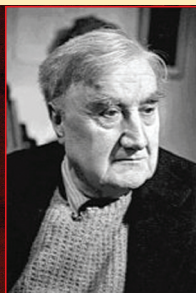


# **A Vaughan Williams Serenade**



**Rhodes MasterSingers Chorale  
and  
Memphis Symphony Orchestra  
Tim Sharp Conductor**

**Sunday, November 11, 2007  
3:00 p.m.  
Idlewild Presbyterian Church  
1750 Union Avenue  
Memphis, TN**



# **Violin Concerto in D Minor**

**(2nd movement)**

featuring Susanna Perry Gilmore, violin

## **Serenade To Music**

### **Hodie**

## **Rhodes MasterSingers Chorale and Memphis Symphony Orchestra**

with soloists

Jennifer Cooper, soprano  
Carole Blankenship, soprano  
Randal Rushing, tenor  
Sean Cooper, bass

Tim Sharp, Conductor

**Sunday, November 11, 2007**

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**Idlewild Presbyterian Church  
1750 Union Avenue  
Memphis, TN**

## SERENADE TO MUSIC

words by William Shakespeare from  
*The Merchant of Venice*

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!  
Here will we sit and let the sounds of music creep in our ears:  
Soft stillness, and the night,  
Become the touches of sweet harmony.

Look how the floor of heaven is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:  
There's not the smallest orb that though beholds't,  
But in his motion like an angela sings,  
Still quiring to the young-ey'd cherubins;  
Such harmony is in immortal souls;  
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay doth grossly close it in we cannot hear it.

Come, ho! And wake Diana with a hymn:  
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear,  
And draw her home with music, with music.

I am never merry when I hear sweet music.  
The reason is, your spirits are attentive:  
The man that hath no music in himself,  
Nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils;

The motions of his spirit are dull as night,  
And his affections dark as Erebus;  
Let no such man be trusted.

Music! Hark! It is your music of the house.  
Me-thinks it sounds much sweeter than by day  
Silence bestows that virtue on it,  
How many things by season seasoned are  
To their right praise and true perfection!

Peace, ho! The moon sleeps with Endymion  
And would not be awak'd!  
Soft stillness and the night,  
Become the touches of sweet harmony.

## HODIE

### I. Prologue

Nowell! Hodie Christus natus est: Hodie salvator apparuit:  
Hodie in terra canunt angeli,  
laetantur archangeli: Hodie exultant justi, dicentes:  
Gloria in excelsis Deo: Alleluia.

This day is our saviour born: This day on earth angels are singing,  
archangels rejoicing. This day just men rejoice,  
saying, Glory to God in the highest.

*(Vespers for Christmas Day)*

### II. Narration

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: when as his mother Mary was  
espoused to Joseph, before they came together,  
she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, was minded to put her away  
privily.  
but while he thought on these things,  
behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream.

“Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for  
that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.  
And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus:

He shall be great, and shall be called the son of the Highest:  
Emmanuel, God with us.”

*(Matthew 1: 18-21 and Luke 1: 32)*

### III. Song

It was the winter wild, while the heaven-born child  
all meanly wrapt, in the rude manger lies;  
Nature in awe to him had doffed her gaudy trim,  
with her great Master so to sympathise.  
And waving wide her myrtle wand,  
she strikes a universal peace through sea and land.

No war, or battle's sound, was heard the world around:  
the idle spear and shield were high uphung;  
the hooked chariot stood unstained with hostile blood;

the trumpet spake not to the armed throng;  
and kings sate stille with awful eye,  
as if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by.  
But peaceful was the night, wherein the Prince of Light  
His reign of peace upon the earth began:  
the winds, with wonder whist, smoothly the waters kissed  
whispering new joys to the mild ocean,  
who now hath quite forgot to rave,  
while birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave.

