

THE SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS

George Shangrow, conductor

presents

Robert Kechley's

FRAIL DEEDS

plus music by

Linda Waterfall

March 14, 8pm

University Unitarian Church

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 polished musical performances. Each ensemble rehearses at University Unitarian Church, where they enjoy the status of artists-in-residence, and where they further develop their repertoire under 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, Music Director and Conductor of the Broadway Symphony and Seattle Chamber Singers, is a native of Seattle who founded the chorus (in 1968) and the orchestra (in 1978) in order to give Seattle area artists and audiences an opportunity to hear and perform great works of music. In addition to acclaimed performances of the classic repertoire for both chorus and orchestra, he has brought to Seattle world premieres of operas, choral works, and symphonies by Seattle's most gifted local composers. Mr. Shangrow has toured Europe as a conductor and keyboard artist; appeared as a guest conductor with the Seattle Symphony, Northwest Chamber Orchestra, and Eastern Texas University Opera; and lectures frequently for the Seattle Opera and Symphony. As Director of Music for University Unitarian Church, Mr. Shangrow is a leader in the performance of sacred music, and as the guiding producer of The Bach Year in Seattle (1985) he brought to our city the world's most extensive celebration of the music of J.S. Bach.

LINDA WATERFALL is a well-known and popular composer/performer in the pop musical genre; her compositional style, influenced by rock, jazz, classical and ethnic elements, is difficult to categorize. She has produced four albums of her own work and toured the United States several times. In 1979 she was named Seattle's Best Solo Artist by the Seattle Sun-KZAM Arts and Entertainment Poll. Since 1980 she has also conducted numerous workshops and has been an Artist-in-Residence in Washington and Alaska. A fifth album of original songs is scheduled for May release on Flying Fish Records.

ROBERT KECHLEY has become one of Seattle's best liked and most frequently heard 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. 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.

THE SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS
George Shangrow, conductor

March 14, 1987

University Unitarian Church

PROGRAM

SIX FABLES DE JEAN DE LA FONTAINE

LINDA WATERFALL

Le Cigale et la Fourmi
La Chatte Métamorphosée en Femme
Le Père et le Lion
Le Lion Abattu par L'Homme
Le Vieillard et L'Ane
Le Loup et le Chien

INTERMISSION

FRAIL DEEDS

ROBERT KECHLEY

A Noiseless, Patient Spider
There Was a Child Went Forth
I Cannot Dance Upon My Toes
Down By The Salley Gardens
Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night
He Fumbles At Your Soul

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 possesseth me, One Claw upon the Air,

That had I Ballet knowledge— Nor tossed my shape in Eider Balls.
Would put itself abroad Nor rolled on wheels of snow
In Pirouette to blanch a Troupe— Till I was out of sight, in sound,
Or lay a Prima, mad, The House encore me so—

Nor any know I know the Art
I mention—easy—Here—
Nore any placard boast me—
It's full as Opera—

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.

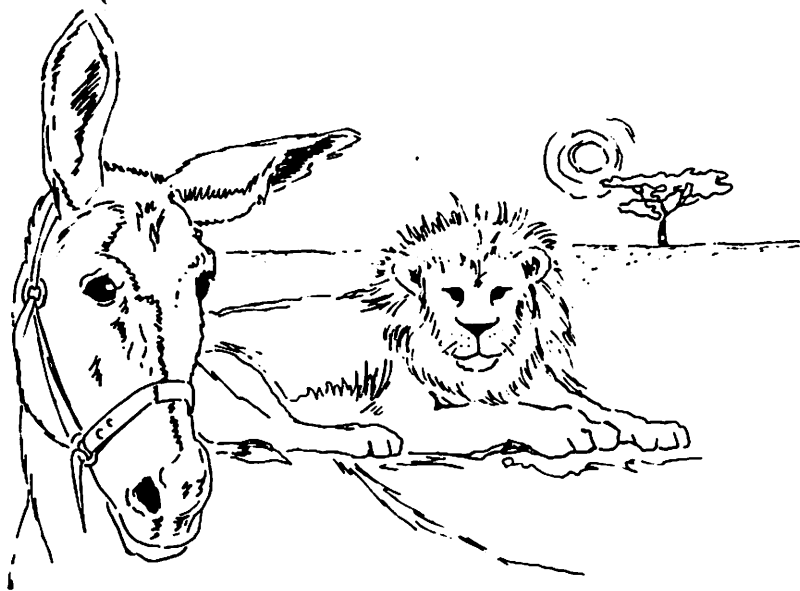
Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

