

York County Choral Society and
The Lancaster Chamber Choir

Present

Oct. 1992

Columbus: Dream to Reality

Chorus and Orchestra

Poetry by Foster Provost and Walt Whitman

Music by Jane Walker Wiley

Monday, October 12, 1992

8:00 p.m.

First United Methodist Church
200 West Gay Street, Lancaster, SC



YORK COUNTY CHORAL SOCIETY

David Lowry, Music Director and Conductor

Shirley Fishburne, Accompanist

and the

LANCASTER CHAMBER CHOIR

David Ratchford, Music Director and Conductor

Barbara Paul, Accompanist

Susan Read, soprano

Keith Jones, tenor

William Read, baritone

Members of the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra

Monday, October 12, 1992

8:00 p.m.

First United Methodist Church

Lancaster, S.C.

MUSIC FROM THE 1492 ERA

Viv' el gran Re Don Fernando

Anonymous, c. 1493

Triste España sin ventura

Juan del Encina, c. 1468-1529

Salve, Regina

Martin de Rivafllecha, d. 1528

YCCS Chamber Choir

MUSIC OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Never weather-beaten sail

C. Hubert H. Parry

(Thomas Campion, 1567-1620)

1848-1918

My soul, there is a country

(Henry Vaughan, 1622-1695)

Lancaster Chamber Choir

COLUMBUS: DREAM TO REALITY

Jane Walker Wiley

Prologue - "Dreaming alone of yet uncharted seas"

The Grand Procession - "Fourteen ninety two"

"Night on the Western Sea"

"Blessed be the hour"; Salve Regina

"Ring out, my soul"

Canzona da sonar

Epilogue - "Lo, soul, seest thou not God's purpose?"

Combined Choruses

World premier performances. This work was commissioned by the YCCS for the 500th Anniversary of Columbus' voyage.

COLUMBUS: DREAM TO REALITY

Prologue

Dreaming along of yet uncharted seas
Beyond the western curve,
Where, in the womb of the ocean,
Lay continents undreamed and consequence
Past all imagining:
Dreaming alone, Columbus
Struck forth his vision.
The dream becomes the act: with signal vigor
This first Conquistador
Ripped from the western sea the riotous wealth
And squalor of the future centuries
And showed, in his myopic prescience,
The shape of our modern world.
(*Columbus Dream and Act, Foster Provost*)

II

Fourteen ninety-two:
On the feast day of Epiphany
A grand procession, coming from Granada,
Wound through the rocky plain
Toward the siege fortress of Santa Fe.
A splendid silhouette
Against the snowy peaks of the Sierra,
The riders bobbed along unhurriedly,
The King and Queen in front
And, just behind, the Cardinal of Spain,
Scarlet upon a milky Arabian horse.
The Spanish warriors rode in polished armor,
The priests in surplices and crimson stoles,
Or more reserved and solemn cloaks of black.
In the rear strode veteran Spanish men-at-arms,
Pikes at the trail, encased in sparkling steel.
The marchers sang "Te Deum" as they walked,
And the mountains echoed with the song of peace.
(*Columbus Dream and Act, Foster Provost*)

Te Deum laudamus, Te Deum laudamus,
Te Dominum, Dominum confitemur.
Te aeternam Patrem omnis terra veneratur.
Tibi caeli Angeli tibi caeli et universae potestatis.
Tibi cherubim et Seraphim incessabili voce
proclamant.
Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus
Deus, Deus sabaoth.
Pleni sunt caeli et terra majestatis
Gloria, e Gloriam Tuam
(*Ambrosian Hymn*)

In Santa Fe the Queen
Huddled with Ferdinand, summoned Columbus,
And planned an audience in thoughts, like these:
"At last, this dreadful Moorish war is through,
And I return to the subject in my heart,
The bearing of the Cross to distant lands
Beyond the western sea.
Be now rewarded, Man of Enterprise!
"My scholarly advice from Salamanca
Rejects as fanciful the supposition
That India lies so close:
Columbus fools himself, these men insist,
And may they not be right?
No matter!
Ferdinand is reluctant,
But, large of soul, does not oppose my will;
The fleet shall sail with rigorous dispatch,
Delayed no longer than the preparation of the ships
requires
And the phrasing of Columbus's commission.
Sail then, Columbus, man of destiny,
And summer zephyrs breathe you to harbors deep!"
(*Columbus Dream and Act, Foster Provost*)

Night on the western sea!
 Across the sky, the fleets of summer stars
 Sail on, and under the caravels,
 Reflected in the
 troughs between the waves,
 The constellations sparkle:
 As though the limpid sea were bottomless
 And one could sight the stars right through the
 world
 In the sky on the other side.

