

The Seattle Chamber Singers and The Broadway Symphony

George Shangrow, *conductor*



AN ★ AMERICAN ★ EXTRAVAGANZA



Sunday, June 1, 3:00pm
Meany Theatre

The Broadway Symphony/ Seattle Chamber Singers

The collaboration of the Broadway Symphony and the Seattle Chamber Singers has become a respected musical force in the Pacific Northwest. This company of volunteer artists is dedicated to the presentation of exciting and well polished musical performances. Each ensemble rehearses weekly at University Unitarian Church, where they enjoy the status of artists-in-residence, and where they further develop musical skills and repertoire under the direction of conductor George Shangrow. Membership is by audition, and general auditions for vacant positions are held every August and September. On several occasions each season smaller ensembles are formed from the main ensembles for the performance of chamber music. Especially important to the Broadway Symphony/Seattle Chamber Singers is the support and presentation of local performing artists and the work of local composers.

GEORGE SHANGROW is the music director and conductor of the Broadway Symphony and Seattle Chamber Singers. Having founded the Singers in 1968 and the orchestra in 1978, he has brought both groups to enjoy respected national and international reputations. In addition to his work with the BS/SCS, George Shangrow is Director of Music at the University Unitarian Church in Seattle. Under his leadership the church and its music programs have become recognized as a place for fine musical presentations. He also lectures frequently for the Women's University Club and Seattle Opera's Preview program, and has participated in the regional conventions of the American Choral Director's Association and the American Guild of Organists. Several of Seattle's professional performing ensembles have had Mr. Shangrow appear as guest conductor, and he is frequently asked to adjudicate at student and professional competitions.

ROBERT KECHLEY has become one of Seattle's most often heard and best liked home-town composers. Within the last five years, works by him have been commissioned and performed by the Broadway Symphony, the Seattle Chamber Singers, the Northwest Chamber Orchestra, the Northwest Boychoir, and the University and Eastshore Unitarian Churches. While on tour in Europe in 1981 and 1983, the BS/SCS performed several of Robert's folksong arrangements; these pieces were the highlights of the programs. Robert Kechley is a native of Seattle and began composing at the age of fourteen. He is a graduate of the University of Washington, where he studied composition with Robert Suderberg, Ken Benshoof, William O. Smith and others. Presently, he teaches music at Seattle Central Community College, as well as privately, and assists with the music program at Eastshore Unitarian Church.

PETER MACK was born in Dublin, Ireland in 1961 and began to study the piano at the age of five. In 1978 he entered the medical school of Trinity College Dublin, but left after two years to concentrate on music. Peter Mack was the first Irish person to win the Silver Medal for Great Britain and Ireland, having been chosen from 500 musicians in all areas. He has studied at the Academy of Music in Prague, the Johannesen school in British Columbia, and the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music. In the fall of 1985, Peter followed his instructor, Bela Siki, to the University of Washington, where he is pursuing his Doctoral studies. He is the recipient of the Stout Fellowship and the prestigious Brechemin Scholarship at the University of Washington, and in November 1985 he won the Sherman Clay Competition in Los Angeles, being chosen from a field of 83 top competitors to be the recipient of a Steinway Grand Piano along with five guest appearances with West Coast orchestras.

The Seattle Chamber Singers and The Broadway Symphony

George Shangrow, *conductor*

PROGRAM

American Folk Songs

- At the River* arr. Aaron Copland
Simple Gifts* arr. Aaron Copland
When Jesus Wept arr. Carol Sams
Ching-a-ring Chaw* arr. Aaron Copland

The Unanswered Question Charles Ives (1874-1954)

Four Dances from Rodeo Aaron Copland (b. 1900)

- Buckaroo Holiday
Saturday Night Waltz
Corral Nocturne
Hoedown

I N T E R M I S S I O N

Rhapsody in Blue George Gershwin (1898-1937)
Peter Mack, piano

Folksong Arrangements Robert Kechley (b. 1952)

- Risselty Rosselty
The Water is Wide†
The Arkansas Traveler*
The Erie Canal†
Londonderry Aire

