

# The Full Score



## Messiah - The First Performance

### Inside this issue:

Soloists: Holmes, Davies, Berry, and Plaster	2
Jerry Boots, Trumpet	2
Chorale Member Duos	3
Twenty Years with the Master Chorale Notes from the Board	4

*Cuesta  
Master Chorale*  
Breathing vitality into the  
Music of the Masters

Don't Forget !

- Christmas Concert  
Handel's *Messiah*  
December 20
- Spring Concert  
Verdi's *Requiem*  
May 15

by Larry Bolef

In the spring of 1741 Handel's friends were worried. The great composer's first love, Italian opera, had been firmly rejected by the English public. At 56 he suffered from rheumatism, insomnia, depression and intermittent paralysis, perhaps from stroke. Rumor had it that he planned to return to his native Germany.

Among those worried was one Charles Jennens, a wealthy, eccentric, literary scholar educated at Balliol College, Oxford. Jennens had already supplied texts for several of Handel's biblical oratorios. On July 10, Jennens wrote, "...Handel says he will do nothing next winter, but I hope I shall

perswade him to set another Scripture Collection I have made for him, & perform it for his own Benefit in Passion week. I



hope he will lay out his whole Genius & Skill on it, that the Composition may excell all his former Compositions, as the Subject

excells every other Subject. The Subject is Messiah..."

Though Jennens selected his texts with exquisite care, Handel was a practical man of the theatre who composed only for a specific performance. The libretto of *Messiah* might have been quickly forgotten if not for a timely invitation from an obscure English aristocrat named William Cavendish who then served as the Lord Lieutenant (governor) of Ireland. One of Cavendish's official duties was to raise money for the local Dublin charities. In late summer 1741 he sent Handel an official invitation to give a series of charity concerts.

(Continued on page 3)

## Getting a Handle on Handel

by Lydia Marzano

Handel was born in Germany in 1685 and his father intended for him to study the law. George started practicing his music in secret until his father finally allowed

him to study organ at the age of 8. By the age of 18, he was a professional musician. By 1712 he had taken up permanent residence in London, where, though he did create music for the church and the court,

opera remained his central interest. Altogether, he completed 46 operas, 32 oratorios, more than 100 large vocal works, numerous dramatic pieces, and many, many solo instrumental and

(Continued on page 2)

## *Messiah* Soloists by Don Aronson

### **Lyric Soprano, Janet Holmes**

Janet Holmes is a highly regarded vocalist, pianist and organist. Since moving to San Francisco in 1985, she has been active in recital and oratorio performances. She was selected as one of two American vocalists to work with Frederica von Stade at the Oregon Bach Festival where she performed as a professional chorister under Helmut Rilling. Ms. Holmes maintains her own vocal studio in San Ramon and is the organist for First Presbyterian Church in Livermore, California.

### **Alto, Susan Azaret Davies**

Susan accompanies the Cuesta Master Chorale during their rehearsals with her husband, Dr. Tom Davies. She performs regularly, giving solo recitals and chamber music concerts. In addition she has sung with various vo-



cal festivals and often sings the alto solos in presentations by the Cuesta Master Chorale

### **Tenor, Daniel Plaster**

Daniel Plaster has soloed with many choral groups including the Santa Cruz Chorale, Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra and the Mozart Festival Chorus.

### **Bass-Baritone, Cedric Berry**

Cedric Berry recently amazed local audiences in his portrayal of Mephistopheles in the opera *Faust* produced by Pacific Repertory Opera. He has sung with the Los Angeles Opera since 1995 and has appeared with other California opera companies, symphonies and choral groups. He was the first place winner of the 1998 Metropolitan Opera regional competition.



## **His Trumpet Shall Sound** by Don Aronson

When asked how many times he has played this work, Jerry Boots, principal trumpet with the San Luis Obispo Symphony since 1978, answers, "The Hallelujah Chorus' many, many times, the abbreviated work many times, but the entire work—only a few times." The entire work takes about 2½ hours to perform and in that time frame there are only 15 minutes of trumpet playing, but those 15 minutes really showcase the trumpet and require many hours of practicing on a daily



basis. Baroque style music requires a special trumpet that is in a high range and can handle trills. For that reason, Jerry will be playing a special piccolo trumpet.

So when Jerry Boots raises his horn for "The Hallelujah Chorus," "The Trumpet Shall Sound," and the grand finale, "Worthy is the Lamb," he may not "raise the dead" but he will certainly "raise the roof"—and our appreciation of this great instrument.

**Beethoven once said,  
"Handel is the greatest  
composer who ever  
lived. I would bare my  
head and kneel at his  
grave."**

## **Getting a Handle on Handel** continued from page 1

orchestral compositions.

Handel was the first real businessman in the music world. He organized opera companies and obtained financial support. He was also a central figure in London society, entertaining guests at parties and being constantly in demand. Unlike many other composers, Handel was appreciated in his own lifetime.

