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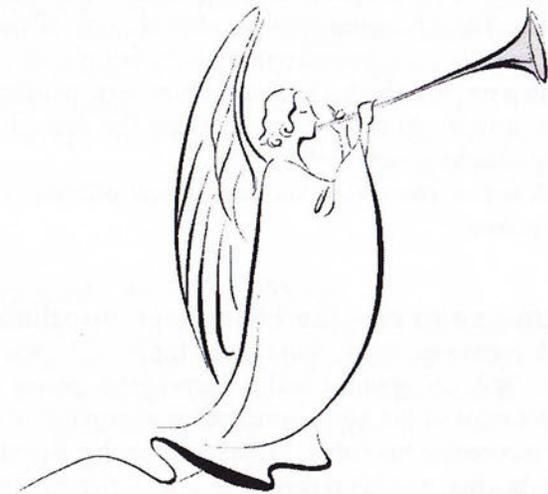


The Cantata Singers

Will Wickham, Musical Director

present

*Hodie Christus:
A Fanfare for Christmas*



**Saturday, December 14th, 2002 – 4:00 p.m.
THE PARK CHURCH, ELMIRA**

Featuring:

***The Pinnacle Brass Quintet of Ithaca College
Park Church Children's Choir
Park Church Bell Choir
Charlotte Cook, Organist***

Hodie Christus: A Fanfare for Christmas

Fanfares have been around a long time. Think of movies with knights jousting or chariot races: always a trumpet fanfare to announce the “main event.” In fact, imagine back to the birth of Christ over 2000 years ago. Trumpets! A glorious announcement of the birth of Jesus. All right, maybe it was angels, heralding the birth, but it was definitely a fanfare.

While Christmas carols may not have been around as long as fanfares, they were the earliest form of vernacular choral literature permitted in the Church, back in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In the nineteenth century Bramley and Stainer put together the first really important Christmas collection: *Christmas Carols New and Old*. Through the last century many leading composers wrote carols: Britten, Mendelssohn, Vaughan Williams, Holst and others. The Christmas carol is, after all, one of very few musical forms that allows classically trained musicians to feel it’s permissible to write “tunes” without worrying about a kind of “composers’ political correctness”! So what better way might there be to celebrate the Advent and Christmas season than with fanfares and carols?

All we ask is that you enjoy this, our musical offering, full of the spirit and joy of the season.

***Hodie, Christus natus est*– Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck**

The Dutch composer, Jan P. Sweelinck (1562-1621), was best known in his lifetime as both an organist and a harpsichord player without equal. Sweelinck spent most of his life in Amsterdam as organist of the Oude Kerk (Old Church) succeeding his father, Pieter. As a teacher Sweelinck was influential and sought after, and his pupils were among the most highly regarded musicians of the time; they included Peter Hasse, Samuel and Gottfried Scheidt, Jacob Praetorius, and Heinrich Scheidemann, founders of the “North German organ school” of the 17th century.

As a composer Sweelinck was very prolific. With several hundred works published in his own lifetime, his compositional style was also highly influential. Considered by many to have been one of the dominant composers in the transition from the Renaissance to the Baroque period, he can be linked with significant composers from more recent history. He was the first to compose independent pedal lines in organ music, including fugue subjects. This innovation helped to pave the way for J.S. Bach to perfect the “art of the fugue” a century later.

Sweelinck’s “choral fanfare” *Hodie Christus natus est* is written for five voice parts and shows an elegant and mature contrapuntal style.

***A Western Fanfare* - Eric Ewazen**

Eric Ewazen, (1954-) is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music and received advanced degrees from the Julliard School, where he has been a member of the faculty since 1980. A recipient of numerous composition awards and prizes, his works have been commissioned and performed by many chamber ensembles and orchestras in the U.S. and overseas. *A Western Fanfare* was commissioned by the Music Academy of the West for their 50th anniversary season, and is a short energetic work bursting with life. Versions exist for both brass orchestra and brass quintet.

***Psallite* – Michael Praetorius**

While sharing a surname with one of Sweelinck’s students, Michael Praetorius actually lived some time before Sweelinck was born. While there remains a great deal of uncertainty as to the origin of this lovely and spirited Christmas proclamation it is certain that the first known “printed” version was found in a collection of sacred pieces put together by Michael Praetorius. Like the Sweelinck *Hodie*, this piece is very much akin to a fanfare.

