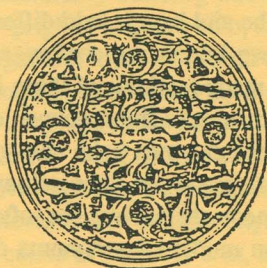


Pittsburg Centennial Choir  
Pittsburg State University Chamber Choir

Susan Marchant, director

*The Early Music Consort*



November 1, 1992  
3:00 p.m.

McCray Recital Hall  
Pittsburg State University



## PROGRAM NOTES

Perhaps the most striking difference between hearing music played on period rather than on modern instruments is that of pitch. Instruments of the Baroque era were built to play at A415 (or often even lower), rather than A440--the effect on twentieth-century ears being that the music sounds (at least) one half-step lower (i.e., a written B would sound like a B-flat).

There are also differences between the instruments and their modern counterparts, of course. The string instruments have arguably changed the least, although various members of the string family have virtually disappeared from contemporary use (the viols, for example), as have members of other instrument families. Happily, the resurgence of interest in early music is bringing such long-neglected instruments as theorbos, crumhorns, shawms, sackbuts, and citterns to the attention of audiences again.

Baroque string instruments are generally built slightly smaller and have shorter necks than their modern siblings. Rather than metal strings, they are strung with gut, which gives a rounder, less piercing quality. The bows, too, are shaped slightly differently, which also affects the sound. These instruments are without chin rests, and the cello is without an end pin, so that it is held between the player's knees without resting on the floor. The viols are also held between the knees. They differ slightly from the violin family in their construction and tuning, and the viol bow is held differently, with the palm up.

The early woodwinds have their own interesting challenges. The flutes, oboes, bassoons, etc., usually have no more than three keys, if that many (and one of those is likely to be a duplicate key), so that the player receives no aid from the horn in chromatic lines, octave leaps, and like passages. Because the holes are covered only with the fingers, the player needs to be able to manipulate such techniques as half-hole fingering, cross-fingering, etc. Higher registers are often achieved by overblowing, in itself a rather hazardous undertaking! However, the instruments themselves are softer and sweeter, and generally take less endurance (because of the larger bore) than modern instruments designed to cut through a 100-piece orchestra.

Baroque ensembles themselves, to the listener acquainted with the vast orchestras and choirs of Beethoven and Wagner, are usually surprisingly small. The average number of voices in a choir would be around twenty, and (in sacred music especially) would consist only of men and boys, although by this period women were beginning to be used occasionally as soloists. The orchestras, often private ensembles attached to the court of a nobleman, were also about that size--it would not be unusual to have one player per part. There is some evidence that Handel, at least, enjoyed working with massed forces on the rare occasions they were available, but orchestras did not begin to swell to their present enormous sizes until the end of the Classical era.

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Vivaldi's impressive setting of Psalm 112, *Beatus vir*, is in the tradition of the great cathedral services of St. Mark's, Venice, where composers used its opposing balconies to great effect in writing for



multiple choirs and orchestras to fill the vast, resonant space with a ringing wash of sound. Vivaldi's father was one of the excellent violinists of the St. Mark's orchestra, and Vivaldi knew from experience the thrilling effects that could be achieved in such writing. Although in this work the two groups are frequently used in dialogue, Vivaldi produces coloristic and textural effects by also combining them into majestic unison statements, or by having only a small chorus sing at the most tender moments. Adding oboes to the first orchestra, but not the second, further heightens the antiphonal effect.

The opening chorus, *Beatus vir*, opens with sharply dotted rhythms and sweeping gestures, but becomes placid and serenely confident with the entry of the choir, while the orchestra subsides to a murmur, surging briefly upward again at the conclusion of the movement. The opening theme of this movement becomes an antiphon which creates unity by being repeated between many of the verses of the psalm. In the powerful bass duet, *Potens in terra*, the singers alternate between canon and unison, with their respective orchestras accompanying them in unison, creating a stark and biting effect. By contrast, the soprano duet, *Gloria et divitiae*, is lilting and vivacious, the second soprano and orchestra being treated purely as an echo. Obviously inspired by the text, the writing of the following chorus, *Exortum est*, rises in long, arching lines, with the intensity slowly but inexorably building into a great outpouring at the lines proclaiming mercy and compassion. In the short, sprightly soprano solo, *Jucundus homo*, the obbligato line is given to the organ, a somewhat surprising assignment in an orchestral context. There follows a movement of great poignancy, *In memoria aeterna*, its beautiful lines achieving a dark richness by using only the lower voices. A vigorous triple meter surges forth exuberantly in the next chorus, *Paratum cor eius*, ending in lively imitative writing. The tenor aria, *Peccator videbit*, uses fiercely driving lines to portray the anger of the evil man, with orchestral tremolos providing savage asides. Calm assurance is restored in the *Gloria Patri*. Once again, the orchestra opens the movement in overture style, but subsides deferentially as the sopranos intone the opening lines. The chorus enters at the *Sicut erat*, and the orchestra supports them with a return of the overture, sweeping the momentum into an exuberant fugue.

