

*LYRICS
FROM
LITERATURE*

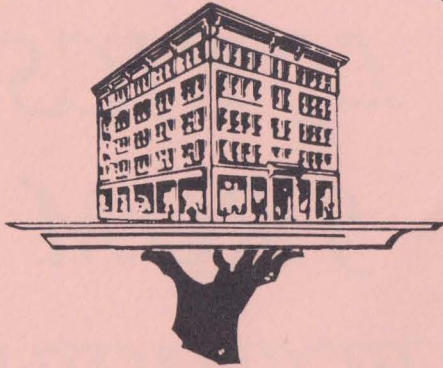
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MASTER
CHORUS**

**DR. RICHARD CAULKINS, CONDUCTOR
SOPHIA KIDDER, ACCOMPANIST**

commentary by

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LYRICS FROM LITERATURE

WORDS AND MUSIC

Great music and literature sometimes form an uneasy alliance. Often the lovely Italian words of an opera sound ridiculous when translated into plain English: "Do you have change for a dollar bill?"

The problem is that greatness in one field sometimes fights with greatness in another; sometimes it may intimidate. The character of literary style seems to move in different ways from musical style. The great lyric poet George Herbert had to be rewritten by Charles Wesley to make his lyrics suitable for hymn-singing.

Of course, at times the combinations of music and words are conspicuously successful: witness Verdi's use of Shakespeare and Beethoven's of Schiller.

The lyrics chosen for this concert show the delight that can result when a great musician interprets a great piece of literature.

Besides the quality of both words and music, the lyrics chosen also reflect the stylistic character of the literary period represented by each.

The Renaissance—where we begin—was characterized by great religious conviction and a profound lyrical outburst. The first resulted in a series of Biblical translations, culminating in the outstanding Authorized and Douay versions. In this concert these are represented by two selections, one from the Old Testament and one from the New.

Many lyric poets also wrote profound devotional compositions: men such as John Donne, Henry Vaughan, Richard Crashaw—the so-called Metaphysicals. Among these, the greatest writer of purely religious poetry is George Herbert, University Orator, Member of Parliament, and revered pastor of Fulston St. Peter's, Bemerton, Wiltshire. His poems were published posthumously by his closest friend, in a single volume entitled *The Temple*. The five selections set to music by Vaughan Williams typify the entire volume.

"Easter" uses the aubade (morning song) form to present the response of Herbert to Easter, relating the joy or "rising" of his heart to the rising of Christ. But the poem also contains a "conceit" (unusual comparison) comparing Christ's "stretched sinews" to the strings of a musical instrument, which obviously must play in the minor mode to "celebrate this most high day."

"I got me flowers" also speaks of Easter, comparing the sun to the Son and Christ's resurrection to the resurrection of the believer.

"Love bade me welcome" may be Herbert's finest poem: the allusions and implications of the lyric seem endless. The basic picture is that of Christ (Love) welcoming the celebrant to the Eucharist, but that picture is expanded into a Host (pun intended) welcoming a guest into a home, and finally God welcoming Herbert into heaven and to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. Theological profundities are expressed simply, among them, original sin, justification, sanctification, and the substitutionary atonement.

"Quick-eyed Love" is in contrast to the blind Cupid of Greek myth.

"The Call" builds a triple trilogy of key words for the Christian life: Way, Truth, Life, Light, Feast, Strength, Joy, Love, Heart.

Finally, "Antiphon" expresses Herbert's conviction that great poetry can also be straightforward:

Nor let them punish me with loss of rhyme,
Who plainly say, My God, My King.

The Renaissance was an age in which "Music and sweet poetry agree." Four songs in the section of "Roses, Music, and Love" show this combination. Edmund Waller uses the language of flowers to warn his beloved of both his attraction to her beauty and the shortness of life (*carpe diem*).

Andrew Marvell, in "Musicks Empire," sweeps over the power of music from creation, when the "morning stars sang together," to the final gathering of the "quire" in heaven to sing "Hallelujah!" Lloyd Pfausch uses plainsong chant to suggest the great antiquity of music. He also refers to the Biblical Jubal, "the father of all who play the harp and flute." Pfausch also mentions those who invented the lute, viol, cornet, wind and wire instruments. All these also "sought a consort," a word which means both a musical group of instruments and a spouse.