*('Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity' - Milton)*

#### IV. Narration

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree  
from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.  
And all went to be taxed, everyone into his own city.  
And Joseph also went up into the city of David,  
which is called Bethlehem:  
to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.  
And so it was that while they were there,  
the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.  
And she brought forth her first born son,  
and wrapped him in swaddling clothes,  
and laid him in a manger;  
because there was no room for them in the inn.

*(Luke 2: 1-7)*

#### V. Choral

The blessed Son of God only  
in a crib full poor did lie;  
with our poor flesh and our poor blood  
was clothed that everlasting good. Kyrie eleison.

The Lord Christ Jesus, God's Son dear,  
was a guest and a stranger here;

us for to bring from misery,  
that we might live eternally. Kyrie eleison.

All this he did for us freely,  
for to declare his great mercy;  
all Christendom be merry therefore,  
and give him thanks forevermore. Kyrie eleison.

*(Miles Coverdale, after Martin Luther)*

## VI. Narration

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field,  
keeping watch over their flock by night.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them,  
and the glory of the Lord shone round about them:  
and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them,

“Fear not: for, behold, I bring unto you good tidings of great joy,  
which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour,  
which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you;  
ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.”

And suddenly there was with the angel

a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men.

We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee,  
we give thanks to thee for thy great glory;

O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.”

“Let us go now unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass,  
which the Lord hath made known unto us.”

And the shepherds came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph,  
and the babe lying in a manger.

And when they had seen it, they made known abroad  
the saying which was told them concerning this child.

And all they that heard it wondered at those things  
which were told them by the shepherds.

*(Luke 2: 8-17 and the Book of Common Prayer)*

## VII. The Oxen

Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock.  
“Now they are all on their knees,”  
an elder said as we sat in a flock by the embers in hearth side ease.  
We pictured the meek mild creatures  
where they dwelt in their strawy pen,  
nor did it occur to one of us there to doubt they were kneeling then.  
So fair a fancy few would weave in these years!  
Yet, I feel if someone said on Christmas Eve,  
“Come, see the oxen kneel,  
in the lonely barton by younder coomb our childhood used to know,”  
I should go with him in the gloom,  
hoping it might be so.

*(Thomas Hardy)*

## VIII. Narration

And the shepherds returned,  
glorifying and praising God for all the things  
that they had heard and seen,  
as it was told unto them.

*(Luke 2: 20)*

## IX. Pastoral

The shepherds sing; and shall I silent be?  
My God, no hymn for thee?  
My soul's a shepherd too:  
a flock it feeds of thoughts, words, and deeds.  
The pasture is thy Word;  
the streams, Thy Grace enriching all the place.  
Shepherd and flock shall sing,  
and all my powers outsing the daylight hours.  
Then we will chide the sun  
for letting night take up his place and right:  
we sing one common Lord;  
wherefore he should himself the candle hold.  
I will go searching,  
till I find a sun shall stay till we have done;



a willing shiner, that shall shine  
as gladly as frost-nipt suns look sadly.  
Then we will sing, and shine all our own day, and one another pay;  
His beams shall cheer my breast,  
and both so twine till even his beams sing, and my music shine.

*(George Herbert)*

#### X. Narration

But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

*(Luke 2: 19)*

#### XI. Lullaby

Sweet was the song the Virgin sang,  
when she to Bethlehem Judah came  
and was delivered of a son,  
that blessed Jesus hath to name.  
“Lulla, lulla, lulla-bye, sweet babe,” sang she,  
and rocked him sweetly on her knee.  
“Sweet babe,” sang she, “my son,  
and eke a saviour born,  
who has vouchsafed from on high  
to visit us that were forlorn:  
Lalula, lalula, lalula-bye, sweet babe,” sang she,  
and rocked him sweetly on her knee.

