Program Notes

This will mark the tenth time we've ended the year with a performance in the Great Court, and we will once again take advantage of its remarkable acoustics and design by featuring a group of polychoral pieces, along with other pieces specifically chosen for this space. Polychoral (multiple choirs) music reached its maturity in Venice, at the cathedral of St. Marks, with its widely separated balconies in the late Renaissance period, and our first composer worked in Venice during this period. (That's St. Marks on the cover of this program)

Hans Leo Hassler moved to Venice to study with the masters who had perfected the polychoral style in the early 1600's and subsequently composed our first piece, Cantate Domino a 12, a work for triple chorus. Born in Germany, Hassler returned to Germany after spending several years in Venice. This work uses unbalanced groups, one choir with no basses, one choir with no sopranos and a fully mixed group to create an interesting stereo effect as part of the call and response typical of polychoral music.

In his Mass in G minor for double chorus and solo quartet, British composer Ralph Vaughan Williams calls upon the harmonic and rhythmic resources of the English Renaissance composers. It seems hard to imagine that this work was written in 1922, at the same time that Stravinsky was developing the “neo-classic” style and Schoenberg was creating a following for his atonal, dodecaphonic music, but Vaughan Williams was secure in his tonal vision and, in this work, created music of timeless beauty.

In 2005 we commissioned composer John Baboukis to write a polychoral work, O Sing Unto the Lord (Psalm 96) for our University Chorus. When we learned that Dr. Baboukis, who teaches at the American University of Cairo (in Egypt) would be in the U.S. working on a new symphony for the Cairo Symphony Orchestra in June of this year, we jumped at the chance to perform it again and to have him come down from New York to provide us with a workshop on the piece. Here is what he had to say about the piece when we premiered it nine years ago:

The structure of the piece is to some extent an imitation of (and homage to) a few late Renaissance choral works of the great composers Orlando di Lasso and Giovanni Gabrieli. Each new phrase of the text is matched with a new melodic idea, treated in various ways, and with various combinations of voices. The location of the choirs also affects how the musical material is used. Often a melody or a short phrase may be heard calling back and forth from opposite sides of the room. Toward the middle of the piece, a contrasting texture and color, derived from and elaborating on Byzantine Chant, is introduced (that’s the Middle-Eastern-sounding part). The melodic material from that section is then used to create a fugal (highly imitative) conclusion, which also uses a brief recap from the very beginning.

The Chamber Singers will take center stage next and begin their part of the program with three movements of L.A. composer Morten Lauridsen’s Chanson des Roses. These lovely pieces, based on poetry by Austrian poet Rainer Maria Rilke (from a set called “Les Roses,” which explains the name of the choral set) each introduce one or two melodies which are all combined in the final, now famous piece Dirait-on.

Program Notes (continued inside)
Program

The first half of this concert will take place in the Main Auditorium. It will include a variety of selections by the Drexel Concert Band and conclude with a joint performance of Vincent Persichetti’s “Celebrations” by the Concert Band and the University Chorus under the direction of Dr. Wesley Broadnax.

Intermission (concert will continue in the Great Court)

Cantate Domino a 12................................. Hans Leo Hassler (1564–1612)
Kayla Speedy, soprano Laura Allan, alto
Brett Rodgers, tenor Joseph Juhase, bass

Credo from “Mass in G minor”............Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)
Victoria Tielebein, Nicole Zusman, sopranos
Katie LaVoie, Taylor Nolan, altos
Brett Rodgers, tenor Corey Fedorowich, bass

O Sing Unto The Lord.........................................John Baboukis
Meghan Cash, alto

University Chorus

from Les Chansons des Roses .................Morten Lauridsen (1943–)
En une seule fleur
La Rose Complete
Dirait-on

Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden (Motet No. 6) ..........J. S. Bach (1685–1750)

Gloria.................................................................John Rutter
I. Allegro vivace
II. Andante
III. Vivace et ritmico
Alexis Wolfer, Julianna Quazi, sopranos Emily Barth, alto
Nick Pescatore, trumpet 1
Carson Elias, trumpet 2
Anthony Romano, trumpet 3
Jacob Adamcik, trumpet 4
Katie Leis, trombone 1
Dreddrick Brown, trombone 2
Alex Smith & Alex Pierce, trombone 3—bass trombone
Hannah Dickey, Tuba
Steven Burns, timpani
Erica Barry, Percussion
Stephanie Abruzzo, keyboard

Program Notes (continued from back cover)

We’ll follow with the last of J.S. Bach’s six remarkable motets, Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden. This difficult, contrapuntally complex work shows many of Bach’s great virtues: imaginative use of polyphony, complex and unexpected thematic development, a rich harmonic vocabulary, and great variation in texture as he moves from many parts to just one or two parts active at any given time. The work is in two rather asymmetric sections, with an extended opening section in $\frac{1}{2}$ time, followed by a fast Alleluia in $\frac{3}{4}$ time.

