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University Choir & Schola Cantorum Spring Tour

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UNIVERSITY of RICHMOND

UNIVERSITY CHOIR
SCHOLA CANTORUM

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Translations and Notes on the Music

Nunc dimittis (Desprez)

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people, to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of thy people Israel. Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace . . . (sung in Church Latin).

Josquin was certainly the most important musician of Europe up to the middle of the 16th century. He was able to give his sacred music an uncanny radiant quality, as in Nunc dimittis. The piece also includes a sly musical pun. At the end of the authorized text come the words "...as it was in the beginning." Josquin omits this and the rest of the standard text and returns instead to the opening measures of the piece, making his music "as it was in the beginning," in the process providing a moving close.

Nunc dimittis (Rachmaninov)

Text as above, closing with "...thy people Israel" (sung in old Church Slavonic).

Rachmaninov's setting of this text unavoidably brings visions of snowy Russian steppes and hooded worshippers. The ancient church melody on which it is based ends each phrase with the same three descending notes (do-ti-la).

Justorum animae (Stanford)

The souls of the righteous are in God's hand, and no torment will touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seem to have died; but they are at peace (sung in Church Latin).

Never neglected in the churches of his native Britain, the late Victorian composer Stanford's richly eloquent music has recently been "rediscovered" by American choirs and appears frequently on concert programs of choral music.

Translations and Notes, cont.

Nolo mortem peccatoris (Morley)

Refrain: I do not accept the death of the sinner. These are the words of the Savior. (sung in Latin).

Thomas Morley was England's most prominent music teacher in the late years of Elizabeth I's reign, and was a popular and respected composer. In Nolo mortem Jesus addresses a prayer to God, explaining in English the basis of the thought given in the Latin refrain.

Sfogava con le stelle (Monteverdi)

One stricken with love poured out his sorrow to the stars, and gazing at them said: "O lovely images of the idol whom I adore, just as you show me, shining as you do, her rare beauty, so also show to her my vivid passions. Make her, with your golden likeness, merciful--as once you made of me her lover." (sung in Italian).

Monteverdi brought to music of the late Renaissance a degree of passionate expressiveness unknown before him and rarely equalled even now. Sfogava, with its many places set in speech rhythm, exemplifies this intense quality.

I gondolieri (Rossini)

We glide under gentle sail, fair sparkles the heaven; the moon is without cloud, without cloud or tempest the sea. To row, to lie in the meadow is to the gondolier given as of all boons the greatest. Not hotly shines the sun, nor sadly the moon. Ever on the lagoon the gondolier is king (sung in Italian).

Rossini's operas were so successful that he retired relatively young to Paris, where he lived comfortably, composing only when it suited him. The result of these later years was a collection of small pieces he called "sins of my old age," and refused to publish. They became available to the musical public in the 1950's. Probably intended mostly for solo quartet, they will very likely also be sung often by larger ensembles as well.

Translations and Notes, cont.

Finale from The Gondoliers (Sullivan)

The wit of Gilbert and Sullivan's musical satires is often lost on audiences unfamiliar with the music being parodied. The Gondoliers ends with a vigorous Spanish dance in the style of the dances named in the text: cachuca, fandango, bolero.

The Turtle Dove (Vaughan Williams)

Strenuous efforts were made early in this century to find and write down the folksongs of Europe and the Americas before they were supplanted by the spread of radio and records. One of the most vigorously active of the collectors was the Englishman Vaughan Williams. He made a large number of choral settings of the tunes he and others collected in the British Isles.

Two German Folksongs (David)

Kume, kum: Come, come my sweetheart, I entreat thee sore.

...Sweet rosy mouth, come and make me well (sung in German).

Mit Lust: With joy I'd go out riding through a green wood; there I heard singing three pretty birds. And if they be not birds, then they be thrée maids. It's worth the life of me to have one of them. The first is called Ursula, the second Barbara; the third has no name--she shall be the rider's. Who sings that song so fresh and free? It was a rider from the town of Landsberg. Thereby were sitting three dainty maids; they have not forgotten it, by mead or by cool wine (sung in German).

Like Vaughan Williams, the Austrian David actively collected and set for chorus a large number of the folksongs of his own country. His harmony, resembling that of Paul Hindemith, is more dissonant than the Englishman's, but preserves the archaic quality of the originals.

Two "Flower Songs" (Britten)

Sir Benjamin Britten's Five Flower Songs, Op. 47, were published in 1951. They have in common only the fact that each is based on a text having something to do with plants. Some, like

Translations and Notes, cont.

The Evening Primrose, set texts by a known poet (John Clare); others, like Green Broom, use anonymous words from the rich ballad tradition of the British Isles.