† - *World Premiere*

* - *Orchestrated by the conductor*

Program Notes

by William E. Irving

The Unanswered Question

by Charles Ives

Charles Ives was perhaps the most unusual, indeed most eccentric, yet most original, freshest, most unabashedly and aggressively American of composers. Ives was born in 1874 in Danbury, Connecticut, the son of a Civil War band leader and music teacher. A large part of Charles Ives can only be comprehended within the context of the tremendous influence his father, George Ives, had upon his early musical development. At that time, "art music" in the United States was tightly laced into the corset of rigid German academicism — Romans, ears to the ground, as it were, listening for the latest word from the Greeks. Charles was simultaneously and mercifully isolated from the constrictive influences of this staid American compositional environment, and blessed to have been born the son of George Ives, a well trained "practical" musician with absolute pitch, who demonstrated a lifelong fascination with and experimented with all manners of acoustical phenomena. George admired Bach, Handel and Beethoven, the "sterner stuff" of European musical tradition, but deplored the "pretty music" of Mozart and Haydn. He gave young Charles solid, pedagogical foundations in music theory and compositional technique, but only as tools, not as ends in themselves. He would often say to Charles, "It's all right to do that, Charlie, if you know what you're doing." The point of view, oft expressed by Ives' detractors that Ives, though a brilliant intellect with a vivid imagination, was hamstrung from the start by his isolated upbringing; that he composed the way he did because no one had taught him better, misses the mark about the significance of Ives and his music, as well as simply being erroneous. Ives knew exactly what he was doing; his father made sure that he did. In his teen years, young Ives showed his father a fugue that he had written. Each successive entrance of the fugue subject was in a different key. The elder Ives said: "Charlie, it will be time enough to write and improper fugue and do it well when you can write a proper fugue and do that well."

Concerning the overall impact of his father on his musical growth, Charles Ives wrote: "One thing I am certain of, that if I have done anything good in music, it was first, because of my father, and second, because of my wife. What she has done for me I will not put down, because she will not let me. But my father! — not only his influence, his personality, character, and openmindedness, and his remarkable understanding of the ways of a boy's heart and mind. He had a remarkable talent for music and for the nature of music and sound, and also a philosophy for music that was unusual. Besides starting my music lessons when I was five years old, and keeping me at it until he died, with the best teaching that a boy could have in Bach and the best of the classical music, and the study of harmony and counterpoint, he above all kept my interest, and encouraged openmindedness in all matters that needed it in any way. For instance, father thought that man as a rule did not use the faculties that the Creator had given him hard enough. I could not have been over ten years old when he would occasionally have us sing a tune like Swanee River in E flat while he accompanied us in the key of C. This was to stretch our ears and strengthen our musical minds, so that they could learn to use and translate things that might be used and translated into the art of music more than they had been. In this instance, I do not think he had the possibility of polytonality in composition in mind, particularly; he rather wanted to encourage the use of the ears and mind to think for themselves and be more independent — in other words, to be less dependent on customs and habits."

In Ives, therefore, we have a composer who was a rare combination of the consummate musician in the general sense, schooled in the disciplines of music, and the free thinker who compositionally and aesthetically turned over every rock, took no prisoners, and worshipped no idols. He experimented with dodecaphonism independent of the Viennese Expressionists, used polytonality, layered meters, i.e. bars of one meter superimposed over bars of another; like Bartok, drew his musical sources from the folk and vernacular traditions, and in general did anything he saw fit in his quest for a musical vocabulary and grammar uniquely his own and uniquely American.

Ives music was seldom performed during his lifetime and he therefore was imitated by few. His influence lies in the way he asserted "American-ness" in music. In the words of Henry Cowell, "Every American writing music today is the more independently and confidently himself because of the courage with which Ives obeyed Thoreau's injunction:

"Direct your eye inward . . . and so be expert in home cosmography."

