

# **The Unicorn, The Gorgon and the Manticore**

by

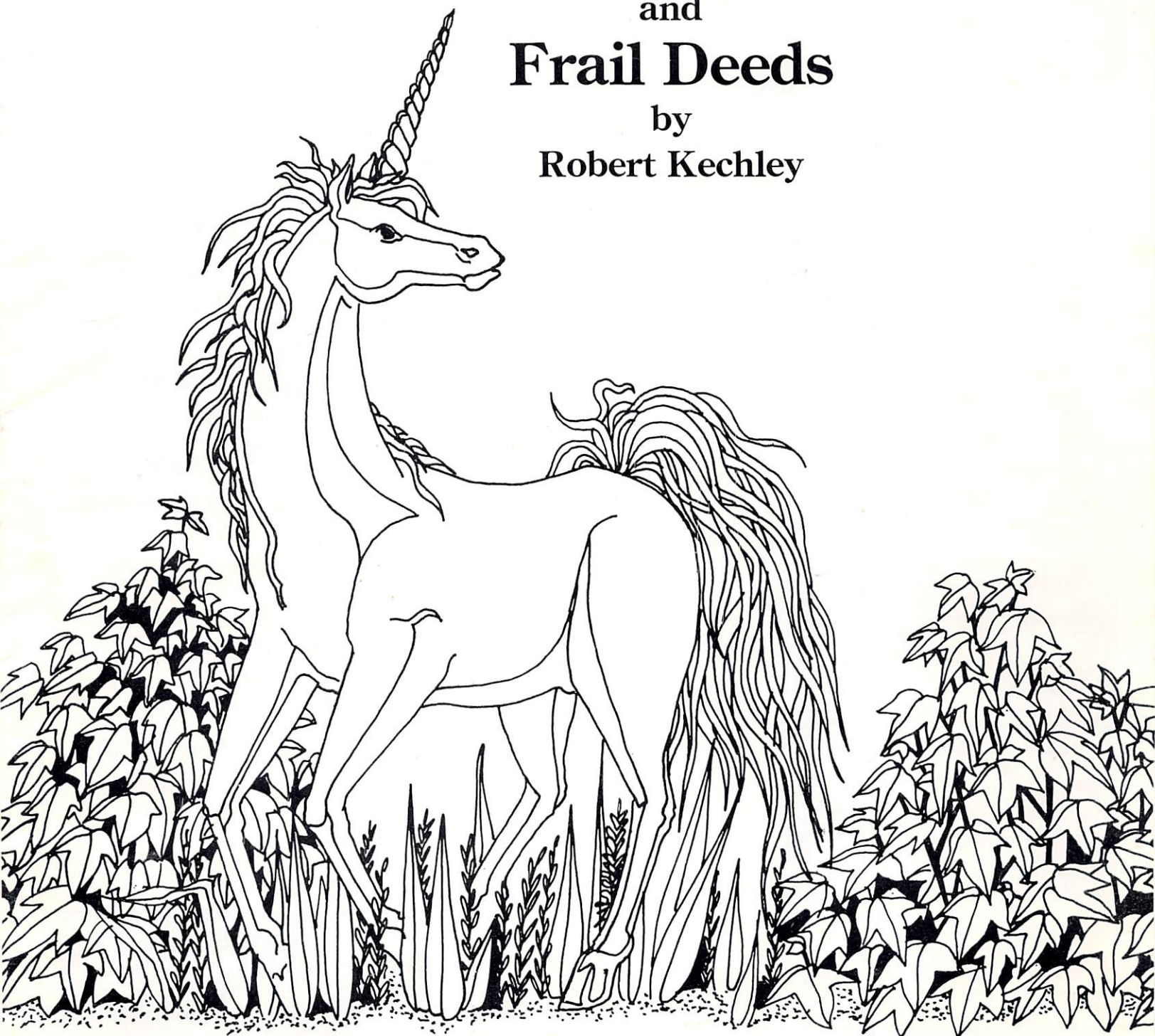
Gian Carlo Menotti

and

## **Frail Deeds**

by

Robert Kechley



## **SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS**

*George Shangrow, conductor  
February 19, 21 and 25, 1982*





**THE SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS** was founded in 1968 by their conductor, George Shangrow, with twelve singers. The group incorporated in 1973 and have, each year since then, produced their own concert seasons. Their performances of Handel's *Messiah* and Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, among other oratorios and concerts, have made them favorites with thousands of Seattle concert-goers. Critics have named them the best choral group in town. To their credit is a 10-concert tour of Europe during the summer of 1981, and winning first place in the regional competition of the 1982 Great American Choral Festival. This year, too, they are guest performers for the Northwest Regional American Choral Directors Association convention held at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington.

**GEORGE SHANGROW** reaches Seattle's music lovers at many points. He enters his thirteenth year as conductor of the Seattle Chamber Singers and looks forward to the third successful season as conductor of the Broadway Chamber Symphony. With Mr. Shangrow as director of music, the University Unitarian Church has become a well-known site for fine concerts as well as musically active worship services. Through his affiliation with Seattle Central Community College, he has taught music appreciation and contributes to many of the performances in the Broadway Performance Hall. George Shangrow is in demand as both soloist and accompanist on piano and harpsichord, and produces several series of chamber music events each year.