Hans Adolf Brorson has been called the "greatest of the Danish Pietist poets." The first hymn sung here is based loosely on the Song of Solomon, a dialogue in which Solomon pledges love ("All that I have is thine") to the woman—the Shulamite—and she responds, "Forevermore let me be Thine." "God's Son Hath Set Me Free," using a traditional folk tune, speaks blithely of death because "Christ's Cross . . . Makes bliss eternal mine."

The end of the 18th century and the 19th century saw a change in poetic style with a new emphasis upon emotion, individuality, and a longing for the long ago and far away—Amorous of the Far. In "The Splendour falls on Castle Walls," Tennyson expresses all of these, with a mystical appreciation of nature added.

Christina Rossetti also expresses a heartfelt desire to be guided "along life's dangerous track" to heaven "where glad stars sing together."

Robert Frost mentions stars also, but in a totally different context. In the 20th century the prevailing moods had darkened considerably, producing Hope and Despair amid the philosophies of existentialism, pragmatism, positivism, even nihilism. A star, for Frost, represents an ideal, a goal, a necessity in the midst of night. But lacking precision, he asks it to speak even in scientific terms, which don't really help. Nevertheless we must "Choose Something Like a Star."

James Agee has written several famous screen plays, among them, *The African Queen* and *The Night of the Hunter*. He won the Pulitzer Prize for *A Death in the Family*. In his youth he published *Permit Me Voyage*, a collection of poems, including "Sure on this Shining Night." In that night he sees health and love ("hearts all whole"), but the context is still threatening: the "sure" seems to suggest some hope that may not be realized.

Thomas Wolfe has no such ambiguity; life is not pleasant—"naked and alone we came into exile." Wolfe is the one who convinced us that we can't go home again!

Feeling that we shouldn't end our evening on such a depressing note, we've added *A Lighter Touch*. Most of the songs need no explanation, except possibly to justify their inclusion as "literature." As readers we need to remember not to be stuffy! Also, great personal and literary insight can come from "some mute inglorious Milton," like the unknown composer of "Good News."

Oddly enough, all of the music of this program is from the 20th century, although the Grieg "Four Psalms"—his last compositions—were written in 1906, one year before his death. Musically, however, they were quite innovative, featuring major and minor tonalities in direct conflict. Since the melodies are traditional folk-tunes, Grieg commented whimsically: "Life is like folk-music—you sometimes can't tell whether it is major or minor." At least one critic felt that harmonically the "Four Psalms" were Grieg's finest work

"Jesus and the Traders" also uses contrasting tonalities, the clashing tones and fugal melodies representing the chaos when Christ threw the moneychangers out of the temple. The gypsy-like melody, sung by the basses, presents the calm sadness of the words of Christ.

In "Five Mystical Songs," Vaughan Williams uses a rather fragile harmony and several contrasting timbres: baritone solo, chorus, some cross rhythms, and a traditional sacred song, "O Sacrum Convivium."

"The Shepherds had an Angel" begins with a dialogue between the soprano soloist and the English horn, presenting a pastoral feeling and longing for guidance. Toward the end, the chorus, with antiphonal solo, presents a chorale-like affirmation of the heavenly destination, switching from minor to major.

Frederick Delius, in "The Splendour falls on Castle Walls," captures the regret of lost ages and the mysticism of a nature populated by elves and magic music, heard here by the echoing "horns" of tenor and baritone.

William Schuman, in "Prelude for Voices," presents the "lostness" of the 20th century through clashing harmonies, whispers like fingernails on a blackboard, a distressed soprano, and plaintive repetition drifting away into nothingness.

Michael T. Barrett

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Richard L. Caulkins

Dr. Caulkins has taught at Western Baptist College for thirty-eight years, in a wide variety of positions. He is currently chairman of the humanities division. Previously he was head of the music department for ten years and directed the college choir for twenty years.

Caulkins graduated from Westmont College, University of California (Berkeley), and Oregon State University, and received the Ph.D. from the University of Oregon. His dissertation was on George Herbert, the author of "Five Mystical Songs."

He has been a member of the Willamette Master Chorus for six years, serving as assistant conductor for five.

James P. Hills

Jim Hills is associate professor of English at Western Baptist College. In addition, he teaches writing and literature at two local correctional facilities. He has also conducted classes in poetry at various elementary and middle schools.

