

## ***DIRECTOR'S NOTES***

Tonight you will hear 75 people from all walks of life who come together weekly to sing music of diverse style. Last concert was Mozart's Grand Mass in C minor with orchestra, tonight Missa Gaia in an eclectic mix of style from chant to gospel to folk, with African and Brazilian rhythms. Some of the lyrical melodies were "composed" by wolves, whales, seals, and birds. It is truly a collaboration.

Missa, Latin for "mass," joins Gaia, the Greek name for Mother Earth. "Gaia" acknowledges the "Gaia hypothesis" of scientists James Lovelock and Lynn Margulis, who propose "that the entire range of living matter on Earth, from whales to viruses, and from oaks to algae, could be regarded as constituting a single living entity, capable of manipulating the Earth's atmosphere to suit its overall needs and endowed with faculties and power far beyond its constituent parts." The structure of this work follows the liturgical form of the Mass, with some other music occurring between mass movements.

1981 was the year Missa Gaia was first presented in the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine after a series of "coincidences" between the Cathedral and the Paul Winter Consort, a jazz ensemble that generated the composition of this work. The Dean of the Cathedral and a jazz ensemble - an unlikely pairing, but a fortunate one for us.

This evening's performance features:

Scott Elliff, baritone

Brenda Miles, mezzo

Marissa Cummings, mezzo

Rick McDonald, soprano saxophone

Julia Briley, oboe

Carrie Pierce, cello

Mike Mazzatenta, piano

Trent Spofford, bass

Frederick Volcansek, guitar

Neil Sisauyhoat, percussion

Tommy Alejandro, percussion

Paul Bowman, drums

Tonight's slides are prepared by Brenda Miles and Lisa Louis.

We welcome the Corpus Christi Youth Chorale who are singing this evening as well, under the direction of Nan Borden, Lorri Dow, Katie King, Alexis Garcia, and Nick Lopez. This is their first year as a group of young singers, and we are excited to have them here.

Tonight the Youth Chorale will perform the following:

**Place in the Choir**

Words and Music by Bill Stains

Arranged by John Leavitt

**Be a Candle of Hope**

Becki Slagle Mayo

**Dona Nobis Pacem**

Traditional Canon

## PROGRAM NOTES

### Canticle of Brother Sun

The Mass begins with a song based on the inspiring words of St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of ecology, who called all sorts of wild creatures, including sheep, water-fowl, birds, crickets, and wolves to give praise and prayer to the Creator. A line from Job also appears as part of the text: "Speak to the earth and it shall teach thee."

*All praise be yours through Brother Sun, all praise be yours through Sister Moon,  
By Mother Earth my Lord be praised, by Brother Mountain, Sister Sea,  
Through Brother Wind and Brother Air, through Sister Water, Brother Fire,  
The Stars above give thanks to thee, All praise to those who live in peace.*

*All praise be yours through Brother Wolf, All praise be yours through Sister Whale,  
By Nature's song, my Lord be praised by Brother Eagle, Sister Loon,  
Through Brother Tiger, Sister Seal, through Sister Flower, Brother Tree.  
Let Creatures all give thanks to thee, All praise to those who live in peace.*

*Ask of the Beasts and they shall teach you the Beauty of the Earth.  
Ask of the Trees and they shall teach you the Beauty of the Earth.  
Ask of the Winds and they shall teach you the Beauty of the Earth.  
Ask of the Flow'rs and they shall teach you the Beauty of the Earth.*

Chant: *Brother Sun, Sister Moon.*

### Kyrie

The Kyrie—a prayer for mercy—contains the only Greek words left in the Western Mass and dates from the early centuries of Christianity. This is undoubtedly the first Kyrie melody composed by a wolf. She sings the same four-note howl seven times, with slight embellishment each time. Her mystical melody evokes the mystery of the living earth.

### Beatitudes

The Beatitudes, taken from the Gospel of St. Matthew, is often sung in the Mass between the Old Testament reading and the Epistle in both the Greek and Slavic Orthodox churches. In this movement we hear these words of Jesus in a contemporary gospel style.

### Mystery

Both words and music were written by Jeremy Geffen, then a medical student in New York, later an orthopedic surgeon in Colorado. This motet for solo voice is "the most universal statement of theology in song that I know" — Paul Winter.