The Unanswered Question was composed in 1908. Ives first subtitled it "A Cosmic Landscape"; later he subtitled it "a contemplation of a serious matter" while pairing it with "Central Park in the Dark — or a contemplation of nothing serious." The piece can be thought of as a musical allegory of sorts. The strings represent the silent passage of eons in a vast different cosmos. The solo trumpet asks "the perennial question

of existence"; the big capital WHY? The flute quartet represents mankind, making at first feeble attempts at an answer. With each posing of the question, the flutes make ever more dissonant, disjoined and disparate attempts at an answer and therefore a sense of purpose. The question is posed one last time and seemingly in recognition of the futility of it all, the flutes ultimately do not answer, the strings, like the eons, continue on and fade away. The theme of mankind, the lonely sentient voice crying out for meaning within the vastness of an indifferent universe, is a very unusual one both because it reveals a depth of profundity in Ives that is often overlooked and because Ives composed this years before two world wars, several "police actions," "limited wars," and the spectre of nuclear annihilation made such gloomy thinking fashionable.

Four Dance Episodes from Rodeo

by Aaron Copland

Among the three well known American composers featured in today's concert, Aaron Copland was the best schooled in the accepted sense. He was one of America's first professional composers of serious music. Unlike Ives, who rejected professionalism, and Gershwin, who entered through the back door of Tin Pan Alley, Copland went out and got all the "right papers"; went to Paris to study with Nadia Boulanger, and upon his return in 1924 started to "push all the right buttons" by taking leadership of the League of Composers, lecturing at the New School for Social Research, guest lecturing at Harvard, teaching composition at the Berkshire Music Center, where he became dean in 1946. He received the Guggenheim Fellowship 1925-26, RCA Victor Award 1930, Pulitzer Prize, 1944, the New York Music Critic's Circle Award in 1945, and an Academy Award for film score to *The Heiress* in 1950. His awards and accomplishments are legion, all the way up to his presentation by Ronald Reagan of the Medal of Freedom. He has been a lifelong champion of new music by American composers. In 1937 he, Marc Blitzstein, Lehman Engel and Virgil Thompson founded the Arrow Music Press, a cooperative publishing facility, and, with several dozen others, the American Composer's Alliance, a licensing vehicle for the performance of new serious music. It is thus fair to say that Aaron Copland is not only one of America's best composers but also American music's best friend and promoter.

His musical style has varied considerably over his life, from highly compact, austere chamber pieces to experiments with jazz rhythms, to opera. He is best known, however, for three ballets: *Billy the Kid* (1938), *Rodeo* (1942), and *Appalachian Spring* (1944).

Rodeo was written for the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and was first performed at the Metropolitan Opera House in October 1942, choreographed by Agnes de Mille. The first movement, "Buckaroo Holiday," with its heavy use of syncopation and accents and with colorful orchestration, conveys without the need of choreography the essence of a group of cowboys on furlough descending into town with money in their pockets. The "Corral Nocturne" beautifully communicates the mood and flavor of our romanticised notions of the West: the clear air, beautiful sunsets, but mostly the openness and quiet. It does this through Copland's characteristic use of open harmony and clear textures. The "Saturday Night Waltz" sounds more to this writer like a minuet than a waltz. It starts boisterously with stacked and hekketed open fifths in the strings followed by a declamatory statement from the horns and trombone. Then it settles into a moderate dance in triple time — sort of like Haydn with a cowboy hat! The "Hoe-Down" is a square dance; a fast one that starts in a tripping sort of way with staggered syncopations in the brass and strings. It then settles into a rousing two-step feeling with short stops and starts which show evidence that the white lightning has been flowing freely. Then the fiddlers' tune breaks in at full tempo with strings and mallet percussion. There is a middle section featuring thinner textures and more syncopation. It builds in loudness and excitement, then suddenly comes to a halt as if everyone collapses in exhaustion. There is a pause for breath before the first fiddlers' tune returns in full blast and builds in volume and speed to the end.

This piece is so evocative of the Old West to most of us that countless imitators have written similar sounding music to countless "B" Westerns through the years. But *Rodeo* exists as the prototype, the best, most lasting example of the style. This piece as well as his other famous ballets demonstrates Copland's genius for writing accessible yet well-crafted works that have lasting quality and speak to the world with a voice uniquely American.

