



Orchestra Seattle Seattle Chamber Singers

George Shangrow, music director

THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

Stabat Mater

Saturday, October 17, 1998 • 8:00 PM
Illsley Ball Nordstrom Recital Hall
Benaroya Hall

Rebekkah Graves, *soprano*
Julie Johnson, *mezzo-soprano*
Howard Fankhauser, *tenor*
Michael Delos, *bass*
Orchestra Seattle
Seattle Chamber Singers
George Shangrow, *conductor*

ANTONIN DVORAK *Stabat Mater*, Op. 58
1841-1904

- I. *Stabat Mater dolorosa*
- II. *Quis est homo, qui non fleret*
- III. *Eja, Mater, fons amoris*
- IV. *Fac, ut ardeat cor meum*

- Intermission -

- V. *Tui Nati vulnerati*
- VI. *Fac me vere tecum flere*
- VII. *Virgo virginum praeclara*
- VIII. *Fac, ut portem Christi mortem*
- IX. *Inflamatus et accensus*
- X. *Quando corpus morietur*

Please disconnect all signal watches and pagers. Flash photography is not permitted during the performance.

This concert is made possible in part by: Classic KING-FM, Gretchen's Catering, Davis Wright Tremaine,
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Program Notes

On the morning of September 11, 1884, Antonin Dvorak conducted his symphonic cantata, *Stabat Mater*, in London, and that evening, he conducted his Sixth Symphony. Shortly afterward, the 27-year-old Edward Elgar, who was one of the first violinists on that occasion, and who himself became a famous composer, wrote to a friend: "I wish you could hear Dvorak's music. It is simply ravishing, so tuneful and clever and the orchestration is wonderful; no matter how few instruments he uses, it never sounds thin; I cannot describe it; it must be heard." This evening you will have the privilege of hearing the *Stabat Mater*, Dvorak's first great masterwork.

Antonin Dvorak, professor of music, composer of symphonies, operas, and choral works, raiser of pigeons, and lover of trains, was born in a village near Prague in 1841, the eldest of nine children. His father, who played the violin and zither and wrote dance tunes, was an innkeeper and butcher, and the young Antonin was expected to take up his father's trade. He managed instead, at the age of sixteen, to leave home to study at the Organ School in Prague. As a violist in Prague's Provisional Theater Orchestra, Dvorak began a musical career that would bring him honor as one of the founders of the Czech national style of composition. Dvorak did not succeed quickly as a composer, but by the age of forty, he had labored as an orchestral player, organist, music teacher, and conductor, and had become able to support himself as professor of composition at the Conservatory of Prague. Here he was able to exercise significant influence upon the musical life of his day. By the end of the 19th century, Dvorak the composer was known all over Europe. For three years, he lived and worked in the United States, where he composed his most famous work, the symphony *From the New World*. He spent the last years of his life in Prague with his wife, his six surviving children, his pupils, and his friends. He died on May Day of 1904 at the age of 62 from heart failure, a musician greatly loved and venerated throughout the world.

Dvorak composed his *Stabat Mater*, which has been called the first Czech oratorio, while struggling through the Valley of the Shadow of Death. The 34-year-old composer was an organist striving for musical recognition in Prague, when, in September 1875, his two-day-old daughter, Josefa, died. Five months later, Dvorak began work on a cantata setting of a somber Roman Catholic liturgical text, written around 1300 for the Feast of the Seven Sorrows of Mary (September 15). This mystical contemplation of a biblical passage (John 19:25-27), probably by a Franciscan monk, describes the anguish of Jesus' mother, Mary, as she stands at the foot of the cross on which her son has been crucified. In 1877, further tragedies struck the Dvorak family. On August 13, their ten-month-old daughter, Ruzena, died after drinking a solution of phosphorus intended for making matches. A few days later, their three-year-old son, Otakar, caught smallpox. He died on September 8, Dvorak's 36th birthday; the composer and his wife were left childless. Dvorak channeled his grief into work on the *Stabat Mater*, completing it on November 13, 1877, as a memorial to all three children.