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—



PROGRAM NOTES

Jean de la Fontaine (1621-1695) is best known for his books of Fables, the sources of which were, for the most part, the Fables of Aesop. At the beginning of the sixth book, la Fontaine presents a brief poetic justification of his art form:

"Une morale nue apporte de l'ennui:
Le conte fait passer le precepte avec lui.
En ces sortes de feinte il faut instruire et plaire;
Et conter pour conter me semble peu d'affaire."

"An unvarnished moral brings boredom:
A story can impart a teaching along with a telling.
In this sort of fiction one must instruct and please;
Any storytelling just for its own sake seems inconsequential."

I.

La Cigale et la Fourmi

La cigale, ayant chanté tout l'été,
Se trouva fort depourvue
Quand la bise fut venue.
Pas un seul petit morceau
De mouche ou de vermisseau.
Elle alla crier famine
Chez la fourmi sa voisine,
La priant de lui prêter
Quelque grain pour subsister
Jusqu'à la saison nouvelle.
Je vous paierai, dit-elle,
Avant l'ôût, foi d'animal,
Intérêt et principal.

The Grasshopper and the Ant

The grasshopper, having sung all summer,
Found herself quite impoverished
When the cold north wind came.
Not a single little crumb
Or fly or worm.
She went, crying of famine,
To her neighbor, the ant,
Asking her to lend
Some little bit to subsist on
Until the next growing season.
I will pay you, she said,
Before August, upon my oath as an animal,
Interest and principal.

La fourmi n'est pas prêteuse;
C'est là son moindre défaut.
Que faisiez-vous au temps chaud?
dit-elle à cette emprunteuse.
Nuit et jour à tout venant,
je chantois, ne vous déplaise.
Vous chantiez, j'en suis fort aise;
Eh bien, dansez maintenant.

The ant is not a moneylender;
That is her least fault.
What were you doing when it was warm?
She asked the borrower.
Night and day, no matter what happened,
I sang, don't be displeas'd.
You sang, I feel fine about it;
Well, then, you :an dance now.

2.

La Chatte Metamorphosée en Femme

The Cat That Turned into a Woman

Un homme chérissait éperdument sa chatte;
Il la trouvait mignonne, et belle, et délicate,
Qui miaulait d'un ton fort doux:
Il était plus fou que les fous.
Cet homme donc, par prières, par larmes,
Par sortilèges et par charmes,
Faisait tant qu'il obtint du Destin
Que sa chatte, en un beau matin,
Devient femme; et, le matin même,
Maître sot en fait sa moitié.
Le voilà fou d'amour extrême,
De fou qu'il était d'amitié.
Jamais la dame la plus belle
Ne charma tant son favori
Que fait cette épouse nouvelle
Son hypocondre de mari.
Il l'amadoue; elle le flatte,
Il n'y trouve plus rien de chatte,
Et, poussant l'erreur jusqu'au bout
La croit femme en tout et partout:
Lorsque quelques souris qui rongeaient de la natte
Troublèrent le plaisir de nouveaux mariés.
Aussitôt la femme est sur pieds.
Elle manqua son aventure.
Souris de revenir, femme d'être en posture.
Pour cette fois elle accourut à point;
Car, ayant changé de figure,
Les souris ne la craignaient point.
Ce lui fut toujours une amorce,
Tant le naturel a de force.
Il se moque de tout: certain âge accompli,
Le vase est imbibé, l'étoffe a pris son pli.

