

Earth/Peace ... Choral Director David Chase

"Earth/Peace" is the title of our last concert of the season. Consider how it differs from the other titles in this series of concerts based on the novel "Angle of Repose," titles like "Hero/Anti-hero," "Dark/Bright," "Inside/Outside." I'm intrigued by its implication in this context that "Earth" and "Peace" may be intrinsically opposites. I don't think that is necessarily true – certainly it's not the planet's fault that humankind has always been at each other's throats! Yet there is a poetic ring to this title, reminiscent of the biblical refrain "Peace on Earth." To me, it evokes that biblical sentiment but simultaneously says, "Yeah ... but not yet."



Which is exactly at the heart of the music and the poetry in this program.

Benjamin Britten's orchestral work, *Sinfonia da Requiem*, which begins the program, was written in a fit of rage at

the approach of World War II. Ralph Vaughan Williams' work, written in similar circumstances, pits a massive amount of war poetry in English against a single fragment of the Latin mass, *Dona nobis pacem* (Give us peace) rendering that phrase at once pathetic and hopeful. Between these two large works on our program is a uniquely odd choral piece by Schoenberg. It sets a uniquely odd poem with the perfectly normal-sounding title, *Friede Auf Erden* – "Peace on Earth!"

The *Friede* text is an obscure poem by a mid-19th-century poet named Conrad Ferdinand Meyer. I have no idea how Schoenberg came to use it but, in my estimation, the choice of the poem is perfect. Like our title, "Earth/Peace," it is vague in the creative way that music itself is vague – or at least, non-specific. Like music, it refers obliquely outside itself – in this case, to the Christmas Story – but contextualizes the reference such that it is not *about* that story.

The poem begins with a sense of a murky past and builds its own dramatic thread to a hopeful climax. In 1907, the composer himself was in a compositionally murky state, a personal transition from a hyper-chromatic Romantic style toward his inevitable modernism. Setting this poem gave him the opportunity to weave the old and new compositional ideas, driving a purposefully amorphous harmonic structure toward a deeply gratifying climax in D major! There is no other piece quite like this one in all of music history. It seems, by its very confused complexity, to embody our theme, "Earth/Peace."

The obvious mutual impact of text and music is an important part of those perennial debates about text/music, and about music/meaning. It is my theory that Schoenberg's setting of this text was essentially as non-literary as his purely instrumental works, or at least equally driven by his purely musical thinking. It underlines the fact that music's magic is not dependent on text, even when it is interwoven with text. Schoenberg is working out his own compositional issues, yet, paradoxically, his composition is an exemplary setting of the poem.

In this issue...

- Earth/Peace
- News from the Executive Director
- The loss of Sharon Jones
- Meet Donna Johnson
- Musical Merit Foundation
- Chorus outreach, Sing!
- City Heights Music School
- Article Watch
- Dedication



So what about the other two works on the program, one purely instrumental, the other dealing with a back-breaking amount of poetry? What do they “mean”? How do they relate with language?

Both Britten and Vaughan Williams were writing between the two World Wars, both dreading the recurrence of the slaughter they had seen in the first war. Like Britten, Vaughan Williams – whom his wife described as an “atheist ... [who] drifted into a cheerful agnosticism” – used liturgical Latin of the church as a code.

We know that Britten was dealing with his intensely personal terror of war. He was a pacifist; he was an artist; he was responding to the drumbeat of war in the most meaningful way he could. Although he was a very literary man, he didn’t look for an anti-war poem; he wrote his emotions directly in musical language. But he did use that universal code that comes from the ancient church – bits and pieces of text from the Requiem (the Mass for the Dead) – *Lacrymosa* (Weeping); *Dies Irae* (Day of Wrath) and *Requiem Aeternam* (Eternal Rest). They turn out to be good indicators of the emotional temperature of each movement, as well as expressions of his fears for his countrymen. As the listener, you may infer what you will from these literary touches, but the music stands by itself.



Vaughan Williams’ *Dona Nobis Pacem* is the archetype of text-based composition. It sets a massive amount of Walt Whitman’s Civil War poetry, much of it gut-wrenching, and adds some rather ponderous passages from the Old Testament. All in all, it is a sprawling libretto, full of disparate images – battle images, moon images, death images. What holds it all together? A sliver of Latin code that everyone understands: *dona nobis pacem*.

