University in Bloomington.
and the two choruses play the parts of the people of Jesus' day in the fervently composed and, when they sing, the incomparable choral (hymn tune) settings, they represent the congregation of Bach's time as they ponder the implications of Christ's Passion for themselves as a church community. The life and death of Jesus that is the subject of each aria that comment upon the narrative dominates the entire work. Following the musical and dramatic elements of the narrative with this in mind will both help to clarify the progressions in the work, and to explain some of the pieces.

The opening and closing choruses of Part One each contain a chorale melody sung by a choir of treble voices. In the first chorus, a tremendous chorale-fantasy whose painfully prevailing bass line, constantly changing its harmonic course, all of humankind is called to participate in the Passion story. Over its dialogue text (and incredibly complex musical counterpoint), Bach presents the chorale tune, "O Lamb of God," an emotional counterpart to the tragedy that follows.

A dramatic recitative begins the "Last Supper" portion of the Passion. Note that Jesus' words are always accompanied by a sequence of strings in St. Matthew's Passion, but the practice is descended directly from earlier sacred works, such as the Seven Last Words, by Heinrich Schütz.

As this section continues, Bach contrasts the chorale that asks that Christ's sacrifice has come to an end, the one that describes the elders, scibels, and priests suggesting that Jesus was not killed during the feast of the Passover, then follow descriptions of the woman anointing Jesus with expensive ointment, the disciples disputing among themselves, and Jesus' rebuke of the disciples for their criticism. The ensuing alto recitative and aria complete the section with deeply personal comments on the preceding actions.

In a gentle chorus, Bach recalls the moment where the Passion feast will be celebrated. The mood of his answer is in direct contrast with that of the chorus. He says that this will be brief, this, of course, Judas has already done. The disciples now are 11, and 11 it is when Judas betrays Jesus. Bach sets the word "Lord" exactly eleven times, leaving the question from the twelfth disciple, Judas the betrayer, for the next recitative. Judas asks Jesus if he is to be sent first. The grievallel that follows contains many canons and is reminiscent of the chorale melody. In Part One's opening chorus, questions from Choir II interrupt the music sung by Choir I. Here, the crowd is more represented by the words of Jesus, "Barabbas!" This exclamation is immediately followed by the "Crucify Him!" chorus, which is a fugatta (short fugula) with a jagged subject that describes tonally the ugliness of the crown and redwood. The following soprano recitative and aria hold the heart of the entire Passion: "For love of me, I am dying." This aria's only accompanying instruments are obbligato flute and two more accompanied by the weeping of the believer's heart. The soldiers now and a tranquil mood is established, the Evangelist interrupts and the crown repeats the "Crucify Him!" chorus, this time a whole step higher in pitch, as the chaotic crowd's hysteria and the reproofing of Pilate again concludes the Passion.

Théfollowing soprano recitative and aria hold the heart of the entire Passion: "For love of me, I am dying." This aria's only accompanying instruments are obbligato flute and two more accompanied by the weeping of the believer's heart. The soldiers now and a tranquil mood is established, the Evangelist interrupts and the crown repeats the "Crucify Him!" chorus, this time a whole step higher in pitch, as the chaotic crowd's hysteria and the reproofing of Pilate again concludes the Passion.
and the two choirs play the parts of the people of Jesus' day in the first half of the piece, and, with a new sense of incomparable chorale (hymn tune) settings, they represent the congregation of Bach's day as they ponder the implications of Christ's Passion for themselves as a church community. The "life" of the Passion is always there in the chorale, and the chorale that comment upon the narrative" dominates the entire work. Following the musical and dramatic elements of the narrative with this in mind will help both to clarify the progressions in the work and to explain some of the pieces.

The opening and closing choruses of Part One each contain a chorale melody sung by a choir of treble voices. In the first chorus, a tremendous chorale fantasia whose painfully rocking bass line in an apparent march, all of humankind is called to participate in the Passion story. Over its dialogue text (and some incredibly complex musical counterpoint), Bach presents the chorale tune, "O Lamb of God" as an emotional counterpart to the tragedy that follows.