Peter Matthiessen comments: "And we must feel awe again if we are to return to a harmonious existence with our own habitat, and survive. As a first step, we might consider this direct Mystery that is all about us and in every movement; it is the music of the stars, the color of the wind, the stillness between tides at dead of night, birds, trees, sea pearls and manure, and it is no less and no more strange or beautiful or scary than our life itself. When modern man has regained his respect for the earth, when science becomes a tool in the service of nature rather than a weapon to dominate it, then the lost Paradise, the Golden age in the race memories of all people on Earth will come again, and all men will be 'in Dios,' People of God."

For the Beauty of the Earth

Adoro Te Devote

For the Beauty of the Earth

Instrumental Anthem

Gregorian Chant

Hymn

These three pieces form a whole. In the first, we hear the song of the canyon wren in the saxophone, and the throbbing call of the "Heartbeat of Mother Earth" in the drum. This instrumental work is followed by *Adoro Te Devote*, a plainchant composed by St. Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century. This tune later found its way into our hymnal as a communion hymn, and then more recently as For The Beauty of the Earth.

## For the Beauty of the Earth

For the beau - ty of the Earth, sing oh sing to - day.

9  
Of the sky and of our birth, sing oh sing al - ways.

17  
Na - ture, hu - man and di - vine, all a - round us lies.

25  
Lord of all, to thee we raise grate - ful hymns of praise.

The musical score is written on four staves in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics are printed below the notes.

### Sanctus and Benedictus

Paul Winter writes: "If any animal on Earth symbolizes the Great Mother, it is the whale. The song of the whale is jubilant, and therefore, rightfully forms the foundation for the Sanctus, a joyful song of praise."

*Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts. Heaven and Earth are full of Thy Glory.*

*Hosanna in the Highest. Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.*

The whale that begins the Sanctus is a humpback recorded off the coast of Bermuda. The same sequence of four phrases is sung seven times. The song of the whale then develops into the joyous rhythms of the Baiiao from the north east of Brazil.

### Stained-Glass Morning

In this sound painting, the early morning is heralded by the calls of the Uirapuru (musical wren) of the Amazon Forest and the bell-bird of New Zealand. In Brazil the legend is that hearing the song of the Uirapuru will ensure a good fortune.



## **Agnus Dei**

The inspiration to use the song of the harp seal for the Agnus Dei came from the experience of Dr. Wilfred Grenfell, a medical missionary to Labrador in 1909, who wrote: "it has not been easy to convey to the Eskimo the meaning of the eastern similes of the Bible. Thus, the Lamb of God had to be translated Kotik, or young seal. This animal, with its perfect whiteness as it lies in its cradle of ice, its gentle helpless nature, and its pathetic innocent eyes, is probably as apt a substitute, however, as nature offers."

## **The Blue Green Hills of Earth**

Paul Winter writes: "Astronaut Rusty Schweickart had been the first man to walk in space without an umbilical. I heard him give a profoundly moving description of that experience, and of the nostalgia he felt, as he floated in space, when he looked out and saw our tiny Earth in the distance and realized that all the joy and beauty and love that had nourished his life had taken place on that little blue marble which he could cover with his thumb. Rusty later told me the story of Rhysling, the blind poet of the Venus Shuttle in Robert Heinlein's science fiction classic 'The Green Hills of Earth,' who writes a ballad about his yearning 'for one more landing on the globe that gave us birth'."

*For the earth, forever turning, for the skies, for ev'ry sea, to our Lord we sing, returning home to our blue green hills of earth.*

*For the mountains, hills and pastures, in their silent majesty, for all life, for all of Nature, sing we our joyful praise to Thee.*

*For the sun, for rain and thunder, for the land that makes us free, for the stars, for all the heavens, sing we our joyful praise to Thee.*

## **Let Us Depart in Peace (Canticle of Brother Sun)**

At the end of the Mass, the priest dismisses the congregation with the words, "let us depart in peace." The music for the dismissal is the same as that heard at the very beginning of the Earth Mass, except that it is introduced by a trilogy of voices from the wild: Sister Loon, Brother Wolf, and Sister Whale.