The ten-section cantata, for four soloists, mixed chorus, and orchestra, was first performed in Prague on December 23,

1880, under the direction of Adolf Cech. The work soon achieved considerable notoriety in the musical centers of Europe and America; the 1884 London performance conducted by the composer established the great reputation that Dvorak was to enjoy throughout the Anglo-Saxon world. He wrote: "At the concert my appearance was greeted with a storm of applause. The general enthusiasm grew from item to item, and, at the end, the applause was so great that I had to thank the audience again and again. At the same time the orchestra and choir overwhelmed me from the other side with the heartiest ovations. In short it turned out better than I could ever have hoped for."

The *Stabat Mater* begins with a 70-measure orchestral introduction. The musical line first rises in octaves from the lowest to the highest F-sharp, as if the Cross on the Hill of the Skull were swept from foot to head with light. The music then falls in half-steps to depict the grief and humility of the Mother of Sorrows standing beneath the Cross. The choir takes up these two contrasting musical symbols in its presentation of the first verse of the text. The four solo voices, individually and in various combinations, then alternate and interweave with the choir, and the first section closes in a mood of tender consolation. In the second section, the four soloists softly contemplate the death of Jesus and the sorrow of his Mother. The third section is reminiscent of a funeral march, and the music then turns, in the fourth section, from the contemplation of Jesus' sufferings to prayer to the Holy Mother: "Light within my heart the flame." Here, the solo bass contrasts with a four-part chorus of women's voices. The choir now sings, in the fifth section, a gently-rocking pastorale, "For the suffering of your Son," which is interrupted briefly by a more dramatic middle passage. In the sixth section, the solo tenor alternates with and is accompanied by the male chorus. The seventh section features the contrasting colors of the orchestra and the full chorus. The eighth section combines the soprano and tenor soloists in a passionate duet, "Let me bear Christ's agony." In the following alto aria, Dvorak paints, with the rich tone-color of the female voice's lower register, a moving picture of tragic supplication. The finale, for quartet and chorus, raises the soul through suffering to the glories of Paradise. The lament of the work's opening section reappears, but it is dissolved in the consolation, then in the rejoicing, and, at last, in the longing of the "Amen" - "Be it so!"

The text of the *Stabat Mater* is one of the most powerful in world literature, and in setting it, Dvorak does not paint the individual words or ideas, but instead expresses the Latin poem's basic moods and visions. He also gives voice to his own trust in his Creator. The anguish he expresses is not cry of rage or a protest against fate, but is rather Dvorak's acceptance of the burden of grief that has been imposed upon him, coupled with an unshakable faith that it will be eased. Dvorak lightens the musical gloom from time to time through the use of more cheerful tonalities, and thus not only displays his naturally cheerful disposition, but also affirms his faith: Christ's suffering and death bring a joy that conquers grief, and a bliss that cannot be described, except perhaps in music.

- Lorelette Knowles

Soloists

Bass Michael Delos, has appeared throughout North America and Europe, dividing his time between opera and the concert stage. A Northwest native, Mr. Delos has appeared extensively with OSSCS in the major Bach works, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, Vaughan Williams' *Hodie*, Handel's *Messiah* and Haydn's *The Seasons*. In 1987 he joined the roster of the New York City Opera. He has made frequent Seattle Opera appearances since his debut in the 1978-79 season, and is also a welcome guest artist with the Chicago Opera Theater and Hawaii Opera, as well as the companies of Salt Lake, Portland, Vancouver, Las Vegas, and St. Louis. In the winter of 1991, Mr. Delos appeared with Monaco's Opera of Monte Carlo in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*, garnering international acclaim.