A dramatic recitative begins the "Last Supper" portion of the Passion. Note that Jesus' words are always accompanied by a chorale as a comment on strings in St. Matthew's Passion, but the practice is descended directly from earlier sacred works, such as the Seven Last Words, by Heinrich Schütz.

As this section continues, Bach contrasts the chorale that asks what crime Jesus has committed with the one that describes the elders, scribes, and priests suggesting that Jesus not be killed during the feast of the Passover. Then follow descriptions of the woman anointing Jesus with expensive ointment, the discussion of the silver pieces, and Jesus' rebuke of the disciples for their criticism. The ensuing alto recitative and aria complete the section with deeply personal comments on the preceding actions.

In a gentle chorale aria, the scene is set where the Passion feast will be celebrated. The mood of His answer is again in direct contrast with that of the chorale. He says that one of them will betray him, this, of course, Judas has already done. The disciples now ask, "Is it I, Lord?" When Jesus sets the word "Lord" exactly eleven leaves, taking the question from the twelfth disciple, Judas the betrayer, for the next recitative. Judas asks, if His question facing the question differently. Bach builds upon this distinction, and the first time that the actual betrayal scene occurs later in the work, in which Judas will once again Jesus as "Rabbi."

Next over supplanted. The real aria sung by Jesus in the entire work. Accompanied by the strings, is one of the most beautiful moments in the work. After the soprano recitativo and aria, which comment on Jesus' words, comes one of the most descriptive of Jesus' recitatives: the upward-moving scalar structure, which starts in the cello part and ends in the Evangelist's lines as Jesus and his disciples ascend the Mount of Olives. Bach scatters the sheep with a very spiritual and meaningful accompaniment that takes a sober turn at the end of the section.

Next comes an illustration of Jesus' use of tone to make a philosophical point. The joyful chorale extolling the virtues of the Savior/Shepherd is in E Major. Immediately follows Jesus' declaration that he will be absolutely faithful to Jesus whatever happens, and Jesus' prediction that Peter will deny Him three times. The following chorale, "I will stand here beside Thee," is set one-half step lower, signifying the personal loss human mind must entertain in the exactness of the word "stand." The next accompanied recitative and aria feature a solo tenor paired with a chorale melody sung by Chor II. The cello-bass repeated-note pattern symbolizes the trembling, lomented heart, while the structural line in the following section is the job of the Evangelist to maintain the drama's taunt. Bach moves the story forward by keeping the Evangelist's interjections brief and energetic. The chorale that ends this section is particularly bittersweet.

Next comes Peter's denial of Jesus; Peter is asked by two individuals, and then by a group of people, if he knows who this man (Jesus) is. All three times Peter's reply is "no," and after the third time, he is driven out of the city. The piece was written, Peter's last line, "I know man not," and the following line, "And immediately the cock crowed," were identically written notes. The Evangelist's words, "And Peter went forth weeping bitterly," and the ensuing alto aria with violin obbligato ("obbligato" referring to the fact that this decorative counter-aria is indeed essential to the integrity of the music), are two of the most intimate moments in the work. Through this foreboding of Peter's inner torment, the moderate movement for a large orchestra in A minor (probably intended to return the thirty silver pieces, his betrayal fee, to the High Priests, but his attempt is in vain; the priests tell him that in no way can he absolve himself of the evil that he has done. In despair, he attempts the same crime as Judas, and resists death. A bass solo obbligato follows, this one contrasting strongly with the alto aria mentioned above. Jesus' trial proceeds. Pilate asks the crowd which prisoner is to be released. The crowd chooses "Jesus," and Jesus is released. The people are then driven out by a chorale called "Barabba!" This chorale's exclamation is immediately followed by the "Crucify Him!" chorale, which is a fugal (short fugue) with a jagged subject that describes tellingly the ugliness of the crowd and Jesus' removal from their sight and our own wretchedness and the even greater depth of Jesus' redemptive love.

In the Passion's original liturgical context, the motet, "Bach's sublime reprise of the tenor chorale," Now thank we all our God," in which praise is rendered for God's unfailing goodness, would have followed the presentation of the Passion. Thus the Good Friday worship experience of Bach's listeners would have concluded with Thanksgiving for the glorious redemption of humanity accomplished by Jesus' death. They would have returned to Easter morning to participate in the final act of the Holy Week drama—the Resurrection—and we may join them if we so choose.