A man loved his cat to distraction;
He found her sweet, beautiful, and delicate,
She meowed in such a gentle voice:
He was more foolish than madmen.
This man, with prayers and tears,
With sorcery and charms,
Was able to obtain from Destiny
That his cat, one fine morning,
Became a woman; that same morning,
Mr. Fool made her his wife.
There he was, as crazy in love
As he had been in friendship.
Never had the most beautiful woman
So charmed her spouse
As did this new wife
Her eccentric husband.
He coaxed her, she caressed him,
He found nothing of the cat left in her,
And, going to the extreme,
Believed her to be a woman through and through:
When some mice, who were gnawing on the matting,
Disturbed the newlyweds' pleasure.
Immediately the wife was on her feet.
She longed for the chase.
Whenever they returned, she stalked.
But now her pursuit was pointless;
Because, having changed her form,
The mice did not fear her at all.
It was always a temptation for her,
So strong is nature.
It makes fun of everything: After a certain age,
The vase is molded, the fabric has taken its pleat.

3.

Le Pâtre et le Lion

The Shepherd and the Wolf

Un pâtre, à ses brebis trouvant quelque mécompte,
Voulut à toute force attraper le larron.
Il s'en va près d'un autre et tend à l'environ
Des lacs à prendre loups, soupçonnant cette engeance.
Avant que partir de ces lieux,
Si tu fais, disait-il, ô monarque des dieux,
Que le drôle à ces lacs se prenne
en ma présence,

A shepherd, finding some of his flock missing,
Resolved to catch the thief.
All around the mouth of a lair
He set wolf traps, suspecting them to be the culprits.
Before I leave this place,
O king of the gods, if you could arrange
That the scoundrel would be taken in these traps,
in my presence,

Et que je goûte ce plaisir,
 Parmi vingt veaux je veux choisir
 Le plus gras et t'en faire offrande!
 A ces mots sort de l'autre un lion grand et fort;
 La pâtre se tapit et dit, à demi-mort:
 Que l'homme ne sait guère, hélas! ce qu'il demande!
 Pour trouver le larron qui détruit mon troupeau,
 Et le voir en ces lacs pris avant que je parte,
 O monarque des dieux, je t'ai promis un veau:
 Je te promets un boeuf si tu fais qu'il s'écarte.

And that I would taste this pleasure,
 From twenty calves I would choose
 The fattest and offer it to you!
 At these words came forth from the den a big strong lion:
 The shepherd cowered, and said,
 How man never knows, alas! what he asks for!
 To catch the marauder that destroyed my flock,
 And see it in my traps,
 Oh lord, I promised you a calf:
 I promise you an ox if you'll take him away.

4.

Le Lion Abattu Par L'Homme

The Lion Cast Down by the Man

On exposait une peinture
 Où l'artisan avait tracé
 Un lion d'immense stature
 Par un seul homme terrassé.
 Les regardants en tiraient gloire.
 Un lion en passant rabattit leur caquet.
 Je vois bien, dit-il, qu'en effet
 On vous donne ici la victoire;
 Mais l'ouvrier vous a déçus:
 Il avait liberté de feindre.
 Avec plus de raison nous aurions le dessus,
 Si mes confrères savaient peindre.

A painting was on exhibit
 Where the artist had depicted
 A lion of immense stature
 Thrown down by a single man.
 The onlookers were partaking in the glory.
 A lion passing by silenced their babble.
 I can see very well, he said, that
 In effect you've been given the victory;
 But the artist has deceived you:
 He had the liberty to imagine.
 More reasonably we would have the upper hand,
 If my brethren knew how to paint.

5.

Le Vieillard et l'Âne

The Old Man and the Donkey

Un vieillard sur son âne aperçut en passant
 Un pré plein d'herbe et fleurissant:
 Il y lâche sa bête, et le grison se rue
 Au travers de l'herbe menue,
 Se vautrant, grattant et frottant,
 Gambadant, chantant et broutant,
 Et faisant mainte place nette.
 L'ennemi vient sur l'entrefaite.
 Fuyons, dit alors le vieillard.
 Pourquoi? répondit le paillard;
 Me fera-t-on porter double bât, double charge?
 Non pas, dit le vieillard, qui prit d'abord le large.
 Et que m'importe donc, dit l'âne, à qui je sois?
 Sauvez-vous, et me laissez paître.
 Notre ennemi, c'est notre maître:
 Je vous le dis en bon français.