***A Virgin Unspotted* – William Billings**

William Billings was a very prolific early American composer. He worked as a teacher and organist, writing music for the church, and as a staunch patriot, he also wrote music in support of the American Revolution. Billings was 30 years old when the war broke out, and was a personal friend of both Sam Adams and Paul Revere.

Billings was instrumental in the establishment of “shape-note” singing in the 1890s. The term “shape note” refers to the use of geometric shapes to indicate the pitches of the notes. A square would equal “sol” (the 5th note of the scale), a star would equal “fa” (the 4th note of the scale) and so on in the system of sight-singing known as “solfege”. The singers would learn the music using the solfege system at first and add the words later. While shape note singing fell out of favor in the early 19th century, it has enjoyed a “re-awakening” since the 1930s.

***Hymn to the Virgin* – Benjamin Britten**

It would be difficult to find an earlier work of Benjamin Britten than the *Hymn to the Virgin*. Britten, having been born in 1913, was barely 17 when he wrote the piece while a first year student at the Royal College of Music in London. Although he dropped out of the RCM before completing

his studies, Britten was one of the most successful “career composers” of the 20th century.

In 1939 Britten moved to Amityville, New York where he lived and worked for 3 years. Having already enjoyed much musical success in his life, he continued to write prolifically while in the US. In addition to writing, he and his dear friend, tenor Paul Pears, performed many recitals and chamber concerts at Southold in nearby Suffolk County, one of which was attended by Albert Einstein.

Even though the *Hymn to the Virgin* was written very early in his career, one can hear Britten’s ability to set a text in a very delicate yet powerful fashion. The work is set for unaccompanied choir with a small “semi-chorus” responding in Latin to the English text of the larger ensemble for the first two verses. The final verse finds the two choirs combining to create a powerful and moving climax before returning to the delicate setting heard at the opening of the piece.

Christmas Cantata (Sinfonia Sacra) – Daniel Pinkham

The long and illustrious career of Daniel Pinkham (1923-) includes a large catalogue of compositions, teaching and performance. In addition to a large body of choral works, he has written symphonies, concertos, documentary film scores, stage works and many chamber works. Pinkham has taught at Boston University, Harvard and the New England Conservatory where he lectured in early music.

Pinkham’s interest in early music and his role as a composer-performer came together in producing his most often performed work, the *Christmas Cantata*. Subtitled *Sinfonia sacra*, the interplay between three choirs - brass, organ and singers - recalls the polychoral works of composers such as Gabrielli and Schütz. The Latin texts are drawn from the Mass and various Christmas services. The first movement *Quem vidistis, pastores? Dicite! (Whom do you see, shepherd? Tell us!)* uses contrasting textures and rhythms to render the conversation of the text. With its modal tonality and long, sustained melismas, the second movement *O magnum mysterium (O great mystery)* evokes a medieval atmosphere. The final movement presents statements of the text *Gloria in excelsis deo (Glory to God in the highest)* accompanied by brass alternating with a cappella statements of the psalm *Jubilate Deo omnis terra (Rejoice in the Lord, all ye lands)*. The glorious conclusion of the work is with the simple text of praise *Alleluia, Alleluia*.

Hodie, Christus natus est – Healy Willan

Healy Willan was born in 1880 in England. Early in his life he developed a deep love of the Church of England and its musical heritage. From this background it is easy to imagine how he found his way to becoming an accomplished young organist, conductor and teacher. In 1913 these interests and talents brought Willan to Toronto, Canada as the head of the music theory program at the Toronto Conservatory of Music. His love for the Church and its music brought him to the position of organist and choir director of St. Mary Magdelene Anglican Church in Toronto, a position he held for most of his life.

Willan wrote his *Hodie, Christus natus est* in 1935, and it is widely heralded as one of his finest works. Always a great lover of medieval chant, Willan shows some influence of that in this piece. In talking about his own music he once said, “The beautifying of the liturgy is only possible through the use of the church’s own music, so that plainsong has been the essential backbone of my work.” Look for a similarity with the Sweelinck *Hodie* from the first part of today’s program – both were based on the same Gregorian chant. There is also some influence from the music of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Listen also for the moving “open fifth” sound at the text *Gloria in excelsis Deo*.