These three works make a powerful combination. Let us presume that everyone who listens wants peace on earth; wants an end to war; wants humankind to do the right thing. But powerful as it is, this music will not attain those goals. It will do only what music can do. It will enter our souls through the most vulnerable of portals, the ears, to pierce the heart. And it will help us to contemplate the poetic ambiguity of ... “Earth/Peace.”



News from the Executive Director ... Diane Salisbury

Wines of Italy

Our 12th annual wine tasting, “Wines of Italy,” was a huge success on Saturday, April 27th. Enjoying the Italian villa-style home of Barbara Lee, a sold-out crowd sampled international wines and Mediterranean cuisine while overlooking the La Jolla Cove or relaxing on one of the home’s lovely terraces. La Jolla Strings (orchestra volunteers Loie Flood, Ina Page, Dan Swem and Carol Tolbert), serenaded guests as they arrived. The “blind” tasting conducted by Robert Whitley featured eight Italian red wines from a variety of wine-growing regions in Italy. The afternoon concluded with a raffle of over 30 wines (where almost everyone was a winner!), and two auction items including an original oil painting thematic of the wine tasting and our concert season created by chorus member Judy Manuche. Thank you to all of our guests who came out to enjoy and support this event, which made over \$9,000 for LJS&C!

Good News from Councilwoman Sherri Lightner

La Jolla Symphony & Chorus was notified this week that we are the recipient of a \$3,000 grant toward June concert expenses from City Councilwoman Lightner’s arts and culture discretionary fund! If you reside in District 1 and have an opportunity to send her a note or email of thanks, please do. We appreciate Councilwoman Lightner’s acknowledgement of our value to the community and her support of our concert program!

Contributors:

Barbara Peisch, Ed.

Evon Carpenter, Asst Ed.

David Chase

Victoria Eicher

Beda Farrell

Marty Hambright

Donna Johnson

Jean Lowerison

Susan Taggart

Tom Peisch

Diane Salisbury



And another big thank you to those of you who responded to my ED News from the last issue of *Tutti* by completing your ensemble member financial commitment and/or making an additional donation to the organization.



The loss of Sharon Jones ... David Chase

The LJS&C community is devastated by the tragic loss of Sharon Jones on May 16. Sharon was one of "the originals," a great team player, who added her lovely and accurate soprano voice to the chorus in 1987, along with her dry wit, her mischievous smile and her endless willingness to volunteer for the common good.

Perhaps her most lasting contribution was the creation of this newsletter. In 1996, she co-edited a new newsletter with Thelma Parris, created to "solidify the identity of the LJS&CA by broadening our understanding of the organization and facilitating communications among its various entities." By the next fall, it was christened *Tutti* and Sharon was the editor until Barbara Peisch took over in 2004. In that year Sharon retired from her UCSD position as Senior Administrative Analyst for the Faculty Senate and moved to the desert in the Palm Springs area.

After she moved, she began to sing with the California Desert Chorale but returned to sing with us when she could, mostly joining in summer tours. She had been a member of our very first European tour in 1988, and she took part in a total of eight tours. In fact, she made a point of joining us for the Carnegie Hall tour, saying that once she'd sung in Carnegie Hall with us, she finally "could retire!"

Sharon was the epitome of the community chorus member. She was unassuming but proactive. She made major contributions with voice and musicianship but also did whatever work had to be done. And most of all, she glowed from within with kindness and love. We will miss her.

David

At the time of publication, no plans for a memorial service are known.



Sharon with Charles Carver, from Sharon's Facebook page



You can view *Tutti* online!

You can download this and previous issues of *Tutti* from:

www.lajollasympphony.com

Look for TUTTI NEWSLETTER on the right side of the home page.



Meet Donna Johnson ... Evon Carpenter

Donna has been sharing her beautiful voice in the soprano section of our chorus for five years and travelled with the chorus on two tours before becoming a member.



She has been involved in music since the age of seven when she began singing solos. Her musical education came from Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois, where she sang with the Augustana Choir. She toured Europe and the U.S. with that choir, and even experienced her first trip to California with them. A fond memory of this time for Donna was the singing of the Bach B minor Mass with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Fritz Reiner. "It was quite interesting and intense. I well remember 'the look,' which scared me to death and definitely kept me in line."

