



The St. Martin's Voice

The Quarterly Newsletter of St. Martin's Chamber Choir

“Scarlatti Inspirations”

*By Timothy J. Krueger,
St. Martin's Chamber Choir Artistic Director*

During his lifetime, Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757) was overshadowed by the reputation of his father, Alessandro (1660-1725). The latter was a highly successful opera composer, a prominent church musician, and the undisputed leader of the Neapolitan musical world of the early 18th century. His son Domenico had a much less distinguished career, and humbly served the Portuguese-born Spanish Queen Maria Barbara and her court in Madrid. He was a lowly court retainer, serving in a not particularly wealthy or musically-inclined court, whereas his father commanded great respect from not only kings and noblemen, but the entire musical establishment of 18th century Italy.

History treated Domenico more kindly than Alessandro, however. Whereas the lofty reputation of the father declined (quite precipitously, in fact, immediately after his death), that of his obscure son rose (with equal intensity, it would seem). Domenico is now seen as the father of modern keyboard technique, the inventor of the keyboard sonata, and the author of many hundreds of innovative keyboard works that demonstrate a fertile and prolific

genius. By contrast, none of his father's hundred-some operas has been heard in over two hundred years; cantatas and oratorios in droves lie mouldering in archives, and a mere fraction of his total output has been published in modern editions. His talent and significance are not disputed, but the relevance of his works, the size and grandeur of the forces called for (in Baroque terms), have largely "priced" him out of modern accessibility. The

seemingly humble keyboard sonatas of the son, which perhaps appeared as an unimportant endeavor when held in comparison to his father's large-scale productions, have stood the test of time, however, and place Domenico among the greater of the stars in the Baroque constellation of composers.

Enter Toby Tenenbaum, a Boulder composer and pianist. I became acquainted last year with a set of piano sonatas written by Toby that were inspired by and modeled on those of the younger Scarlatti. I was so impressed with these works as modern re-interpretations of a well-known and established model that I resolved to work him into a St. Martin's concert. "Scarlatti Inspirations" is the result, a concert featuring the newly unearthed glories of a faded star (Alessandro), the works, both well-known and unknown of the more famous son (Domenico), and modern, fresh works inspired by this musical father-son duo of an ancient time.

Choral works include both madrigals and motets – secular and sacred – of Alessandro Scarlatti, showing a vocal technique of rare facility, attesting to the well-earned reputation he enjoyed during his lifetime. Keyboard works include not only several of Toby Tenenbaum's sonatas, but an example of those sonatas that were their inspiration – Domenico's. And the piano and chorus will join forces on the final work, Domenico Scarlatti's *Missa La Stella*, a mass for chorus, soloists, and *basso continuo* (realized, in this case, on the piano).

Join us for this unique exploration of choral and keyboard works by this fascinating Baroque family, and the modern fruits of their inspiration in the compositions of Toby Tenenbaum.



“Scarlatti Inspirations”

Friday, February 11, 2005

7:30 p.m.

First United Methodist Church
1421 Spruce St., Boulder

Sunday, February 13, 2005

7:30 p.m.

St. Elizabeth's Church
Auraria campus, Denver
[Sponsored by Gregory Robbins]

Adults, \$18; Seniors, \$15;
Students, \$10
(303) 298-1970

Meet SMCC Executive Director Brock Erickson

For the first time in its history St. Martin's has hired a full-time Executive Director. Many of you already know Brock Erickson as a singer and Board member, but since September 1st he has been responsible for the administrative and operational aspects of the choir. Brock works very closely with St. Martin's Board of Directors, Board committees, and Artistic Director Tim Krueger.

Brock most recently served as Executive Director of the American Recorder Society, a national organization that promotes recorder playing among young students, seniors, and early music enthusiasts. He also worked in the computer industry for many years as a programmer and systems analyst. After earning a Bachelor of Music in Music Education degree from Kent State University (Ohio) Brock studied Music Composition at the University of Denver's Lamont School of Music. In addition to his singing Brock recently played piccolo and flute for a local production of Menotti's opera "Amahl and the Night Visitors".

"St. Martin's is a Colorado treasure," says Erickson. "Choral music has the power to really touch people, and allows singers and listeners to share a rare, transcendent experience through music. St. Martin's



St. Martin's Chamber Choir Executive Director Brock Erickson

intentionally focuses on serious, beautiful chamber music, and although the nonprofit arts climate is difficult right now, support for the choir is strong through donations, concert attendance, and sales of our recordings." He adds, "Our next challenge is to more effectively spread the word that St. Martin's Chamber Choir is worthy of national exposure and recognition."