**ROBERT KECHLEY** has become one of Seattle's most often heard and best liked "home-town" composers. Within just the last five years, works by him have been commissioned and performed by the Seattle Chamber Singers, The Broadway Chamber Symphony, the Northwest Chamber Orchestra, the Northwest Boychoir, and University and Eastshore Unitarian Churches. The Chamber Singers performed two of Robert's pieces while on tour in Europe in 1981. A native of Seattle, Robert Kechley graduated from Roosevelt High School and then the University of Washington with a bachelor's degree in composition. He is currently teaching theory and sight-singing at Seattle Central Community College and is often heard playing oboe or English horn with various ensembles in Seattle.



**CHRIS STOLLERY**, choreographer, studied dance at Indiana University, Harvard, University of Utah and locally with Bill Evans and Washington Hall. She has performed with Whistlestop and Dance Theater Seattle, Skid Road and Empty Space. She has directed/choreographed over thirty shows in the Puget Sound area, her work including professional, community, community college, high school and children's theater. She has been a guest artist with both Seattle Opera and the Seattle Symphony and has conducted movement demonstrations at the regional conferences of the American Alliance for Health, Physical education, Recreation and Dance. Chris pioneered Seattle programs for creative dance for senior citizens and for four years was the artistic director for "Moving On," a seniors dance group. Currently, Chris Stollery is a movement specialist with the Seattle Public Schools.



# PROGRAM

## FRAIL DEEDS

*by Robert Kechley*

- I. A noiseless, Patient Spider ..... WALT WHITMAN  
*from Leaves of Grass*
- II. There Was A Child Went Forth ..... WALT WHITMAN  
*from Leaves of Grass*
- III. I Cannot Dance Upon My Toes ..... EMILY DICKINSON
- IV. Down By The Salley Gardens ..... WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS
- V. Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night..... DYLAN THOMAS
- VI. He Fumbles At Your Soul ..... EMILY DICKINSON

### — INTERMISSION —

## THE UNICORN, THE GORGON AND THE MANTICORE

or the Three Sundays of a Poet

*by Gian Carlo Menotti*

CHOREOGRAPHY BY CHRIS STOLLERY  
COSTUMES BY REBA SHANGROW

The Man in the Castle .. JOANIE ANDERSON  
The Unicorn ..... CYNTHIA SPRINCIN  
The Gorgon ..... STACEY BAUNTON  
The Manticore..... MAUREEN MOONEY

