

MOZART BICENTENNIAL CONCERT
(1756-1956)

Presented by
THE LOS ALAMOS CHORAL SOCIETY AND LOS ALAMOS SINFONIETTA
in commemoration of the 200th anniversary of W. A. Mozart's birth



I

THE MASS IN F MAJOR, K. 192
Kyrie
Gloria
Credo
Sanctus and Ozanna
Benedictus and Ozanna
Agnus Dei and Dona Nobis Pacem

II

CONCERTO FOR HORN IN E-FLAT, K. 447
Allegro
Romanza
Allegro — *William Stocum, Horn*

INTERMISSION

III

VESPERAE SOLEMNES DE CONFESSORE, K. 339
Psalm 110 (Dixit Dominus)
“... The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength
out of Zion: rule thou amidst thine enemies...”
Psalm 111 (Confitebor)
“With my whole heart will I praise the Lord.”
“The work of God is a work of honor and glory.”
Psalm 112 (Beatus Vir)
“How blessed is he that feareth God,
and delighteth in his commandments.”
Psalm 113 (Laudate Pueri)
“From the rising of the sun to its going down is
the name of the Lord to be praised.”
Psalm 117 (Laudate Dominum)
“Praise ye the Lord, all ye nations,
for His merciful kindness is great toward us:
and the truth of the Lord endureth forever.”
The Canticle of Mary (Magnificat)
“My soul doth magnify the Lord...”

The Mass in F, K.192 (1774)

This work, written in Salzburg when Mozart was 18, is already his sixth mass. It is scored for violins and continuo only, apparently because violas were not available for church music in Salzburg. The Mass in F is a Missa Brevis, or short mass intended for an ordinary Sunday service; it is masterfully concise and simple. Only the Kyrie and Agnus Dei have instrumental preludes; the other movements begin at once with the voices. Other means to brevity are the terseness of all thematic material, rapid choral declamation, and division of lengthy sections of text among the voices, which seem almost to interrupt each other.

The Kyrie is in sonata form with only a very brief development section (Christe Eleison). The Gloria opens with an intonation (originally sung by the priest at the altar), and the rest of the movement consists of soaring choral passages set off by relatively static sections sung by a smaller group. There is, however, a short fugue "Cum Sancto Spiritu".

The four-note theme of the Credo is heard many times in Mozart's music, notably in the Finale of the "Jupiter" Symphony. Here it recurs no less than thirteen times, each time treated differently, but each time confirming "I Believe" in a manner that is profoundly moving. Owing to this grand and lively movement this early Missa Brevis more truly merits being called a "Credo Mass" than does the more pretentious C Major Mass (K.257) to which the title has actually been given.

The Sanctus, Ozanna, Benedictus, and Agnus Dei are treated with a succinctness and expressive intensity that is unique among settings of the mass. The Agnus Dei is followed without pause by the Dona Nobis, a sonatina of incredibly light-hearted innocence, which is typical of much of Mozart's work; it leaves one with a sense of personal affection for the young composer.

Concerto for Horn in E-flat, K.447 (1783)

The concertos for Horn are primarily showpieces, and were written so far as is known for the Salzburg horn player, Ignaz Leitgeb. He seems to have been the butt of numerous "jokes" by Mozart, such as confusing variegated inks in the solo part, highly insulting remarks inserted in the musical directions, and the dedication of K.417 in which Mozart says he is "taking pity on that ass, ox, and fool of a Leitgeb." The last concerto, K.495, was also written "for that Leitgeb."

The concerto we are to hear is much more subtle and serious in style than the others, its horn part is artistically and technically more difficult, and a different orchestration is used; it may well not have been composed for "that ass, Leitgeb." The mystery is compounded, however, by the "hunting style" of the finale which starts off strikingly like those of the other two concertos in E-flat.

William Slocum, a three-times Aspen Fellowship winner, studied Horn with Joseph Eger, distinguished faculty member of the Aspen Institute of Music. Occupying the principal horn chair in the orchestra of the University of New Mexico, Mr. Slocum is also a member of the Albuquerque Chamber Music Ensemble and The Albuquerque Symphony. This promising young horn player has frequently appeared with the University orchestra with Kurt Frederick in concerts at Santa Fe and Los Alamos.

The Los Alamos Choral Society is one of this community's oldest civic organizations; this is its twelfth season. It has since its inception been devoted to the study of masterpieces of choral literature, and is open to anyone who can carry a tune and wishes to join the Society. For the last three seasons, the Choral Society has been under the direction of John D. Seagrave, a physicist employed by the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory.

Collaboration with the Los Alamos Sinfonietta, a group of amateur instrumentalists, began in 1953 when the Sinfonietta joined forces with the Choral Society to perform Bach's Christmas Oratorio. Last year the groups gave a joint concert performing the Schütz Seven Last Words, and the Piano Concerto in D Major and the "Lord Nelson" Mass by Joseph Haydn.

The Sinfonietta this season has been directed by Frank Pinkerton, who directed an enlarged orchestra in concert last summer, and was recently heard as co-soloist with Ottis Rechard in the Bach Concerto in D minor for Two Violins in a concert of the Chamber Music Players of Santa Fe and Los Alamos. The Horn Concerto will be directed by Mr. Pinkerton, and the choral works by Dr. Seagrave.

Vesperae Solemnes de Confessore, K.339 (1780)

The vesper services at Salzburg were held about sundown. The usual introductory prayers were followed by five Psalms, their character chosen for the occasion. The label "de Confessore" indicates that these vespers were written for a Saint's Day (the "confessor"), but the text does not reveal which Saint was so honored. After each Psalm there is an antiphonal Gloria Patri.

This was the last major work written for the Salzburg Archepiscopal Court, in whose service Mozart had been for nearly ten years. The composer had become increasingly rebellious at the many arbitrary musical restrictions decreed by the Archbishop. His earlier ecclesiastical music for Salzburg had conformed nobly to the task of achieving just the desired combination of brevity and brilliance, and the present work is indeed representative of Mozart's best work in that milieu, as it has all the hallmarks of his expressive musical language together with the compactness and baroque splendor demanded for the great Salzburg Cathedral. However, as Mozart's need for greater artistic freedom manifested itself in more frequent departures from the "official line", an open break with the Archbishop became inevitable. Thus, with these Vespers Mozart broke away from the Court. Although the work is on highest artistic integrity, to the traditionalists its style appeared too free and too daring.

The first three Psalms are festive and strong enough, but their many surprising contrasts must have upset Archbishop Coloredo, and especially the rousing D minor fugue which follows (Laudate Pueri), for it is simply loaded with forbidden devices. The subject is an archaic theme with the leap of a diminished seventh found in the music of many composers, and also in Mozart's own Requiem. The Laudate Dominum, with its seraphic soprano solo (Aileen Cherry) and choral response, is a movement entirely "unchurchly" in a narrow sense - a movement intensely poetic and charming. The final Magnificat forms an eloquent climax of this pivotal work of

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

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