The sweet salt breeze
 Blows steadily from the east,
 Billowing the canvas full upon the yards
 And whistling in the rigging.
 The Nina and the Pinta splash ahead,
 Each wake a trail of light.
 Thus for an hour past dark. Then, to the stern –
 Another path of light, bobbing and dancing,
 Leads to the ships from a mammoth orange moon
 Allowing the observers on the Pinta
 To see the Santa Maria in silhouette
 Full canvassed on the disc of the rising moon.
 (*Columbus Dream and Act, Foster Provost*)

IV

Blessed be the hour when God was born
 Saint Mary who bore Him
 Saint John who baptized Him.
 The watch is called,
 the glass floweth;
 we shall make good voyage
 if God willeth.

To our God let's pray
 To give us a good voyage,
 And through the Blessed Mother,
 Our advocate on high,
 Protect us from the waterspout
 And send no tempest nigh.

(*Columbus' logs*)

Salve Regina

Salve Regina Mater Misericordiae,
 Vita, Dulcedo, et spes nostra salve.
 Ad Te clamamus exsules Filii Evae.
 Ad Te suspiramus Gementes et flentes
 In hac lacrimarum valle.
 Eia ergo Advocata nostra,
 illos tuos Misericordes oculos ad nos converte.
 Et Jesum Benedictum fructum ventris tui,
 Nobis post hoc exsilium ostende.
 O clemens, O Pia, O Dulcis Virgo Maria.
 (*Marian Antiphon*)

VI

Ring out, my soul
 And celebrate fulfillment, O my spirit!
 For on this morning, on the grey horizon,
 There loomed an island fringed with leaning palms
 Which in the growing light
 Were interspersed with many flowering trees
 Of gold and scarlet blossom,
 And all surrounded by a sparkling beach
 On which the gentle breakers splash and gurgle.

The air is like Castile in early April;
 The blossoming trees have a delicate aroma
 Suggesting Paradise.
 Little grey birds with white on tail and wing
 Sing like so many Spanish nightingales;
 And near the shore I saw a single native
 Eyeing us awestruck, as if the gods themselves

Had sailed into his bay.
 "Rejoice, my men, your long ordeal is over,
 And though we shall not taste the sherry wine
 Until we take possession of the island,
 Still, you shall celebrate
 My spirit's triumph when the hour is right.

The beauty of this land
Surpasses anything the poets dream
And write of in their gardens of delight.
A new Castile of harmony and peace!
Ring out, my soul,
And celebrate fulfillment, O my spirit.
O dream of concord!"
(*Columbus Dream and Act, Foster Provost*)

VII

Epilogue

Lo, soul, seest thou not God's
purpose from the first?
The earth to be spann'd,
connected by network,
The races, neighbors to marry and
be given in marriage,
The oceans to be cross'd, the
distant brought near,
The lands to be welded together.
Ah Genoese thy dream! thy dream!
Centuries after thou art laid
in thy grave,

The shore thou foundest
verifies thy dream.

(*Passage to India, Walt Whitman*)

*Foster Provost, 1986, excerpts from Columbus:
Dream and Act, John Carter Brown Library,
Providence, RI. Reprinted with permission. All rights
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COMPOSER'S NOTES

After months of creative work (the fun part) and a lot of production work (the not so fun part), the moment of truth has arrived. It will be up to history to decide if it has all been worth it! One of the joys of composing a piece such as this is the direction it takes during rehearsals and in actual performance. What may have been in my mind a year ago, may not necessarily be what you hear today. "Columbus" has taken on a life of its own, brought about by the participation of many other creative artists. The performance you will hear is truly a collaborative effort; a shared artwork.