#### THE TOWNSFOLK

The Count ..... Peter Schindler  
The Countess ..... Marjorie Katz  
The Mayor ..... Gary Jankowski  
The Mayor's Wife .. Margaret Penne  
A Vendor ..... Laila Hammond  
A Woodsman ..... David Call  
The Doctor ..... Morris Jellison  
The Doctor's Wife . Ann Beller  
A Tall Peasant .... Gerard Beamster  
A Sleeping Peasant. Liesel Rombouts  
The Old Crone ..... Georgia Rohrbaugh  
A Maidservant ..... Lynn Wegge

#### Instrumentalists

Janeen Shigley, flute  
Daniel Gluck, oboe  
Gary Oules, clarinet  
Francine Peterson, bassoon  
Gary Fladmoe, trumpet  
Kara Hunnicutt, cello  
Deborah DeLoria, bass  
Joyce Birchman-Fankhauser, harp  
David Nyberg, percussion

#### Dancers

Joanie Anderson  
David Bardsley  
Stacey Baunton  
Ryan Gober  
Wade Harness  
Penny Hutchinson  
Maureen Mooney  
Cynthia Sprincin



# FRAIL DEEDS

notes by Peter Kechley

The six movements of Robert Kechley's work for a cappella double chorus and soloists represent various stages of growth in a person's life; a progression from birth through death. The first movement describes the first tentative reaching out to the world. While one chorus repeats an ostinato figure, the other chorus comments over this "web-like" background. The movement makes use of elaborate word painting, while antiphonal effects musically represent the void and the tireless efforts to form a bridge over it.

The second movement assumes that the bridge has been formed. The poem used here was taken from an early edition of *Leaves of Grass* by Whitman, and the freshness and optimism found here are contrasted with the uncertainty of the later poem used in the first movement. The child and the experiences he encounters are all introduced by motives. The elements of his world are often contrasted humorously through antiphonal effects, as the transition from the old drunkard section into that of the school mistress. All of the child's impressions are finally brought together, suddenly to be interrupted by a soprano soloist, who opens; the third movement.

Naive childish wonder is replaced by the pride and coy self-consciousness of adolescence. The prima ballerina of the poem has inspired a musical competition between two operatic coloraturas. The tongue-in-cheek theatricality is enhanced by the underlying barbershop harmony.

A folk song style is used to communicate the expression of love, with its accompanying sense of loss and nostalgia. The repeat of the second verse features a tenor descant, which imitates the melody canonically.

In the fifth movement, death's inevitability and the struggle against it are represented by the juxtaposition of a dirge-like refrain and brief dramatic sections. In these sections, the somber religious flavor of the movement is emphasized by the use of cantus firmus style, with its underlying chromatic counterpoint. The verses increase in intensity while canonic imitation adds to the complexity of the refrain.

The last movement pictures an enlightenment which transcends the concerns of the previous movements. A predominance of major sevenths in the harmony creates a sense of not quite grasping the approach of inspiration. Antiphonal effects, including a reference to the first movement, measure the gradual approach to the biggest climax of the work. Following a silence, the stark harmonies of the opening return as the natural cycle from birth to death is ready to begin again.

## I. A NOISELESS PATIENT SPIDER      WALT WHITMAN

A noiseless patient spider,  
I marked where on a little promontory it stood isolated,  
Marked how to explore the vacant vast surrounding,  
It launched forth, filament, filament, out of itself,  
Ever unreeling them, ever tirelessly speeding them.

And you, O my soul where you stand,  
Surrounded, detached, in measureless oceans of space,  
Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing, seeking spheres to connect them,  
Till the bridge you need be formed, till the ductile anchor hold,  
Till the gossamer thread you fling catch somewhere, O my soul.

## II. THERE WAS A CHILDREN WENT FORTH      WALT WHITMAN

There was a child went forth every day,  
And the first object he looked upon, and received with wonder, or pity or love or dread,  
That object became part of him . . .

And the early lilacs became part of this child, . . .  
And the March-born lambs and the sow's pink-faint litter, the mare's foal and the cow's calf,  
And the noisy brood of the barn yard or by the mire of the pondside,  
And the fish suspending themselves so curiously below there, and the beautiful curious liquid,  
And the waterplants with their graceful flat heads, all became part of him.

