

Inspire - Transform - Enchanting
Resounding Joy
Passion, Spirit, Warmth
From the Beginning
Imagination

Da Capo

directed by Leonard Enns *Chamber Choir*

Brier

Ruth Watson Henderson

Samuel Barber

Jeff Smallman

Olivier Messiaen

Eric Whitacre

Arvo Pärt

Saturday November 20th, 2004 – 8pm

St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, Kitchener

PROGRAM

*What we call the beginning is often the end
And to make an end is to make a beginning.
The end is where we start from.*

~ T. S. Eliot, Little Gidding V (excerpt), from Four Quartets

O sacrum convivium – Olivier Messiaen

In Memoriam, Elmer Iseler – Ruth Watson Henderson

Prelude

Fugue ~ Kyrie

When David Heard – Eric Whitacre

Brier – Jeff Smallman

intermission

Reincarnations – Samuel Barber

1. Mary Hynes

2. Anthony O Daly

3. The Coolin

The Beatitudes – Arvo Pärt

organist, Marlin Nagtegaal

Cloudburst – Eric Whitacre

Water Night – Eric Whitacre

Please join us for an informal reception following the concert.

Notes and Texts

(All notes written by L. Enns)

Tonight's concert continues the **DaCapo** tradition of marking, in our November concert, the cycle of rest, death, hope, and new life on which our existence turns; while we mark this reality civically and religiously at this time of year, we experience it perhaps most directly in the constancy of nature as the sleep of winter approaches once more.

It is also from nature that we take tonight's concert title: **Brier**. A rose is possibly *the* icon of love and tenderness, and yet nature bears this stunning and delicate flower on a thorny, crude, and painful brier. The lesson is ultimately not avoidance, but rather hope—that beauty will be both born from, and borne by, the painful brier.

O sacrum convivium – Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)

O sacrum convivium,
in quo Christus sumitur recolitur
memoria passionis ejus.
Mens impletur gratia
et futurae gloriae nobis pignus datur.
Alleluia.

~ *Thomas Aquinas*

*O sacred feast,
in which we may receive Christ
and remember his passion.
The mind is filled with grace,
and the promise of future glory is given to us.
Alleluia.*

Messiaen—that great lover of all the arts, of oriental culture, of the beauty of birds and the intricacy of birdsong—sets Aquinas' meditation on the passion of Christ to such sensual harmonies that the distinction between brier and rose, between suffering and hope, is blurred in a most exquisite and seductive way.

In Memoriam, Elmer Iseler – Ruth Watson Henderson (b. 1932)

Christe eleison
Kyrie eleison

Christ have mercy
Lord have mercy

Composer Ruth Watson Henderson served as long time accompanist for Elmer Iseler. Appropriately, her tribute to Iseler begins with a near-pianistic prelude followed by a fugue, whose general characteristics are reminiscent of the Preludes and Fugues of Bach. The singers are given no text in the **Prelude**, only a gradual opening and closing of the lips that allows the initial hum to move to an impassioned “ah” and then return to silence. Interestingly, the **Fugue** begins not with the traditional “Kyrie” (in the Kyrie-Christe-Kyrie liturgical sequence), but directly with “Christe”; thus, in retrospect, the prelude takes on the function of a wordless initial “Kyrie”—a prayer not yet articulated, or perhaps simply a grief.

When David Heard – Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)

When David heard that Absalom was slain
he went up into his chamber over the gate and wept,
and thus he said:

My son, my son Absalom
O Absalom, O my son, Absalom my son,
Would God I had died for thee,
O my son, my son!
-II Samuel 18:33

This short text represents the tragic end of a litany of avenging, revenging, scheming, deception, and violence gone terribly wrong. The simple dramatic quality and impact of the story will easily repay the time spent reading the biblical chapters leading up the verse in question. But more deeply, in an archetypal way, the lament here is for all the children of humanity, whose future is stolen in so many ways by misguided decisions made in the name of protection of “our” kingdom.