The poetry was selected from a variety of sources, though the bulk of the libretto is a setting of Columbus Dream and Act by Foster Provost. Mixed with it are liturgical works, Te Deum laudamus and one of the Marian antiphons, Salve Regina. Further, I incorporated excerpts from the logs of the voyage as well as a small section of Walt Whitman's Passage to India. The work begins and ends with a Prologue and Epilogue which alludes to the idea that Columbus' "nearsighted vision" led to the "shape of our modern world." History tells us that Columbus was looking for riches, not a new continent. Whitman sums it up by asserting that the connecting of lands and peoples was "God's purpose from the first" and that the "shore thou foundest verifies thy dream." Even if he didn't really dream about finding a new world, a point can be made that Columbus may have been the vehicle for discovery. It is a fact that today we are a global community.

The inner movements include "The Grand Procession", "Night on the Western Sea" and "Ring Out My Soul" as well as the liturgical works. The piece immediately preceding the Epilogue is a work for organ, "Canzona da sonar." The Provost poetry is quite descriptive and lends itself very well to musical settings. Specifically, "Night on the Western Sea" conjures up wonderful images of reflections in the "troughs between the waves," the "limpid sea" and the paths of "light, bobbing and dancing." The whole tone scale and the augmented chords derived from that scale and identified with the French Impressionist composers of the late 19th century, seemed a logical

way of setting the images to music. You will also hear specific Spanish musical ideas such as the Andalusian Scale in which the 2nd, 3rd, 6th and 7th scale degrees are interchangeably major or minor and the use of a "habanera" rhythm as an accompaniment figure.

The opening notes of the Prologue state the "David" motive which recurs throughout the work. The motive begins and ends on the same note (letter), as in the name David. It is the musical material for the "Canzona" which was composed for David Lowry. The model in music history for deriving or carving out a subject from words is called "soggetto cavato" and was first employed by Josquin in his mass dedicated to Hercules, Duke of Ferrara (d. 1505). The composer used the six (at that time) solmization syllables (ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la) and assigned specific vowels which yielded the pitches dcdcdfd.

"Salve Regina" (Hail Queen) is one of the four antiphons for the Blessed Virgin Mary. From the 15th and 16th centuries especially, various composers used text and/or melody as the basis for vocal pieces. I have used the complete text and approximately six measures of the chant pitches. The music in the plainchant was set in free rhythm, not measured. I took the pitches and superimposed my own rhythms on those pitches to create this piece. The "Te Deum laudamus" (We praise thee O, God) is often attributed to St. Ambrose. Composers have set this text for choral and orchestral works, particularly to celebrate festive occasions from the Peace of Utrecht in 1713 to the coronation of Elizabeth II in 1953. I used only excerpts of the text for my setting.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those persons and organizations who have helped me produce this work. If I have inadvertently left someone out, I apologize... my mind and my creative self have gone on vacation. Thank you from the bottom of my heart Audrey and Bill Walker, Joni Canupp, Martha Cowan, Mike Falter, Bob Lindberg, Mary Martin, Lynn Moran, Frances Murphree, Beverly Russell, Margaret Ann Tice, and David Wiley. I also thank the Board of Directors and staff of the Lancaster County Council of the Arts for their patience, support and encouragement throughout this process.

YCCS SINGING MEMBERS

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(*denotes member of YCCS Chamber Choir)

LANCASTER CHAMBER CHOIR MEMBERS

Soprano - Jean King, Kim Lance, Elaine Reese, Faye Skipper, Mary Etta Taylor

Alto - Jane Ballentine, Deborah Cureton, Marita Eden, Feliste Ellis, Helen Threat, Barbara Watkins

Tenor - Charles Clark, Harvey Eden, Joe Mangan, Don Reese

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ORCHESTRA

Jane Snyder, violin
Martha Geissler, violin
Jan Dougherty, viola
John Cloer, violoncello
Joni Canupp, flute
Hollis Ulaky, oboe
Phil Thompson, clarinet

Hillary Yost, bassoon
Robert Blalock, horn
David Dougherty, trumpet
Stacy Mills, trumpet
Martin Hughes, trombone
Michael Williams, percussion
David Ratchford, organ

NOTES ON THE MUSIC

The three early works from around 1492 introduce this program to give something of a flavor of the choral music of Columbus' time. The corpus of Spanish choral music of this time seems limited if we compare the amount of the literature to the collections of Italian, French and English music of the same time. It is interesting to note that an important source of late 15th C. Spanish music stems from a library collection owned by Christopher Columbus' son.

