

Choir for 6 hands

Da
Camera
Singers

1996-1997



December 21, 1996

Da Camera Singers

For 33 years Da Camera Singers has performed throughout Alberta, across Canada and most recently in Europe and Florida. While specializing in chamber masterworks of the classical choral repertoire, Da Camera also performs popular programs. Many of its members are professional choristers, conductors or musicians in schools and churches and Da Camera seeks to develop and present the finest in Canadian choral music.

Mel Unger - Music Director

Dr. Unger has the warm opportunity to enjoy a sabbatical year teaching at the University of Hawaii at Hilo. Mel has taken a one year leave of absence from Da Camera. We look forward to his return in our 1997-98 season.

Born in Alberta, Mel Unger holds degrees in choral music from the Universities of Saskatchewan, Oregon and Illinois. Dr. Unger also studied conducting as a scholarship student under well-known conductor and Bach specialist Helmut Riling at the State Music Conservatory in Frankfurt. Dr. Unger has written a number of scholarly articles and music editions including a book on the choral music of Bach's contemporary, Johann David Heinichen. Most recently, he has completed a reference book translating and analysing the text of each of Bach's 200 sacred cantatas. He is Professor of Music at North American Baptist College in Edmonton and was appointed music director of Da Camera Singers in 1981.

John Hooper - Interm Artistic Director

Dr. John Hooper is Director of Choral Music at Concordia University College of Alberta, Edmonton, where he directs the Concert Choir and Community Chorus. He holds music degrees from Arizona State University and James Madison University in Virginia. He has served on the faculty of several schools, both collegiate and secondary. He is active in Lutheran church music, conducting workshops and seminars in that area. His professional singing experience includes six years with the Phoenix Bach Choir.

Loretta Dueck - Resident Pianist

A native Albertan, Loretta completed her Bachelor of Music Degree in piano at the University of Alberta with Professor Munn. Previous studies include a B.Ed. and a B.A. in music. In 1975 upon

completion of her B.Ed. degree, Loretta taught high school music in Brisbane, Australia. In 1984, Ms. Dueck was employed by the University of Alberta as an accompanist in the voice studios and continued in that position until 1991. Loretta has also toured with the Alberta Opera Touring Association and is presently involved in teaching privately and accompanying. This is Loretta's twelfth season as accompanist with Da Camera Singers.

Concert Accompanists

Jerrold Eilander - Organ

While working in public relations for AreoPark Corporation Jerrold is actually a pipe organist by trade. His musical career revolves around the organ including a BA degree (1988) from Dordt College Iowa in Organ performance and church music and one year at King's College Edmonton. He is currently part time music director at Trinity Christian Reformed Church in the City.

Liane Gayler - Flute

Liane presently teaches at Alberta College and is the principle flute player for the Concordia Symphony.

Subscription Supporters

The following companies have greatly assisted our subscription drive this year by providing significant savings to Da Camera subscribers on products and services. These companies were chosen because of their high quality and we are proud to have them supporting us.

A&B sound
Almi Hair Studio

A Candlelight Christmas

December 21, 1996, 8:00 PM

Da Camera Singers

Dr. John Hooper, conductor

I. Renaissance motets

O Beatum Et Sacrosanctum Diem

Peter Philips (1561-1628)

This Day Christ Was Born

William Byrd (1543-1623)

Gaude Barbara

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1526-1594)

Three Christmas Motets

Jacob Handl (1550-1591)

1. Regem natum
2. Natus est nobis
3. Resonet in laudibus

II. Baroque cantata

Cantata No. 142:

Uns ist ein Kind geboren

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Stan Backs, bass

Russ Wilkinson, tenor

Rosemarie Barnes, alto

Jerrold Eilander, organ

1. Overture
2. Chorus: Uns ist ein Kind geboren
3. Bass Aria: Dein geburstag ist erschienen
4. Chorus: Ich will den Namen Gottes loben
5. Tenor Aria: Jesu, dir sei Dank
6. Alto Recitative: Immanuel! Du wollest dir gefallen lassen
7. Alto Aria: Jesu, dir sei Preis
8. Chorus: Alleluia!

*** Interval (15 minutes) ***

III. Contemporary suite

Noel!

