MESSIAH

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2009 - 3:00 PM
FIRST FREE METHODIST CHURCH

Linda Tsatsanis, soprano
Melissa Plagemann, mezzo-soprano
Stephen Wall, tenor
Barry Johnson, baritone
Robert Keckley, harpsichord

ORCHESTRA SEATTLE
SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS
George Shangrow, harpsichord/conductor

GEORG FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685-1759)

Symphony
Accompanist: “Comfort ye”
Air: “Every valley shall be exalted”
Chorus: “And the glory of the Lord”
Accompanist: “Thus saith the Lord of hosts”
Air: “But who may abide”
Chorus: “And He shall purify”
Accompanist: “Behold, a Virgin shall conceive”
Air and Chorus: “O thou that tellest”
Accompanist: “For behold, darkness”
Air: “The people that walked in darkness”

Intermission -

Chorus: “Behold the Lamb of God”
Air: “He was despised”
Chorus: “Surely He hath borne our griefs”
Air: “And with His stripes”
Chorus: “All we, like sheep”
Accompanist: “That they see Him”
Chorus: “He is trusted in God”
Accompanist: “Thy rebuke hath broken his heart”
Air: “Behold, and see if there be among”
Accompanist: “Why do the nations”
Air: “But Thou didst not leave”
Chorus: “Lift up your heads”

Intermission -

Air: “I know that my Redeemer liveth”
Chorus: “Since by man came death”
Accompanist: “Behold, I tell you a mystery”
Air: “The trumpet shall sound”
Accompanist: “Then shall be brought to pass”

Chorus: “For unto us a child is born”
Pastoral Symphony
Recitative: “There were shepherds”
Accompanist: “And lo, the angel”
Chorus: “O world, in the highest”
Air: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion”
Recitative: “Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened”
Air: “He shall feed His flock”
Chorus: “His yoke is easy”

Please disconnect signal watches, pages and cellular telephones. Thank you. Use of cameras and recording equipment is not permitted in the concert hall.
Handel was born in Halle, Germany, on February 23, 1685, and died in London on April 14, 1759. He composed Messiah between August 22 and September 14 of 1741. The oratorio was first heard in Dublin on November 4, 1742, under the direction of the composer. In addition to a quartet of vocal soloists and choir, the work is scored for 2 oboes, 2 trumpets, timpani, harpsichord and strings.

Dr. Charles Burney, an 18th-century English music historian, wrote that Handel's oratorio, Messiah, "has been heard in all parts of the kingdom with increasing reverence and delight; and the hungry, clothed the naked, fostered the orphan and enriched succeeding managers of Oratorios more than any single musical production in this or any other country." We believe that your musical experience will be enriched, and that you will hear with special delight our unique interpretation of one of the most famous of all musical compositions.

George Frideric Handel, renowned in his day as an organist and as a highly prolific writer of Italian operas and English oratorios, was born in Germany in 1685 about a month before J.S. Bach. He received his musical training in Italy, and later became 18th-century England's "national composer." Between February and November 1741, Handel, suffering at the age of 56 from various ailments, both financial and physical, withdrew increasingly from public life. At some point that year, the composer received from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and the governors of Dublin's three major charitable institutions an invitation to travel to that city to aid the charitable institutions through the performance of music. Handel was well known in Dublin as a church-music composer, and his works were often played there to benefit charities. It may thus have been his invitation that provided the incentive for Handel to compose "a new sacred Oratorio." In July of 1741, Charles Jennings, who was responsible for the texts of Handel's oratorios Israel in Egypt and Solomon, gave the strengthening Handel the libretto of Messiah, a compilation of biblical texts from both the Old and New Testaments.

On the 22nd of August, Handel began to set Jennings' text to music. He composed the first part of his oratorio (which deals with the prophecy of Christ's coming and his nativity) in six days, the second part (which describes Jesus' suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension, the spread of his gospel, the presence of the heathen, and the vision of the ultimate triumph of the gospel in the establishment of God's kingdom) in nine days, and the third part (which celebrates the gift of resurrection and eternal life offered to all through Christ's victory over death) in six more days, with two or three additional days for completing the orchestration. Regarding Handel's state of mind during Messiah's composition, biographer Jonathan Keates observes in his 1992 book, Handel: The Man and Music, that "etherealized visions of the elderly master refusing food, weeping into the semimuffles and having angelic hallucinations are mostly moonshine, Mash and writer Christopher Hogwood admits that "the turbulent state of Handel's manuscript; the blots, erasures and emendations that litter the page right to the final bars give enough evidence of tempestuous creation to tempt any romantic imagination. But there is little doubt, in any event, that this enduring masterpiece, completed in 24 days on September 14, 1741, will remain among the greatest compositional feats in the history of music.

