

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2022 – 7:30 PM

Trinity Episcopal Church, Newtown, CT

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2022 – 3:00 PM

North Church, Woodbury, CT

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2022 – 3:00 PM

Valley Presbyterian Church, Brookfield, CT

40th Anniversary Concert

VIVALDI, BACH & HANDEL

Choirs and Singers from across Connecticut are invited to sing Vivaldi's GLORIA as we celebrate the Connecticut Choral Society's 40th Anniversary. OUR VOICES UNITED offers a festival performance of Vivaldi's joyful *Gloria* with a diverse company of singers. Great music will resound as we come together in one voice.

Yevgenia Strenger, violin

Sander Strenger, violin

Kristen Plumley, soprano

www.kristenplumley.com

Jessica Grigg, mezzo-soprano

www.jessicagrigg.com

Linda Sweetman-Waters, organ

Max Vladimiroff, harpsichord

ORCHESTRANEXUS

Connecticut Choral Society Festival Chorus

Eric Dale Knapp, conductor

PROGRAM

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH CONCERTO NO. 3 IN D MINOR, BWV 1043

1685-1750 for Two Violins, Strings, and Continuo

Vivace in D minor

Largo ma non tanto in F major

Allegro

ANTONIO VIVALDI GLORIA IN D MAJOR, RV 589

1678-1741 Gloria in excelsis

Et in terra pax

Laudamus te

Soprano 1 and 2

Gratias agimus tibi

Propter magnam gloriam tuam

Domine Deus

Soprano

Domine fili unigenite

Domine Deus, agnus Dei

Mezzo-soprano and chorus

Qui tollis

Qui sedes

Mezzo-soprano

Quoniam tu solus sanctus

Cum sancto spiritu

G. F. HANDEL HALLELUJAH from MESSIAH, HWV 56

1685-1759

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Born: March 21, 1685. Eisenach, Thuringia

Died: July 28, 1750. Leipzig, Saxony

Concerto No. 3 in D minor for Two Violins, Strings, and Continuo

Composed and premiered around 1720. Bach may have been one of the soloists in its first performance

Bach left two concertos for solo violin and several in which he combines the violin with various solo instruments. (It is likely that he wrote concertos for solo violin other than the famous pair in A minor and E major; although those other concertos don't survive, they can convincingly be reconstructed from the concertos for solo harpsichord, all of which are presumed to be transcriptions rather than original compositions.) The concerto we hear this evening is Bach's only one for two violins. It is a work of remarkably expressive intensity. The themes are full of character, full of irregularities, and they are presented with tremendous urgency. Right at the beginning, for example, the accompaniment of the violas and the bass group is in itself startlingly elaborate. The appearances of the explosive opening theme are the structural beams that support the inventive rush of activity in the brief first movement. The second movement is, by contrast, gloriously expansive, though Bach cautions that the Largo must not be too broad. As Bach's serenely broad-spanned melody unfolds, the two violins support each other, compete in noble eloquence, spur each other on, make imitations that in all courtesy insist on individual views of phrasing, and speak precisely together only in the final cadence. The orchestra is reticent in this elegantly wrought star turn, but its few moments of soft emergence—some sighs from the first violins, two passages of sustained chords—reward attentive listening. The finale returns in heightened form to the impassioned, almost brusque motion of the first movement. Even the downward-hurling last phrase is far from being just a formal closure. It is, by the way, Violin II that begins the first and second movement, Violin I asserting its primacy by coming in on a higher pitch. — Michael Steinberg

ANTONIO VIVALDI

Born: March 4, 1678, Venice, Italy

Died: July 28, 1741, Vienna, Austria

Gloria RV 589

When the modern-day Vivaldi revival began early in the twentieth century, attention focused mainly on the composer's concertos. Those were particularly interesting to scholars and musicians because of their influence on J. S. Bach. But then, in the late 1920's their view of Vivaldi changed, when a large collection of his vocal music was discovered in Turin. Suddenly, he was much more than a composer of violin concertos. The *Gloria*, part of that Turin collection, received its twentieth-century premiere in 1930 and has remained the most popular of all Vivaldi's vocal works ever since.

In addition to concertos, Vivaldi was asked to write a good deal of religious music for the accomplished musicians at the Ospedale della Pietà, the girls' orphanage in Venice where he served as music director. In all likelihood, the present *Gloria*, in which all the vocal solos are for female voices, was written for the girls at the school. It is a setting of a single section of a mass, but it is almost certainly a complete work and not a fragment, since it was not uncommon to write individual mass movements for specific occasions.

The orchestration, which may have been inspired by the roster of students at the school, calls for relatively limited forces -- only a single oboe and a single trumpet (with no timpani) are added to the strings -- and there are only three vocal soloists. The work opens with the kind of strong motoric rhythm that is reminiscent of Vivaldi's concertos but then shifts into the beautiful harmonic world of the *Et in terra pax*, a movement that wanders meditatively through unexpected keys.

The closing fugue (*Cum sancto spiritu*) is in a more conservative style than the rest of the work and is in fact not originally by Vivaldi. He "borrowed" it from a work by a contemporary, Giovanni Maria Ruggieri. Here Vivaldi has considerably improved the original, altering the orchestration, giving a greater role to the trumpet, and condensing Ruggieri's double chorus to a single four-voice chorus. The Ruggieri fugue may be an unexpected choice for the ending of this work, but Vivaldi seems to have been so impressed with it that this was the second time that he used it. The first was a rather different adaptation in one of his earlier works, which was also a setting of the *Gloria*. — Martin Pearlman

TEXT & TRANSLATION

Chorus

Gloria in excelsis Deo;

Glory to God on high;

Chorus

Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.

And on earth peace, good will toward men.

Sopranos 1 and 2

Laudamus te, benedicimus te,
adoramus te, glorificamus te.

We praise thee, we bless thee,
we worship thee, we glorify thee.

Chorus

Gratias agimus tibi
propter magnam gloriam tuam.

We give thanks to thee
for thy great glory.

Soprano 1

Domine Deus, rex coelestis,
Deus pater omnipotens;

Lord God, heavenly king,
God the father almighty;

Chorus

Domine fili unigenite, Jesu Christe;

Lord, the only begotten son, Jesus Christ;

Alto and chorus

Domine Deus, agnus Dei, filius patris,
Rex coelestis, Domine Fili unigenite,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.

Lord God, lamb of God, son of the father,
heavenly king, only begotten son,
thou who takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.

Chorus

Qui tollis peccata mundi,
suscipe deprecationem nostram.

Thou who takest away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.

Alto

Qui sedes ad dexteram patris,
miserere nobis.

Thou who sittest at the right hand of
the father, have mercy upon us.

Chorus

Quoniam tu solus sanctus,
tu solus Dominus,
tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe.

For thou alone art holy,
thou alone art the Lord,
thou alone are most high, Jesus Christ.

Chorus

Cum sancto spiritu,
in gloria Dei patris.
Amen.

With the holy spirit,
in the glory of God the father.
Amen.