Notes by Lorette Knowles, George Shangay, and Gay Verellen
The Passion According to St. Matthew
by Johann Sebastian Bach
Written in Leipzig during the late 1720s, J. S. Bach's St. Matthew Passion is considered one of the finest works in the arts of words, strings, and continuo, two SAB choruses, children's chorus, and six soloists.

Biographical Notes:
Bach was born in Eisenach on March 21, 1685, into a family that had produced church and town-band musicians for over 150 years. Orphaned at ten, he was raised by an older brother, and apprenticed to a local Eisenach music master. Bach began his professional career at 18, when he was appointed organist at a church in Arnstadt, and at 23, he became court organist and chamber musician to the Duke of Weimar. During his nine years in this post (1704-1727), he gained fame as an organ virtuoso and composer. From 1727 to 1733, Bach served the prince of Anhalt-Cöthen, producing suites, concertos, sonatas for various instruments, and his famous Goldberg Variations. In 1729, Maria Barbara, Bach's wife and the mother of his seven children, died, and the composer soon married Anna Magdalena, a young singer who provided her spouse not only with great support and understanding, but also with thirteen more children. When he was 38, Bach accepted the position of Cantor at St. Thomas' Church in Leipzig, one of the most significant musical posts in Germany, and served as music director, composer, choirmaster, and organist of St. Thomas' Church. In this post, Bach produced monumental musical masterworks, though he was occupied by the care of his large family and circle of friends and by the tasks of a very busy professional life. He also suffered ongoing struggles with the officials of town, school, and church, who never recognized that they were dealing with one of the greatest musical geniuses of all time. He died July 28, 1750, leaving an insignificant worldly estate, but bequeathing incalculable musical riches to succeeding generations.

Historical Notes:
The tradition of presenting on Good Friday one of the four Gospel narratives which describe Jesus' suffering ("passion") and death dates back some 1000 years, and continues today in most liturgical churches. According to church tradition, texts from the Gospels can be chanted or sung only by members of the clergy. Lay people, however, have traditionally been allowed to participate in the presentation of the Passion narratives, and it was this that allowed more elaborate musical settings of Passion texts to develop. From medieval times, these texts were chanted, a medium voice for the narrative role of Jesus ("Evangelist"), a lower voice singing those of Jesus, and higher voices singing the words spoken by the Jews. By the late 1400s, Passion settings appeared in which the simple plainchant began to be embellished by the addition of more vocal lines to create harmonies. In the 12th century, Passions began to receive more operatic treatments: orchestral accompaniments were included, and the biblical passages began to be paraphrased or expanded by insertions of free poetic texts. J. S. Bach composed five settings of the Passion story, only two of which survive: the St. John Passion of 1723, and the St. Matthew Passion, in which the zenith of the "oratorio-style" Passion composition was reached. The work is a dramatic musical setting of Martin Luther's German translation of the 26th and 27th chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel, with 28 additional texts for C-levels of C major, in especially for the Passion by Picander, one of Bach's frequent collaborators. The composition of the work seems to have extended over a number of years, and appears not to have been completed even by the time of the Passion performance on Good Friday of 1729, though many of the parts to be the work's first presentation (it might have been performed for the first time on Good Friday, April 11, 1727; it was certainly performed on April 15, 1729, and on March 30, 1735, and it might have been performed in 1740 as well). In any event, the monumental masterpiece, as it has come down to us in an exquisite autograph full score and a complete set of parts corresponding to the 1736 version, achieved its final form through a series of revisions and rearrangements. Though highly popular today, the St. Matthew Passion descended into the grave of oblivion after 1740, and remained thus entombed for nearly a century until Mendelssohn rescued and revised it in 1824.