In the autumn of 1741, Handel accepted the invitation to visit Dublin, arriving there on November 18 with the completed score of Messiah in his traveling bags, but it was not until April 13, 1742, that the work was premiered. Seven hundred people were able to squeeze into Dublin's Musick Hall in Fishamble-street to hear the work performed by the choir of Dublin's two cathedrals (not more than forty men and boys) and the string band (reinforced occasionally by trumpets and timpani — solo and bassoon parts were written later), all directed from the keyboard by Mr. Handel himself. The work created a sensation: "Words are wanting to express the exquisite Delight it afforded to the admiring crowded Audience," extolled Faulkner's Journal, "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." Handel divided his proceeds (about £400) as did the other performers, among Dublin's three most important charities.

Messiah is unique among Handel's works, being his only biblical oratorio using texts from the New Testament, and his "Christian-contemplative" oratorio. Although the text is not a dramatic narrative but an epic-lyric poem celebrating Christian redemption, Handel's musical approach in setting Jennings' libretto was decidedly dramatic. The work's three parts recall the three acts of Italian operas, and the oratorio is indeed a piece designed by a seasoned operatic professional to "entertain," in the best sense of the word, listeners at a concert room, not chiefly to instruct or edify a congregation or to be used in any sort of worship setting. Handel synthesizes the best elements of the three musical traditions in which he was steeped: the Italian, the German, and the English. He makes use of Italian forms of musical expression, borrowing, rearranging, and transforming into "duet-choruses" (such as "And he shall pour out his spirit upon all flesh") some passages from his own Italian love duets. In the "Pastoral Symphony" (entitled Pha) that introduces the story of Handel's alludes to the music of the lilac trees, the country bagpipers who descend the Italian mountains during the Christmas season to play in village streets, Handel employs German musical ideas, particularly in the music describing Jesus' suffering and death, where the jagged dotted rhythms and forceful harmonies have a particularly German expressive quality, as in the "consumption march;" the "Chorus," melodic fragments echoing the German chorale "Wachtet auf" may be heard in "The king's majesty of this world" and "In and he shall reign for ever and ever." In this last Chorus," melodic staccato, clear fanfare-like choruses, and text-setting display the PART I

Symphony

Accompagnato Comfort ye, comfort me your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem; and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned. The voice of his joy shall be in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Isaiah 40:1-3

Air Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill made low: the crooked straight, and the rough places plain: Isaiah 40:4

Chorus And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken. Isaiah 40:5

Accompagnato Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Yet once, a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come. Nahum 2:6-7

Air The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. Malachi 3:1

Air But who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth? For his fire is like a consuming fire, and stronger than the fire of Jacob. Malachi 3:2

Air And he shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Malachi 3:3

Reclitcative Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel, "God with us". Isaiah 7:14

Air And Chorus O thou, that bringest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain; O thou, that bringest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid: say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Isaiah 40:9

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. Isaiah 60:1

Accompagnato Fear not, for darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. Isaiah 60:2-3

Air And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Isaiah 60:2-3

Chorus The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. Isaiah 9:2

Air For unto you is a child born, unto you is a son given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6

Piata (Pastoral Symphony)

Reclitcative — Accompanato There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. Luke 2:8-9

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. Luke 2:10-11

Reclitcative And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. Luke 2:14

Chorus Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will toward men! Luke 2:13

Air Regioe greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee. Zechariah 9:9-10

Chorus He is the righteous Saviour and he shall speak peace unto the heathen. Zechariah 9:10

Reclitcative Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf be unstopped. Zechariah 9:10

Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. Isaiah 35:3-6

Air He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs of his flock, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. Isaiah 40:11

Come unto him, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and he will give you rest. Matthew 11:28-29

