

ORCHESTRA SEATTLE ■ SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS
GEORGE SHANGROW, MUSIC DIRECTOR
1999-2000 SEASON

Messiah

Saturday, December 18, 1999 ■ 7:00 PM

University Christian Church

Sunday, December 19, 1999 ■ 3:00 PM

Eastside Foursquare Church

Catherine Haight, *soprano*

Emily Lunde, *alto*

Stephen Wall, *tenor*

Brian Box, *baritone*

Orchestra Seattle

Seattle Chamber Singers

George Shangrow, *conductor*

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL *Messiah*, A Sacred Oratorio
1685-1759

Part I

INTERMISSION

Part II

INTERMISSION

Part III

Please disconnect signal watches, pagers and cellular telephones. Thank you.
Use of cameras and recording equipment is not permitted during the performance.

SOLO ARTISTS

Soprano Catherine Haight is well known to Seattle audiences for her performances of Baroque music. She is an accomplished performer of the oratorio repertoire, including all of the major works of Handel and Bach, as well as works by Vivaldi, Purcell, Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Brahms and others. For the past five years, Ms. Haight has been a guest soloist with the Pacific Northwest Ballet in their acclaimed production of *Carmina Burana*. She traveled with them to Australia to perform as part of the Melbourne Festival in 1995, and to the Kennedy Center for three performances in 1996. Her recent recordings include: Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang* with Philharmonia Northwest; Orff's *Carmina Burana* with the Seattle Choral Company, with whom she will perform that work this New Year's Eve; and Handel's *Messiah* with Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers under the direction of George Shangrow.

One of the Pacific Northwest's premier mezzo-sopranos, Emily Lunde is a Seattle native who has sung extensively with many of the area's finest ensembles, including the Seattle Symphony, Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers, Northwest Sinfonietta, Seattle Choral Company, Choir of the Sound, Everett Symphony and Walla Walla Symphony. Ms. Lunde also performs regularly with the Pacific Northwest Ballet in their productions of *The Nutcracker* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Her repertoire runs the gamut from early music to classical and contemporary works, with a special affinity for music of the Baroque period, having performed all of the great Bach passions as well as many of Handel's fabulous oratorios, including *Messiah*, which she recently recorded with OSSCS. Last season Ms. Lunde was featured at Benaroya Hall in performances of Maurice Ravel's *Shéhérazade* and Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with OSSCS, and in a concert performance of Deems Taylor's *Peter Ibbetson* with the Seattle Symphony.

Tenor Stephen Wall has appeared frequently with Orchestra Seattle since 1985, when he performed as a soloist in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*. He has been featured in leading and supporting roles with Seattle Opera, Portland Opera, Utah Festival Opera, and Tacoma Opera, and soloed with the symphonies of Seattle, Vancouver, Spokane, Everett, Bellevue, Yakima, Pendleton, Great Falls and Sapporo (Japan). Mr. Wall is featured on Orchestra Seattle's new CD release of Handel's *Messiah*. In January, he will appear in a supporting role in Seattle Opera's performances of *Boris Godunov*. Mr. Wall will rejoin OSSCS in June for a performance of Mendelssohn's oratorio *Elijah* in Benaroya Hall.

A native of Washington, baritone Brian Box received his Masters degree in vocal performance from Western Washington University in 1985. Mr. Box performs frequently with many Northwest ensembles, including Orchestra Seattle and the Seattle Chamber Singers, Seattle Choral Company, Seattle Pro Musica, Bellevue Chamber Chorus, and Choir of the Sound. He has performed with Rudolf Nureyev, singing Mahler's *Songs of a Wayfarer* to Mr. Nureyev's dance. Mr. Box has performed frequently with OSSCS in such works as Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, *St. John Passion*, Christmas Oratorio, and B minor Mass, and appears on their new CD of Handel's *Messiah*, as well as on previous recordings of music by Bach and Vaughan Williams. The regional winner of San Francisco Opera's 1988 Merola Opera Program, he made his Seattle Opera debut as the Corporal in Donizetti's *Daughter of the Regiment* and has subsequently performed the roles of Corphee in *Don Carlos*, the Shepherd in *Pelléas and Mélisande* and Lucas' friend in *The Passion of Jonathan Wade*. For Tacoma Opera, Mr. Box created the role of Franz in the world premiere of Carol Sams' *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*. He has also performed extensively with Seattle Opera's Education Program and Northwest Operas in the Schools.

ORCHESTRA SEATTLE

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** concertmaster
* principal

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Holiday Gift Ideas

Messiah on CD

If you would like to take our rendition of Handel's *Messiah* home with you, our brand new, audiophile-quality recording of the complete oratorio is available on a three-CD set in the lobby for the low price of \$22, all inclusive. You may also purchase CDs on our website at www.ossacs.org, and for this same low price have your gift shipped to *Messiah*-loving friends and family.

Gift Certificates

Give the gift of live music by purchasing a gift certificate redeemable for tickets to any future OSSCS performance.

The above items will be available for purchase in the lobby during the intermissions.