Whitacre, one of the bright lights among young North American composers, sets this familiar text in a deeply moving way. The text/music proportions he chooses are telling: of the 15 minutes or so of music, almost all of the time is consumed with only four words: *O Absalom, my son*. While the main narrative is necessary, it serves only as the brief framing context—the grief is the substance. As will be expressed in the final line of the second of Barber’s **Reincarnations** (opening the second half of our concert), “*After you there is nothing to do! There is nothing but grief.*”

Brier – Jeff Smallman (b. 1965)

Because, dear Christ, your tender, wounded arm
Bends back the brier that edges life's long way
That no hurt comes to heart, to soul no harm,
I do not feel the thorns so much today.

Because I never knew your care to tire,
Your hand to weary guiding me aright,
Because you walk before and crush the brier,
It does not pierce my feet so much tonight.

Because so often you have hearkened to
My selfish prayers, I ask but one thing now,
That these harsh hands of mine add not unto
The crown of thorns upon your bleeding brow.

~ *E. Pauline Johnson*

Jeff Smallman lives in London Ontario, where he works in the University of Western Ontario's music library. **Brier** was awarded the *Association of Canadian Choral Conductors Associated Publishers Award for Choral Composition*, 2004.

Any sentient person will see the “*crown of thorns upon your bleeding brow*” pictured and described daily on the front pages of our newspapers; the age-old challenge remains, not to let these harsh hands of ours add to this wounding.

Reincarnations – Samuel Barber (1910 – 1981)

1. Mary Hynes

She is the sky of the sun!
She is the dart of love!
She is the love of my heart!
She is a rune!
She is above the women
of the race of Eve,
as the sun is above the moon!

Lovely and airy
the view from the hill
that looks down from Ballylea!
But no good sight is good,
until you see
the blossom of branches
walking towards you,
airily.

2. Anthony O Daly

Since your limbs were laid out
the stars do not shine!
The fish leap not out
in the waves!

On our meadows the dew
does not fall in the morn,
for O Daly is dead!

Not a flow'r can be born!
Not a word can be said!
Not a tree have a leaf!
for O Daly is dead!

Anthony!
After you
there is nothing to do!
There is nothing but grief!

3. The Coolin

Come with me, under my coat,
and we will drink our fill
of the milk of the white goat,
or wine if it be thy will.

And we will talk,
until talk is a trouble, too,
out on the side of the hill;

And nothing is left to do,
but an eye to look into an eye,
and a hand in a hand to slip;
and a sigh to answer a sigh;
And a lip to find out a lip!

What if the night be black!
And the air
on the mountain chill!
Where all but the fern is still!

Stay with me, under my coat!
and we will drink our fill
of the milk of the white goat,
out on the side of the hill!

~ poems by *James Stephens*

Composed in 1940, Barber's **Reincarnations** remain a staple for chamber choirs, masterfully recounting delight, grief, and tenderness in turn, depicting love in its various incarnations.

The Beatitudes – Arvo Pärt (b. 1935)

~ organist, Marlin Nagtegaal

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness:

for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake:

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you,
and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven:
for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Amen.

~Matthew 5:3-12

Pärt's setting of the Beatitudes remains striking in its direct communication and its refusal to countenance the maudlin sentimentality with which a lesser composer might clothe these comforting and yet very hard words of Christ. There is no compromise here; the message is clear; the setting is only a few steps removed from liturgical chant. Yet the compositional technique is so "tough," that when the choral music finishes and the organ essentially unwinds all the preceding music—but in reverse—to bring the whole edifice back to the starting point, one has the sense that a profound truth has been told.

In the words of T. S. Eliot, "*The end is where we start from.*" Yes, but now somehow changed.

Cloudburst – Eric Whitacre

The rain...

Eyes of shadow-water,
eyes of well-water,
eyes of dream-water.