Chorus His yoke is easy, His burden is light. Matthew 11:30

PART II

Chorus Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. John 1:29

Air He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. Isaiah 53:3

Air He gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: he hid not his face from shame and spitting. Isaiah 50:6
Chorus
Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him.
Isaiah 53:4-5

Chorus
And with His stripes we are healed.
Isaiah 53:5

Chorus
All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.
Isaiah 53:6

Accompanist
All they that see Him, laugh Him to scorn: they shoot out their thorns, and shake their thorns, saying,
Psalm 22:7

Chorus
He trusted in God that He would deliver Him: let Him deliver Him, if He delight in Him.
Psalm 22:8

Accompanist
Thy rebuke hath broken His heart: He is full of heaviness: He looked for some to have pity on Him, but there was no man: neither found He any to comfort Him.
Psalms 69:20

Arioso
Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow.
Lamentations 1:12

Accompanist
He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgressions of Thy people was He stricken.
Isaiah 53:8

Air
But Thou didst not leave His soul in hell; nor didst Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption.
Psalm 16:10

Chorus
Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors: and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.
Lift up your heads, O ye gates,... The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory.
Psalms 24:7-10

Refrain
Unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee?
Hebrews 1:5

Chorus
Let all the angels of God worship Him.
Hebrews 1:6

Air
Thou art gone up on High, Thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men: yea, even for thine enemies, that the Lord God might dwell among them.
Psalm 68:18

Chorus
The Lord gave the law; great was the company of the preachers.
Psalm 68:11

Air
How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!
Romans 10:15

Chorus
Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world.
Romans 10:18

Chorus
But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
1 Corinthians 15:57

Air
If God be for us, who can be against us? Romans 8:31
Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth.
Revelation 5:12-14

Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is at the right hand of God, who makes intercession for us.
Romans 8:33-34

VIOLIN
Susan Carpenter
Lauren Daughtery
Manchung Ho
Maria Hunt
Fritz Klein*
Avron Maletzky
Gregor Nilsche
Susan Owens
Stephen Provine**
Theo Schaad
Kenna Smith-Shangrow
Nicoіe Tsong

VIOLA
Katherine McWilliams*
Lorraine Perrin
Andrew Schirmer
Sam Williams
Celio
Valerie Ross
Matthew Wyant*

ORCHESTRA
TRUMPET
Dan Harrington
Janet Young*
BASSOON
Judy Lawrence*
TIMPANI
Daniel Oie
HARPSICHORD
Robert Kechley
George Shangrow

* principal
** concertmaster

SOPRANO
Barb Anderson
Hillary Anderson
Chisa Cugini
Kyla DaReimer
Dana Duraso
Cinda Fleece
Alexandra Heron
Kelli Hood
Jill Kraakmo
Peggy Kurtz
Lisa Woodworth-May
Jana Marlow Music
Kim Sams
Nancy Shasteen
Melissa Thriloway
Liesel von Cleef
Pat Vettersien

ALTO
Jane Blackwell
Pamela Ivesč
Courtney Juhi
Ellen Kasse
Lorellette Knowles
Theodora Letz
Laurie Medill
Paula Rimmer
Julie Akoury Thiel
Ann Thompson
Kristin Zimmermann

TENOR
Ronald Carlson
Ralph Cobb
Alvin Kroon
Jon Lange
Timothy Lunde
Thomas Nesbitt
Vic Royer
Jerry Sams
David Zapolsky

BASS
Stephen Brady
Andrew Danlich
Douglas Durasso
Stephen Keeler
Rob Kline
Dennis Moore
Jeff Thriloway
Skip Vlau
Rick Wycoff
Chorus
Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; We were wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him. Isaiah 53:4-5

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And with His stripes we are healed. Isaiah 53:5

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Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow. Lamentations 1:12

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Refrains
Unto which of the angels did He at any time, that He should be made His Son, that he should be begotten? Hebrews 1:5

Chorus
Let all the angels of God worship Him. Hebrews 1:6

Air
Thou hast not left us in the wilderness; nor given us to the power of the enemy. Psalms 68:18

Chorus
The Lord gave the word: great was the company of the preachers. Psalms 68:11

Air
How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! Romans 10:15

Chorus
Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world. Romans 10:18

Air
Why do the nations so furiously rage together? why do the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His anointed. Psalms 2:1-2

Chorus
Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yokes from us. Psalms 2:3

