

The St. Martin's Voice

The Newsletter of St. Martin's Chamber Choir

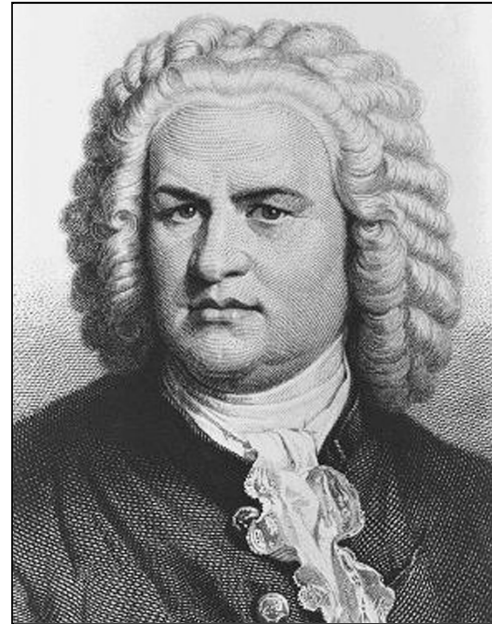
De-constructing Bach

By Timothy J. Krueger, Artistic Director

Many will argue that Bach was the greatest musical composer of the Western world. If this is so, and if the form of the *fugue* is the most complicated musical form there is, then it stands to reason that Bach's fugues represent one of the greatest achievements of mankind.

But what exactly *is* a fugue? And why is it so complicated? And how many different types of fugues are there? And finally, why were Bach's fugues the best?

In celebration of the 325th anniversary of Bach's birth, these questions will be answered at this season's second set of Cameo Concerts. All of the fugues from Bach's six motets, in addition to examples by sons C.P.E. and J.C.F. Bach, will be used to illustrate this most glorious of musical forms. No prior musical knowledge will be necessary, as parts of my presentation will be simple; other parts will hopefully engage the more musically



literate, as well. But even if the words are either below or above you, the music will be, as usual, consummately prepared and executed, and will charm all comers. I look forward to seeing you there, and enlightening you on one of my favorite musical forms.

De-constructing Bach

Friday, February 5th, 7:30 p.m.

Grace Lutheran Church, Boulder

Saturday, February 6th, 7:30 p.m.

Christ's Episcopal Church, Castle Rock

Sunday, February 7th, 4:00 p.m.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Denver

Tickets: \$15 General Admission, \$5 Student

303-298-1970 or www.StMartinsChamberChoir.org

What's Inside?

| | |
|---|---|
| De-constructing Bach | 1 |
| December concerts a triumph | 2 |
| A note from the Executive Director | 2 |
| What are they wearing? | 3 |
| Looking ahead to a March collaboration | 3 |
| Upcoming Feasts of St. Martin | 3 |

December concerts a triumph!

In December St. Martin's and the Baroque Chamber Orchestra of Colorado teamed up for the most successful concerts in either group's history. Over 1,300 concertgoers heard a great program of *noël*-inspired works, ranging from the French Baroque to a special new piece written by a member of the choir. The centerpiece of the concert was Marc-Antoine Charpentier's "*Messe de Minuit pour Noël*", and the program also featured works by Corelli, Aichinger, Sweelinck, our own Micaëla Larsen Brown, and charming arrangements of old French *noëls* by Charpentier.

The Denver Post, in their review titled "*A salient night of holiday music*", called the weekend "*one of the region's most magical holiday traditions.*" The review continued, "*Playing to a sold-out audience, the ensembles were a perfect pairing of artistic sensibility, as well as musical approach and proficiency.*" "*Timothy Krueger, the choir's artistic director, applied his characteristically nuanced technique to the [Charpentier Mass'] distinct shape and sound. Meticulously molding each movement, he drew forth all the joy and mystery of the Mass set to the words of 17th-century French Noël melodies. Of particular pleasure were several polished solos from alto MB Krueger.*" The Post reviewer also noted that "*Another highlight was the beautifully layered "Celebrons la Naissance," composed by choir member Micaëla Larsen Brown.*"

There are already faint murmurs in the air about a future collaboration between St. Martin's and the Baroque Chamber Orchestra, and if firm plans are made, the readers of the St. Martin's Voice will be among the first to know!



A note from the Executive Director

I'm often asked how St. Martin's is faring in these uncertain economic times. Our loyal patrons are concerned, of course, because so much of the news that we hear about the financial climate in the U.S. is downright scary. I'd like to bring you up to date on how the recession is affecting us, and what you can expect from St. Martin's in the future.