And the Old Drunkard staggering home from the outhouse of the tavern from whence he had  
lately risen,

And the schoolmistress that passed on her way to school,

And the friendly boys that passed, . . .

And the tidy and fresh cheeked girls, . . .

. . . All became part of him.

### III. I CANNOT DANCE UPON MY TOES      EMILY DICKINSON

I cannot dance upon my toes—	And though I had no Gown of Gauze—	
No man instructed me—	No Ringlet, to my Hair,	
But oftentimes, among my mind,	Nor hopped to audiences—like Birds,	
A Glee posseseth me,	One Claw upon the Air,	Nor any know I know the Art
		I mention—easy—Here—
That had I Ballet knowledge—	Nor tossed my shape in Eider Balls.	Nore any placard boast me—
Would put itself abroad	Nor rolled on wheels of snow	It's full as Opera—
In Pirouette to blanch a Troupe—	Till I was out of sight, in sound,	
Or lay a Prima, mad,	The House encore me so—	

### IV. DOWN BY THE SALLEY GARDENS      WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

Down by the salley gardens my love and I did meet;  
 She passed the salley gardens with little snow-white feet.  
 She bid me take love easy, as the leaves grow on the tree;  
 But I, being young and foolish, with her did not agree.  
 In a field by the river my love and I did stand,  
 And on my leaning shoulder she laid her snow white hand.  
 She bid me take life easy, as the grass grows on the weirs;  
 But I was young and foolish, and now am full of tears.

### V. DO NOT GO GENTLE INTO THAT GOOD NIGHT      WALT WHITMAN

Do not go gentle into that good night,  
 Old age should burn and rave at the close of the day;  
 Rage, rage against the dying of the light.  
 Though wise men at their end know dark is right,  
 Because their words had forked no lightning they  
 Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright  
 Their fragile deeds might have danced in a green bay,  
 Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,  
 And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,  
 Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight  
 Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,  
 Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,  
 Curse, bless me now with your fierce tears, I pray.  
 Do not go gentle into that good night.  
 Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

### VI. HE FUMBLES AT YOUR SOUL      EMILY DICKINSON

He fumbles at your soul as Players at the Keys  
 Before they drop full Music on—He stuns you by degrees—  
 Prepares your brittle Nature for the Ethereal Blow  
 By fainter Hammers—further heard—Then nearer—Then so Slow  
 Your Breath has time to straighten—Your Brain—to bubble Cool—  
 Deals—ONE—imperial—Thunderbolt—that scalps your naked Soul—

When Winds take Forests in their Paws—  
 The Universe—is still— . . .



# THE UNICORN, THE GORGON AND THE MANTICORE or The Three Sundays of a Poet

*A Madrigal Fable for Chorus and Instruments*  
by Gian Carlo Menotti

- The Unicorn: "No hunter can catch him, but he can be trapped by the following stratagem: a virgin girl is led to where he lurks and there she is sent off by herself into the wood. He soon leaps into her lap when he sees her and embraces her, and hence he gets caught."
- The Gorgon: "It is a beast all set over with scales like a dragon, having no haire except on his head, great teeth like Swine, having wings to fly and hands to handle, in stature betwixt a Bull and a Calfe."
- The Manticore: "It has a three-fold row of teeth . . . the face of a man with gleaming blood-red eyes . . . a tail like the sting of a scorpion, and a shrill voice which is so sibilant that it resembles the notes of flutes."

(from *The Book of Beasts*)

Gian Carlo Menotti was born in Cadegliano, Italy, in 1911. His inclusion in the scene of American music stretches a point, as he has never renounced his Italian citizenship. But he spent the greater part of his life in the United States—he came here when he was seventeen—and won his greatest successes in this country. Besides, his librettos, which he writes himself, are generally in English. Menotti is the most successful opera composer of our day. He has created a series of lyric dramas that has spread his name throughout the musical world. The list includes *The Medium* (1946), *The Consul* (1950), *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (1951), *The Saint of Bleecker Street* (1954), *The Last Savage* (1963), and *Help! Help! The Globolinks!* (1968).