Refrains
He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn: the Lord shall have them in derision. Psalms 2:4

Air
Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Psalms 2:9

Chorus
Hallelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Hallelujah Revelation 19:6

Accompanist
The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever, Hallelujah! Revelation 11:15

Part III
King of kings, and Lord of Lords, and He shall reign for ever and ever, Hallelujah! Revelation 19:16

Air
I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though worms destroy this body, yet shall I see God. Job 19:25-26

For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep. 1 Corinthians 15:20

Chorus
Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 1 Corinthians 15:21-22

Accompanist
Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. 1 Corinthians 15:51-52

Air
The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 1 Corinthians 15:53-54

Refrains
Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written. Death is swallowed up in victory. 1 Corinthians 15:54

Duet
O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. Romans 6:18

Chorus
O by whose grace we stand? O by whose right we live? We stand by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:57

Air
If God be for us, who can be against us? Romans 8:31

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is at the right hand of God, who makes intercession for us. Romans 8:33-34

Amen. Revelation 5:12-14

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ORCHESTRA
SEATTLE

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SOPRANO
Barb Anderson
Hillary Anderson
Chriss Cugini
Kyla Deitmer
Dana Durasoff
Cinda Ficeke
Alexandra Heron
Kari Hood
Jill Kraakmo
Peggy Kurtz
Lila Woodruff May
Jana Marlow Music
Kia Sams
Nancy Shasteen
Melissa Thrillogy
Liesel von Cleef
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TAMPAI
Daniel Oie

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Robert Kechley
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* principal
** concertmaster
Canadian soprano LINDA TSATSIANIS enjoys an active and diverse career. Hailed as “riveting” [New York Times] and possesses a voice with “remarkable purity” [Seattle Times], Ms. Tsatsiani’s career spans the concert hall, opera stage, and performance in movies and television. Ms. Tsatsiani has appeared as soloist with orchestras such as the Toronto and Indiana Orchestra, Auburn Symphony, and Pacific Baroque Orchestra and has made recent appearances at the Indianapolis, Boston and Bloomington Early Music Festivals. She keeps a demanding performance schedule with the Pacific Northwest in addition to performances around the United States and Canada. Ms. Tsatsiani holds degrees from the University of Toronto and Indiana University. She has a new solo album with Origi Classical. And I Remain: Three Love Stories, and can also be heard on recordings by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and Naxos. Ms. Tsatsiani is a member of Praine & Estes, winners of the 2009 Early Music America Medieval/Renaissance Competition. Currently, Ms. Tsatsiani is living in Seattle where she studies with Joyce Guyer.

MELISSA PLAGEMANN, mezzo-soprano, performs frequently throughout the Pacific Northwest, and has appeared with some of the area’s finest ensembles, including the Seattle Symphony, Tacoma Opera, Orchestra Seattle, Seattle Opera and Utah Opera; the Baroque Choral Ensemble, the Seattle Church Chorus, Kitap Opera, and NOISE among others. Recent opera roles for Ms. Plagemann include Hänsel in Humperdinck’s Hänsel und Gretel; Carmen in semi-staged scenes with the Seattle Symphony; Dorabella in Così fan Tutte; Rosina in Rossini’s II Barbiere di Siviglia; and Niccolau in Offenbach’s Les Contes d’Hoffmann. Equally at home on the concert stage, she has performed in several recent productions of Mozart’s Requiem, as well as Copland’s In the Beginning, and Saint-Saëns’ Christmas Oratorio, among others. Ms. Plagemann has a special interest in music of the Baroque era, and has performed several masterpieces of J.S. Bach, including both Passions, the B Minor Mass and Magnificat in D, as well as several of his Cantatas. She has also been featured at Seattle’s annual Town Hall Bach Marathon in Seattle, singing Bach’s Cantata #18 and J.C. Bach’s solo cantata, Aach, dass ich Wasser gug. Other Baroque oratorio repertoire includes Vivaldi’s Gloria and Magnificat, and the 1610 Vesper of Monteverdi which she will sing with OSSCS this December.