Tenor Howard Fankhauser is a frequent soloist with choirs and orchestras throughout the region. Recent performances have included Bach's Christmas Oratorio with the Northwest Sinfonietta, St. James Cathedral's New Year's Eve concert, and Handel's *Hercules* and *Theodora* with OSSCS. This season he will sing Britten's *Saint Nicholas* with Opus 7, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Everett Symphony, P.D.Q. Bach's *A Little Nightmare Music* with the Northwest Chamber Orchestra, Part's *Passio Domini nostri Jesu Christi secundum Joannem* with Choral Arts Northwest, *Messiah* with OSSCS, and several concerts at St. James Cathedral, where he is Cathedral Soloist. Mr. Fankhauser's recent recordings include Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise* and Haydn's *Creation*.

Born in Washington, D.C., soprano Rebekkah Graves has traveled extensively through the United States. After studies at Northern Illinois University, she performed many solo recitals in Illinois, North Carolina, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Seattle. With the San Francisco Chamber Singers, she participated in a Koch International CD recording of Elinor Armer's *Uses of Music in Uttermost Places*, and was named "Best Actress in a Musical" for a role she created for an original work with the Lamplighters, a Light Opera repertory theater in San Francisco. Her operatic roles have included Princess Laoula in *L'Etoile* by Emmanuel Chabrier, the title role in *Princess Ida* by Gilbert and Sullivan, the Second Prioress in Poulenc's *Dialogues des Carmelites*, and Helen in *Three Sisters Who Are Not Sisters* by Ned Rorem. Instructors have included Myron Myers, Genia Las, Edward Sayegh, and (currently) Marianne Weltmann.

Mezzo-soprano Julie Johnson, a native of Oregon, received a Bachelor of Music from Willamette University and a Masters degree from the University of Iowa; while at Iowa she served as a graduate assistant, and as an instructor at Grinnell College. Her musical studies continued at the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria and the Summer Vocal Institute in Salt Lake City. She has been a state and regional winner of the Metropolitan Opera Auditions, and national finalist in the National Federation of Music Clubs Young Artist Awards and the International Mozart Competition. Her repertoire includes works of Mozart (*Grand Mass in C minor*, *Coronation Mass*, *Requiem*, *Magic Flute*, *Marriage of Figaro*), Handel (*Messiah*), Verdi (*Requiem*), Haydn (*Lord Nelson Mass*, *Mass in Time of War*), Pasatieri (*Goose Girl*), Vivaldi (*Gloria*), Clausen (*A New Creation*), Copland (*In the Beginning*) and Pergolesi (*Stabat Mater*). Most recently she has performed in *The Daughter of the Regiment* with N.O.I.S.E., *The Face of Orpheus* with Seattle Opera's Opera For the Fun of It, and recorded an aria from Barber's *Vanessa* for Seattle Opera's 1998-99 promotional CD.

Orchestra Seattle

Violin Dajana Akropovic Alison Han Sue Herring Jamie Keyes Fritz Klein** Pam Kummert Eileen Lusk Avron Maletzky Gregor Nitsche Susan Ovens Leif-Ivar Pedersen* Elizabeth Robertson Theo Schaad Druska Salisbury-Milan	Viola Deborah Daoust Saundrah Humphrey Alice Leighton Katherine McWilliams Shari Peterson Timothy Prior* Cello Evelyn Albrecht Joseph Banks Yumi Hiraga Megan Kennedy Soo H. Lee Valerie Ross	Joan Selvig Matthew Wyant* Bass Allan Goldman* Jo Hansen Chris Simison Flute Kate Johnson* Megan Lyden Oboe Tim Garrett Shannon Hill*	Clarinet Gary Oules* Cindy Renander Bassoon David Cripe* Jeff Eldridge Keyboard Robert Kechley Trumpet John Falskow Gordon Ullmann*	Horn Barney Blough Don Crevie* Jennifer Crowder Laurie Heidt Trombone David Brewer Moc Escobedo* David Holmes Timpani Daniel Oie * <i>principal</i> ** <i>concertmaster</i>
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Libretto

I. Quartet and Chorus

Stabat Mater dolorosa
Juxta crucem lacrimosa
Dum pendebat filius.