Inaugural CD from Mark Sheldon Fund

Following the death in late 2003 of St. Martin's member and assistant conductor Mark Sheldon, a special fund was established in his name. The primary purpose of this fund is to further Mark's passion for music by producing choral recordings of the very highest quality. December 2004 saw the very successful release of "The Unknown Masterpiece", the first project underwritten by the Mark Sheldon Fund. Consisting of premieres from St. Martin's Chamber Choir's 2003-04 season, the CD includes a setting by Colorado composer Janet Vanden Bosch of "These Few Tears: In memoriam Mark Owen Sheldon", written by Todd Morley the day after Mark's death.

Friends of Mark and of the choir have given

Be Part of a World Premiere!

Would you like to help St. Martin's Chamber Choir premiere a new a cappella work written just for the choir? St. Martin's will premiere Denver composer John White's "The Canonical Hours" in March on its concert "Tenebrae: A Holy Week Cycle". Artistic Director Tim Krueger also plans to record the piece for the ensemble's next CD.

In "The Canonical Hours" Mr. White has set to music medieval poems for the eight Divine Offices of the liturgical day. Producing performing scores for this premiere costs \$10 apiece, and we're asking for your help to defray this expense. To make a special donation and play an important part in introducing this beautiful piece to the world, please send your contribution today with the note "Canonical Hours scores".

Please see *Unknown Masterpiece* on page 3

Unknown Masterpiece from previous page

generously to the Mark Sheldon Fund during its first year. Plans for St. Martin's next CD are already in the works, made possible by your support. Please consider making a contribution to the Mark Sheldon Fund to help us continue Mark's legacy.

Introduce Yourself to the SMCC Audience

Bring new customers to your event or business and help St. Martin's at the same time. St. Martin's Chamber Choir now includes advertising in its concert programs, and we'd love to help you tell our audiences about your business. It's not too late to be part of our March program, so contact the SMCC office (303-298-1970) right away to discuss advertising opportunities.

More Great Ways to Support St. Martin's

- Make a donation by check or credit card
- Check for a charitable gift matching program at work
- Donate your unwanted vehicle
- Tell everyone you know about upcoming concerts
- Request more St. Martin's Chamber Choir music from your radio station and CD store
- Be a volunteer at St. Martin's events

Call today for more information!

St. Martin's Chamber Choir

2015 Glenarm Place
Denver, CO 80205

Phone:

(303) 298-1970

Fax:

(303) 296-6234

E-Mail:

smcchoir@msn.com

Visit us on the Web at:

www.StMartinsChamberChoir.org

Auction of Quilt a Success

Cille Stacer's beautiful quilt "Road to Christmas" was auctioned as a fundraiser at St. Martin's December concerts. The final bid price was \$325.00. Our sincere thanks go to the generous winning bidder, and to everyone who participated in the auction during the concert weekend. We also particularly want to thank Ms. Stacer for her donation of this wonderful item.

To find out more about ordering a quilt custom-made by Cille Stacer you contact her at cilles@mchsi.com.

Email, Anyone?

St. Martin's announcements are now available via email. Find out when the group can be heard on radio, learn about upcoming concerts, and get the inside scoop on coming special events. Just send a quick message to smcchoir@msn.com and we'll add you to our growing email list. Thanks, and we'll see you in cyberspace!

Still to Come in Our 2004-05 Season

Tenebrae: A Holy Week Cycle

Friday March 18, 2005, 7:30 p.m.

St. John's Episcopal Cathedral, Denver

Sunday March 20, 2005, 7:30 p.m.

St. Elizabeth's Church, Denver

From darkness to light; from despair to rejoicing:
Music by Duruflé, Victoria, Purcell, Pergolesi, Schutz,
Wood, and world premieres from Carnahan and
White.

Choral Milestones

Friday June 10, 2005, 7:30 p.m.

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Denver

Sunday June 12, 2005, 7:30 p.m.

St. Elizabeth's Church, Denver

Key works that influenced the history of choral music:

Examples of earliest polyphony; selection from
Machaut *Notre Dame Mass*; Palestrina *Pope Marcellus
Mass*; Allegri *Misereri*; Vaughan Williams *Kyrie* from
Mass in G Minor, and more.

Scarlatti Inspirations

- ⦿ St. Martin's performs a cappella choral works by Alessandro and Domenico Scarlatti
- ⦿ The choir is joined by Boulder pianist Toby Tenenbaum for Domenico Scarlatti's *Missa la Stella*
- ⦿ Mr. Tenenbaum performs his modern sonatas which were inspired by the younger Scarlatti.
- ⦿ Sunday evening's concert is sponsored by Gregory Robbins

Where & When:

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www.StMartinsChamberChoir.org

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

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St. Martin's Chamber Choir
2015 Glenarm Place, Denver, CO 80205
Eleventh Concert Season, 2004-05

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