

University of Missouri-Columbia
School of Fine Arts
Department of Music
Event No. 30 in the 1996-97 Series

UNIVERSITY SINGERS

David Rayl, conductor

8:00 p.m.
Sunday, October 27, 1996
First Baptist Church of Columbia, Missouri



Program

In virtute tua, Domine Grzegorz Gorczycki

*Adrienne St. Clair and Rebecca Berlin, violins
Sarah Sherman, cello; Ryan Malone, harpsichord*

Khvalite Gospodas nyebyes Sergei Rachmaninov

Otche nash Nikolai Golovanov

Choral Dances from *Gloriana* Benjamin Britten

Introduction
Time
Concord
Time and Concord
Country Girls
Rustics and Fishermen
Final Dance of Homage

*Ryan MacPherson, tenor
Diarz Derrow, harp*

Three Elizabethan Part-Songs (*world premiere*) John Cheetham

Virtue
The Noble Nature
To Daffodils

Intermission



Native American Ambiances

Jackson Berkey

Loon Lake By Morning
The Sacred Earth
Words From Our Brothers
Prairie Fire
This We Know
The Web of Life

*Hilda Neihardt, dramatic reader
Jackson Berkey, Native American flute*

Sacramento-Sis Joe

Jackson Berkey

Janelle Rackers and Todd Gill, piano

Shenandoah

American Folksong
arr. James Erb

The Missouri Waltz

John Valentine Eppel
arr. Greg Gilpin

Nero ed Oro (Overture) (*world premiere*)

Daniamo Willettini



Program Notes

Grzegorz Gorczycki (c. 1665-1734)—a contemporary of Vivaldi, Bach, and Handel—was one of the most important Polish composers of the Baroque era. Although his music is seldom heard in this country, it is well-known and often performed in Poland. Gorczycki studied at the universities of Prague and Vienna before returning to his native country where he served several churches including the famed Wawel Cathedral in Krakow. *In virtute tua, Domine* (Ps. 20: 2-3) is a setting of the Introit from the First Mass of a Martyr Not a Bishop.

In Thy strength, O Lord, the just man shall rejoice:
And in Thy salvation he shall rejoice exceedingly.
Thou hast given him his heart's desire.



The stunning choral music of Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943) and Nikolai Golovanov (1891-1953) is representative of the heights to which Russian church music had ascended in the early years of the 20th century. The historical origins of this music are found in the ancient melodies of the Byzantine Church. When transplanted onto Russian soil, this liturgical music progressed from strictly unison singing to a variety of polyphonic styles. Unfortunately, the Russian Revolution of 1917 not only brought an end to the composition of works in this style, it effectively relegated the entire repertoire to obscurity.

Khvalite Gospodas nyebyes is a movement from the *Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, the most important and most frequently used liturgy in Russian Orthodox worship. It has been set by many Russian composers, including Gretchaninoff, Archangelsky, and Tchaikovsky, whose setting was Rachmaninov's principal model. Rachmaninov's *Liturgy* was composed in the summer of 1910 and was performed in Moscow in the autumn of that year, but ecclesiastical authorities did not sanction it for church use, and it soon vanished from the repertoire.

O praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise Him in the heights!





Golovanov was a student in the Moscow Synodal School of Church Singing and later worked as assistant conductor of the Synodal Choir under Nikolai Danilin who led the first performance of several of Rachmaninov's choral works, including the *Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*. Golovanov's setting of *Otche nash* (The Lord's Prayer) was one of the last works to be published before the Revolution.



Benjamin Britten (1913-1976) was arguably the most important British composer of the middle years of this century, so it is not surprising that he was commissioned to write an opera in honor the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. *Gloriana*—which glorifies Elizabeth I (and her 20th-century namesake)—was premiered at Covent Garden in June 1953.

At the opening of Act II, Elizabeth is on a state visit to the city of Norwich. After a formal address of welcome, she is entertained by a Masque, a sequence of Choral Dances, introduced and linked by the Spirit of the Masque, to which dancers—representing Time and Concord, country girls, and young rustics and fishermen—all pay homage and tribute to the Queen. Britten later arranged the music from this scene into the suite performed this evening.



John Cheetham, Professor of Music Theory and Composition at MU, has written works for band, orchestra and numerous chamber combinations which have been widely performed in the U.S. and abroad. His *Reflections From a Country Parson* was commissioned by the University Singers in 1992 and first performed in November of that year. It was subsequently published by Plymouth Music of Ft. Lauderdale in the spring of 1994. Cheetham has been the recipient of numerous commissions including those from the Kentucky Derby Museum, Texas Tech University, the New Mexico Brass Quintet, and the Summit Brass. He was awarded the 1992 Abraham Frost Prize in Composition. The texts of *Three Elizabethan Part-Songs* are from George Herbert ("Virtue"), Ben Jonson ("The Noble Nature"), and Robert Herrick ("To Daffodils").