When asked how she became a part of LJS&C she says, "I auditioned because David Chase was our church choir director at the time. I was going to be

a part of the Mendocino Music Festival with the LJS&C and he also invited me to join the tour to Mexico. I knew I had to be a part of this wonderful chorus under David's direction. Besides singing in such an outstanding chorus, I appreciate being exposed to so many different types of music that I would never have sought out myself. Last, but certainly not least, I love having this chorus as my extended family. I've made so many wonderful friends."

Donna has considerable solo experience, including singing the National Anthem in the rotunda of the Capitol Building. She has also sung with Dale Wood's Choir in Riverside and with Mira Costa Chorale and Madrigal Group and San Dieguito United Methodist Church Choir in the San Diego area.

Carlsbad has been home to Donna for fourteen years. Prior to the move to Carlsbad, Donna spent thirty six years in Riverside. She is retired from pharmaceutical sales and has two sons and five grandchildren, all who live in Carlsbad. She is known as "The Cookie and Caramel Queen," and if you have not experienced her wonderful baking you are missing out. She enjoys reading, volunteering in several community groups, and is on the board of the Musical Merit Foundation. Donna is a lovely person and a true asset to our organization.



Musical Merit Foundation ... Donna Johnson, board member

It's the best kept secret in San Diego. Musical Merit Foundation of Greater San Diego was established to discover, encourage, and present young music students of exceptional talent and to provide monetary awards to those students who pass final auditions. Auditions take place yearly in the spring. Students are required to perform classical repertoire from a program prepared by the Foundation Auditions Committee.

Musical Merit Foundation was founded in 1946 and since its inception has given almost 300 students over a half million dollars in financial awards. Last year it awarded over \$80,000 in scholarships.

Monetary awards are presented the day following the final auditions, at which time the award winners are showcased in performance. First place awards are given for each of the following categories: voice, instrumental, and keyboard. The overall first place winner earns a summer scholarship to the Aspen School of Music in Aspen, Colorado.

Need to contact the LJS&C?

La Jolla Symphony & Chorus Association

9500 Gilman Drive
Mail Code 0361
La Jolla, CA 92093

(858) 534-4637

www.lajollasymphony.com

Diane Salisbury,
Executive Director
dsalisbury@lajollasymphony.com



This year the 67th Annual Awards Concert is on Sunday, June 2, 5:00 p.m., at the First Presbyterian Church, 320 Date Street, San Diego. The concert is free to the public. You won't want to miss this presentation of talented young award winners. Come and bring a friend.

For further information visit our website at musicalmerit.org

Chorus Outreach, Sing! ... Evon Carpenter

In early April, Sing! visited Del Mar Heights School, where I teach fifth grade. Sing! is an educational choral outreach program by LJS&C. The quartet was composed of wonderful singers from the chorus: Ken Bell, Mark Walters, Connie Lawthers, and Marianne Schamp. The program was presented to the fifth grade students and included elements of choral music history, voicing, rhythm, and listening. The singers did a wonderful job of connecting and engaging the students. The repertoire was well-chosen and appealing to the audience.

The program was very professionally presented, and I was proud to be associated with it. Not only was it very educational for the audience, but the students were encouraged to attend the Friday dress rehearsals with their parents, which potentially builds a continuing audience for our ensembles. Great job, Sing!



City Heights Music School ... Victoria Eicher

We've had a very busy month of May! It started with a new Spring Session (on April 26th). We have 124 students in our schedule of Saturday classes that includes:

- 5 violin classes
- 4 guitar classes
- 2 West African drum classes
- 2 keyboard classes
- 1 voice class

51 of the students receive a partial or full scholarship (tuition is \$30 for the 10-week session). I love the fact that many students take more than one class! In fact, based on totals in each class, our enrollment adds up to 175 students!

On May 3rd, 50 CHMS students and parents enjoyed a pizza party followed by a field trip to the LJS&C dress rehearsal. Our first official field trip - with a bus! And it was even more awesome for one of my violinists who happens to love the French horn. She was thrilled to see and listen to our YAC winner Nicolee Kuester.