In the first piece (*Viv' el gran Re*) one must reflect on Granada, the last bastion of Moorish civilization which had flourished in Spain for seven centuries. King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, in their fierce Christian zeal, waged holy war to vanquish this last infidel stronghold on Spanish soil.

The second piece is by Juan del Encina, a Salamanca who wrote much music, and all of it secular. The occasion of Isabella's death doubtless causes its unusual mixture of sadness, tenderness and austerity.

The strong and spirited *frottola* in the Italian repertory is in praise of Ferdinand and Isabella's triumph.

The last is a setting of the liturgical text, one of four antiphons in honor of the Blessed Virgin. We find in Columbus' diaries that the sailors sang the chant version of the Salve, Regina in their daily religious devotions on the Niña, Pinta and Santa Maria. This setting, alternating between the chant and four-part choral setting, gives us a strong feeling of the music of the church in Columbus' day.

The works by Charles Hubert Hastings Parry, settings of 17th-century texts reflecting the broadness of the nature in which we exist, are in an English style of music which we associate with romantic idioms championed by Edward Elgar. Parry, well-known for his magnificent anthem "I was glad when they said unto me," and revered by all of England for his hymn tune *Jerusalem*, casts these texts in vocal sonorities of exquisite sensitivity.

The insert to this program contains the complete text of the cantata *Columbus: Dream to Reality*, with notes on the work by the composer.

The York County Choral Society is indebted to Dr. Wiley for her enthusiasm in accepting the commission and bringing the work to its completion with unflagging vigor, humor and commitment. The YCCS is also indebted to the cooperation and interest of David Ratchford and the Lancaster Chamber Choir for honoring Dr. Wiley with the participation of the neighboring counties in which Dr. Wiley offers much in the way of leadership in the arts.

As always, our continued indebtedness to the staff of Oakland Baptist Church for their support and enthusiasm, and to First United Methodist Church of Lancaster for its cooperation in realizing a second performance.

notes by David Lowry

ABOUT THE SOLOISTS

Soprano Susan Eichelberger Read has a wide range of experience in concert, oratorio, and opera. Her many professional appearances include being soloist with the Atlanta Symphony conducted by Robert Shaw, leading roles with the Israel National Opera, and scores of the great oratorios. Since becoming a resident of Rock Hill in 1991, she has assisted in all aspects of the music program at Oakland Avenue Presbyterian Church and has opened a private studio in voice and piano.

Tenor Keith Jones has sung extensively in the Midwest in opera, in oratorio, and in recital. Recently appointed Director of Choral Activities and Head of Vocal Studies at Newberry College, he directs the two touring choirs and teaches voice and conducting. He is a candidate for the Doctor of Music degree at Indiana University.

Baritone William Read is Director of Music at Oakland Avenue Presbyterian Church in Rock Hill where he oversees the work of five choirs and four bell choirs. As a soloist his experience includes major roles in operas in such houses as the Metropolitan Opera and the Israel National Opera. In oratorio and concerts his appearances have included performances in major houses in New York and Washington. He is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music with bachelor's and master's degrees in voice and holds the Performer's Certificate in Opera and Voice.

All three soloists make their first appearances with the YCCS in these concerts. It is a genuine pleasure to welcome them to South Carolina.

LANCASTER CHAMBER CHOIR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Appreciation is expressed to the following organizations for assisting with the performance today: First United Methodist Church, Horton Adams Graphics and Advertising, Lancaster County Council of the Arts, and the Lancaster County Library.

This event is partially funded by the South Carolina Arts Commission, Southern Arts Federation and the National Endowment for the Arts.

*Christmas
with the
Lancaster Chamber Choir*

Sunday, December 13

3:00 p.m.

First United Methodist Church
Lancaster, S.C.

John Rutter "Gloria" and familiar Christmas carols
with

Palmetto Brass of Columbia

TICKETS AVAILABLE AFTER CONCERT

Adults: \$8 in advance/\$10 at the door

Seniors & Students: \$6 in advance/\$8 at the door

Children under 12: Free accompanied by adult

Portion of proceeds go to Hospice of Lancaster