

PERFORMANCES

We hope you enjoy the afternoon performance, but just wanted to remind you of what we normally do—and fervently hope to return to! Here we were at Harvey Browne just months ago, performing Vivaldi, Bach and Mozart.



Our free performances for the community.



Here is our Christmas at the St. John Day Center for Homeless Men. We want to return to doing that, too.

THANKS FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

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\$1,000 & ABOVE

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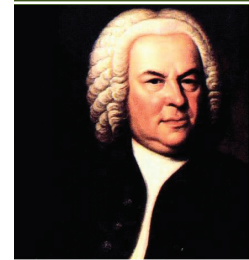
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LOUISVILLE
masterchorale



BACH AND ROSSINI

PRE-PERFORMANCE LECTURE

DR. JOHN R. HALE

QUI SEDES AD DEXTERAM PATRIS

(B Minor Mass)

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

ERBARME DICH

(St. Matthew Passion)

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

NACQUI ALL-AFFANNO...NON PIU MESTA

(La Cenerentola)

GIOACHINO ROSSINI

Audrey Dawson, *Mezzo-Soprano*

Debbie Dierks, *Piano*

Jack Griffin, *Violin*



The Kentucky Arts Council, the state arts agency, provides operating support to Louisville Master Chorale with state tax dollars and federal funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.



All venues are wheelchair accessible. Large print programs available at door.

Unauthorized photographs, video, or other recordings of this concert are strictly forbidden.

Sunday, November 8, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.

PINECREST

View the Performance at:

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/7599549>

Password: !Amadeus!

TEXT

FROM THE B MINOR MASS

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis.

Who sits at the right hand of Father, have mercy on us.

FROM THE ST MATTHEW PASSION

*Erbarme dich, mein Gott,
Um meiner Zähren Willen!
Schau hier, Herz und Auge
Weint vor dir bitterlich.
Erbarme dich, erbarme dich!*

Have mercy, my God,
for the sake of my tears!
Look here, heart and eyes
weep bitterly before You.
Have mercy, have mercy!

FROM LA CENERENTOLA

*Nacqui all'affanno e al pianto,
Soffri tacendo il core;
Ma per soave incanto
Dell'età mia nel fiore,
Come un baleno rapido
La sorte mia, la sorte mia cangiò.*

I was born into sorrow and weeping.
My heart suffered in silence;
But through a gentle magic spell
In the flower of my youth,
like a swift flash of lightning,
my fate changed.

*No, no! tergete il ciglio :
Perchè tremar, perchè?
A questo sen volate,
Figlia, sorella, amica,
Tutto, tutto, tutto trovate in me.
Padre, sposo, amico, oh istante!*

No, no, no, no:
wipe your lashes;
Why should you tremble, why?
Fly to this bosom;
daughter, sister, friend—
all, all, all—find all of these in me.

*Non più mesta accanto al fuoco
Starò sola a gorgheggiar, no!
Ah fu un lampo, un sogno, un gioco
Il mio lungo palpitar.*

No longer sad by the fire
will I remain alone, warbling—no.
Ah, my long-time heartache was a flash,
a dream, a game!

PROGRAM NOTES

As one scholar put it, Bach never wrote a piece called the “Mass in B Minor.” Technically, this is true. Instead, sometime during the last decade of his life, Bach brought together music from earlier works, revised some of them, wrote new music, and then left four separate manuscripts that seemed to belong together. Bach titled the four sections “Missa” (the first two parts of the Mass Ordinary: Kyrie and Gloria); “Symbolum Nicenum” (Credo, the Nicene Creed); “Sanctus”; and “Osanna, Benedictus, Agnus Dei et Dona nobis pacem.” His son, C. P. E. Bach called these four separate manuscripts “The Great Catholic Mass.” Some of the music in this mass Bach adopted from much earlier in his career. And some of it he wrote in the last years of his life. But by putting the Mass together Bach shows us brilliantly almost every type and style of music available to a baroque composer.

The “Qui sedes” is from the *Gloria*, the second part of the “Missa,” which we know Bach had written by July of 1733, because he sent it to Dresden to support his application for a job there. (He didn’t get the job.) The *Gloria* itself is an early Christian hymn that begins with the words the angels sang to the shepherds at the birth of Christ and then becomes a hymn of praise, glorifying the early church’s understanding of Jesus as both human and divine. In the “Qui sedes,” while the words emphasize Christ’s divinity, seated at the right hand of God, the alto voice, in dialogue with a solo violin (an oboe d’amore in the score) makes Him poignantly human. At least one critic has suggested that the demands put on the singer come from the popularity of Italian opera in Dresden. That the piece is a *gigue*, a dance form, further emphasizes the human. But the text brings us back to the divinity of Christ with the plea for mercy at the end: “*miserere nobis.*”

The *St Matthew Passion* is also operatic, with soloists singing the roles of characters in the drama and the chorus, sometimes, taking the part of the people. Perhaps the most famous performance of the piece was in 1829, when Felix Mendelssohn conducted the work at the Berlin Singakademie. This one performance resurrected Bach’s music for European audiences. Mendelssohn did, however, make several cuts to the score, including all of the solo arias but two. One of them is the aria that you will hear: “Erbarme dich.” It is an anguished plea for mercy. It comes in the *Passion* after Saint Peter has denied knowing Jesus for the third time. The Russian filmmaker Andrei Tarkovski opens and closes his last film, *The Sacrifice*, with this piece. The film deals with a man faced with the outbreak of World War III. In that context it is heartbreaking.

In the Aarne-Thompson-Uther classification of world-wide folk tales the traditional, familiar story of Cinderella is included with those tales dealing with supernatural helpers. But the Rossini opera *La Cenerentola* would not fall in this category. No fairy godmother for Rossini and his librettist Jacopo Ferretti. No stepmother, but a stepfather. And it’s Alidoro, the court philosopher, who arranges for Cinderella to go to the ball. And there’s no glass slipper. Instead, when the prince proposes marriage while she is still in her magnificent clothes, she hands him a bracelet and tells him that he should look for the girl with its mate on her arm. He will have to find and accept her in her rags before she will marry him. “Nacqui all’affanno e al pianto” is Cinderella’s final aria, in which she forgives her stepsisters and stepfather (which, by the way, is how the Charles Perrault version of the story ends, with forgiveness).

One of the immediately recognizable characteristics of a Rossini opera is *coloratura* arias. Richard Somerset-Ward in *The Story of Opera* suggests that the reason the opera disappeared from the repertory for almost a hundred years is that there were no sopranos who could sing the part of Cinderella. But we have someone who can.

Program Notes by Millard Dunn



THE PERFORMERS

AUDREY DAWSON, Mezzo-Soprano, specializes in Baroque and early music. She performs in Cincinnati and Louisville venues, in chamber groups as well as larger ensembles, in variety of operatic and cantata roles.

DEBBIE DIERKS, Piano, is at the keyboard in LMC rehearsals and performances. She has performed extensively in the United States and Europe as a collaborative pianist for soloists and ensembles and has also made important contributions to the community’s music life as a vocal coach and music director.

JACK GRIFFIN, Violin, is our Concertmaster and Production Manager. He has held the Principal Viola position with the Louisville Orchestra for decades, while also providing ensembles for weddings and events through his company, Commonwealth Musicians.