



VOICEMAIL

December 2010

Bingham Composition Soars

The November concert, *Transition: From Babylon to Jerusalem*, held at Congregation Shaare Emeth, included not one but two SLCC commissions. The first was *Psalm 137* by Composer-in Residence **Clare Maclean** commissioned in 2009 by **Dick and Marilyn Brickson** in honor of Shaare Emeth's cantor **Seth Warner**. It was repeated on this occasion with the Bricksons and Cantor Warner present. **Judith Bingham's** *A Bird is Singing*, was commissioned for SLCC by **Dr. John and Barbara Uhlemann**. This was its world premiere, with the Uhlemanns and composer Bingham present.

John Stewart, Director of Vocal Activities at Washington University, attended the concert and wrote:

"For me, the Chamber Chorus' recent appearance at Shaare Emeth was one of its finest in the last few years. In general, the intonation and ensemble could not have been better, and this year the choir's tonal quality is richer and more varied.

The highlight of what also was one of Philip's best programs in terms of musical selections, was undoubtedly Judith Bingham's charming, dramatic and gripping piece. The Shaare Emeth venue was the perfect environment: spacious, bright and acoustically vibrant. In his program notes Philip had underscored Bingham's highly dramatic, really operatic musical mentality. The eloquent whistler [tenor **Dr. David Carpenter**] roaming throughout the auditorium was only the most obvious dramatic component. Bingham's musical form, consisting of very identifiable musical motives (à la Wagner), provided an audible scenario of the musical journey. In short, a great concert!"



From left, John and Barbara Uhlemann, Composer Judith Bingham and Philip Barnes in front of the ark at Shaare Emeth.

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The Saint Louis Chamber Chorus

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Message from the President

I am pleased to welcome you to today's concert, *Traditions: Christmas from Ancient to Modern*, the third concert in our 55th season, and your annual opportunity to engage your mind and refresh your soul with choral music celebrating the holiday season as you will hear it no where else in St. Louis. You will hear some familiar carols and much new music in this program. The latter includes world premieres by our composer-in-residence, **Clare Maclean**, and by composer **Yakov Gubanov** whom we are delighted to welcome back to St. Louis.

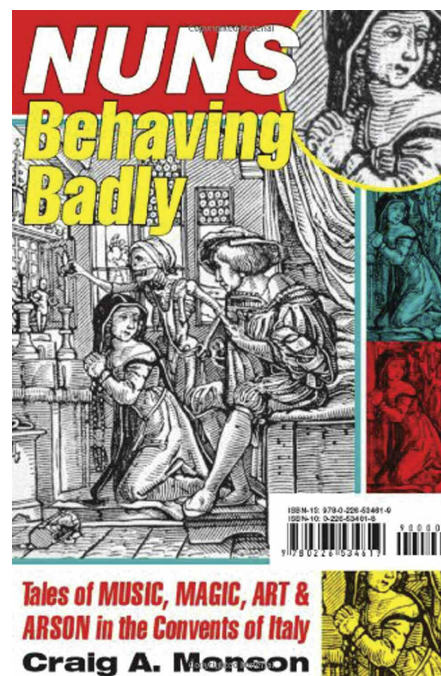
As those of you who have attended our concerts before will know, the St. Louis Chamber Chorus does not have a permanent home; one of the benefits of coming to its concerts is the opportunity to visit many buildings in St. Louis that are generally not open to the public. It is a pleasure to be here at beautiful and historic Holy Cross Lutheran Church for the first time.

Our next concert will take place on Sunday, February 13, 2011 at 3:00 p.m. at Graham Chapel on the campus of Washington University. You can find information about our upcoming concerts and much else on our website, www.chamberchorus.org, where you can now purchase tickets and recordings online. I urge you to explore this exciting web location and find out more about the Chorus, its mission and history.

Barbara Uhlemann
SLCC President

Economist Highlights Professor Monson's Book

The *Economist* magazine, not usually noted for its coverage of music, recently highlighted a book by **Craig Monson**, who teaches at Washington University. Professor's Monson's book, "Nuns Behaving Badly: Tales of Music, Magic, Art and Arson in the Convents of Italy," reveals the expertise of convent choirs in the Renaissance. His own reconstruction of motets written for such choirs by Renaissance composers, such as **Gabriele Fattorini**, was particularly helpful to the study, and these may be heard for the first time in the modern era when the Chamber Chorus 'premiers' them in its April concert, *Transfiguration: From Completion to Invention*, as part of a program that features the completion of otherwise fragmentary works. Professor Monson has kindly agreed to give a short introductory talk at 2:30 pm, immediately preceding the performance on April 17.



Book cover

Meet the Singers — Susan Greene

Susan was born and raised in Mt. Ayr, a small rural town in Iowa, the third of four daughters with talented musical parents. Susan doesn't remember when she was not singing or being surrounded by music. An important family tradition was to sing the *Messiah* choruses together during the Christmas holidays. Her father sang bass, sister Anne sang tenor, Julie and she sang alto, Cindy sang soprano and her mother played piano.

Her mother tells the story of seven-year-old Susan singing a solo of *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly* for the church Christmas program. For some unremembered reason the organ stopped working in the middle of the carol. Young Susan went on singing and when the organist finally made her way to the piano to start playing again, Susan was still on key and didn't miss a beat!