Nancy Telfer

Liane Gayler, flute

Mitch Waldon, bass

Joan Townend, soprano

1. The Bird of Dawning
2. The Shepherd's Song
3. The Kings of the East
4. Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day
5. Lully, Lulla
6. Welcome, Yule

IV. Carol arrangements

Behold, Emmanuel

arr. Diane Loomer

O Little Town of Bethlehem

arr. Mark Shepherd

The First Noel

arr. David Maddux

Barb Sabo, alto

Tammie Quick, soprano

Joy to the World

arr. Don Hart

A Child Is Born

Thad Jones, arr. Michelle Wier

Marion McFall, soprano

Silent Night

Franz Gruber (1878-1863), arr. Wolfgang Linder

Due to professional recording agreements, we request that no visual and/or audio equipment be used during the concert. Please turn off all watch alarms and pagers for the duration of the concert. Thank you.

Reception to follow in the hall

Program Notes

Christmas music has been important throughout the ages. This concert gives a glimpse of the sacred music of the past, through Renaissance motets and a Baroque cantata, as well as a touch of our own time, through a suite by a Canadian composer and carols set in various contemporary styles.

Renaissance Motets - The first part of this concert consists of a set of Renaissance motets for the Christmas season. These works represent the cappella church style of the day, often called the "golden age" of choral music. Renaissance motets are generally in Latin, although following the Reformation, some texts were in the vernacular, such as "This Day Christ was Born" by the Englishman William Byrd (1543-1623).

Characteristic of the Renaissance sacred motet was the imitative style. Imitation, the practice of repeating of a line or phrase in a different voice part, was inherited from the 15th century and was common even into the 18th century. Jacob Handl (1550-1591) uses typical 16th century imitation to begin the first two of this set of three motets. Imitation sections are found to a more limited degree in the other motets on the program.

The use of text painting, making the music sound like what the words mean, is also found in Renaissance music. This is clearest in the opening motet by Peter Philips (1561-1628): "the sound of the trumpet" [in sono tubae] is set in fanfare-like triads, the "strings" [cithara] in a rhythmic figure, and "ceaselessly singing his praise" [semper suas laudes] set to longer note values. Other, less overt examples are present in the Byrd and Handl motets.

Common in many motets in duple meter (groupings of two or four counts) is a triple meter section toward the end. The relationship of note values is a source of controversy, as metric and rhythmic notation was still undergoing substantial changes and had not yet been unified. All the relationships are, however, proportional to the meter just left. For instance, a half note in one meter may get the same time as a dotted half note in another meter.

Celebratory motets, such as those for the high festivals of Christmas and Easter, often include a concluding section of "alleluia's" or "noe's". These motets, unlike their predecessors, are sectional in nature, with each part communicating a limited

sentence or phrase. In the Baroque, the style period which followed the Renaissance, this practice was taken to the extreme, limiting individual compositions or movements of compositions to only one emotion or "affection". This formed part of an aesthetic theory called the doctrine of affections.

Baroque Cantata - The sacred cantatas of J.S. Bach number over 200. They were written based on the themes of the different Sundays and festivals of the liturgical calendar. The format of the cantatas adheres to the doctrine of affections, with separate movements for different musical or textual ideas. In a typical Bach cantata will include one polyphonic movement for the choir, a few recitatives and arias and often a closing chorale. This one includes three choruses (though not a chorale, per se), a bass aria, a tenor aria, an alto recitative and aria. Interestingly, the music of the alto aria is identical to the tenor aria, simply transposed up a perfect fourth. The key structure is balanced. After clearly establishing A minor in the first two movements, Bach moves the tonic down successively by thirds from the dominant E in the third movement to the subdominant D in the next to last movement. The last movement is, of course, in A minor again.

Contemporary Suite - Nancy Telfer is a Canadian composer and music educator from Ontario. Well published, she is known for both her compositions and her music curricula. The multi-movement work called "Noel!" includes six different texts, half authored by Shakespeare, Edmund Bolton, and Katherine Lee Bates and the other half by unknown authors of traditional Christmas words, such as "Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day," "Lully, Lulla," and "Welcome, Yule." Telfer uses a variety of contemporary compositional devices, especially complex meter, irregular phrase lengths, additive harmonies, and ostinato, to communicate the text in an expressive fashion. The piano and flute accompaniment adds a sense of vitality and whimsy to this contemporary Christmas suite.

Carol Arrangements - Christmas carols are a favourite for both choral singers and fans alike. These arrangements are by musicians who bring another dimension to the carols through innovative settings. Many sound jazz-like because of the harmonic language used. And while the harmonies are certainly contemporary sounding, the melodies are ageless, as is the spirit of the Christmas season.