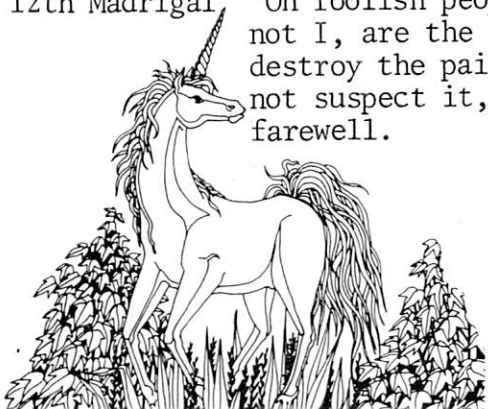
*The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore* (or *The Three Sundays of a Poet*) was written in the early 1950s and is the story of a strange Man in the Castle who was shunned by the Townsfolk for his peculiar ways. When he is seen on Sunday with his Unicorn, the Man in the Castle is mocked by the Townsfolk. But soon, following the lead of the Count and Countess, they imitate him. On the second Sunday, the Man in the Castle appears at a picnic with a Gorgon. To the queries of the Townsfolk as to the fate of the Unicorn, he answers that he grew tired of him and "peppered and grilled him." Soon shocked surprise turns to envy and Gorgons are the rage. On the third Sunday, the Man in the Castle appears with the Manticore and tells the scandalized Townsfolk that the Gorgon died of murder. They again bow to his influence and having secretly disposed of their Gorgons they bring the Manticore into fashion.

When the Man in the Castle is seen no more, the Townsfolk, sure that his Manticore has met the same fate as his other animals, form a committee and march on the Castle to stop the crimes. There they find the Man dying in the company of his three animals. To him the animals represented the dreams of youth (The Unicorn), manhood (The Gorgon) and old age (The Manticore). These creations were easily adopted and discarded by the Townsfolk as passing whims, but for the Man in the Castle, they were the very essence of his life.

- Introduction: There once was a man in a castle. He shunned the Countess' parties; he yawned at town meetings. Oh What a strange man! He does not go to church on Sundays.
- Interlude I The Dance of the Man in the Castle
- 1st Madrigal Every Sunday afternoon, all the respectable folk went out walking. At four o'clock they all greeted each other--they spoke ill of each other at six!
- Interlude II The promenade
- 2nd Madrigal One Sunday Afternoon the proud man in the castle joined the crowd in their promenade by the sea. He walked slowly down the quai leading by a silver chain a captive unicorn! The townsfolk stopped to stare at the ill-assorted pair. Thinking the man insane, some laughed with pity, some laughed with scorn.
- Introduction to the third madrigal
- 3rd Madrigal Unicorn, unicorn, my swift and leaping unicorn, keep pace with me, don't run astray my gentle rover. Beware of the virgin sleeping under the lemon tree. If you kiss her lips the hidden hunter will pierce your throat.