*(W. Ballet)*

#### XII. Hymn

Bright portals of the sky, embossed with sparkling stars,  
doors of eternity, with diamantine bars,  
your arras rich uphold, loose all your bolts and springs,  
ope wide your leaves of gold,  
that in your roofs may come the King of Kings.  
O well-spring of this all. Thy father’s image vive;  
word, that from naught did come, what is, doth reason, live;  
the soul’s eternal food, earth’s joy, delight of heaven;  
all truth, love, beauty, good: to thee be praises ever given!  
O glory of the heaven! O sole delight of earth!

Of mankind lover true, indearer of his wrong,  
who dost the world renew,  
still be thou our salvation and our song!

*(William Drummond)*

### XIII. Narration

Now when Jesus was born,  
behold, there came wise men from the east, saying,  
“Where is he that is born King?  
For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.”  
And they said unto them,  
“In Bethlehem.” When they had heard that, they departed;  
and lo, the star which they saw in the east, went before them,  
till it came and stood over where the young child was.  
When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.  
And when they were come into the house,  
they saw the young child with Mary his mother,  
and fell down and worshipped him;  
and when they had opened their treasures,  
they presented unto him gifts: gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

*(Matthew 2: 1, 2 and 11)*

### XIV. The March of the Three Kings

From kingdoms of wisdom secret and far  
come Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar;  
they ride through time, they ride through night  
led by the star's foretelling light.  
Crowning the skies the star of morning, star of dayspring calls,  
lighting the stable and the broken walls where the prince lies.  
Gold from the veins of earth he brings,  
red gold to crown the King of Kings.  
Power and glory here behold shut in a talisman of gold.  
Frankincense from those dark hands was gathered in eastern, sunrise lands,  
incense to burn both night and day to bear the prayers a priest will say.  
Myrrh is a bitter gift for the dead.  
Birth but begins the path you tread;  
your way is short, your days foretold by myrrh and frankincense and gold.  
Return to kingdoms, secret and far, Caspar, Melchior, Balthasar,  
ride through the desert, retrace the night leaving the star's imperial light.

Crowning the skies the star of morning, star of dayspring calls:  
clear on the hilltop its sharp radiance falls,  
lighting the stable and the broken walls where the prince lies.

*(Ursula Vaughan Williams)*

XV. Choral

No sad thought his soul affright;  
sleep it is that maketh night;  
let no murmur nor rude wind  
to his slumbers prove unkind;  
but a quire of angels make  
his dreams of heaven and let him wake  
to as many joys as can  
in this world befall a man.

Promise fills the sky with light,  
stars and angels dance in flight;  
joy of heaven shall now unbind  
chains of evil from mankind,  
love and joy their power shall break,  
and for a newborn prince's sake;  
never since the world began  
such a light such dark did span.

*(verse 1 - anonymous; verse 2 - Ursula Vaughan Williams)*

XVI. Epilogue

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.  
And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.  
Emmanuel, God with us.

*(John 1: 1-14)*

Ring out, ye crystal spheres, once bless our human ears,  
if ye have power to touch our senses so;  
and let your silver chime move in melodious time,  
and let the bass of heaven's deep organ blow;  
and with your ninefold harmony,  
make up full consort to the angelic symphony.  
Such music (as 'tis said), before was never made,

but when of old the sons of morning sung,  
while the Creator great His constellations set,  
and the well-balanced world on hinges hung;  
and cast the dark foundations deep,  
and bid the weltering waves their oozy channel keep.  
Yea, truth and justice then will down return to men,  
orb'd in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,  
mercy will sit between, throned in celestial sheen,  
with radiant feet the tissued cloud down-steering;  
and heaven, as at some festival,  
will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

(*'Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity' - Milton*)

## HODIE NOTES

In *Hodie* stylistic diversity serves to characterize both the various strands of the Christmas experience and the contrasting worlds within the anthology of poems that forms the heart of the work, poems ranging from the 17th to the 20th centuries, from Herbert to Hardy. The poems furnish reflection upon and emotional response to the events of the Nativity as recounted in the narrative portions of the cantata, which draw on the *King James Bible* and the *Book of Common Prayer*.