TENOR STEPHEN WALL has appeared frequently with Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers since 1985. He has been featured in leading and supporting roles with Seattle Opera, Portland Opera, Utah Festival Opera, and Tacoma Opera and has soloed with the symphonies of Seattle, Vancouver, Spokane, Everett, Bellevue, Yakima, Pendleton, Great Falls and Sapporo (Japan). Mr. Wall appears on the OSSCS recording of Handel’s Messiah and sings the role of Joes in Seattle Opera’s heralded production of La Fanciulla del West. BARRY JOHNSON, baritone, is a frequent performer in Western Washington, having sung more than a dozen roles with Seattle Opera, most recently Baron Dougal in Verdi’s La Traviata and Antonio in Mozart’s Le Nozze di Figaro. Other roles with Seattle Opera have included Farnadod in Massimo Botti’s Requiem in Andrea Chenier, Prince Orlofsky in Die Freischütz, and Budyn in The Ballad of Baby Doe. Regionally, Mr. Johnson has performed with Portland Opera, Anchorage Opera, Central City Opera, Opera Colorado, Stockton Opera, and Tacoma Opera where some of his roles have included Figaro in The Marriage of Figaro, Papageno in The Magic Flute, Dr. Falke in Die Fledermaus, Scarpia in La Bohème, and Mercutio in Romeo and Juliette. Concert credits include Seattle Symphony, Tacoma Symphony, Northwest Sinfonietta, American Symphony, and Yakima Symphony. Some favorite concert roles with these companies include Off’s Camino Bunch, Brahms’ A German Requiem, Rachmaninoff’s The Bells, Handel’s Messiah, and Faure’s Requiem. Mr. Johnson has served as stage director for Tacoma Opera’s production of Puccini’s Tosca, La Bohème, Rossini’s Le Comte Ory, and Bernstein’s Trouble in Tahiti.

Conductor and Music Director GEORGE SHANGROW founded the Seattle Chamber Singers in 1969 and Orchestra Seattle in 1979. A musician with a broad range of experience, Mr. Shangrow’s Baroque performance practice, harpsichord, and composition at the University of Washington. He began his professional conducting career at age 18 and has appeared as guest conductor with the Seattle Symphony, Northwest Chamber Orchestra, Tacoma Opera, Rudolf Nureyev and Friends, East Texas University Opera, Oregon Symphony and the Sapporo (Japan) Symphony. He has conducted world premieres of six operas and numerous other orchestral and choral works. Mr. Shangrow is a frequent lecturer throughout the Northwest and has served on the faculty of the Seattle Conservatory of Music, where he taught Music History, Conducting, and Literature. He concertizes frequently as part of the Cohon-Shangrow Duo with flutist Jeffrey Cohon. Having toured Europe several times as keyboardist and conductor, he is a sought-after accompanist and has appeared in concert on the piano and harpsichord with many noted soloists and ensembles such as B Trio Grande, the Kronos Quartet, Northwest Chamber Orchestra, and the Seattle Symphony. Seattle music lovers also remember him as a regular announcer on Classical KING-FM and host of Live By George. Mr. Shangrow has recorded for London, Voyage, Edel, Sono Lumin, and Lyman Digital.

SAVE THE DATES:

OSSCS Chamber Music Concert Sunday, January 17, 2010, 3 p.m. – First Free Methodist

OSSCS Mostly Mozart Concert Sunday, February 7, 2010, 3 p.m. – First Free Methodist

OSSCS Barock Concerto for Orchestra Sunday, March 14, 2010, 3 p.m. – Meyany Hall

DVDs and CDs of our performances of Handel’s Messiah and Monteverdi’s Vespers of 1610 are available for purchase!!! DVDs are priced at just $20 and CDs are just $15 – perfect gifts for the music lovers on your list!
Musician and writer Christopher Hogwood admits that "The turbulent state of Handel's manuscript, the blot, erasures and emendations that litter the page right to the final bars give enough evidence of tempestuous creation to tempt any romantic inclinations. But there is little doubt, in any event, that this enduring masterpiece, completed in 24 days on September 14, 1741, will remain among the greatest compositional feats in the history of opera, bassoon, 2 trumpets, timpani, harpsichord and strings.

Dr. Charles Burney, an 18th-century English music historian, wrote that Handel's oratorio, Messiah, "has been heard in all parts of the kingdom with increasing reverence and delight; and the hungry, clothed the naked, festered the orphan and enriched succeeding managers of Oratorios more than any single musical production in this or any other country." We believe that your musical experience will be enriched, and that you will hear with special delight our unique interpretation of one of the most famous of all musical compositions.