Jackson Berkey is perhaps best known for his performances as the featured keyboardist of the classical-pop group Mannheim Steamroller, but he is also an accomplished composer and has a sizeable published catalogue of works. Berkey and his wife Almeda Horton Berkey, an MU alum and a distinguished director herself, are the founders of Soli Deo Gloria CANTORUM, Nebraska's Professional Chorale. In 1992 *Native American Ambiances* was written for the CANTORUM with the support of the Mid-America Arts Alliance Commissioning Fund.

For the dramatic texts at the center of the work, Berkey drew on the writings of poet John Neihardt. Neihardt grew up in Nebraska and early in life developed an interest in the Sioux, their customs, and traditions. Among his most important writings are *Black Elk Speaks* and *The Song of the Messiah*, excerpts from both of which works appear in *Native American Ambiances*. Neihardt was named Nebraska's Poet Laureate at age 40, became literary editor for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch at 45, and at 68 became poet-in-residence and lecturer in English at the University of Missouri. His daughter, Hilda Neihardt, who acts as dramatic reader in tonight's performance, received a J.D. degree from MU in 1963 and practiced law in Columbia for many years.

About *Native American Ambiances* Berkey writes:

In this eclectic work, I have combined the elements of Native American texts, both dramatically read and sung *a cappella*, with percussion, plains flute, and natural environmental sounds. These layers of sound or "ambiances", as I prefer to call them, exist either separately or in varied combinations throughout the six sections of the work...A strong purpose of the *Ambiances* was to take smaller, concise sections from larger bodies of text (Chief Seattle, Najinyanupi, Sitting Bull, Black Elk) and to present them in a compelling, thought-provoking environment...The modality and tonal centers of the *Ambiances* were determined by a five-hole Native American flute which I acquired and learned to play prior to writing any of the music. Because of this, it is my feeling that the *Ambiances* more closely represent the culture they attempt to embrace.



And of Sacramento-Sis Joe, he writes:

Sacramento-Sis Joe is a wiry, spiky combination of two American folksongs, one very well-known, one somewhat obscure. The better known of the two is “Camptown Races,” attributed to Stephen Foster. Its appearance here, however, is with a completely different text that captures the excitement of a mid-1800s trip to California in search of gold.

Quite a few years ago, I came across “Sis Joe” in an elementary school music book. Along with “John Henry”, it was placed in a group of American work songs. I was astounded to see that the complex, shifting rhythmic structure I had always attributed to Aaron Copland (in *Rodeo*) was present in the original version, even in this elementary music book!



In spite of its atypically lyrical character, the folk song *Shenandoah* is actually an American shanty or sea song. The title likely refers to an Indian chief’s daughter who has not been seen for “seven long years.” The reference to the “wide Missouri” is probably used to remind the American seamen of home.



Written in 1914, the *Missouri Waltz* typifies much of the music that came out of New York’s Tin Pan Alley in the early part of this century. Greg Gilpin’s arrangement preserves the tune’s graceful lyricism.



Daniamo Willettini (dates unknown) is believed by scholars to have worked in central Missouri during the latter decades of the 20th century. His recently discovered *Nero ed Oro* (Black and Gold) is written in a style that seems to parody the opera overtures of Gioacchino Rossini. Its texts, which apparently were a part of some peculiar 20th-century ritual called “football”, need no exegesis.

- David Rayl

University Singers and the Department of Music extend special thanks to Ed Rollins and the people of First Baptist Church of Columbia for the use of their facilities.
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University Singers
David Rayl, conductor
Ryan Malone, rehearsal pianist

Sopranos

Laura Been
Heather Brooks
Jenny Broom
Amity Bryson
Janiece Hedrick
Heather Holland
Julie Johnson
Crystal Nix
Tonya Nowlin
Melissa Pickens
Sariah Pinick
Valery Price
Janelle Rackers
Janice Simmons
Paula Stickel

Altos

Elizabeth Bennett
Jennifer Derrington
Karen Ely
Callie Epperson
Andrea Haefke
Stacey Hite
JoAnna Hoepfner
Rebecca Hunt
Kandi Kos
Kellie Maltagliati
Callie Reynolds
Audra Sergel
Kate Swords
Robin Sypolt
Kate Wellborn

Tenors

Mike Elliott
Gregory Gilmore
Shand Glenn
Travis Grant
Michael Grove
Josh Hayes
John Litten
Ryan MacPherson
Todd Samra
Robert Sinclair
Justin Tanner
Jeff Thompson
Kevin Wortley

Basses

Julian Andebrhan
Rodney Caudle
Rick Clawson
Justin Giles
Todd Gill
Jason Green
Aaron Harper
Kevin Highfill
Daniel Hoskins
Eric Hughes
Jason Jackson
Jeff Liljegren
Ryan Malone
Bret Sanders
John Vetter
Chris Wood



Requests for accommodations related to disability need to be made to Dr. Alex Pickard, 213 Fine Arts Building, 882-7361, at least seven days in advance of the event.