Rhapsody in Blue

by George Gershwin

George Gershwin was born Jacob Gerszkovitz on September 26, 1898 in Brooklyn, New York of Russian immigrant parents. George was to

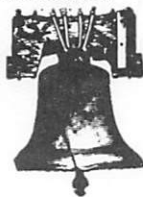
become a living, breathing example of one of America's dearest pieces of folklore, the Horatio Alger rags-to-riches story.

George's young life was among the streets and tenements of Manhattan's lower East Side. He did very poorly as a student, thinking intellectual pursuits to be the province of "sissies"; would much rather ply stickball or cards, or fight. He played hooky when he thought he could pull it off with impunity and made his teachers' lives miserable with his misbehavior. In short, George was a pillar of American youth, the hope for America's future.

George showed no evidence of either interest in or aptitude for music until his association, at the age of ten, with the eight-year-old violin prodigy, Maxie Rosenweig, later to have a brilliant solo career as Max Rosen. He was so impressed by a recital by young Rosen in the assembly hall at P.S. 25, that he sought him out and shortly thereafter they became good friends. George was fascinated by Maxie's musical endeavor and was influenced to try his hand for the first time at playing the piano. Maxie was amused by George's interest in music, but told him in the most unvarnished of terms that he lacked the talent. George, far from deterred, sought and engaged the tutelage of several New York teachers until he finally connected with Charles Hambitzer some time in 1912. His studies under Hambitzer unveiled the first evidence of anything special about George Gershwin. George developed an interest in jazz and popular song, and unlike many teachers of that time, Hambitzer was not of a type to discourage this interest on the part of his pupil. On the contrary, he took great pride and joy from George's rapid progress and accomplishment and in return gave George a solid foundation in piano technique and musical fundamentals, as well as knowledge and respect for the music of the masters.

In 1914, George became a functioning adult professional by taking a job as a song plugger for J. Remick and Co., a music publishing house on Tin Pan Alley. George's reputation as a pianist grew and he recorded a large number of piano rolls for what at the time was decent money. George was by this time also writing his own songs and performing them professionally at age sixteen. His circle of acquaintances widened vastly. In 1917, he met and worked with his idol, Jerome Kern, as well as Victor Herbert and Florenz Ziegfeld, in his capacity as rehearsal pianist for a musical called "Miss 1917" This got him into musical theatre. Al Jolson interpolated Gershwin's 1919 song "Swanee" in his own show "Sinbad." It was such a success that Jolson recorded it for Columbia Records. Jolson was well established by this time, but it in retrospect is fitting that the song that made Gershwin famous is also the song by which today Jolson himself is most remembered.

Gershwin's meteoric rise continued and he became, along with his lyricist brother Ira, the most celebrated songwriter of his time. After a very successful series of recitals by singer Eva Gauthier, which featured, among works by Bartok, Hindemith, Schoenberg and Milhaud, works by Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin, and George Gershwin, with Gershwin accompanying her on his own works. He earned special critical mention as well as the attention of bandleader Paul Whiteman, the "King of Jazz." Before you jazz aficionados choke on this appellation, please remember that at that time mainstream musical society (i.e. white musical society) had no clear idea of what jazz really was. Paul Whiteman possessed a measure of musical skill, a gifted arranger named Ferde Grofe (most remembered later for his Grand Canyon Suite), and an admirable marketing and business acumen. He made his career on packaging a lushly orchestrated, highly polished, considerably sanitized version of a musical style that while influenced by jazz, was very weak tea compared to the music of young Louis Armstrong, for instance. Nevertheless, Whiteman's slicked-up product reached an audience that was ripe for something new, but not quite ready for the unrefined, real thing. Whiteman noticed the bold programming of American popular music on a "serious" recital program and saw an opportunity to bring jazz out of the closet, dress it for a night on the town and bring America's music to the serious concert hall stage. Whiteman commissioned George Gershwin to compose a concert piece for piano and orchestra to be played by the composer and Whiteman's orchestra. On February 12, 1924, Rhapsody in Blue was premiered and reportedly saved an otherwise dreary affair. At the end of the piece, which was near the end of the program, there were some seconds of silence and then hell broke loose. It was and remains to this day a smash hit.