George Frideric Handel, renowned in his day as an organist and as a highly prolific writer of Italian operas, and English oratorios, was born in Germany in 1685 about a month before J.S. Bach. He received his musical training in Italy, and later became 18th-century England's "national composer." Between February and November 1741, Handel, suffering at the age of 56 from various ailments, both financial and physical, withdrew increasingly from public life. At some point that year, the composer received from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and the governors of Dublin's three major charitable institutions an invitation to travel to that city to aid the charitable through the patronage of his music. Handel was well known in Dublin as a church-music composer, and his works were often played there to benefit charities. It may thus have been this invitation that provided the incentive for Handel to compose "a new sacred Oratorio." In July of 1741, Charles Jennings, who was responsible for the texts of Handel's oratorios Israel in Egypt and Saul, gave the struggling Handel the libretto of Messiah, a compilation of biblical texts from both the Old and New Testaments.

On the 22nd of August, Handel began to set Jennings' text to music. He was the first part of his oratorio (which deals with the prophecy of Christ's coming and his nativity) in six days, the second part (which describes Jesus' suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension, the spread of his gospel and its acceptance by the heathen, and the vision of the ultimate triumph of the gospel in the establishment of God's kingdom) in nine days, and the third part (which celebrates the gift of resurrection and eternal life offered to all through Christ's victory over death) in six more days, with two or three additional days for completing the orchestration. Regarding Handel's state of mind during Messiah's composition, biographer Jonathan Keates observes in his 1992 book, Handel: The Man and Music, that "etherized visions of the elderly master refusing food, weeping into the semicouches and moving angelic hallucinations are mostly moonshine.

Part I: Symphony

Accompagnato

Comfort ye, comfort me ye people, saith your God.

Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned.

The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness: Prepare ye the Way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Air

Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill made low: the crooked straighten, and the rough places plain:

Chorus

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken.

Accompagnato

Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Yet once, a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea, and the dry land;

And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come.

Air

But who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth?

For he is like a refiner's fire:

Chorus

And he shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

Recollective

Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel, "God with us".

Air and Chorus

O thou, that livest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain: O thou, that livest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid: say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!

Air

Arise, shine: for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

Accompagnato

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness shall possess the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

Air

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

Part II: Chorus

Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.

Air

He was despised and rejected of men: a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.

Chorus

He gave his back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: He hid not his face from shame and spitting.

Air

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

Recollective

That shall see the eye of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf be unstopped.

Air

Behold, the lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.

Chorus

Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth, good will toward men.

Recollective

Shall they that have filled iniquity be filled with joy, and ungodly men with exceeding joy.

Air

When the Lord shall come as a hundred folds, and as a Redeemer from strength.

Chorus

Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth, good will toward men.
SOLD ARTISTS

BARry JOHNSON, baritone, is a frequent performer in Western Washington, having sung more than a dozen roles with Seattle Opera, most recently Baron Douphol in Verdi’s La Traviata and Antonio in Mozart’s Le Nozze di Figaro. Other roles with Seattle Opera have included Farnadod in Maometto II, Burtgh in Requiem in Andrea Chenier, Prince Chérubin in Der Freischiitz, and Buddha in The Ballad of Baby Doe. Regionally, Mr. Johnson has performed with Portland Opera, Anchorage Opera, Central City Opera, Opera Colorado, Stockton Opera, and Tacoma Opera where some of his roles have included Figaro in The Marriage of Figaro, Papageno in The Magic Flute, Dr. Falke in Die Fledermaus, Schiannurb in La Bohème, and Mercury in Trovatore. Concert credits include Seattle Symphony, Tacoma Symphony, Northwest Sinfonietta, American Symphony, and Yakima Symphony. Some favorite concert roles with these companies include Off’s Camino Burana, Brahms’ A German Requiem, Rachmaninoff’s The Bells, Handel’s Messiah, and Faure’s Requiem. Mr. Johnson has served as stage director for Tacoma Opera, conductor of Puccini’s Tosca, La Bohème, Rossini’s Le Comte Ory, and Bernstein’s Trouble in Tahiti.