The University Chorus will then be joined by brass and percussion players from the Concert Band for our final piece, British composer John Rutter’s popular Gloria. Written in 1974, it is his first large-scale work for Chorus and has become a durable standard in Great Britain and the U.S. Rutter sets the Gloria text in three movements, fast/slow/fast, with contrasting styles that directly reflect the text of each section. The final movement (Cum sancto spiritu...[with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.,] with its energetic fugue and propulsive, multi-metric accompaniment is particularly effective.
Drexel Chorus
Dr. Steven Powell, director
Stephanie Abruzzo, accompanist

Soprano
Emily Fister ----------------------------- Biological Sciences
Emily Lantz ------------------------------ Entertainment & Arts Management
Juliana Quazi ----------------------------- Math
#Julianne Scott -------------------------- Culinary Arts
#Johanna Mikitka Simon -------- Architectural & Civil Engineering
Lauren Smith ----------------------------- Still Deciding
*Kayla Speedy --------------------------- Fashion Design
Victoria Tielebein ---------------------- Physics
Carrie Wang ----------------------------- Biological Sciences
Alexis Wolfer --------------------------- Business Administration
Malhun Deniz Yildiz --------------------- Criminal Justice
#Nicole Zusman ------------------------- Music Industry

Alto
#Laura Allan ----------------------- Materials Sci and Engineering
#Emily Barth ------------------------ Chemical Engineering
*K#Meghan Cash ---------------------- Environmental Engineering
Cathlene Farnelli ------------------- Architectural Engineering
Demi Ferker ------------------------- Electrical Engineering
Annia Jasper ------------------------- Music Industry
#Katie LaVoie ------------------------ Music Industry
Samantha Leinberger ---------------- Environmental Science
Taylor Nolan ------------------------- Psychology
Pritika Ramesh ---------------------- Music Industry
#Cameryn Richards ----------------- Graphic Design
Sarah Ritter ------------------------ Biological Sciences
Jenna Snyder ------------------------ Communication
Jessica Williams ---------------------- Nursing

Tenor
Elias Agia -------------------------------- Architecture
#Ben Anderson ------------------------ Nursing
Miguel Calderon ---------------------- Computer Science
Joshua Cohen ------------------------- Civil Engineering
William Kocher ---------------------- Civil Engineering
#Doug McCaskey ---------------------- Biological Sciences

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Elias Agia -------------------------------- Architecture
#Ben Anderson ------------------------ Nursing
Miguel Calderon ---------------------- Computer Science
Joshua Cohen ------------------------- Civil Engineering
William Kocher ---------------------- Civil Engineering
#Doug McCaskey ---------------------- Biological Sciences
Nick Nanfito ---------------------------------- Psychology
#Jonas Newschaffer ----------------- Business Administration
*Brett Rodgers ----------------------- Music Industry
Noah Scheffey --------------------- TV Production & Media Mgmt
#Bradley Shaw ---------------------- Business Administration
George Slavin ---------------------- Computer Engineering
Billy Ting --------------------------- Biological Sciences
#Michael Zimmermann ---------------- Business Administration

Bass
Michael Annucci ---------------- Mechanical Engineering
Daniel Carrion ---------------------- International Area Studies
Austin Dean ------------------------ Software Engineering
Chris Doblovosky ---------------- Software Engineering
#Corey Fedorowich ---------------- Biological Sciences
Joseph Juhase ---------------- Entertainment & Arts Management
Young Yoo Kim ---------------- Mechanical Engineering
Philip Moyer ---------------------- Architectural Engineering
Adam Nassani ------------------ Mechanical Engineering
Matthew Prusinski ------------- Biomedical Engineering
Alexander Ruth ---------------- Mechanical Engineering
Jonathan Shoup ------------------ History
Eric Simon ------------------------ Computer Science
Ted Swanson ----------------------- Graphic Design

* Section Leader       # Pi Nu Epsilon Member
Graduating Seniors in bold

Chamber Singers

Soprano
Lauren Smith
Victoria Tielebein
Alexis Wolfer

Alto
Laura Allan
Emily Barth
Demi Ferker
Pritika Ramesh

Tenor
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Doug McCaskey
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