Kathryn Parke



**Beatus vir (Psalm 112)**

*Chorus*

Blessed is the man who fears the Lord,  
who delights in his commandments.

*Duet*

His seed shall be mighty upon the earth;  
the generation of the righteous shall be blessed.     *Antiphon.*

*Duet*

Glory and prosperity shall be in his house;  
and his justice endures from generation to generation.     *Antiphon.*

*Chorus*

A light has risen in the darkness for the upright:  
one who is merciful, compassionate, and just.

*Solo*

Happy is the man who sympathizes and shares,  
who chooses his words with discretion:  
because he will not be troubled for eternity.     *Antiphon.*

*Chorus*

The just man shall be in everlasting remembrance;  
he shall not fear evil tidings.     *Antiphon.*

*Chorus*

His heart is ready to hope in the Lord.  
His heart is strengthened;  
he shall not be shaken until he looks down upon his enemies.  
He disperses, he gives to the poor;  
his justice endures from generation to generation.  
His horn shall be exalted with honor.

*Solo*

The wicked man will see, and be angered;  
he will gnash his teeth, and waste away.  
The desire of the wicked shall perish.     *Antiphon.*

*Chorus*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Ghost.  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen.



## PROGRAM

Beatus vir (Psalm 112)  
chorus, *Beatus vir*  
duet, *Potens in terra*  
duet, *Gloria et divitiae*  
chorus, *Exortum est*  
solo, *Jucundus homo*  
chorus, *In memoria*  
chorus, *Paratum cor eius*  
solo, *Peccator videbit*  
chorus, *Gloria Patri*

Antonio Vivaldi  
(1678-1741)

Kathryn Parke, soprano    Katherine Kelton, soprano  
Paul Huybrechts, bass    Paul Walrod, bass  
William Vance, tenor

## INTERMISSION

Concerto No.2  
for recorder and strings  
Allegro  
Adagio  
Presto

John Baston  
(fl. 1711-1733)

John Titterington, recorder

Orchestral Suite No.1 in C major, BWV 1066

Johann Sebastian Bach  
(1685-1750)

Overture  
Courante  
Gavotte I, II  
Forlane  
Menuet I, II  
Bourée I, II  
Passepied I, II



## CHOIR PERSONNEL

Leota Anthony  
Melissa Belk  
Michael Brandel  
Jancil Bryan  
Jim Burden  
Reyna Burris  
Melford Butler  
Mary Cash  
David Dalby  
Alicia Davis  
Jennifer Davis  
Barbara Diskin  
Sheryl Eaton  
Sally Eckles  
Joann Ellegood  
Beth England  
Beth Freholm  
Bryan Ganer  
John Gladson  
Edward Good

Colette Hardesty  
Jonee Hardesty  
Jo Ann Hollenbeck  
Rachel Hunley  
Paul Huybrechts  
Linda Jackson  
Susan Johns  
Katherine Kelton  
Ken King  
Henry Kost  
Ruth Kost  
David Lane  
Kelli Lantis  
Susan Laushman  
Shannan Mathes  
Norma McCaslin  
Mary Ott  
Jack Overman  
Kathryn Parke  
Sarah Pearman

Ellen Pennekamp  
Claude Reno  
Robert Reno  
Donna Salsbury  
Karen Shepherd  
Angela Shoup  
Kenneth Smith  
Herndon Snider  
Ruth Snider  
Pete Stuckey  
Ruth Ann Stuckey  
Anita Tally  
Katie Trickey  
Jo Ann Triplet  
William Vance  
Nancey Wade  
Paul Walrod  
Barbara Whitten  
Mark Young

Rehearsal accompanist: Lori Kehle

## CONSORT PERSONNEL

Evelyn Grau, violin  
Beth Titterington, violin  
Paul Carlson, violin  
John Rozendaal, cello  
Susan Brashier, oboe  
Robert Jenkins, harpsichord

Susan Marchant, organ & harpsichord

Michael Kimber, violin & viola  
Cora Cooper, violin  
Nancy Yagiela, viola  
Peter Spring, violone  
Sara Funkhouser, oboe  
John Titterington, bassoon & recorder



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