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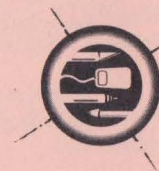
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WILLAMETTE MASTER CHORUS

LYRICS FROM LITERATURE

I. Biblical Texts

From the Bay Psalm Book
2 Psalm 23: The Lord To Me a Shepherd Is
Jean Berger

Jesus and the Traders
Zoltan Kodaly

II.

Five Mystical Songs
R. Vaughan Williams
words by George Herbert [1593-1633]

Wallace Long, baritone solo
1 Easter
2 I Got Me Flowers
3 Love Bade Me Welcome
4 The Call
5 Antiphon

III. Roses, Music, and Love

Go, Lovely Rose
Eric H. Thiman
words by Edmund Waller [1606-1687]

Triptych
Lloyd Pfautsch
words by Andrew Marvell [1621-1678]

1 Musicks Empire

Four Psalms
Edvard Grieg
words by Hans Adolf Brorson [1694-1764]

1 How Fair Is Thy Face
bass solo, Bruce McDonald

translated by Percy Grainger

2 God's Son Hath Set Me Free
baritone solo, Erik Wood

Intermission

IV Amorous of the Far

The Splendour Falls on Castle Walls
Frederick Delius
words by Alfred, Lord Tennyson [1809-1892]

The Shepherds Had an Angel
Maurice Besly
words by Christina Rossetti
[1830-1894]
soprano solo, Daun Hayes
cor anglais, Ray Toubman

V Hope and Despair

Choose Something Like Star
Randall Thompson
women's voices
words by Robert Frost [1874-1963]

Sure on this Shining Night
Samuel Barber
from "Permit Me Voyage"
words by James Agee [1909-1955]

Prelude for Voices
William Schuman
from "Look Homeward, Angel"
words by Thomas Wolfe
soprano solo, Connie Bresee
[1900-1938]

VI A Lighter Touch

O Whistle and I'll Come to Ye
arr. Mack Wilberg
words by Robert Burns
piano duet, Sophia Kidder and Royal Norquist [1759-1796]

Much Ado About Nothings
Norman Luboff

Something Lovely
Age Before Beauty
Tally Ho
text from a sign board
Dorothy Parker [1893-1967]
Oscar Wilde [1856-1900]