The St. Matthew Passion, which has been called "the most noble and inspired treatment of its subject in the whole range of music," displays Bach's mastery of vocal and instrumental techniques in a wide variety of musical forms, but remains consistent throughout in spiritual feeling. Bach makes frequent use of musical illustration ("tone painting") to enhance the meaning of the text, and also employs abundant tonal, thematic, and homorhythmic development as the least violence to the aesthetic beauty of the music. The more musically- and theologically-sophisticated listeners of Bach's day would have understood and appreciated such subtleties, but they remain hidden from the casual listener who no longer speak this "musical language." The music of the Passion is indeed sublime and the text is immensely powerful emotionally, but it is the way in which Bach combines the music with the text that distinguishes the St. Matthew Passion as the greatest sacred work ever composed. If you follow your translation, you will be better able to understand the story, and you will also gain deeper insight into the genius of Johann Sebastian Bach.

Musical commentary:
The St. Matthew Passion consists of approximately 24 scenes, repeated in canto, which are divided into three parts, a pair of powerful choirs. Throughout the massive work, Bach employs double chorus and orchestra to produce highly dramatic choral dialogue and strongly compelling crowd scenes. As the story of Jesus' final days unfolds, the solo tenor "Evangelist" serves as the narrator; the soloists sometimes portray the various individual characters in the drama, and at other times, in their arias, they represent the soul of the faithful Christian believer who meditates on the spiritual meanings of the events described.

OUR SOLOISTS
WESLEY ROGERS divides his busy singing career between operas and concert programs. His operatic roles include performances of Mendelssohn's Elijah, Handel's Messiah, Bach's Magnificat, Haydn's Creation, Handel's King David, Kurt Weill's Seven Deadly Sins, and the world premiere of Hafen's Large. Wesley also appears with the Seattle Opera Chorus Company, the Seattle Symphony, the Cascadian Chorale, the Bremerton Symphony, and the Bella Arte Concerts. In March, 2005, Wesley performed the role of Damon in Handel and Handel's Messiah. Wesley's operatic stage was most recently seen in the role of Max in Sun Valley Center for the Arts' production of Copland's The Tender Land. Summer 2002 found Wesley returning to the Lake Chelan Bach Festival where he performed the role of Bastien in Mozart's Bastien and Bastiana. He performed the role of Laurie in Mark Adamo's Little Women at the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music in Santa Cruz, California. Shortly after moving to the Pacific Northwest, Wesley made his Seattle Opera debut in 2001 as Masetto in Donizetti's Il Figaro. He returned the next season as the Fourth Jeeves in Strauss' Salome. Wesley has also performed roles with companies including Opera Memphis, Washington East Opera, and the Bremerton Symphony. His Seattle Community Outreach Productions, and the University of Washington Opera Theatre. He recently completed his Master of Music degree from the University of Washington.

Bass-baritone MICHAEL DELOS has won critical acclaim for his performances in a diverse repertoire of over three dozen operas and oratorios in concert, including the roles of Figaro (Le Nozze di Figaro and Don Giovanni), Olin Bilton in Floyd's Susannah and Nick Shadow in Stravinsky's Rake's Progress—the role of his European debut with L'Opera de Monte Carlo, Monaco. He returned the following season in June 1992 to be a welcome guest artist with Vancouver (BC) Opera. In 1993, Mr. Delos performed the role of Figaro, opera and operetta, with orchestras throughout the country. In 1994 and 1995, he appeared with the Seattle Opera Orchestra in Seattle Opera, Opera Utah, Portland Opera and Hawaii Opera Theater. A highly respected concert artist, Mr. Delos has appeared with many major orchestra companies, including those of Detroit, Tokyo, Osaka, Seattle, Calgary, Edmonton, Oregon, Sacramento and Spokane.

JESSICA ROBINS MILANESE, lyric coloratura soprano, is a magnetic performer who brings a natural ground to her characters and lends her voice to both comic and dramatic roles. Her range and the color of her voice is well suited to the comedy of Mozart. Brought up in the San Francisco Bay Area, Jessica studied at the University of California at Berkeley and received her bachelor of music degree from the University of California at Los Angeles. She made her professional debut in 2002 as Rosina in Rossini's Barber of Seville with the West Bay Opera in Benicia and has since performed with more than a dozen companies in the United States and abroad. She has sung a wide range of roles from Rossini to Strauss, with a particular focus on the characters of Rossini and Mozart. Jessica has performed with the Seattle Opera, Portland Opera, Utah Festival Opera, and Tacoma Opera, and has served with the symphonies of Seattle, Vancouver, Spokane, Everett, Bellevue, Yakima, Penticton, Great Falls and San Diego. She received her bachelor of music degree from the University of California at Berkeley and her master of music degree from the University of Southern California.