First, I'm thrilled to report that our concert attendance has never been higher. For the last several seasons we've consistently seen our audiences grow, and their enthusiasm for our music has grown as well. It has become clear to us that despite the troubling economic news, people have a great desire to gather together to support the music that they love.

In terms of contributed support, our patrons have continued to make generous gifts to St. Martin's. Some families and individuals have prudently scaled back their giving somewhat, but they're still with us, both as concert attendees and as financial supporters. Foundations and public sources of funding have seen their own portfolios' balances suffer. The private foundations have been able to hold the line in their support of groups like St. Martin's, and public entities like the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District and the Colorado Council on the Arts are doing everything they can to continue to support the arts fairly even in the face of their reduced budgets.

So, what does this mean for St. Martin's Chamber Choir? The St. Martin's Board of Directors has been maintaining a conservative budgeting approach, and although we've had to freeze some expenditures, including the compensation of our singers and staff, we will continue to present the high-quality choral programs that you've come to expect from St. Martin's. Our loyal audiences and supporters are truly remarkable, and St. Martin's is definitely here for the long haul.

By Brock Erickson, Executive Director

What are they wearing?

By Timothy J. Krueger

I'm sometimes asked, "What are those black gowns over the singers' clothes?" They are British academic gowns, imported from England. If you've ever seen films with British undergraduates at Oxford or Cambridge (or even Hogwarts!), especially from Victorian or Edwardian times, you have seen them wearing these gowns on campus. Though in modern times they are no longer worn to lectures, they are still worn at ceremonial occasions or college chapel services, and I wore mine to many an event during my 2 years as a post-graduate student in London.

My personal feeling about choral attire is that it should be as un-distracting as possible, allowing the focus of the concert to be where it belongs – on the music. To this end, I decided to make these academic gowns St. Martin's performance attire from our very earliest concerts, marking the scholarly, formal approach to my programming and our concerts, and lending a sense of unity to our "look," while not resorting to tuxedos or identical dresses, which many choral singers find objectionable. The gowns' open fronts allow the singers to make a personal statement with their individual clothes, while nevertheless retaining a look of uniformity for the ensemble as a whole.

Group discounts on SMCC concert tickets

Groups of 10 or more qualify for a 10% discount on the purchase price of tickets. Group rates must be arranged by advance purchase. Call 303-298-1970 or email info@stmartinschamberchoir.org to take advantage of this great opportunity to share the music of St. Martin's Chamber choir with your friends, and get discounted tickets too.

Looking ahead...St. Martin's joins with the Colorado Chorale for special March concerts

On March 19th and 20th St. Martin's will be joined by the Colorado Chorale in a pair of concerts featuring works written for choirs of different sizes. Featured will be a setting of the Mass by Louis Spohr, a contemporary of Beethoven. More information about this exciting collaboration will be available on the SMCC website and in the next issue of "The Voice".

Next Feast of St. Martin combines Bach and Boulder

Following the Friday, February 5th "Deconstructing Bach" concert in Boulder, Feast guests will retire to the Boulder History Museum (just across the street) for champagne, dessert and additional intimate commentary by Tim Krueger. (*Cost: \$40 per person, exclusive of concert ticket*)

Some other great upcoming Feasts:

February 27th: S'Martin's Sense of Snow

Guided snowshoeing trek at Butler Gulch (Arapahoe National Forest) *Cost: \$50 per person*

March 21st: Organ Crawl on Bach's B'day

Celebrate Bach's 325th birthday by touring three historic downtown Denver pipe organs. *Cost: \$60 per person*

For more information about the 2009-10 **Feasts of St. Martin**, call 303-298-1970, e-mail info@StMartinsChamberChoir.org, or visit www.StMartinsChamberChoir.org. Don't forget, you can make your reservations by phone or through the SMCC website!

To receive "The Voice" by email only, send a quick note to info@stmartinschamberchoir.org or call 303-298-1970






St. Martin's Chamber Choir
 2015 Glenarm Place, Denver, CO 80205
Sixteenth Concert Season, 2009-10

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De-constructing Bach

A Cameo Concert

-  St. Martin's Chamber Choir explores the fugues of Bach
-  Twelve SMCC singers illustrate the intricacies of Bach's masterful polyphonic writing
-  Artistic Director Krueger engages our audience in a fascinating conversation about the program

Where & When:

Friday, February 5th, 7:30 p.m.,
 Grace Lutheran Church,
 1001 13th St., Boulder

Saturday, February 6th, 7:30 p.m.
 Christ's Episcopal Church,
 615 4th St., Castle Rock

Sunday, February 7th, 4:00 p.m.,
 St. Andrew's Episcopal Church,
 2015 Glenarm Place, Denver

St. Martin's Chamber Choir' 16th Season is sponsored by:

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