



The St. Martin's Voice

The Newsletter of St. Martin's Chamber Choir

A new holiday tradition?

By Timothy J. Krueger, Artistic Director

This year's sparkling holiday concert "**Christmas with St. Martin's Chamber Choir**" celebrates the release of St. Martin's second Christmas CD, "A Marian Christmas II." The first portion of the concert contains highlights from both "Marian Christmas" CDs, including, from the first, Distler's 6 settings of *Est ist ein Ros entsprungen*, Parry's *When Christ was born*, and the Biebl *Ave Maria*; and from the second, Maxwell-Davies' *The Fader of Heven*, Byrd's *Beata Viscera Maria*, and Dunkin's arrangement of *Gloucestershire Wassail*. The second portion of the concert presents a "Christmas Cornucopia" of works, from Pearsall's *In dulci jubilo*, to Swedish composer Gustav Nordqvist's *Jul, jul*, and including along the way *Four Canticles for the Christmas Season* by modern American composer J. Chris Moore. The final section of the concert features a single work, the *Ceremony of Carols* by Benjamin Britten, with Don Hilsberg, harp.

Something new in this year's concert is a "sing along" unlike



any that anyone has likely experienced, for the audience will be asked to join the *a cappella* choir in modern arrangements of "O come, O come Emmanuel" by Terry Schlenker, "'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime" by Timothy J. Krueger, and others. The audience will sing the familiar and largely unaltered melody (conducted by me), while the choir sings newly-composed harmonies (conducted by our Mark Sheldon conducting intern Ace Edwards) to crown the audience's contribution with an ethereal and haunting halo of sound. Will this become a new Holiday Tradition for St. Martin's concert-goers? Come to the concert and find out!

Christmas with St. Martin's Chamber Choir

Concert sponsors: Robert and Juanita Kniss

Sunday, Dec. 16, St. Elizabeth's Church, Denver

**Thursday, Dec. 20, Broomfield Auditorium,
Broomfield**

Friday, Dec. 21, St. John's Cathedral, Denver

All concerts begin at 7:30 p.m.

Adults \$20 Seniors \$17 Students \$5

(303) 298-1970 or www.StMartinsChamberChoir.org

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A heartfelt letter from a St. Martin's supporter

By Duane Claassen

One Friday eight years ago, my wife presented me with an article in the Denver Post about St. Martin's Chamber Choir. I read and missed that the choir was even local. We attended the concert that weekend and were hooked.

There are at least three clear reasons why we keep coming back. First, the experience is a source of joy. Choral singing also has a unique ability to touch the soul. Finally, we were in an especially receptive and vulnerable time in our lives.

The purity and precision of the sound which this choir creates is a delight. If I do not find myself in tears, I often feel a smile spreading unbidden across my face. There are few experiences in life that are so predictably joyous.

The sound, however, is not enough. I can be moved by poetry and I love the symphony. But the blending of words and music in choral singing exceeds either by itself to move my soul. The capacity to communicate the realities of our lives finds its clearest and deepest expression in this art. Themes of humor, grief, love, longing, and faith all find their home here.

When we first heard St. Martin's, our lives felt dry and isolated. We were especially receptive to the warmth and depth this choir possesses. To be spiritually enriched and enlivened simply by being present seems to be an experience of grace.

In the past eight years we have not missed a St. Martin's concert. And I expect that number to grow in the years to come.

St. Martin's collaborations and special appearances in 2007-08

St. Martin's will be presenting a joint concert with the outstanding **Baroque Chamber Orchestra of Colorado** on February 15th, 16th and 17th. On April 26th SMCC will appear with the **Boulder Philharmonic** in a performance of Vaughan Williams' *Serenade to Music*. Finally, on June 12th St. Martin's has been invited to perform at the **National Performing Arts Convention**, held in Denver, providing the first half of an evening being presented by the **Colorado Children's Chorale**.

St. Martin's Launches Educational Outreach Programs

By Cynthia Henning, Singer Representative to the Board of Directors and Chair of the Education Committee

We are pleased to announce the kick-off of educational outreach programs for high school and elementary school students.

On Saturday, November 3, 2007, an octet from St. Martin's Chamber Choir sang among twenty members of Arvada West High School's premier choir, "Vocal Showcase," in a two-hour workshop, with Artistic Director Timothy J. Krueger as clinician. After a short physical and vocal warm-up and introductions, the workshop was conducted like an ordinary SMCC rehearsal, *i.e.*, *a cappella*, and Tim described the difference between "well-tempered" and "*a cappella*" tuning. The group sight-read four selections together (although the SMCC'ers had performed them before). Tim worked on interpretive and technical skills – syllabic stress, word painting, phrasing, dynamics, defined length of rest for a breath, and how to determine one's pitch when a single starting pitch is given. He also described the choral audition process, provided a very brief history of choral music, and discussed why so much choral repertoire is

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Remaining concerts in St. Martin's 2007-08 Season

Christmas with St. Martin's
December 16, 20 & 21, 2007

Gradus ad Parnassum: with the Baroque Chamber Orchestra of Colorado
February 15, 16 & 17, 2008

This Joyful Eastertide
April 4 & 6, 2008

Masterworks for Double Choir
June 6 & 8, 2008

All concerts begin at 7:30 p.m., except June 8th, 4:00 p.m.