Wildwood Carol – John Rutter

John Rutter (1945-) began his composing career while at the Highgate School in London. The director of music, Edward Chapman, encouraged his students to compose carols as a way of experimenting with a miniature art form. Rutter’s first carol was actually inspired by his having heard that classmate John Taverner had written one, and thus a career was born! Rutter’s undergraduate education continued at Clare College in the early 1960s, where he later became director of music.

As a composer, Rutter first met with wide recognition in the early 1970s thanks to his work on the follow-up to the hugely successful *Carols for Choirs*. After giving up the Clare post to allow more time for composition, he formed the Cambridge Singers as a professional chamber choir primarily dedicated to recording, and he now divides his time between composition and conducting. He has guest-conducted or lectured at many concert halls, universities, churches, music festivals, and conferences in Europe, Scandinavia, and North America.

Wild Wood Carol is an extract from Rutter’s musical version of Kenneth Grahame’s timeless children’s classic *The Wind in the Willows*, writ-

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PROGRAM

Hodie, Christus natus est Jan P. Sweelinck
CANTATA SINGERS, PINNACLE BRASS, AND ORGAN

A Western Fanfare Eric Ewazen
PINNACLE BRASS

Psallite Michael Praetorius
A Virgin Unspotted William Billings
CANTATA SINGERS

A Canticle of Carols arr. Linda Spevacek
PARK CHURCH CHILDREN'S CHOIR AND PINNACLE BRASS

Hymn to the Virgin Benjamin Britten
CANTATA SINGERS

Christmas Cantata (Sinfonia Sacra) Daniel Pinkham
I. Maestoso II. Adagio III. Allegro
CANTATA SINGERS, PINNACLE BRASS, AND ORGAN

INTERMISSION

Hodie, Christus natus est Healy Willan
CANTATA SINGERS, PINNACLE BRASS, AND ORGAN

A Christmas Fanfare adapted Joe Milliken
PARK CHURCH BELL CHOIR

Wildwood Carol John Rutter
CANTATA SINGERS, PARK CHURCH CHILDREN'S CHOIR, AND ORGAN

Qui Natus est di Virgine Will Wickham
CANTATA SINGERS

Carol of the Bells M. Leontovich
PARK CHURCH BELL CHOIR

Christmas Day Gustav Holst
CANTATA SINGERS WITH ORGAN

Salvation is Created Pavel Chesnokov, arr. Matt Haines
PINNACLE BRASS

Carols for the season:

- The First Noël*
- Hark the Herald*
- O Come all ye Faithful*

The audience is invited to join with us in singing these carols. Words can be found on pages 10 & 11.

Organist: Charlotte Cook

Park Church Children's Choir

Directed by Mary Jane Todd Eckel

Melissa Beattie	Christiana Eckel	Katia Raj
Asa Cadwallader	Jack Lauroesch	Mina Raj
Eli Cadwallader	Maddie Lauroesch	Jay Schiraldi
Emma Cadwallader	Ben Poppleton	Justin Schiraldi
Emily Carroll	Olivia Poppleton	Ethan Sheets

Pinnacle Brass Quintet of Ithaca College

Cassandra Large and Jesse King, trumpets
Tyler Ogilvie, French horn
Matt Haines, trombone
Christian Carichner, tuba

Cantata Singers

Soprano

Ruth Bruning
Robin Fitzgerald
Dorothy Hoos
Colleen Kane
Joy McFarland
Laurie Scullin
Susan Tanner
Jane Tucker
Helen Vincent
Meg Wickham

Alto

Loueda Bleiler
Amy Chrabaszcz
Joan Cunnings
Martha Horton
Ruth Kuhn
Laurie LaBruyere
Frances McLaren
Jane Poliseo
Cora Range
Lou Sand
Ginny Shippy

Tenor

Thomas J. McCloskey
Ron Tunison
Lydia Wickham

Bass

David Edsall
Jim Fink
Scott Frye
Graham Howard
Sid Reed
Rick Schockner
Michael Wald

Park Church Bell Choir directed by Joe Milliken

Rehearsal Accompanist: Frances McLaren

Special thanks: Joe Milliken, Mary Jane Eckel, and the staff and congregation of the Park Church.

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ten in 1981 for The King's Singers. *Wild Wood Carol* forms an interlude covering the winter journey of Mole and Rat to Badger's house. Although the text of the "musical fable" was the work of the late David Grant, a friend of the composer from Clare College days, the words for this one number are by Rutter himself.

