

Apr. 2003

York County Choral Society

Twenty-second season 2002-2003

DAVID LOWRY, MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR

SHIRLEY H. FISHBURNE, CO-FOUNDER

SUSAN READ, ACCOMPANIST AND VOCAL COACH

Sunday, April 6, 2003 at 4:00 pm

Oakland Baptist Church, Rock Hill, South Carolina

The Secular Side of the YCCS

PATSY BLACK AND WESLEY REVELS, DUO-PIANISTS

MIRIAM MICK, SOPRANO

Program

Liebeslieder Waltzer, Op. 52
(*Lovesong Waltzes*)

Answer, maiden
Deep in thunder roars the tide
Oh, these women
Like the evening sunset's rapture
The tender hopvine wanders
There was a tiny, pretty bird
How dear, alas, was life together
When your eyes so fondly seek
On Danube's border

Johannes Brahms
1833-1897

Oh, how calm the river flows
No, I will not listen to them
Locksmith, go and bring me padlocks
Ev'ry bird that soars the sky
See how bright the fountain gleams
Nightingale, you sing so sweet
My love is a well
Don't wander, my light
Each tender leaf is trembling

Two Country Songs by Robert Frost
from *Frostiana*

"The Road not taken"
"Choose something like a star"

Randall Thompson
1899-1984

Three Robert Burns Ballads

"The Banks o'Doon"
"A Red, Red Rose"
"O Whistle, and I'll come to ye"

James Mulholland

Four Persian Poetic Fragments
(World premier)

"Look at your eyes" (Rumi, 13th c.)
"The moon starts singing" (Hafiz, 14th c.)
"Dawn" (Helali, 15th-16th c.)
"All day and night, music" (Rumi)

Bruce A. Thompson
b. 1937

"Loch Lomond"

Scottish Folk Song
arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872-1958

"Sing me to heaven"

Daniel Gawthrop
b. 1949

"All the things you are"
from *Very warm for May* (1939)

Jerome Kern
1885-1945

PROGRAM NOTES

Johannes Brahms

Opus 52 was composed in 1868-69 with words from *Polydora* by Georg Friedrich Daumer (1800-1875) which offers sentimental and sometimes conversation-like texts.

Daumer began *Polydora* with a quote from Aristophanes: "The common people have no love for difficult poets, nor for wine from Pramnos; they cause the eyes to squint and the stomach to cramp. They love the fragrant, the mild, and that which is sweet as nectar." And he then proceeds to gather poetry from international sources and translate them into German.

Brahms then selected poems for not only two sets of *Liebeslieder Waltzer*, but also for a number of other vocal works. They do not constitute a story (like a song cycle) but instead exhibit universal appeal, compactness, and a single idea for each poem.

Brahms's music was first written in 1865 as a set of waltzes for four-hand piano, and three years later revised, adding four solo voices with Daumer's texts. Singing by a chorus is not uncommon in modern practice. While the German texts are set very cleverly by Brahms, singing the work in English for an English-speaking audience brings a more immediate participation in its charm.

Randall Thompson & James Quitman Mulholland

Randall Thompson, a fine composer and professor at Harvard for many years, wrote *Frostiana* for the 200th anniversary of Amherst, Massachusetts, Frost's hometown. Frost and Thompson were friends for many years.

Mulholland is currently professor of music at Butler University in Indianapolis and is captivated by the poetry of Robert Burns, having set many of his texts.

Bruce A. Thompson

Bruce Thompson is Professor of Music at Winthrop University, where he teaches music theory, composition and music literature. Educated at Indiana University, he has always been keenly interested in contemporary composition and world music. *Four Persian Poetic Fragments* were composed as a gift to the YCCS, which performs them today for the first time.

This short work is similar to the Brahms waltzes in that each poetic fragment projects one thought, mood, or image.

"Look at your eyes"

*Look at your eyes. They are small,
but they see enormous things.*

MAULANA JELALODDIN RUMI, 13TH C.

"Dawn"

*you rise from your chair
and the rays from your face
embroider the universe.*

NURODDIN HELALI ESTARABADI, 15TH-16TH C.

"The moon starts singing"

*The moon starts singing
When everyone is asleep
And the planets throw a bright robe
Around their shoulders and whirl up
Close to her side.*

SHAMSODDIN MOHAMMAD HAFIZ, 14TH C.

"All day and night, music"

*All day and night, music,
a quiet, bright
reedsong. If it
fades, we fade.*

RUMI

Ralph Vaughan Williams

RVW was one of the most powerful musical forces in the British Isles between Elgar and Britten. Not only a major composer, he was fascinated by British folk music. The YCCS is scheduled to travel to the UK in July of this year, including a few days in Scotland. So who can resist singing about Loch Lomond?

Daniel Gawthrop

Gawthrop is a prominent American composer residing the Washington, DC area. The setting of this text by Jane Griner has become one of the most sung choral pieces in the repertory from high school honors choirs to major professional choruses.

Jerome Kern

Dennis Keene, founder of Voices of Ascension, says that he began organ lessons at age seven playing *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*, and *All the Things You Are* (his favorite song) which his teacher, a theater organist, thought was appropriate. Secretly Dennis also practiced Bach because he loved the way it sounded, thus Kern and Bach remain his favorite composers. The combination certainly didn't hurt his chances, for has emerged one of America's top choral conductors and church musicians.

THIS ARRANGEMENT IS BY DENNIS KEENE, CONDUCTOR OF VOICES OF ASCENSION

AS FOUND ON THE COMPACT DISC *CAN'T HELP SINGING*, DELOS DE 3224

THE MANUSCRIPT OF THIS ARRANGEMENT IS USED WITH THE KIND PERMISSION OF MR. KEENE.

David Lowry

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WORKS PERFORMED BY THE YCCS 1981-2003

Albright A Song to David
Bach Magnificat; Missa h-moll; St. John Passion
Beethoven Ninth Symphony
Bernstein Chichester Psalms
Brahms A German Requiem; Liebeslieder Waltzer
Britten St. Nicolas; A Ceremony of Carols; Festival Te Deum
Duruflé Requiem
Fauré Requiem
Handel Messiah; Coronation Anthems;
Foundling Hospital Anthem
Haydn The Creation
Higginson Requiem (American Premier)
Honegger King David
Mendelssohn Elijah
Mozart Requiem; Grand Mass in c; Missa Brevis in D,
Solemn Vespers, Coronation Mass
Poulenc Gloria
Rutter Gloria
Schubert Mass in G
Thompson A Testament of Freedom; The Peaceable Kingdom
Vaughan Williams Dona nobis pacem; Five Mystical Songs
Vivaldi Gloria; Magnificat
Wiley Columbus: Dream to Reality (World Premier)

Plus shorter works by
Bach, Bairstow, Biebl, Britten, Byrd, Conte, Davison, Dawson,
Duruflé, Elgar, Gawthrop, Gibbons, Hadley, Handel, Howells, Hutto, Kern
Lauridson, Lowry, Mozart, Mulholland, Parry, Pärt, Rorem, Rutter, Schubert,
Shaw/Parker, Sowerby, Staheli, Stavinsky, Tavener, Thompson
Tye, Vaughan Williams, Victoria, Wesley

In addition to at least two regular concerts each season, the YCCS has appeared with the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra, the Raleigh Oratorio Society and the Converse Festival Orchestra and Chorus. Concerts have been performed in Cheraw, Chester, Columbia, York, Lancaster, and twice in the Piccolo Spoleto Festival of Churches.

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Oakland Baptist Church
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