

Department of Music Presents

A Season of
Renewal

MESSIAH

Studley Theatre

Tuesday, December 7
7:30 p.m.



P R O G R A M

The Department of Music at the State University
of New York at New Paltz proudly presents
Messiah

Part I

An Oratorio by George Frederic Handel

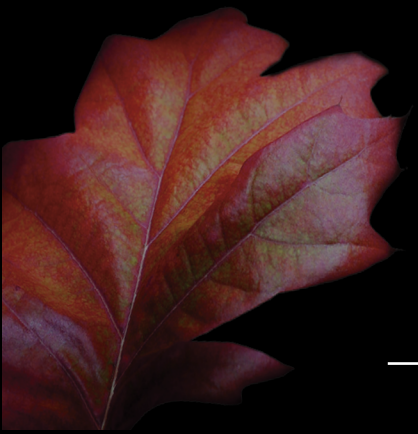
Soloists from the Vocal Studio of Kent Smith

College-Community Chorale

Concert Choir

College-Youth Symphony

Adam Fontana, conductor



A Season of Renewal

Overture

Recitative, "Comfort ye my people"

Air, "Ev'ry valley shall be exalted"

Marc Molomot, tenor

Chorus, "And the glory of the Lord"

Recitative, "Thus saith the Lord"

Air "But who may abide the day of his coming?"

Trent Boock, baritone

Chorus, "And he shall purify"

Recitative, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive"

Air and Chorus, "O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion"

Lauren Leonardi, mezzo-soprano

Recitative, "For behold, darkness shall cover the earth"

Air, "The people that walked in darkness"

Daniel Chiu, baritone

Chorus, "For unto us a child is born"

Pastoral Symphony

Recitative, "There were shepherds abiding in the fields"

Alyssa DeLessio, soprano

Recitative, "And the angel said unto them"

Hailey Brown, soprano

Chorus, "Glory to God"

Air. "Rejoice greatly, o daughter of Zion"

Jessica Buontempo, soprano

Recitative, "Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened"

Jillian Prakelt, soprano

Air, "He shall feed his flock"

Jillian Prakelt, Mia Piperato, sopranos

Chorus, "His yoke is easy, and his burthen is light"

Chorus, "Hallelujah!"



SUNY-New Paltz Choral Ensembles

Edward Lundergan, director; Andrea Shaut, accompanist

Concert Choir

Soprano

Isabel Arter
Hailey Brown
Jessica Buontempo
Alyssa Delessio
Annabelle Desire
Gina Lardi
Sophia Lattof
Lindsay Ork
Jillian Prakelt
Paige Shaver

Alto

Gabrielle Bush
Jane Caulfield
Alicia Crespo
Carlin Feck
Katie Gudzik
Sherap Lama
Lauren Leonardi
Kerry McCloskey
Ellie Simanoff

Tenor

Kathleen Alexander
Brandon Latargia
Maxx MacRae
Giovanna Phipps
Jeremy Sodergren

Bass

Ryan Mauer
A. J. Rella
Joshua Smith
Gregory Wills

College-Community Chorale

Soprano

Fern Ashworth
Callie Hershey
Sandie Hutton
Mary McMullen
Susan Pitzele
Jane Ruback
Constance Rudd
Wren Werner

Alto

Patricia Hoffstetter
Sherap Lama
Carol Lundergan
Charlotte Pietropaolo
Lyndsay von Miller
Susan Wile

Tenor

Rob Becker
Richard Mogavero
Tyler Patti

Bass

Bob Lukomski
Mike Saunders
Gregory Wills



Members and Guests of the College-Youth Symphony

Adam Fontana, director

Violin I

Carole Cowan
Sarah Bartlett
Juliana Freiberg
Anisa Tedesco

Violin II

Marla Rathbun
Saskia Kammerling
Zoe Perles

Viola

Christiana Fortune-Reader
Ryan Stevens
Julia Zieminski

Cello

Susan Seligman
Abigail Dentico
Elias Elcock
Sion Kikuchi

Bass

Lou Pappas
Sarah Texter

Oboe

Joël Evans
Ann Churukian

Trumpet

Logan Bennett
Vincent Santini

Timpani

Julia Colombo

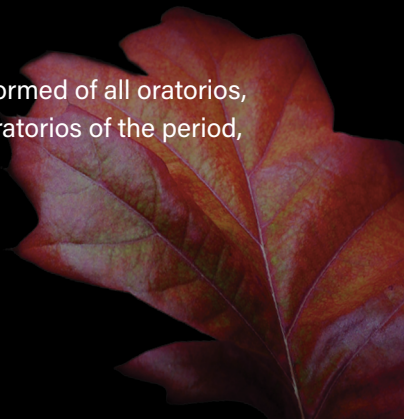
Keyboard

Susan Brown

PROGRAM NOTES

Despite the aura of reverence that has grown up around it over the centuries, Messiah, like Handel's other oratorios, is more closely related to opera than to church music. A contemporary commentator defined oratorio as "a musical Drama, whose Subject must be Scriptural, and in which the Solemnity of Church-Musick is agreeably united with the most pleasing Airs of the Stage." Charles Jennens, the compiler of the libretto of Messiah, described it as "a fine Entertainment". Indeed, the depiction of the drama of human redemption on the stage of a theatre was considered less than respectable in conservative religious circles, and it took nearly a decade and a change in public taste for Messiah to become the beloved standard of the repertoire that it remains today.

Messiah is by far the best-known and most-performed of all oratorios, but it differs in several crucial ways from other oratorios of the period,



even those by Handel himself. The oratorio genre as it was created in 17th-century Italy and developed in 18th-century England grew from the same roots as opera, with plots drawn from Scripture (usually the Old Testament) and solo singers portraying characters in specific dramatic situations. Handel made his reputation in England as a composer of Italian opera, and only turned to oratorio when the public taste began to reject this imported art form. In his oratorios, Handel set texts in English rather than Italian, expanded the role of the chorus, and did away with sets and costumes, but kept most other features of opera. Handel's *Saul*, for example, is a tightly structured political drama depicting the rivalry between Saul and the young upstart David, conflicts within Saul's family, and a climactic offstage battle ending in the old king's suicide. By contrast, *Messiah* draws much of its text from the New Testament, and has no overt plot or identifiable characters.

Nonetheless there is a narrative to be found in *Messiah*. Though now usually performed at Christmas time, it was first given during the Easter season, and the text as a whole relates not only the birth of Christ (Part 1) but also his crucifixion, resurrection and ascension (Part 2) and final victory over death and sin (Part 3). Jennens's libretto artfully combines Old Testament prophecy with interpretations drawn from the New Testament, presenting Christ as the fulfillment of the prophecies.

Handel's chorus displays a great variety of textures and styles, from the dancelike "And the glory of the Lord" to the florid and celebratory "For unto us a child is born" and the majestic "Hallelujah". The "pleasing Airs" for solo voices range from the simple and songlike "He shall feed his flock" to the stormy and dramatic "But who may abide". The orchestration is quite spare, consisting only of strings, oboes and continuo, punctuated by trumpets and timpani at a few climactic moments, but making a powerful effect through Handel's masterly control of key, tempo and mood.



EJL

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