The group called "Americana" includes three different kinds of pieces, each in its own way a classic: those by a known composer, sung to the notation he left (White, Glory in the Highest, 1850); those by a known composer in the manner of folksong, put into notation and arranged by someone else (Ritchie, Now is the Cool of the Day, 1977); and those from the anonymous oral tradition of the spiritual, either arranged in the manner of "art" music (Dawson, Talk About a Child; Parker, I Got Shoes; Orton, Jesus Walked) or put into notation but left largely as improvised by the black congregations that gave them to us (Whalum, I'm Gonna Live; Smith, Ride the Chariot).

The University Choir is made up of students from all disciplines, chosen by audition. They study and perform primarily, but not exclusively, choral literature of the Western art tradition, concertizing twice yearly on campus and frequently elsewhere as well. In 1971, 1977 and 1981 they undertook tours to Europe. A trip to the Soviet Union in conjunction with the University's Russian Studies Program is planned for May, 1987.

The Schola Cantorum is composed of students selected by invitation from the whole student body. Chosen for vocal and musical qualities as well as demonstrated willingness to work hard, they represent a wide geographical range (Virginia, South Carolina, Pennsylvania, New York, Wisconsin, California) and are majoring in Religion, Philosophy, English, Russian Studies, Mathematics, Psychology, Classics, Music and Business.

James Erb, the conductor, is a Colorado native with schooling there, in Europe and at Indiana University, and holds a Ph.D. in music from Harvard University. Twice a recipient of the University's Distinguished Educator Award, he is also founder and director of the Richmond Symphony Chorus and the Chorus of Alumni and Friends of the University of Richmond, (CAFUR). He has published many choral arrangements and editions, and has contributed five volumes of Magnificat settings to the complete works of Orlando di Lasso (1532-1594) currently being issued by the Baerenreiter Press in West Germany.

UNIVERSITY CHOIR

Soprano

Andrea Barrett, Lebanon, VA
Ellen Diggs, Gloucester, VA
Melissa Harple, Lancaster, PA
Lee Hendricks, Winston-Salem, NC
Amber Keating, Westfield, NJ
Lisa Kuntz, Great Falls, VA
Beverly Letcher, Trenton, NJ: Choir Accompanist
Nancy Palermo, Greenwich, CT
Kimberly Perkins, Scotch Plains, NJ
Hunter Price, Chesapeake, VA
Betty Pugh, Danville, VA: Choir President
Deborah Reed, Waynesboro, VA: Choir Accompanist
Maren Roth, Paoli, PA
Cathleen Wissinger, McLean, VA

Alto

Kim Barefoot, Westhampton Beach, NY
Gervaise Cuyler, Richmond, VA
Laura Geer, Havertown, PA
Michelle Key, Memphis, TN
Michelle Land, Morristown, NJ
Janet Markhus, Dover, MA
Virginia McAndrews, Kennett Square, PA
Carol McClelland, Towson, MD
Katie Nimmo, Burke, VA
Diane Pacifico, Huntington Station, NY: Choir Secretary and
Tour Manager

UNIVERSITY CHOIR, cont.

Alto, cont.

Meredyth Pepper, Somerset, NJ
Alyssa Pinks, Setauket, NY: Choir Librarian
Julia Suffredini, Richmond, VA
Daphne Tams, Princeton, NJ
Sharon Tillman, Timonium, MD
Cathy Weatherson, Springfield, VA
Shannon Wood, Reading, PA

Tenor

Kris Anderson, Litchfield, CT
Mark J. Goldfogel, Denver, CO
Micah Houghton, Kilmarnock, VA
Brian Petersen, Brockport, NY
Sean Sullivan, Englishtown, NJ
Rich Whicker, Toms River, NJ: Choir Treasurer
Scott Ziglar, Wayne, PA: Choir Librarian

Bass

Jimmy Bryant, Atlanta, GA
Kelly Byrne, Toronto, Ont., Canada
Michael Clemmer, Oxford, MD
Paul Futrell, Beaverdam, VA
Pat Gill, Floral Park, NY
Michael Johnson, Virginia Beach, VA
Chun Yi Kwok, Richmond, VA
Jim Luck, Burke, VA
Jason Poulis, Lloyd Harbor, NY
Ted Royer, Berwyn, PA
Mark E. Storms, Haskell, NJ
Dean Williams, Ardsley-on-Hudson, NY

SCHOLA CANTORUM

Beth Bostwick, Berwyn, PA	Eric Goldstein, Charleston, SC
Kelly Byrne, Toronto, Ont., Canada	Andy Hunt, Malvern, PA
Michael Compton, Arlington, VA	Betsy Johnson, Richmond, VA
Jay Coston, McLean, VA	Beth Madonia, Hartfield, VA
Page Dawsey, Charleston, SC	Rich Whicker, Toms River, NJ
Kathryn Fessler, Reading, PA	Scott Witmer, Miller Place, NY