Acknowledgements

Rick Lyman, *sound engineer*
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The Broadway Symphony

George Shangrow, *musical director and conductor*

The Broadway Symphony has the policy of regular rotation for orchestral seating.
Therefore, our personnel are listed alphabetically in each section.

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Judith Beatie
Fritz Klein, *concertmaster*
Diane Lange
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Katrina Sharples
Sam Williams, *principal*
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Vera Groom
Penny Green
Rebecca Parker
Joan Selvig
Maryann Tapiro, *principal*
Julie Wheeler

BASS

David Couch, *principal*
Alan Goldman
Jo Hansen

FLUTE

Erin Adair, *co-principal*
Claudia Cooper
Janeen Shigley, *co-principal*

CLARINET

John Mettler, *co-principal*
Gary Oules, *co-principal*

BASS CLARINET

Jerome Vinikow

OBOE

Huntley Beyer, *co-principal*
Shannon Hill, *co-principal*

ENGLISH HORN

Gail Coughran

BASSOON

Daniel Hershmann,
co-principal
Paul Rafanelli, *co-principal*

TENOR

SAXOPHONE
Herbert Hamilton, Sr.

ALTO

SAXOPHONE
Herbert Hamilton, Jr.,
principal

HORN

Maurice Cary, *principal*
Laurie Heidt
William Hunnicutt
Anita Stokes

TRUMPET

William Berry
Gary Fladmoe
David Hensler, *principal*

TROMBONE

Jeff Domoto
William Irving, *principal*
Steve Sommer

TUBA

David Brewer

TIMPANI

Daniel Oie

PERCUSSION

Matthew Beckmeyer
Chris Monroe

HARP

Naomi Kato

PIANO

Kristina Haight

The Seattle Chamber Singers

George Shangrow, *conductor*

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Jane Blackwell
Belle Chenault
Crissa Cugini
Michele DeMaris
Catherine Haight
Pamela Hill
Kathe Kern
Jill Kraakmo
Stephanie Belanger
Nancy Lewis
Mary Jane Loizou
Margaret Marshall
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Nancy Robinson
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Nancy Shasteen
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Nedra Slauson
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Luna Wilcox

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Phil Mortenson
Gene Patterson
Jerry Sams

BASS

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Gustave Blazek
Andrew Danilchik
Dexter Day
Mark Haight
Ken Hart
Bob Schilperoort
Roger Schmeekle
Richard Wyckoff

The Broadway Symphony and the Seattle Chamber Singers

1986-1987 Concert Season

G.F. Handel's grand oratorio Theodora — September 26, 8:00pm location TBA

BSO #1 with the music of Brahms, Bartok, and Mozart — November 16, 3:00pm Kane Hall

Monteverdi: 1610 Vespers — December 7, 3:00pm St. Alphonsus Church

BSO #2 featuring the 1986 Broadway Symphony Solo Competition winner, Chris Wang — February 8, 3:00pm Kane Hall

SCS Virtuoso Choral Concert — February 21, 8:00pm University Unitarian Church; February 22, 3:00pm University Unitarian Church

BSO #3 Music of Haydn, Beethoven and Stravinsky — March 15, 3:00pm location TBA

BSO #4 featuring guest artists Michelle McBride and Boyd Schlaefter in a light, popular concert highlighting Viennese music — May 17, 3:00pm Kane Hall

World Premiere of a new oratorio by Seattle composer Carol Sams — June 7, 3:00pm Meany Hall

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The Broadway Symphony/ Seattle Chamber Singers

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1987 CONCERT TOUR

In the summer of 1987, the Broadway Symphony and Seattle Chamber Singers will depart for their fourth European Concert Tour. The groups will travel through Italy, Austria, Hungary and France, giving concerts en route. If you are interested in joining the tour, either as performer or non-performer, check the appropriate space below and you will be sent complete information as soon as it becomes available.

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