There are resonances here of several traditions, both communal and personal. The narration is sung in unison by treble choristers, with only organ accompaniment; this potent symbol of the innocence and purity of the Christ-child also alludes to an essential aspect of Christmas in England, the sound of college and cathedral choirs. The alternation of narrative and reflection echoes Bach's cantatas and Passions, in which Vaughan Williams was thoroughly steeped from his celebrated annual performances of Bach at the Dorking Festival. The choral works of Bach are also evoked by the chorales used at two points in the work to represent a communal response, and by the illumination of the Angel's words with a halo of strings, which echoes the similar treatment of Christ's utterances in the Passions.

*Hodie* underscores Vaughan Williams's lifelong involvement with English literary as well as musical tradition, particularly the glories of 17th-century poetry and prose, here represented by Milton, Herbert, Drummond and the *King James Bible*. In the choice of texts Vaughan Williams was ably assisted by his second wife, Ursula; she also wrote a new poem for the journey of the three kings, for which no existing verse acceptable to the composer could be found,

and provided a companion strophe for a short anonymous poem that was to be used for the second chorale.

The sixteen numbers make varied use of the orchestral and vocal resources, and of the composer's wide stylistic range, including the innovations in his music that date from around the time of the score for the 1948 film *Scott of the Antarctic* (the tenor solo 'Bright portals of the sky', with its 'diamantine', celestial glitter, is the most obvious example of the *Antarctic* influence). The full ensemble of large orchestra (including harp, celeste, organ and a variety of tuned percussion), treble choir, and soprano, tenor and baritone soloists are never heard together in a single number, though the "Prologue," "March of the Three Kings" and "Epilogue" (particularly the last two) come close to employing all the available forces. The "Prologue," using words from the Vespers service for Christmas Day, is festal and exuberant, even raucous, with a strong element of dance and clangorous brass and tuned percussion. The 'Gloria' acclamations with which the movement ends return at various points in the cantata, providing a sharp contrast of sound-world.

In many works of the composer's last decade the pastoral vein sounds sweeter and sadder than before, and this is the case in the setting of Hardy's poem *The Oxen*, a poignant lament for lost faith. Vaughan Williams shared Hardy's complex agnosticism, but he was nevertheless able in many of his works on religious texts to produce music of radiant affirmation. *Hodie* is one of his most affirmative works, and the Hardy poem strikes a strangely dissonant note. Yet perhaps it is because of the regretful agnosticism of *The Oxen*, which expresses such a recognizable modern view of Christmas, that we can so readily allow the composer to sweep us up into the final jubilant paean, "Ring out, ye crystal spheres." As is right at Christmas, this is music of healing and hope.

## **Timothy W. Sharp**

Dr. Sharp is Dean of Fine Arts and Chair of the Department of Music at Rhodes College, where he holds the Elizabeth Daughdrill Chair in the Fine Arts and conducts the Rhodes Singers and MasterSingers Chorale. Dr. Sharp is Director of the Center for Outreach in the Development of the Arts at Rhodes, a program that fosters future leadership, vision, and innovation in the fine arts.

## **MasterSingers Chorale**

MasterSingers Chorale is a semi-professional choral ensemble made up of music professionals, faculty, staff, students and choral alumni of Rhodes College. Since 1994, MasterSingers Chorale has presented major choral/orchestral works throughout the region. In 2004, MasterSingers Chorale made their Carnegie Hall debut with a performance of Morten Lauridsen's "Madrigali", "O Magnum Mysterium", and "Lux Aeterna."