Good News
arr. William Dawson
traditional text

die mit Tränen säen, werden mit Freuden ernten

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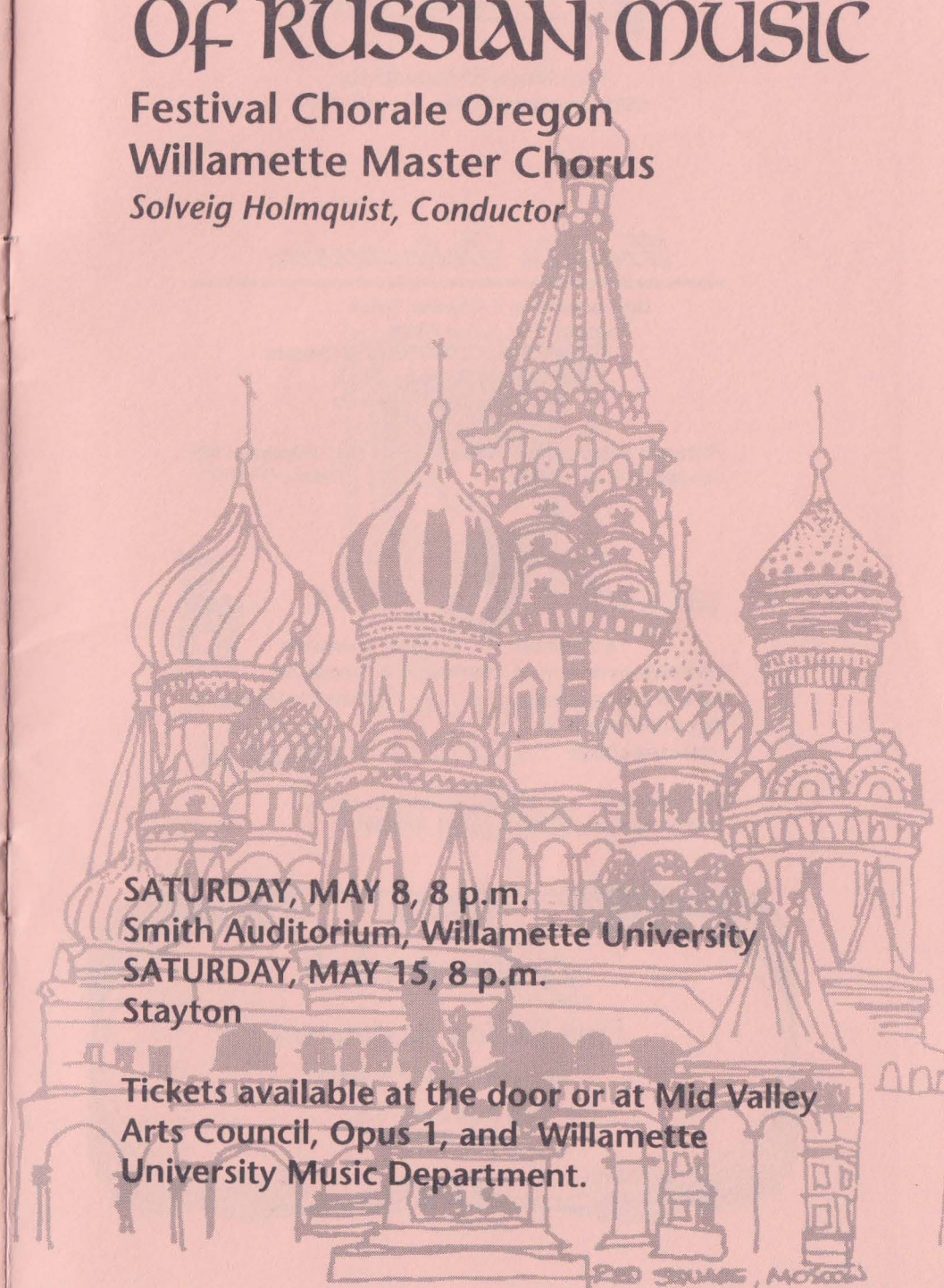
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Solveig Holmquist, Conductor

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**Willamette Master Chorus
to travel to
International Choral Festival**

The Willamette Master Chorus recently received word that it has been chosen to participate in the International Choral Festival in Missoula, Montana. It is the only West Coast choir to be selected. Seventeen other choirs from Russia, Siberia, Europe, Africa, New Zealand, and the United States will join for this celebration of song the week of July 7-10, 1993.

Missoula was the first community in the United States to host an international choral festival. The event this year is named in the Top 100 Events in North America by the American Bus Association.

The Willamette Master Chorus will represent Salem and, in fact, the state of Oregon at this festival. They welcome any donations you can make to help meet the expense involved in the tour. Please look for the donation containers in the gallery and the foyer.

Also, join Willamette Master Chorus members and their families and friends on March 16 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Pietro's Pizza (on South Commercial). Identify yourself as a Willamette Master Chorus supporter as you purchase food and beverages that evening. Pietro's will donate a percentage of those purchases to the chorus as "Moolah for Missoula."



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Soprano II

Marilyn Crawford
Marianne Dole
Mary Ann Ellis
Bev Flood
Daun Hayes
Dee Iltis
Delia Miller
Rosalie Smith
Barbara Tallman

Alto I

Mary Ann Gerson
Karen Jensen
Susie McKinnon
Sally Miller
Betsy Steinberg
Carol Teagle

Alto II

Carol Ann Armstrong
Glenda Betts
Janet Neuberg
Royal Norquist
Victoria Roberts
Timothe Seelbach
Betty Shamberger
Robert Stark
Marlinda Stearns
Jan Whitty
Sharon Young

Tenor I

Jack Just
Ron Peters
Bill Power
Brian Thompson
Mike Whalen
Erik Wood
Tom Wrosch

Tenor II

Merlin Aeschliman
David Clark
Ken Ellis
Robin Jans
Joe Kuehn, Jr.
Dennis Leffler
Alden Moberg
Scott Reichlin
Madison Vick
Mike Whitty

Baritone

John Eastman
Michael Hawkins
Bruce McDonald
Dan Miller
Christopher Silva
Ron Stenson

Bass

Mike Barrett
David Desmarteau
Doug Drysdale
Gerald Johnson
Jim McDonald
Roy Norquist
Don Ross
Kevin Smith
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