An old man on his donkey saw, in passing,
 A field, full of grass and blooming;
 He tied up his animal, and the donkey threw himself
 All about the field,
 Sprawling, rubbing, scratching himself,
 Romping, singing and braying,
 And making many bare spots.
 Meanwhile the old man's enemy came along.
 Let us flee, said the old man.
 Why? responded the donkey;
 Will they make me carry double weight?
 No, said the old man, who was already running off.
 What does it matter then, said the donkey, who I belong to?
 Save yourself, and leave me to graze.
 Our enemy is our master:
 I tell you so in good French.

* (a good idiomatic equivalent would be "in plain English.")

Le Loup et le Chien

Un loup n'avait que les os et la peau,
 Tant les chiens faisaient bonne garde.
 Ce loup rencontre un dogue aussi puissant que beau,
 Gras, poli, qui s'était fourvoyé par mégarde.
 L'attaquer, le mettre en quartiers,
 Sir loup l'eût fait volontiers;
 Mais il fallait livrer bataille;
 Et le mâtin était de taille
 A se défendre hardiment.
 Le loup donc l'aborde humblement,
 Entre en propos, et lui fait compliment
 Sur son embonpoint, qu'il admire.
 Il ne tiendra qu'à vous, beau sire,
 D'être aussi gras que moi, lui repartit le chien.
 Quittez les bois, vous ferez bien:
 Vos pareils y sont misérables,
 Car, hères et pauvres diables,
 Dont la condition est de mourir de faim,
 Car, quoi? rien d'assuré, point de franche lipée,
 Tout à la pointe de l'épée.
 Suivez-moi, vous aurez un bien meilleur destin.
 Le loup reprit: Que me faudra-t-il faire?
 Presque rien, dit le chien: donner la chasse aux gens
 Portants bâtons et mendians;
 Flatter ceux du logis, à son maître complaire:
 Moyennant quoi votre salaire
 Sera force reliefs de toutes les façons,
 Os de poulets, os de pigeons:
 Sans parler de mainte caresse.
 Le loup déjà se forge une félicité
 Qui le fait pleurer de tendresse.
 Chemin faisant, il vit le cou du chien pelé.

Qu'est-ce là? lui dit-il. — Rien—

Quoi? Rien? Peu de chose.

Mais encor? — Le collier dont je suis attaché

De ce que vous voyez est peut-être la cause.

Attaché! dit le loup: vous ne courez donc pas

Où vous voulez? — Pas toujours: mais qu'importe?—

Il importe si bien que de tous vous repas

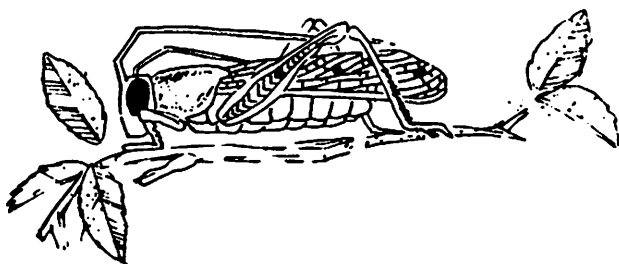
Je ne veux en aucune sorte,

Et ne voudrais pas même à ce prix un trésor.

Cela dit, maître loup s'enfuit et court encor.