A few days later, on May 8th, we delivered several sets of bongos, congas, and

The LJS&CA Board

(Board representatives to the ensemble in bold)

OFFICERS

Stephen L. Marsh, President
 Paul E. Symczak, Vice President
 Jenny Smerud, Treasurer
 Dr. Ida Houby, Secretary

BOARD MEMBERS

Mark Appelbaum
Evon Carpenter
 (Orchestra)
 Gordon Clark
 Frank Dwinell Jr.
Peter Gourevitch (Chorus)
 Eric McCall

EX-OFFICIO

David Chase
 Diane Salisbury
 Steven Schick



timbales to the music program at Rosa Parks Elementary. The music teacher, Sharon Ormsbee, followed up with a note: "The kids love them, and they have really made a huge difference. The 4th and 5th graders have already begun work on their *Drumming with Character* unit and will be putting on 2 concerts towards the end of June." (The Afro-Cuban drums have been in storage for the past several months since our change to West African drums. I'm thrilled they have found a new purpose at Rosa Parks.)

On May 14th, we brought twenty West African drums to a Dad's Club meeting at Rosa Parks Elementary. It was a resounding (loud indeed!) success! Additional Dad's Club visits included Central Elementary (May 16) and Joyner Elementary (May 21), all in City Heights.

On May 18th we opened the 'Celebration of Compassion' event at Cherokee Point Elementary with our go-to ensemble of djembes, dununba, drumsticks, buckets, and paintcans. The drum performance programs have all been led by our new West African drums teacher Bernard 'Yiriba' Thomas. Yiriba is a wonderful, energetic, enthusiastic teacher and performer who often brings his son, Sakani, a junior at Lincoln High, to classes and performances. The drum class has sparked a lot of enthusiasm for its athleticism (yes!) and universal language appeal with community groups and organizers, especially those focused on teenage boys. This video was recorded at the end of the Dad's Club program at Central:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CmPw8ZPw06o>.

Upcoming events include planning sessions at Rosa Parks for after-school drum and violin classes (not combined) and at Monroe Clark Middle to reinstate a choir program. In the meantime, please visit (and like) our Facebook page (cityheightsmusicschool) for a photo documentary of our activities. Website: <http://cityheightsmusicschool.com>, Twitter: @cityhtsmusic

Photos from the field trip to the LJS&C dress rehearsal:



Boarding the bus and arrival at Mandeville



Meeting the bass players



Watching Nicolee at work



Have some news
to report?

Let the editor
know!

barbara@peisch.com

(Be sure to mention *Tutti* in
the subject so I know it's not
spam!)



Article Watch

From Tom Peisch:

U-T San Diego, May 5, 2013

"Steven Schick makes transformative 1926 work by Varèse sing"

By James Chute

A review of our last concert.

<http://www.utsandiego.com/news/2013/may/06/tp-steven-schick-makes-transformative-1926-work/>



From Jean Lowerison:

Radiolab.org

"Musical Language"

It starts out with the observation by UCSD's Diana Deutsch that Asian students are much, much faster at learning music than, say, Americans and she posits the reason is that they were raised on a tonal language.

There's also a lot more.

<http://www.radiolab.org/2007/sep/24/>



From Beda Farrell:

The Times of India, May 12, 2013

"Letter found from Britain's greatest opera composer's drawer shows his love for Ravi Shankar"

By Kounteya Sinha

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-05-12/uk/39203367_1_peter-pears-britten-and-pears-opera-north

and

BBC News Magazine, May 21, 2013

"Cleveland Orchestra plays in bars to reach new audiences"

Produced by the BBC's Franz Strasser

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-22617217>



From Marty Hambright:

Youtub.com

"Tchaikovsky Flashwaltz at Hadassah Hospital"

This is a video of a flash mob performing "Waltz of the Flowers" at an Israeli hospital.

<http://www.youtube.com/embed/tzwWskM4hN8?rel=0>



From Susan Taggart:

Los Angeles Times, March 25, 2013

"He was transformed by Mozart"

By Randy Lewis

<http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/arts/culture/la-et-cm-mozart-obsession-20130325,0,3639008.story>



If you find an interesting, music-related article or Web site, send the information about it to Barbara at barbara@peisch.com or Evon at ecarpen@san.rr.com. For Web sites, send us a link to the site and include "Tutti" in the subject. For articles, you may either send a link to the article or just the name and date of the publication, along with the title of the article, and we can find it online. Or you can bring it to rehearsal and hand it to one of us or snail mail it to Barbara at:



Peisch Custom Software
2530 Vista Way #F190
Oceanside, CA 92054



In Memoriam



**TO MY MENTOR, SHARON JONES, THIS
ISSUE OF *TUTTI* IS DEDICATED TO YOUR
MEMORY.**

EDITOR, BARBARA PEISCH