Her father, Bill Harover, had a beautiful baritone voice and sang solos for many weddings and funerals and was active in church and community choirs and local theatrical performances. In an odd scenario, Susan and her Dad played "romantic" opposites in two productions—usually of the old lech and young ingénue type! These included *A Funny Thing Happened On the Way to the Forum* and *Something's Afoot*. She thinks she acquired her weird sense of humor from him!

Susan's mother Kathleen, a current SLCC subscriber, sang in and directed choirs and taught piano lessons while Susan was growing up. Kathleen was Susan's high school music teacher during two years of high school and they performed in *Godspell* together.

Susan was active in high school band and chorus and was chosen to attend the Iowa All-State Festival as a freshman alto. She played cornet and French horn in band and piano in Jazz band. Her future husband, Mike, played French horn as well. Susan was a baton twirler and majorette in the marching band. She still holds a high school track record.

Mike and Susan married two weeks after her high school graduation. She attended community college in Creston, Iowa where she was active in music and

many musical productions. When their daughters started school she finished her degree in music education at Graceland University (then College) with a focus on vocal music.

After graduation, she took her mother's former high school vocal music teacher's job and directed the community chorus "Ringgold Singers." They sang popular and religious music. Mike was the accompanist, a continuation from when Kathleen had directed the group.

Moving to Missouri in 1993, Susan sang in various church choirs and was the director for six years at New Hope Presbyterian Church in St. Peters where Mike is still the organist. She sang with the Missouri Choral Society before joining the St. Louis Symphony Chorus and the following year, became a member of the Chamber Chorus. Her first SLCC program was the Christmas concert at St. Francis de Sales. Susan says both choruses challenged her in different ways and each fills a unique musical need in her life.



Susan Greene

Mike and Susan have three children, Heather, Stephanie and Chase. Both girls were extremely active in marching band during high school and Chase was the chorister-singing baritone. The families live within ten minutes of each other. With four grandchildren and two more on the way they have a boisterous time when they get together. Grandsons Grant, Carson and Brady all enjoy music but even at age two, granddaughter Lily shows her grandma's ability to stay on pitch.

Susan does have a life apart from singing! She is a secretary for the Sleep Medicine and Research Center research unit at St. Luke's Hospital. When not at work or singing somewhere Susan can be found reading, quilting, playing computer games or researching her family tree. Her earliest known ancestors can be traced back to somewhere in Ireland or the British Isles before 1500. Susan says her family, both past and present, play a major role in her life.

Gill Waltman

Noteworthy Notes

Buy Your CDs for Holiday Gift-Giving Today!

Today's concert is the perfect opportunity to pick up some of your last minute stocking stuffers for your friends and family. Our CDs make great gifts for all the music lovers on your list.

Visit the front table during intermission
or order your CDs online.

SLCC Commissions Provide Legacy

Ask anyone who has been generous enough to underwrite a commissioned piece for SLCC and they will tell you how far-reaching such a gesture becomes.

Not only does this generosity provide the singers with new and exciting works to perform, the audience a frisson of anticipation as an original, never-before-heard piece begins, often in the presence of the live composer, and with all the fullness of enjoyment as the music unfolds for all involved, but it is a gift that goes on giving!

The commissioners have their names, and those they are honoring, associated with the composition for perpetuity, as does the SLCC. Several of our recent commissions have gone "viral" and have been recorded, played on radio stations and sung by other choirs, including several in England. This highlights not only our own Chorus, but the composers themselves, including some younger artists as they begin their climb to fame and hopefully fortune!

If you are an SLCC admirer, consider the munificence of such a tribute to our splendid Chorus and allow the composer, the musical creation, the Chorus and you as supporters to become part of the world repertoire of fine choral music.

Gill Waltman

Former Composer-in-Residence to the Rescue

Scheduling conflicts have caused a change of composer of the premiere slated for our next concert—a setting of Sophocles' *Ode to Love*. We are delighted that our former composer-in-residence **Sasha Johnson Manning** has agreed to take over the commission from **Peter Aston**. Her new work, and that of an earlier commission from distinguished American composer, **Ned Rorem**, set a translation from the ancient Greek by our own **Philip Barnes**.

Chorus Member Auditions for the 'Met'

Congratulations to alternate member **Sarah Price**, who recently won the St. Louis District Auditions for the Metropolitan Opera. We wish her good luck as she proceeds to the regionals in Kansas City in mid-March.

Website Updates

Have you looked at the SLCC website lately? Its simple graphic design, uncluttered pages and user-friendly drop-down tabs provide all the information anyone needs to know about this organization. The home page gives the latest information for upcoming concerts, and tickets are now available on-line. The full season's concert program is available for viewing, as well as those from previous seasons. The many SLCC commissions are also listed with their World or US premiere status.

Web Designer and Administrator **Amanda Verbeck** is gradually updating the archive section, which includes past repertoires and concert venues, and she plans to add all the VoiceMail issues soon. Amanda is ably assisted by Web Engineer **John Wahlers** and Web Archivist **Roger Hill**. Check it out at www.chamberchorus.com.

For more information about concerts, tickets or auditions:

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