The Wolf and the Dog

There was a wolf who was nothing but skin and bones,
 So well did the dogs do their job of guarding,
 This wolf encountered a mastiff as powerful as he was beautiful,
 Fat, and sleek, who had strayed through carelessness.
 Attack and butcher him,
 This the wolf would have gladly done;
 But he would have had to do battle;
 And the mastiff was of a size
 To put up a good fight.
 The wolf therefore approached him humbly,
 Conversed, and complimented him
 On his appearance, which the wolf admired.
 It is within your grasp, my friend,
 To be as fat as I am, said the dog,
 Leave the woods, you will do well:
 Your brethren there are miserable wretches,
 Dunces, sorry fellows, poor devils,
 Whose life is to die of hunger.
 And what for? Nothing assured, no fresh food,
 Everything at the point of the sword.
 Follow me, you will have a much better destiny.
 The wolf answered: What must I do?
 Hardly anything, said the dog: hunt with the people
 Fetch the stick and beg;
 Fawn over the people in the house, and please your master:
 Doing these things, your salary will be
 Generous table scraps of all kinds,
 Chicken bones, pigeon bones;
 Not to mention lots of affection.
 The wolf was already imagining a happiness
 That made him weep with tenderness.
 As they went on their way, he noticed that the dog's neck had
 bald spots.
 What is that? he said. —Nothing—
 What? Nothing? A trifling matter.
 But what is that? —The collar with which they tied me up
 Is perhaps the cause of what you see.
 Tied up? said the wolf: then you don't run free
 Whenever you wish to? —Not always: but what does it matter?—
 It matters so much that of all your fine meals
 I want no part of them,
 And I would not want even a treasure for that price.
 Having said this, Master Wolf ran off, and he is still running free.



THE SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS
George Shangrow, conductor

CHORUS ONE

SOPRANO

*Crissa Cugini
Laurie Flint
+*Catherine Haight
Mary Jane Loizou
Margaret Marshall
Liesel Rombouts
*Carol Sams

ALTO

Marta Chaloupka
Sara Hedgpeth
*Ruth Libbey
+*Nancy Shasteen
*Kay Verelius

TENOR

John Addison
Phil Mortenson
+Gene Patterson
*Jerry Sams
Robert Winsor

BASS

Steve Brault
Ken Hart
+*Peter Kechley
*Bob Schilperoort
Rick Wyckoff

CHORUS TWO

SOPRANO

Laila Adams
Jane Blackwell
+Belle Chenault
*Kyla DeRemer
Pamela Hill
Jill Kraakmo
*Jeanne Van Bronkhorst

ALTO

Kris Haight
Mary Beth Hughes
Suzi Means
Laurie Medill
Janet Ellen Reed
+*Nedra Slauson
Jane Seidman Vosk

TENOR

Henry Elsen
Ron Haight
*Darren Hollenbaugh
Tom Nesbitt
*Doug Overstreet
David Reyes
Tim Southwell

BASS

John Behr
*Gus Blazek
Jim Brigham
Robert Kechley
John Stenseth

+ - denotes soloist in "Six Fables"

* - denotes soloist in "Frail Deeds"

UPCOMING BROADWAY SYMPHONY/SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS CONCERTS

- Friday, March 27, 7:30pm, Kane Hall (UW)

BROADWAY SYMPHONY OPEN DRESS REHEARSAL - This special treat is free to ticket holders and only \$2.00 for others. This is your chance to increase your pre-concert knowledge of the music. Conductor George Shangrow will comment from the podium during the rehearsal.

- Sunday, March 29, 3:00pm, Kane Hall (UW)

THE BROADWAY SYMPHONY IN CONCERT - Join us for Beethoven's First Symphony. Symphony No. 103 (Drum Roll) by Franz Joseph Haydn, and Igor Stravinsky's "Jeu de Cartes."

- Friday, April 17, 7:00pm, Meany Hall (UW)

THE SAINT MATTHEW PASSION - This will mark the sixth time that the BS/SCS will perform Bach's monumental masterpiece. Commemorate Good Friday by sharing in the experience of the Passion. (Please note early starting time.)

- Sunday, May 17, 3:00pm, Kane Hall (UW)

THE BROADWAY POPS - The Broadway Symphony will perform beloved works such as Grieg's "Peer Gynt Suite," and will be joined by special guests soprano Michelle McBride and baritone Boyd Schlaefer who will sing duets by Romberg, Kern and others.

- Sunday, June 7, 7:00pm, Meany Hall (UW)

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN'S "THE SEASONS" - The Broadway Symphony and Seattle Chamber Singers will close their season with Haydn's tribute to love, life, and nature.

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