Details at www.StMartinsChamberChoir.org

Education, cont. from page 2

from the sacred tradition. The workshop concluded with the two groups performing several prepared selections for each other. AWHs choral music director and SMCC member Chris Maunu later reported his kids loved the workshop, and responses to feedback questionnaires directed separately to the students and the octet were overwhelmingly positive and enthusiastic.

A quartet from SMCC recently presented programs for approximately 220 charming second, third, fourth, and fifth graders at Fairview Elementary School in the Adams 50 School District (where SMCC member Micaëla Larsen Brown is the music teacher). The quartet, led by clinician



Fairview Elementary students practice their choral singing technique

MB Krueger, met the students during their regularly-scheduled 35-minute music classes on the afternoons of Friday, November 16th and Monday the 19th. MB animatedly instructed the attentive students on posture, breathing, enunciation, discovering the "head voice," and ensemble singing discipline. The students sang a song they had been preparing for an upcoming concert. MB reminded the students of all the skills she had taught, and their immediate improvement was quite apparent. The Fairview Elementary School workshops were funded by a grant from the North Metro Arts Alliance.

The Education Committee plans to repeat the presentation of these workshops to students at more schools in the metro area, and it is hoped that these thoughtfully designed programs will become a popular and unique educational experience for young musicians in our community.

New CD cover provided by Denver art dealer R.L. Butler

Your art purchase can benefit SMCC

One of our longtime patrons, R.L. Butler, d/b/a Robert Lloyd Butler/galerie, recently assisted St. Martin's by providing the cover to our new CD, **A Marian Christmas II**. The cover, MADONNA AND CHILD, is a 1790 oil painting in the style of Guido Reni (1575-1642) a Bolognese painter famous for his refined color and sensitive craftsmanship. The painting was purchased through a private dealer in Chicago who had contacts with Bonham Auction House in London, and has been in the Butler Collection for nearly 35 years.

"I'm basically a private fine art print dealer, but I occasionally deal with other art work in general. I was extremely happy when Tim Krueger wanted to use it for a CD" Butler said. His print collection is mainly from 1880-1925 although he has large inventory through the contemporary. Most notable are prints by Picasso, Cassatt, Bonnard, Robbe, along with more contemporary: Herbert Bayer, Haas, Liepke, Henri Moore and Jeanette Pasin Sloan. Prices range from \$300 to \$2,000.

Butler, 70, is available by private appointment in your office or home. He can also provide collection advice. He recently has consulted on Dürer, Rembrandt, Malais and Dinis. You are invited to call him at 314-477-4645 or 303-293-0284. Purchases made by mentioning St. Martin's name include a 15 – 20% contribution to St. Martin's Chamber Choir. Butler concludes "St. Martin's is a premier music organization in Denver. Tim Krueger is an unsung hero". Krueger says in return "Butler's collection is tops! MB & I have long felt that way".

R.L. Butler will have his Annual Holiday Art Show at his place on Dec. 9th 2:30 pm to 5:30 p.m., which will benefit many not for profit organizations, including St. Martin's. Price ranges from \$35 to \$2,000. Call Mr. Butler at 303-293-0284 for more details, and your art purchase can create support for St. Martin's.

Be sure to listen for St. Martin's Chamber Choir on KVOD 90.1 FM or www.KVOD.org during December. The choir will be featured on "Colorado Spotlight", "KVOD Presents", and included in other holiday programming.

Christmas with St. Martin's Chamber Choir

- ♣ Benjamin Britten's *Ceremony of Carols* for women's voices and harp
- ♣ Highlights from SMCC CDs "A Marian Christmas" and "A Marian Christmas II"
- ♣ "Sing along" with St. Martin's in new arrangements of familiar carols
- ♣ Experience one of Colorado's most beautiful Christmas musical events

Where & When:

Sunday, Dec. 16, 2007, 7:30 p.m.
St. Elizabeth's Church
Speer & Arapahoe, Auraria Campus, Denver

Thursday, Dec. 20, 2007, 7:30 p.m.
Broomfield Auditorium,
3 Community Park Rd., Broomfield

Friday, Dec. 21, 2007, 7:30 p.m.
St. John's Episcopal Cathedral
1350 Washington St., Denver

For tickets call (303) 298-1970 or visit
www.StMartinsChamberChoir.org

St. Martin's Chamber Choir gratefully acknowledges the generous support of:

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Fourteenth Concert Season, 2007-08

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