Tenor STEPHEN WALL has appeared frequently with Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers since 1995. He has been a member of the Seattle Opera Chorus Company, Seattle Opera, Portland Opera, Utah Festival Opera, and Tacoma Opera, and has served with the symphonies of Seattle, Vancouver, Spokane, Everett, Bellevue, Yakima, Penticton, Great Falls and San Diego. He received his bachelor of music degree from the University of Southern California. He recently appeared as Le Nain in Rossini's Le Comte Ory with the Seattle Opera and Symphony, Tacoma Opera, Skagit Opera, the Seattle Choral Company, Kitsap Symphony, and NOISE, among others. He has performed in the 2001-2002 season for Ms. Plagemann in Hansel in Humperdinck's Hansel and Gretel with Kutsay Opera, and the Penelope in scenes from Monteverdi's L Ritorno d'Ulisse with the Seattle Early Music Guild's Accademia d'Amore (led by acclaimed lutenist Stephen Stubbs). Concert engagements this season included appearances with the Seattle Choral Society, the Bremerton Symphony, the Cascadian Chorale of Oregon and Bach's Cantata still at the Town Hall Bach Festival. In March, 2005, she appeared with the Seattle Symphony in Benaroya Hall, singing the title role in the little known scenes from Cavalleria. Other works in Seattle performances have included Bach's Johannes Passion and Magnificat, Vivaldi's Gloria, and Handel's Messiah. Ms. Plagemann is also an enthusiastic and sought-after performer of Baroque and early music, with several recordings dedicated to performing the works of living composers, including Sonic Lab, 16 visions/Fisher Ensemble, and the Esotetc ras vocal ensemble. She is a founding member of the Seattle Vokalensemble, an all-female a cappella ensemble, providing an opportunity to perform several staples of 20th-century repertoire, including Schönb erg's Pierrot Lunaire and John Cage's 4′33″. Awards for Ms. Plagemann include first prizes in the 2003 Seattle Opera Choral Audition and the Seattle Gilbert and Sullivan Society's annual competition. She holds degrees in music from the University of Victoria, Canada, and Indiana University in Bloomington.

As a preview artist for the Seattle Opera Guild, Jessica has sung the roles of Olympia (Les Contes d'Hoffmann) and Nerina (The Coronation of Poppea), as well as the Seattle Opera Young Artist Program's 2004. She performed the role of Pamina in their adaptation of The Magic Flute and returned as a guest artist following the role of Barbarina in their production of Le Nozze di Figaro. On the concert stage, Jessica has performed as a soloist with the Bremerton Symphony, Orchestra Seattle, Northwest Sinfonietta, the Yakkima Symphony and the Olympia Chamber Orchestra. Jessica has performed in Seattle's summer festival Haydn's The Creation and Liezenen in J.S. Bach's Coffee Cantata. Jessica grew up in Missoula, Montana, received her Bachelor of Music from the University of Colorado, Boulder and her Master of Music from William Eddy of Tacoma, Washington for the past nine years.
Conductor and Music Director GEORGE SHARGROW founded the Seattle Chamber Singers in 1969 and Orchestra Seattle (formerly Broadway Symphony) in 1979. A musician with a broad range of skills, Mr. Shargrow received his musical training at the University of Washington, where he studied conducting, baroque performance practice, harpsichord, and composition under Rudolf Nureyev, singing Mahler's "Symphony of a Thousand." His role as performer and conductor of L'Arpeggiata and Mr. Nureyev's dance. The regional winner of San Francisco Opera's 1988 Merola Opera Program, he made his Seattle Opera debut as the Corporal in Donzetti's Daughter of the Regiment.

