

Program Notes

While neither the composers, nor the pieces on today's program have much in common, these are mature, representative works of individuals who are among the greatest composers of their respective eras.

The compositions:

The *Cantata Misericordium* was composed in 1963 for the centenary of the Red Cross. Britten chose Latin as the text, feeling that it was the most "universal" language available for a work which he did not want to have identified with any one country. He chose as his text the Parable of the Good Samaritan, dramatized by Patrick Wilkinson with "a prologue and epilogue painting the moral in terms sufficiently general to avoid a specifically Christian interpretation." [from the notes to a performance conducted by the composer]

The work is set in the manner of a Greek drama: the Chorus provides commentary, explaining the moral imperatives of the parable, and serves as a functional participant, declaiming the narrative throughout. The bass and tenor soloists play the critical characters (the Traveller and the Good Samaritan, respectively). The audience is expected to make the shift from third person to first person along with the performers.

The structure of the story is as follows:

- The solo string quartet sets the stage and introduces the Chorus, which tells the audience what they are about to see: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"... "But who is my neighbor?"
- The Chorus introduces the Traveller, and warns him of coming danger.
- The Traveller is attacked, robbed, beaten, and left to die.
- The Chorus tells the Traveller not to despair, for a Priest is coming. But the Priest does not help the injured man.
- The Chorus then sees that a Levite is coming, and tells the Traveller that surely he will be helped now—but the Levite also turns away.
- Finally, without much hope, the Chorus tells the Traveller that a despised Samaritan is coming down the road. And to the surprise of all, the Samaritan immediately stops to provide help.
- Ultimately, there is a short epilogue, where the singers explain: "Who your neighbor is, now you know." And the Chorus exhorts the audience to "Go and do likewise."

(continued inside)

Coming this spring:

NATURALLY SHARP (Drexel's Vocal Jazz Ensemble)

Fifth annual *Coffee and Jazz concert* 8:20 p.m.

Friday and Saturday, May 7 and 8

Faculty Club (6th floor, MacAlister Hall)

University Chorus and Chamber Singers

Sixth annual *Great Court concert* 3:00 p.m.

Bach *Motet no. 6*, polychoral masterworks

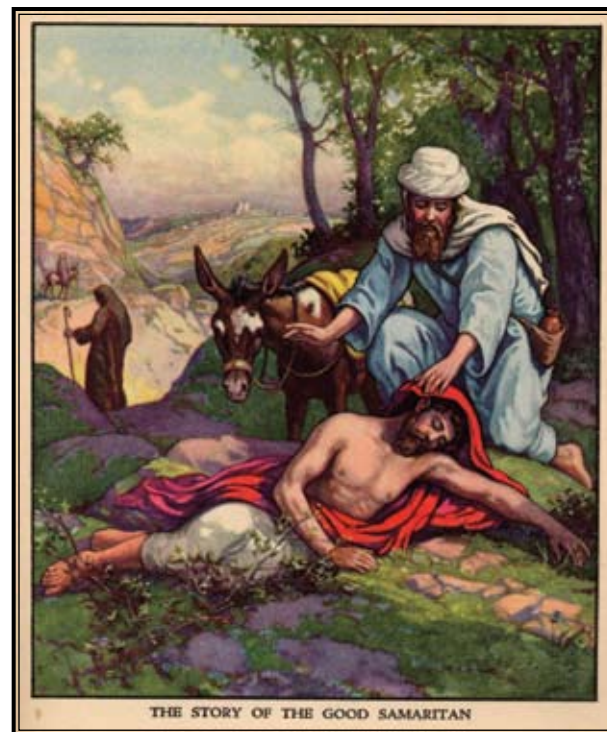
Sunday, June 6, Great Court (Main Building)



The University Chorus

Benjamin Britten Cantata Misericordium

Joseph Haydn Theresienmesse



Penelope Shumate
soprano

Maren Montalbano
mezzo-soprano

Perry Brisbon
tenor

James Kirk
bass

Steven Powell
conductor

Sunday, March 14, 2010

3:00 p.m.

Main Auditorium

Program

Cantata Misericordium, op. 69..... Benjamin Britten (1678–1741)

Perry Brisbon, tenor
James Kirk, bass
Steven Powell, conductor
Fairmount String Quartet
Fairmount Chamber Orchestra
University Chorus

INTERMISSION (10 minutes)

Mass in B \flat , H. 22:12 (“Theresienmesse”) .. Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)

Kyrie
Gloria
Credo
Sanctus
Benedictus
Agnus Dei

Penelope Shumate, soprano
Maren Montalbano, mezzo-soprano
Perry Brisbon, tenor
James Kirk, bass
Steven Powell, conductor
Fairmount Chamber Orchestra
University Chorus

Program Notes (continued from the back cover)

The story, of course, comes from the first century AD, when the Romans were occupying Israel, but the Jews had not yet been forced into the diaspora. The Samaritans are believed to be a tribe of Jews which had not been forced out of the area during the time of Moses, and had altered their beliefs from conventional Judaism of the period just enough to engender utter contempt from the more pious Levites. One would not have expected a Samaritan to involve himself in the affairs of a Jew...but that is what makes it such a powerful story.

Joseph Haydn's *Theresienmesse* is among his greatest works. He wrote it in 1799, one year after his most famous symphonic mass, the “Lord Nelson Mass,” and between his two great oratorios, *the Creation* (1798) and *the Seasons* (1801). Its principal similarity to the *Nelsonmesse* is its instrumentation—it uses strings, trumpets, timpani and just a couple of wind instruments, ostensibly because there was a shortage of wind players in Vienna during this period.