Toward the end of his life, Handel was in ill health,

losing his sight at age 68. Despite being blind, Handel still gave concerts at the organ and conducted performances of his oratorios almost to his last days. He died in 1759 at the age of 74 and was buried in Westminster Abbey. Over his grave is a statue by Roubiliac, which portrays Handel in front of his work table. On the table are his quills and the score of *Messiah* open at the passage: "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

## Chorale Couples—“Old” and New *by Jeanne Potter*

*How many singing couples do you know? In Master Chorale, we have at least nine married couples with both spouses active in the group. When you think about it, it makes perfect sense that life partners do share one of their deepest, most emotional and romantic activities. In this issue, The Full Score takes a look at one of Master Chorale's most seasoned pairs and one of its newest duos.*

### Doug Williams and Madelyn Bedig-Williams



They both sing inside parts and they always sit within hearing range of one

another at rehearsals. If you want to know anything about the early days of Master Chorale just ask Doug or Madelyn—both were there at the group's inception in 1984. They haven't missed a season since and their collective memory accurately recalls the high points as well as the missed notes along the way.

Madelyn loves to cook, bake and entertain. Through her culinary skills and knack for organization, she's earned the title of Master Chorale's own Cookie Lady

In addition to teaching at Cal Poly, Doug travels the world on consulting projects with his firm, Williams Engineering. Doug's renewable energy devices powered by methane gas from cow manure and surplus tomatoes, among other things, have earned him the dubious nickname, Dr. Doodoo.

Knowledgeable, helpful, committed, and faithful, Doug and Madelyn bring the staying power of their own relationship to the Master Chorale and represent the heart of the group's long-term success.

### Debora Schwartz and Larry Bolef



What do a professor of medieval literature and a computer software tester have in common? More than you might think!

Their partnership began with a well-written personals ad in the Tempe, Arizona, newspaper. He wrote it; she responded to a guy looking for someone to share his love of music, the arts, foreign films, and spicy food (not to mention dark chocolate and reading in bed!).

Debora's position with the Cal Poly English Department brought them to the Central Coast in 1995. Daughter Miranda was born shortly before the move and little sister, Nadia, joined the family two years ago. With the move to San Luis Obispo, Larry completed his master's degree in computer science at Cal Poly in 1999 and now is employed as a software tester for TrueLink, a local developer of Internet-based credit products.

It's a pleasure to have this new duo join us for this season's performance of *Messiah*.

## *Messiah*—The First Performance *continued from page 1*

This was a high honor, and Handel was galvanized by the prospect of a fresh audience far from jaded London. He collected his latest secular pieces and decided to add a sacred oratorio. He dug out Jennens' libretto on August 22. Twenty-four days later, on September 14, *Messiah* was complete.

*Messiah's* turn came on April 13, 1742. The Dublin Journal reported:

"On Tuesday last Mr. Handel's Sacred Grand Oratorio, the MESSIAH, was performed at the New Musick Hall in Fishamble

Street; the best Judges allowed it to be the most finished piece of Musick. Words are wanting to express the exquisite Delight it afforded to the admiring crowded audience. The Sublime, the Grand, and the Tender, adopted to the most elevated,

majestick and moving Words, conspired to transport and charm the ravished heart and ear."

Handel was asked to repeat *Messiah* in Dublin on June 3. Two months later he sailed back to England carrying the precious manuscript, and an enduring respect for the musical taste of the Irish.

**"I hope he will lay out his whole Genius & Skill on it, that the Composition may excell all his former Compositions, as the Subject excells every other Subject. The Subject is Messiah. . . ." Charles Jennens, author of *Messiah* text.**

## Cuesta Master Chorale

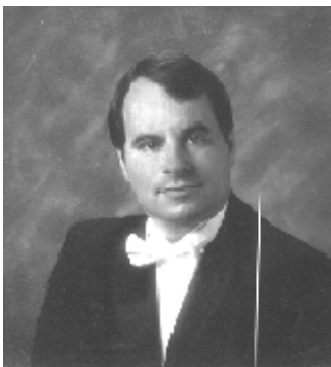
Cuesta College Music Dept.  
Cuesta College  
P.O. Box 8106  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93403

To order tickets  
Call the PAC Ticket Office  
756-ARTS or 1-888-233-2787  
Or order online at [www.pacslo.org](http://www.pacslo.org)

*Messiah* – December 20, 2003

*Cuesta*  
*Master Chorale* 2003-2004  
Season

## Tom Davies and the Cuesta Master Chorale Celebrate 20 Years Together



by Mary Bishop

In their 20 years of collaboration, Dr. Thomas Davies and the Cuesta Master Chorale have made some beautiful music together: Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Verdi's *Requiem*, Schubert's *Mass No. 5*, Eister's *Moby Dick*, Beetho-

ven's *Missa Solemnis*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Vivaldi's *Kyrie*, Pergolesi's *Salve Regina*, Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*, Poulenc's *Gloria*, Fauré's *Requiem*, Handel's *Dixit Dominus*, Pärt's *Te Deum*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Britten's *War Requiem*, Barata's *An American Cantata*, Rachmaninoff's *Vespers*, and Ramirez's *Misa Criolla*, to name a few works.

San Luis Obispo County is lucky to have this musical duo to bring the great choral classics to our area.

## Notes from the Board

Chairperson:  
Vicki Ewart  
Recording secretary:  
Sharon Carro  
Finance chairperson:  
Henry Sullivan  
Facilities chairperson:  
Chuck Hiigel  
Fundraising chairperson:  
Lyn Baker  
Member-at-large:  
Diane Blakeslee



Vicki Ewart, President

Vicki Ewart, our new chairperson, has told us that Cuesta College has changed the structure of our board. Instead of being elected, the board is now appointed by the president of Cuesta College and operates as an advisory board.