PROGRAM NOTES

George Frideric 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 performed in Dublin on April 13, 1742, under the direction of the composer. In addition to a quartet of vocal soloists and choir, the work is scored for 2 oboes, 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; it has fed 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 charities through the performance 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 Jennens, 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 Jennens' text to music. He finished the first part of his new 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 resistance 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 semiquavers and having angelic hallucinations are mostly moonshine." Musician 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 biographer." 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 oratorio was premiered. Seven hundred people were able to squeeze into Dublin's Musick Hall in Fishamble-street to hear the work performed by the choirs of Dublin's two cathedrals (totaling fewer than forty men and boys) and the string band (reinforced occasionally by trumpets and timpani – oboe 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," exulted *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 share of the 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 only "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 Jennens' 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 in 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 purify") some passages from his own Italian love duets. In the "Pastoral Symphony" (entitled *Pifa*) that introduces the shepherds, Handel alludes to the music of the *pifferari*, 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. In that great "coronation march," the "Hallelujah Chorus," melodic fragments echoing the German chorale "Wachet auf" may be heard in "The kingdom of this world" and in "And he shall reign for ever and ever." Handel's melodic shapes, vocal treatment, grand anthem-like choruses, and text-setting display the "English character" that has ensured *Messiah's* unchallenged supremacy in the English choral repertoire: in such arias 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 then illustrates it almost visually (e.g., "Every valley shall be exalted," "The people that walked in darkness," and "All we like sheep").

The easy accessibility and glorious variety of the music that results from the confluence of these elements (and which often conceals the exalted art underlying it) has helped to guarantee *Messiah's* survival, through a seeming infinitude of "arrangements," versions, and types of presentation, as one of the most popular pieces ever composed. As biographer R. A. Streatfeild observes, "*Messiah*, if not Handel's greatest work, is undoubtedly the most universal in its appeal" because it continues to sing to "high and low, rich and poor, wise and foolish alike" a magnificent song of salvation, fresh, vital, and full of aesthetic and spiritual grace.

LIBRETTO

PART I

Symphony

Accompagnato

Comfort ye, comfort ye my 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.

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 it.

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.

Haggai 2:6-7

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 He is like a refiner's fire.

Malachi 3:2

Chorus

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

Malachi 3:3

Recitative

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 tellest good tidings to Zion, get
thee up into the high mountain; O thou, that
tellest 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

For, behold, 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.

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

Isaiah 60:2-3

Air

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

Isaiah 9:2

Chorus

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is
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

Pifa (Pastoral Symphony)

Recitative – Accompagnato

There were shepherds abiding in the field,
keeping watch over their flock by night.

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 2:8-9

Recitative

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

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

Luke 2:10-11

Accompagnato

And suddenly there was with the angel
a multitude of the heavenly host,
praising God, and saying:

Luke 2:13

Chorus

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace on earth, good will toward men!

Luke 2:14

Air

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion;
shout, O daughter of Jerusalem:
behold, thy King cometh unto thee.

He is the righteous Savior and
He shall speak peace unto the heathen.

Zechariah 9:9-10

Recitative

Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened,
and the ears of the deaf be unstopped.

Then shall the lame man leap as an hart,
and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.

Isaiah 35:5-6

Air

He shall feed His flock like a shepherd:
He shall gather the lambs with His arm,
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.

Take His yoke upon you, and learn of Him;
for He is meek and lowly of heart:
and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Matthew 11:28-29

Chorus

His yoke is easy, His burthen 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

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

Accompagnato

All they that see Him, laugh Him to scorn:
they shoot out their lips,
and shake their heads, saying,

Psalms 22:7

Chorus

He trusted in God that He would deliver
Him: let Him deliver Him, if He delight in
Him.

Psalms 22:8

Accompagnato

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

Accompagnato
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.
Psalms 16:10

Recitative
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.
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

Recitative
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

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

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

PART III

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 in my flesh 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

Accompagnato
Behold, I tell you a mystery;
We shall not all sleep,
but we shall all be changed,

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,
at the last trumpet.
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 15:52-53

Recitative
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.
1 Corinthians 15:55-56

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.

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

Chorus
Worthy is the Lamb that was slain,
and hath redeemed us to God by His blood, to
receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and
strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.

Blessing, and honor, glory and power,
be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne,
and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

Amen.
Revelation 5:12-14

ABOUT THE HARPISCHORD

We are excited that our *Messiah* performances this year mark the debut of our new harpsichord, a French double, built by Michael Reiter of Tacoma. The first of two harpsichords that have been commissioned by OSSCS, its acquisition was made possible by initiating grants from the King County Arts Commission, PACCAR, and Visio Corporation. Additional funding has come from individual donations and we are grateful to receive further contributions in order to meet the remaining obligation to complete our harpsichord project. Please feel free to examine this beautiful instrument more closely during intermission or following the concert.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We gratefully acknowledge Jeffrey Cohan for harpsichord tuning and management, University Christian Church and Eastside Foursquare Church for hosting our performances of *Messiah* this season, and all our wonderful volunteers, who through their hard work, time, and talents, make these concerts possible, including: Sarah Berg, Gini Chapson, Michael & Patricia Clarke, Eugene Collias, Emilie Disney-Hoey, Laura & James Dooley, Linda Filippi and family, Christine Hackenberger, Michael Iverson, Bridget Medill, Tobey Nelson, Jeanne Shepard, Nancy Taw, and Annie Thompson.

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