

1974 3-12

PROGRAM NOTES - UNIVERSITY SINGERS CONCERT

The Magnificat of Antonio Vivaldi is the "red priests" setting of the text from Luke which is Mary's canticle of praise at the knowledge that she is to be the Mother of the Savior. The work exists in two versions: the first containing nine sections, seven of which are for chorus. The alternate version (which is performed here tonight) was probably written to take advantage of the female resources of the Ospedale della Pieta' in whose music department Vivaldi was active for nearly forty years. This version replaces the second choral section with 3 soprano arias written specifically for three very gifted soloists.

Hymn to the Virgin, one of Benjamin Britten's earliest choral works, was composed in 1930 and was revised four years later. It has a simple and appealing melody that is heard three times, the third stanza being slightly more elaborate in texture. Using medieval words and modal tonality, the work is set for large choir and semi-chorus.

Zadok the Priest by G. F. Handel was composed in 1727 for the Coronation of George II in Westminster Abbey. It is one of four Coronation Anthems written for this service by Handel. The text is taken from the first book of King's V.39.40.

Purcell's Remember Not, Lord, Our Offenses is a full anthem in five parts (SSATB). The text is drawn from the opening sentences of the Anglican burial service. Whereas the more modern verse anthem used soloists and instrumentalists in highly sectionalized treatment of text, this full anthem employs only choir in a motet style.

Britten's Te Deum was written for the choir of St. Mark's in London in 1935. The work falls into three sections. The outer sections marked *allegro molto*, are very similar in content. The slower central section features soprano soloist. Britten scored the Te Deum for SATB choir and organ. Mr. Obourn has re-scored the work for strings and brass. Soloist: Kathleen Murphy

Brahms: Lass dich nur nichts nicht dauren. This motet was written sometime between 1856 and 1860. Its text is by Paul Flemming (1609-1640), a poet whose works Brahms used in some of his solo songs. The poem is based on Scripture, and the flowing legato lines help express a feeling of repose and assurance.

Vaughan Williams: Benedicite. Soloist: Kathleen Murphy. Although the text Benedicite is part of the Anglican morning service, this work does not use the liturgical text. It uses instead a poem by J. Austin (1613-1669) entitled "The Song of the Three Holy Children" and is in fact a paraphrase of the liturgy. Vaughan Williams wrote this work in 1929 and it was first performed at the Leith Hill Festival in England in 1930. It is a bright and joyful song of praise for the chorus, soprano solo and full orchestra. Tonight's performance uses a piano reduction of the orchestral score. Benedicite is divided into three sections, the first and last being quite festive while the middle section is rather slower and more reflective. The choir and soloist alternate in their exhortation to Seas, Floods, Mountains, Hills, Birds, and the Children of Men to bring their praise and adoration to the Lord.