***Qui Natus Es di Virgine* – Will Wickham**

In addition to being the music director of the Cantata Singers, our own Will Wickham is a classically trained composer. His compositions include sacred and secular choral works, music for band, chamber ensembles, solo instruments and voice as well as an orchestral work that was commissioned in remembrance of Leonard Bernstein. The Cantata Singers motto "soli Deo Gloria" is also the title of a Wickham piece which was commissioned by the singers to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the founding of the group.

Qui Natus Es di Virgine is a modern setting of a renaissance poem that first appears set to music in the 16th century. It is composed in a "verse-refrain" style with each verse a variation of the first.

***Carol of the Bells* – M. Leontovich**

Christmas is definitely a time for bells, and, there is no finer Christmas Carol for bells than this Ukrainian Carol. The English text for this wonderful holiday tradition, adapted by Peter Wilhousky in the early 1930s, says it all: "Hark, how the bells, Sweet silver bells, All seem to say 'Throw Cares away.' Christmas is here, bringing good cheer. To young and old, Meek and the bold. Ding dong ding dong, That is their song. With joyful ring, All caroling. One seems to hear, Words of good cheer From everywhere Filling the air. O, how they pound, Raising the sound, O'er hill and dale, Telling their tale, Gaily they ring, While people sing song of good cheer, Christmas is here! Merry Christmas! On, on they send, on without end, their joyful tone to every home."

***Christmas Day* – Gustav Holst**

Gustav Holst (1874-1933) was born in England, a descendant of Scandinavian musicians, including his great-grandfather, who was an important musician in the Imperial Russian court in St. Petersburg. An interesting family tale tells of his mother's Spanish great-great grandmother, who was an actress, being carried off to Ireland by an Irish peer. Despite the fact that his father, also a musician, would become an "examiner" at the Royal College of Music, it took a lot of time and effort for Gustav to earn a scholar-

ship there so that he could study without worrying about his finances.

Christmas Day, written in 1910, is a very interesting combination of traditional carols in new and innovative settings including some fine "Quodlibet" style writing. Quodlibet is an often humorous style of composition in which well-known melodies or texts are combined in a novel or incongruous fashion.

***Salvation is Created* – Pavel Chesnokov; arr. by Matt Haines**

Pavel Chesnokov (1877-1944) is widely recognized for being one of the great church musicians of the pre-soviet era in the Eastern Church. Even before his graduation from the Moscow Conservatory, he was working as a teacher of choral conducting and church music composition. After the Bolsheviks took over in 1917, Pavel continued to work as hard as ever, although for the rest of his life his beloved church music was forced underground.

Traditional Russian church music is entirely vocal, instruments being banned from religious services. Part music composed for the Russian Orthodox liturgies is a unique blend of Orthodox mysticism, traditional Russian music, and Western Romantic music, particularly that of Italy. Based on a traditional chant melody, *Salvation Is Created* has a uniquely Russian quality in the combining of richly expressive Romantic harmonies with a freedom of rhythm. The text, "salvation is created in the midst of the earth, O our God. Alleluia", combines with rich harmony and intense dissonance to bring listeners into the remote city of God, beyond human boundaries.



The First Noel

1. The first Noel the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay; In fields where they lay, keeping their sheep, in a cold winter's night that was so deep:

Refrain: Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel!

2. They looked up and saw a star, shining in the East, beyond them far: And to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night: *Refrain:*

3. And by the light of that same star three Wise Men came from country far; To seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went: *Refrain:*

4. Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heav'nly Lord, That hath made heav'n and earth of naught, and with His blood mankind hath bought: *Refrain :*

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

1. Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!" Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled: Joyful all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies; with th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem." Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

2. Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ the everlasting Lord; Late in time behold Him come, offspring of a virgin's womb. Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, hail th'incarnate Deity! Pleased as man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel. Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!:"

3. Hail the heav'nborn Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness! Light and life to all He brings, ris'n with healing in His wings. Mild He lays His glory by, born that man no more may die, born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth. Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

O Come, All Ye Faithful

1. O come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant, O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem; Come and behold Him, Born the King of Angels:

Refrain: O come let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

2. God of God, Light of Light, Lo! He abhors not the Virgin's womb; Very God, Begotten, not created: *Refrain:*

3. Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation, Sing all ye citizens of heav'n above: Glory to God in the highest: *Refrain:*

4. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born this happy morning, Jesu, to Thee be glory giv'n. Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: *Refrain:*