The anguished mother stood
In tears beside the cross
Where her Son was hanging.

Cuius animam gementem,
Contristatam et dolentem,
Petra transivit gladius.

Her soul was full of grief,
Of compassion and of sorrow
For the sword had pierced it.

O quam tristis et afflicta
Fuit illa benedicta
Mater Unigeniti.

Oh how sad and how broken
Was that once blessed
Mother of the only begotten [Son]!

Quae maerebat et dolebat,
Pia Mater, dum videbat
Nati poenas incliti.

How she grieved, how lamented,
When the loving mother saw
Her glorious son thus racked!

II. Quartet

Quis est homo, qui non fletet,
Matrem Christi si videret
In tanto supplicio?

Who is he who would not weep
To see Christ's mother
Suffering such anguish?

Quis non posset contristari,
Christi Matrem contemplari
Dolentem cum filio?

Who could restrain his sorrow
To behold Christ's mother
Lamenting for her Son?

Pro peccatis suae gentis
Vidit Jesum in tormentis
Et flagellis subditum.

For the sins of His people
She saw Jesus tormented,
Broken by the scourging.

Vidit suum dulcem Natum
Moriendo desolatum,
Dum emisit spiritum.

She beheld her dear Son
In His agony abandoned,
As He yielded up His soul.

III. Chorus

Eja, Mater, fons amoris.
Me sentire vim doloris
Fac, ut tecum lugeam.

Come, oh Mother, font of love,
Make me understand your sorrow,
That I may mourn with you.

IV. Bass and Chorus

Fac, ut ardeat cor meum
In amando Christum Deum,
Ut sibi complacem.

Light within my heart the flame
Of love to Christ the Lord
That he may look on me with favor.

Sancta Mater, istud agas,
Crucifixi fige plagas,
Cordi meo valide.

Holy Mother, do this [for me]:
Let His wounds of Crucifixion
Pierce my heart eternally.

V. Chorus

Tui Nati vulnerati,
Tam dignati pro me pati,
Poenas mecum divide.

For the suffering of your Son,
The wounds He chose to bear for me,
Let me share your tears.

VI. Tenor and Chorus

Fac me vere tecum flere,
Crucifixo condolere,
Donec ego vixero.

Let me weep in true compassion,
Share the Crucifixion of my Lord,
As long as I shall live.

Juxta crucem tecum stare,
Te libenter sociare
In planctu desidero.

Near the cross to stand with you,
Willingly to cleave to you,
Lament with you, is my desire.

VII. Chorus

Virgo virginum praeclara,
Mihi jam non sis amara,
Fac me tecum plangere.

Virgin highest among virgins,
Do not now refuse my plea,
Let me mourn with you.

VIII. Duet

Fac, ut portem Christi mortem,
Passionis fac concortem
Et plagas recolere.

Let me bear Christ's agony,
Let me share His passion,
And recollect His wounds.

Fac me plagis vulnerari,
Cruce hac inebriari
Ob amorem Filii.

Let me be pierced by His wounds,
Be inspired by His cross,
For the sake of thy Son's love.

IX. Alto

Inflammatum et accensus,
Per te, Virgo, sim defensus
In die iudicii.

Against the all-consuming flames of hell
Be our defense, oh Virgin Mary
On the day of judgment.

Fac me cruce cutodiri,
Morte Christi praemuniri,
Confoveri gratia.

Let me be guarded by the cross,
Protected by Christ's death,
And comforted by your grace.

X. Quartet and Chorus

Quando corpus morietur,
Fac, ut animae donetur
Paradisi gloria.
Amen.

When my body comes to die,
Let my soul be granted
The glory of Paradise.
Amen.

OSSCS wishes to thank Classic KING-FM and Gretchen's Catering for co-sponsoring our 1998-99 season.

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