RONNIE FULLERTON is a prominent member of Seattle's multi-locale cultural leaders. He is accomplished on a variety of historical stringed instruments: bass and treble violins, da gamba, baroque and modern violin, arabic ud, vielle, rebec, and psaltery. In addition, he composes, sings (early, cyclic, and sephardic/arabic), and teaches music. A founding member of La Lira and a core member of Baroque Northwest, Ronn has also done numerous recitals for the Early Music Guild and was a long time member of the Tacoma Symphony. An engaging and engaging educator, Ronnie is known for his innovative teaching style with young people. He is a music specialist for the Tacoma Public Schools and teaches for the Pacific Northwest Viols. Mr. Fullerton can be heard on Le Nuove Musiche's premiere CD, Dolce Desio. Upcoming recording projects include a solo viola da gamba CD, besides Seattle, Ronn has performed in California, Indiana, Oregon, Utah, and Florida. He has appeared in concert with Margaret Tindemans, Mary Springfels, Annalisa Papponio, David Morris, Matthias Maute, Janet See, Lawry Mahonah and Elizabetta, along with his regular collaborators, Kim Pineda, Elizabeth Brown, August Denhard, and Kathy Hansen.

LISA MICHELLE LEWIS holds a master's degree in harpsichord from the University of Washington. She performs frequently with Benevolent Order for Music of the Baroque, and is a member of the Nouveau Musique and the Seattle String Ensemble.

ROBERT KECHELEY was born in Seattle in 1952. The music of Robert Kecheley is familiar to audiences of Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers through the numerous works of this composer that have been premiered by both ensembles. These ranges from arrangements of brief folk songs and hymns to major symphonic and choral works, including the delightful Symphony No. 2 ("Ferdinand the Bull"), a setting of Psalm 100 for organ, chorus and orchestra (performed in September of 2000 by OSSCS at Benaroya Hall) and a flute concerto (premiered by Jeffrey Cohon and Orchestra Seattle in February of 2002). Mr. Kecheley grew up in Seattle and attended the University of Washington, where he studied harpsichord performance with Sylvia Kind and composition with Kenneth Bershoff, Robert Suderberg, William O. Smith and others. A member of the Seattle Chamber Singers from the early days of the ensemble, he not only sang in the chorus but played oboe and keyboard. Mr. Kecheley currently serves as principal harpsichordist for Orchestra Seattle.

After George Shargrow returned from a South America/Antarctica Cruise a year and a half ago, many have asked if he would consider doing that cruise again. It involves sailing from Santiago, Chile around South America and Cape Horn, south to Antarctica for scenic cruising for three days, and back north along the east coast of South America to Rio by way of the Falkland Islands and Buenos Aires. Included with the amazing cruise are ten sessions on classical music topics with George. These feature lively discussions, musical examples, and lots of amusement and education. Call George at 206 528-1076 for more information, or email shargrow@msn.com. Departure is early January, 2008.

Seattle Children's Chorus is in its 18th season celebrating the joy of music! The Chorus performs an outstanding variety of sacred and historical choral literature that inspires each chorister to strive for vocal excellence. The lives of over 200 choristers between the ages of 7 and 18 are enriched through the vocal and choral training offered in four progressive choirs. In addition to forming arts in Seattle and Everett areas, Arioso, the advanced treble choir, has sung throughout the Pacific Northwest and beyond. The choir has toured Great Britain, Scandinavia, Central Europe, and Canada. Arioso has sung at regional and national conventions of the American Choral Directors Association and has been a featured choir at the American International Children's Choir Festival in Eugene, Oregon and the Fort Warden Children's Choir Festival in Port Townsend, Washington. Kris Mason is the Director.
ST. MATTHEW PASSION

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 6, 2007 — 7:00 PM
FIRST FREE METHODIST CHURCH

Wesley Rogers, Evangelist
Michael Delos, Jesus
Jessica Robins-Milanese, soprano
Melissa Plagemann, mezzo-soprano
Stephen Wall, tenor
Brian Box, baritone
Ronnie Fullerton, viola da gamba
Lisa Lewis, harpsichord
Robert Kechter, organ

SEATTLE CHILDREN’S CHORUS
Kris Mason, director

ORCHESTRA SEATTLE
SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS
George Shangrow, conductor

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685–1750)
St. Matthew Passion, BWV 244

Part One
— Intermission —

Part Two

Please disconnect signal watches, pages and cellular telephones. Thank you. Use of cameras and recording equipment is not permitted in the concert hall.