Blue suns, green whirlwinds,
birdbeaks of light pecking open
pomegranate stars.

But tell me, burnt earth, is there no water?
Only blood, only dust,
only naked footsteps on the thorns?

The rain awakens...

We must sleep with open eyes,
we must dream with our hands,
we must dream the dreams of a river seeking its course,
of the sun dreaming its worlds,
we must dream aloud,
we must sing till the song puts forth roots,
trunk, branches, birds, stars,
we must find the lost word,
and remember what the blood,
the tides, the earth, and the body say,
and return to the point of departure...

~ Octavio Paz (1914-1998; adapted by Eric Whitacre)

~ translation by Lysander Kemp

Mexican poet Octavio Paz, recipient of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1990, shares with Pablo Neruda and César Vallejo the distinction being part of a group of internationally recognized Latin American poets. His words rehearse, in a striking way, the challenge of T. S. Eliot; in Paz's words, "*we must find the lost word...and return to the point of departure...*"

Whitacre's music brings us into the heart of the cloudburst, returning us to the place where the promise of life lies, where we can "*dream the dreams of a river seeking its course.*"

Water Night – Eric Whitacre

Night with the eyes of a horse that trembles in the night,
night with the eyes of water in the field asleep
is in your eyes, a horse that trembles,
is in your eyes of secret water.

Eyes of shadow-water,
eyes of well-water,
eyes of dream-water.

Silence and solitude,
two little animals moon-led,
drink in your eyes,
drink in those waters.

If you open your eyes,
night opens, doors of musk,
the secret kingdom of the water opens
flowing from the center of night.

And if you close your eyes,
a river fills you from within,
flows forward, darkens you:
night brings its wetness to beaches in your soul.

~ *Octavio Paz* (adapted by Eric Whitacre)

~ translation by Muriel Rukeyser

DaCapo Chamber Choir

Artistic director – Leonard Enns

Manager – Sara Martin

Board of Directors:

Marlin Nagtegaal, chair

Margaret Andres

Kevin Bradshaw

Lloyd Field

Carol McFadden

The **DaCapo Chamber Choir**, now beginning its seventh season, is dedicated to exploring unaccompanied music, primarily of the 20th Century. Our performance season consists of three annual concerts in Kitchener-Waterloo: once in the fall around Remembrance Day, a mid-winter, and a spring concert. In addition, the choir performs on an ad hoc basis at other events. In the spring of 2004, **DaCapo** was named a finalist in the Contemporary category of the *CBC National Radio Competition for Amateur Choirs* and successfully recorded and released their first CD, **STILL** (on sale at tonight's concert!).

The ARTISTS

Choir Members

Soprano:

Shannon Beynon

Diana Chisholm

Sara Fretz

Sara Martin

Jennifer Spaulding

Stacey VanderMeer

Tenor:

Thomas Brown

Joel Brubacher

Tim Corlis

Brandon Leis

Ron Schweitzer

Alto:

Angie Koch

Shauna Leis

Janice Maust Hedrick

Susan Schwartzentruber

Sara Wahl

Bass:

Donny Cheung

Bill Labron

Alan Martin

Kevin Smith

Dave Switzer

Leonard Enns, Artistic Director

Conductor and composer Leonard Enns has been a member of the Music faculty at Conrad Grebel University College, University of Waterloo since 1977, where he teaches music theory and composition, conducting, and directs the College Chapel Choir. He is the founding director of the **DaCapo Chamber Choir**.

Various CDs including Enns' music have been released in recent years by groups such as The Toronto Children's Chorus, The Winnipeg Singers, Phil Ens and the Faith and Life Male Chorus, The Menno Singers, and others. A forthcoming Canadian Music *Centrediscs* recording of his music is in the planning stages.