- 4th Madrigal (The count and the countess) "Why are you sad my darling? What shall I buy to make you smile again?" "Ah, my husband dear, I fear you cannot afford to calm my sorrow--Why was I ever born if I must go through life without a unicorn?" "Ah, dry your tears my wife. I swear you will own a unicorn tomorrow!"
- Interlude III The townsfolk stare in surprise as the Count and Countess appear with a unicorn. Soon every respectable couple is seen promenading a unicorn.
- 5th Madrigal (The man from the castle enters with a gorgon) Behold the gorgon, stately and proud! His eyes transfixed but not unaware of the envious stare of the common crowd. Fearless and wild, he slowly sarabands down the street. He fascinates the maiden and frightens the child.
- 6th Madrigal "And what did you do with the unicorn, please?" "He only liked to gambol and tease. So I peppered and grilled him!"
- 7th Madrigal (The countess has secretly poisoned her unicorn) "Ah, my unicorn. He is so very ill. No other one could take his place--besides they have grown too commonplace. I want a gorgon!"
- 8th Madrigal (The man from the castle enters with a mantichore) Do not caress the lonely mantichore. He often bites the hand he really meant to kiss. Afraid of love, he hides in secret lairs, and late at night he battles with the sphinx.
- 9th Madrigal "And what of the gorgon, how is he these days?" "He was so proud and loud, I quickly grew tired of his ways. First I warned him and then I caged him, finally he died." "Of what?" "Of murder."
- Interlude V The Countess secretly stabs her gorgon
- Interlude IV The townsfolk stare in surprise as the Count and Countess appear with a gorgon. Soon all the respectable couples promenade with gorgons.
- 10th Madrigal "Why are you sad my darling?" "My gorgon is lost!" "Hardly a reason to weep. I can now get you a dozen at half the original price." "How dare you suggest such a thing! Do you expect me to pamper and feed a breed that is common and cheap? (will you) offer me a mantichore?"
- Interlude VI The townsfolk stare in surprise as the Count and Countess appear with a mantichore. Soon all the gorgons are killed and every respectable couple is seen promenading a mantichore.
- 11th Madrigal "Have you noticed the man in the castle is seen no more, walking his mantichore? I have a suspicion; do you suppose the mantichore too? We must form a committee to stop all these crimes!"
- Interlude VII The March to the Castle  
 "Slow, much too slow is the judgment of God. We the few, the elect, must take things in our hands. We must judge those who live and condemn those who love. We detest all except what by fashion is blest. For ever and ever, whether evil or good, we shall respect what seems clever."
- (As they enter the castle, the townsfolk discover the man on his death-bed, surrounded by the unicorn, the gorgon and the mantichore.)
- 12th Madrigal "Oh foolish people who feign to feel what other men have suffered. You, not I, are the indifferent killers of the poet's dreams. How could I destroy the pain-wrought children of my fancy? Although the world may not suspect it, all remains intact within the poet's heart. Farewell, farewell.



# THE SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS

*George Shangrow, Musical Director and Conductor*

## CHORUS ONE

### *Sopranos*

Pamela Dolan  
Joan Penney  
Liesel Rombouts  
\*Carol Sams  
Heather Smith  
\*Susanna Walsh  
Lynn Wege

### *Altos*

Darden Hanson  
Laurie Medill  
Nancy Shasteen  
\*Key Verelius

### *Tenors*

Ronald Carson  
Morris Jellison  
\*Jerry Sams

### *Basses*

Tom Bascom  
\*Peter Kechley  
Jim Ploger  
\*Bob Schilperoort

## CHORUS TWO

### *Sopranos*

\*Paula Bridges  
Ingrid Crozier  
Miriam Espeseth  
Marjorie Katz  
Stephanie Lathrop  
Margaret Penne

### *Altos*

Ann Beller  
\*Stephanie Field  
Laila Hammond  
Georgia Rohrbaugh  
Nedra Slauson  
Margaret Smith

### *Tenors*

John Baker  
David Call  
\*Peter Schindler  
Dean Seuss

### *Basses*

Gerard Beemster  
Gary Jankowski  
Robert Kechley  
Sandy Thornton

*\* denotes soloist*

## Organizational Staff

George Shangrow, musical director and conductor  
Peter Schindler, assistant director  
Kay Verelius, business manager  
Susanna Walsh, secretary, treasurer

Laurie Dawson, illustrations

## COMING EVENTS WITH THE SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS



*free to our season subscribers*  
A Very Special Performance

## J.S. Bach's St. Matthew Passion

Good Friday, April 9 First Presbyterian Church

## Elijah

*by Felix Mendelssohn*

with the Broadway Chamber Symphony  
March 19 First Presbyterian Church