In most other ways, it is quite different. The *Theresienmesse* interweaves the solo quartet with the Chorus, rather than giving the soloists their own individual movements. It is generally lyric, rather than dramatic, and contains relatively short sections of music rather than extended, developed melodies. There is a very difficult, chromatic fugue at the end of the Credo (“Et vitam”) and a tricky final “Dona Nobis Pacem.” (This section, the words of which mean “grant us peace,” is rather celebratory compared to the settings of the text by most composers. When asked why he often set the Dona this way in his masses, Haydn replied, “because, when I think of God, it makes me happy.”)

The composers:

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976) was the most important composer of his generation in Great Britain. Britten's operas are certainly the finest set of operas ever written in English, but he also wrote many choral works—most notably his powerful *War Requiem* and his oft-performed *Ceremony of Carols*.

Britten was well-known as a pacifist, spending the first part of World War II in the United States as a conscientious objector. He was successful enough to be featured on the cover of Time magazine in 1948, and the first recording of his *War Requiem* won several grammy awards in the early 1960s.

Josef Haydn (1732–1809) is one of the two great composers of the Classic period (along with his friend, W.A. Mozart). Haydn spent most of his career employed by the Eszterházy family, where he had the good fortune to work for people who loved music and appreciated his talent. In 1790, however, the death of Prince Nikolaus led to a new head of the household who had no interest in music and dismissed the estate orchestra. Haydn was awarded a pension and a few years later, asked to write one mass each year for performance on the estate—otherwise, he was free to live wherever he wanted. This led to an enormously successful visit to London, and eventually Haydn's relocation to Vienna. Meanwhile, the six symphonic masses that Haydn wrote for the Eszterházy family remain among his greatest works.

Drexel Chorus
Dr. Steven Powell, director
Brian Dilts, accompanist

Soprano

Samantha Andrel----- Music Industry
Chloe Brulia----- Music Industry
Meghan Cash ----- Environmental Engineering
Jen Chesterson----- Graphic Design
Christina Curreri----- Mechanical Engineering & Mechanics
Charlotte DiGiorgio----- Architecture
Victoria Fiorenza ----- Nursing
Xingzi Lin----- Business Administration
Yee Kei Liu ----- Business Administration
Emma Louth----- Culinary Arts
Jinny Lu ----- Biological Sciences
Jessica McLaughlin----- Nursing
#Johanna Mikitka ----- Architectural & Civil Engineering
Jessica Neumann ----- English
Taylor Nolan ----- Psychology
•#Marielle Octaviano----- Information Systems
Hye Lim Park----- Political Science
#Elizabeth Plowman ----- Electrical Engineering
Shefali Ramsinghani----- Business Administration
Rebecca Rose----- Entertainment & Arts Management
Laura Salciunas----- Behavioral Health Counseling
Stacey Sassaman ----- Psychology
Fransisca Simanullang ----- Business and Engineering
Alison Toback ----- Public Health
Danielle Traitz----- Graphic Design
Kristen Tripolitis----- Entertainment & Arts Management

Alto

Chrystina Cappello ----- Architectural Engineering
Isatu Conteh ----- Design & Merchandising
Martina Crane ----- Business Administration
Madison Eggert-Crowe ----- Political Science/Mathematics
Rachel Hara ----- Communication
Carly Hendricks ----- Still Deciding
Elaine Lubaszka ----- Fashion Design
Karly McAvenia ----- Film & Video
Teri McMahon ----- Music Industry
Eryn Park ----- Design & Merchandising
Cara Pavia ----- Hotel & Restaurant Management
Samantha Ranagan----- Nutrition
Audrey Simpkins ----- Architecture
•Victoria Spellman----- Teacher Education

Tenor

Sean Ballentine ----- Mathematics
Vincent DeGrandchamp----- Biological Sciences

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Daniel Fornasa ----- Music Industry
 Gerard Franklin-----General Humanities and Soc. Science
 William Kehs----- Biomedical Engineering
 Michael Long -----Film & Video
 John Mars----- Architecture
 •#Richard Price-----Software Engineering
 Andrew Sauber-----Computer Engineering
 #Alex Schiano ----- Psychology
 #Brian Summers----- Computer Science
 #Jeremy Toll ----- Music Industry
 Joe Weidman ----- Graphic Design

Bass

Justin Bendigo----- Biomedical Engineering
 Mathew Cheung----- Entertainment & Arts Management
 #Chris Curtis ----- Business Administration
 Colin Eggert-Crowe ----- Mechanical Engineering
 Ben Fasano----- Architecture
 Theodore Fletman----- Music Industry
 Terry Foley ----- Business Administration
 Charles Green -----Electrical Engineering
 Jonathan Greenblatt-----Computer Engineering
 #Matthew Lesnak----- Computer Science
 Stephen Lombardelli ----- Music Industry
 #Peter Mowen ----- Music Industry
 Nick Popyack ----- Screenwriting & Playwriting
 •#Steven Pribis-----Chemical Engineering
 James A. Scott----- Music Industry
 Aaron Strauss----- Communication
 Levi Toback ----- Psychology
 Daniel Toll----- Entertainment & Arts Management

• Section Leader # Pi Nu Epsilon Member

Fairmount Chamber Orchestra

<u>Violin I</u> Taia Harlos Melissa Locati Andreia Torain Thomas Jackson	<u>Viola</u> Beth Dzwil Marka Kasker-Simmons Renee Warnick	<u>Clarinet</u> Karen DiSanto Christopher DiSanto
<u>Violin II</u> Barbara Jaffe Fran Berge Almasd Meshijian Jen Bolcar	<u>Cello</u> Ronald Lipscomb Elizabeth Loughran Talia Schiff	<u>Trumpet</u> Steve Heitzer James Herzog
<u>Keyboard</u> Brian Dilts	<u>Bass</u> Dennis Topper	<u>Harp</u> Sophie Bruno
		<u>Timpani</u> Ken Miller

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