Guest performers

Organist ~ Marlin Nagtegaal

Percussionists ~ Andrew Lewin, Sean Saunders, Paul Teehan, Tina Xi Wang

DaCapo thanks the following donors and sponsors:

- Mersynergy ~ venue sponsor for tonight's concert
- Delphine and Lloyd Martin ~ for their significant 2004-2005 season support
- Conrad Grebel University College ~ for providing the space for DaCapo's weekly rehearsals, and for funding support for the recording of our first CD
- Waterloo Regional Arts Foundation ~ for the funding support for the recording of our first CD
- Jim and Lorna Blair Foundation ~ for their significant support of our **STILL** recording project
- Gowling, Strathy & Henderson ~ for donating their legal services in DaCapo's process of incorporation and charitable status designation
- PeaceWorks Consulting ~ for hosting our Web site
- 2003-2004 season donors:
 - Madeleine Enns
 - Eric Friesen
 - Kathy & Ed Janzen
 - Lloyd & Erla Koch
 - John Schiedel

To inquire about ways of supporting the choir, please contact Sara Martin, choir manager at sara.l.martin@rogers.com or call 725-7549.

Local Choral Events

Friday November 26, 8:00 pm: **TACTUS Vocal Ensemble**

Veni Emanuel

Sara-Lynn Weiler, Celtic Harp & Jay Weiler, Violin

Parkminster United Church, 275 Erb St. East, Waterloo

Tickets \$20 students \$10 (available at the door)

information: 885-9167

November 28: **University of Waterloo Choir** with **Waterloo Chamber Players**

Messiah

Gordon Burnett conducting

December 3, 4: **Menno Singers, Mennonite Mass Choir, KW Symphony**

Messiah

Stephanie Kramer, Jennifer Enns Modolo, Terence Mireau and Steven Horst

Information: 576-9853, mennosingers@gto.net

December 5, 12: **Wellington Winds**

Autumn Gold and Winter Snow

Michael Purves Smith conducting with Boyd McDonald, piano,

Ted Follows, narrator and the WW Saxophone Quartet

Information: 669-4409, 759-3907, www.wellingtonwinds.ca

December 5: **KW Chamber Orchestra**

Great Choruses of Christmas

Graham Coles conducting with University of Waterloo Chamber Choir,

Richard Cunningham, director

Information: 744-3828, kwchamberorchestra@on.aibn.com

December 11, 12: **Renaissance Singers**

O Magnum Mysterium – All Nature Worships Him

Richard Cunningham conducting

Information: jschattman@hotmail.com

December 12: **Guelph Symphony**

Messiah “Sing-along”

Simon Irving conducting

Information: 787-0272, www.guelphorchestra.ca

February 5: **KW Chamber Orchestra**

Pasta Night

Graham Coles conducting with Larry Moser, clarinet.

Information: 744-3828, kwchamberorchestra@on.aibn.com

Upcoming DaCapo Performances

Saturday March 5th, 8pm

Centre for International Governance Innovation

(former Seagram Museum, corner of Erb & Caroline, Waterloo)

Featuring... *Music of Africa*

Sunday May 1st – closing concert for the Open Ears Festival

St John the Evangelist Anglican Church (time TBA).

For more information about the festival, visit www.openears.ca

Sunday May 15th - closing concert for the Guelph Spring Festival

(time and location TBA)

Joint concert with Thames Scholars, Gerald Neufeld, director

The concert will include the premiere of a new work by Leonard Enns commissioned by the Guelph Spring Festival.

For more information about the festival, visit www.guelphspringfestival.org

DaCapo will also appear as invited performers on:

Saturday January 29th, 8pm

First United Church, Waterloo

Music for Two Organs and Five Choirs

Tuesday April 12th, (time TBA)

Centre in the Square, Kitchener

Secondary School Choral festival

Acknowledgements

DaCapo logo, poster, and program design – Heather Lee

To inquire about auditions, or for more information
e-mail **DaCapo** at dacapo@canada.com
or visit our Web site at www.dacapochamberchoir.ca