Melissa Plagemann, mezzo-soprano, performs frequently throughout the Pacific Northwest and has appeared with some of the area’s finest ensembles, including the Seattle Symphony, Tacoma Opera, Orchestra Seattle, Seattle Opera, Kirov Opera, the Seattle Choral Company, Kitaro Opera, and NOISE, among others. Recent opera roles for Ms. Plagemann include Hänsel in Humperdinck’s Hänsel und Gretel, Carmen in semi-staged scenes with the Seattle Symphony, Dorabella in Cosi fan Tutte, Rosina in Rossini’s Il Barbiere di Siviglia, and Niccolausse in Offenbach’s Les Contes d’Hoffman. Equally at home on the concert stage, she has performed in several recent productions of Mozart’s Requiem, as well as Copland’s In the Beginning, and Saint-Saëns’ Christmas Oratorio, among others. Ms. Plagemann has a special interest in music of the Baroque era, and has performed several masterpieces of J.S. Bach, including both Passions, the B Minor Mass, and Magnificat in D, as well as several of his Cantatas. She has also been featured at Seattle’s annual Town Hall Bach Marathon in Seattle, singing Bach’s Cantata #18 and J.C. Bach’s solo cantata, Ach, dass ich Wasser gung. Other Baroque oratorio repertoire includes Vivaldi’s Gloria and Magnificat, and the 1610 Vespers by Monteverdi which she will sing with OSSCS this December.

Stephen Wall has appeared frequently with Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers since 1985. He has been featured in leading and supporting roles with Seattle Opera, Portland Opera, Utah Festival Opera, and Tacoma Opera, and has soloed with the symphonies of Seattle, Vancouver, Spokane, Everett, Bellevue, Yakima, Pendleton, Great Falls and Sapporo (Japan). Mr. Wall appears on the OSSCS recording of Handel’s Messiah and sang the role of Joe in Seattle Opera’s heralded production of La Fanciulla del West.

“English character” that has ensured Messiah’s unprecedented popularity in the English choral repertoire: in such a role as “He was despised” and “I know that my Redeemer liveth,” the rhythms of the music grow out of the natural speech rhythms of the words, so that the music expresses the text directly and powerfully, and thus illustrates it almost visually (e.g., “Every valley shall be exalted.” “The people that walked in darkness,” and “All we like sheep”). The ease accessibility and glorious variety of the music that flow from the confluence of these elements (and which

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OSSCS Bartok Concerto for Orchestra Sunday, March 14, 2010, 3 p.m. – Meyany Hall

DVDs and CDs of our performances of Handel’s Messiah and Monteverdi’s Vespers of 1610 are available for purchase!!! DVDs are priced at just $20 and CDs are just $15 – perfect gifts for the music lovers on your list!
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ORCHESTRA SEATTLE

Seattle Chamber Singers

George Shangrow, harpsichord/conductor

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685-1759)

Messaiah

Symphony
Accompanist: "Comfort ye"
Air: "Every valley shall be exalted"
Chorus: "And the glory of the Lord"
Accompanist: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts"
Air: "But who may abide"
Chorus: "And He shall purify"
Recitative: "Behold, a Virgin shall conceive"
Air and Chorus: "O thou that tellest"
Accompanist: "For behold, darkness"
Air: "The people that walked in darkness"

Intermission -
Chorus: "Behold the Lamb of God"
Air: "He was despised"
Chorus: "Surely He hath borne our griefs"
Air: "And with His stripes"
Chorus: "All we, like sheep"
Accompanist: "Behold, that see them"
Chorus: "He is trusted in God"
Air: "Thy rebuke hath broken his heart"
Air: "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow"
Accompanist: "And He hath cut off"
Air: "But Thou didst not leave"
Chorus: "Lift up your heads"

Intermission -
Air: "I know that my Redeemer liveth"
Chorus: "Since by man came death"
Air: "O death, where is thy sting?"
Chorus: "Amen! The angel of death has slain"
Air: "If God be for us, who can be against us?"
Chorus: "Worthy is the Lamb"

Duet: "A death, where is thy victory?"
Air: "But saints have no more fear"
Air: "If God be for us, who can be against us?"
Chorus: "Worthy is the Lamb"

Recitative: "Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened"
Air: "He shall feed His flock"
Chorus: "His yoke is easy"

Orchestra Seattle | Seattle Chamber Singers | George Shangrow, conductor 2009-2010 Season

Seattle Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs 2009-2010 Season