## MasterSingers Chorale

### SOPRANO

Christine Bertz  
Carole Blankenship  
Charlotte Borst  
Angela Canestrari  
Lynne Canestrari  
Pam Dotson  
Shirley Harris  
Laura Hoffmeister  
Michaela Lynch  
Melanie Marcom  
Michelle Mattson  
Amy Moore  
Virginia Nolen  
Ann Sharp  
Gillian Steinhauer  
Dorothy Wells

### TENOR

Jim Canestrari  
Greg Koziel  
Keith Parsons  
Daniel Frankel  
London-Silas Shavers  
Jim Vogel  
Pat Walker

### ALTO

Fran Addicott  
Leah Bachmeyer  
Eden Badgett  
Elizabeth S. Cooper  
Marcie Hendrix  
Mary Margaret Hicks  
Amber Isom-Thompson  
Ellen Koziel  
Sue Lease  
Erin Lindberg  
Vicki Person  
Teresa Peter  
Connie Pride  
Peggy Rutherford  
Jean Schmidt  
Amanda Vogel  
Abby Walsh

### BASS

Pete Addicott  
John Baxter  
Rick Censuillo  
Leo Connolly  
James Cornfoot  
David P. Cooper  
Robert Harris  
Jeff Hendrix  
Matthias Kaelberer  
Robert Klingbeil  
Jim Lanier  
David Orland  
Robert Patterson  
Philip Walkley  
Dan Witherspoon

**Boys and Girls Choir  
Of Church of the Holy Communion (Episcopal)  
and Grace - St. Luke's Episcopal Church**

Carole Cepeda  
Margaret Cowens  
Elizabeth Craig  
Kneeland Gammill  
Sam Gaskill  
Alex Glasgow  
Abbey Gourley  
Georgeanne Gourley  
Max Leigh  
Rachel Leigh  
Ali MacQueen  
Beverly Nelson

Christopher Nelson  
Lilly Russell  
Emma Sharp  
Caitlin Smith  
Colin Sullivan  
Callan Truitt  
Hagen Weiss  
Meredith Wells  
Henry Widdop  
Margaret Wyatt  
Sarah Clifton Yandell

**Debbie Smith and  
Kristin Lensch, directors**



# Memphis Symphony Orchestra

## VIOLIN 1

Susanna Perry Gilmore, Concertmaster  
The Joy Brown Weiner Chair  
Paul Turnbow, Assistant Concertmaster  
The Maxine Morse Chair  
Marisa Polesky, Assistant Principal  
Barrie Cooper, Assistant Principal  
Laurie Pyatt  
Wen-Yih You

## VIOLIN 2

Gaylon Patterson, Principal  
The Dunbar and  
Constance Abston Chair  
Neal Shaffer, Assistant Principal  
Heather Trussell, Assistant Principal  
Erin Kaste

## VIOLA

Jennifer Puckett, Principal  
The Corinne Falls Murrah Chair  
Michelle Walker, Assistant Principal  
Marshall Fine, Assistant Principal  
Irene Wade

## CELLO

Iren Zombor, Principal  
The Vincent de Frank Chair  
Milena Albrecht, Assistant Principal  
Phyllis Long, Assistant Principal

## CONTRABASS

Scott Best, Principal  
Charles Block, Assistant Principal

## FLUTE

Karen Busler, Principal  
The Marian Dugdale McClure Chair  
Todd Skitch

## OBOE

Joseph Salvalaggio, Principal  
Saundra D'Amato

## CLARINET

Robert Woolfrey, Principal  
Rena Feller

## BASSOON

Jennifer Rhodes, Principal  
Michael Scott

## HORN

Samuel Compton, Principal  
The Morrie A. Moss Chair  
Robert Patterson  
Caroline Kinsey  
Ion Balu

## TRUMPET

Scott Moore, Principal  
The Smith & Nephew Chair  
Susan Enger

## TROMBONE

Greg Luscombe, Principal  
Alexander Reicher  
Mark Vail

## TUBA

Charles Schulz, Principal

## TIMPANI

Frank Shaffer, Principal

## PERCUSSION

John Sprott, Principal  
Ed Murray  
Michael Karcz

## HARP

Marian Shaffer, Principal  
The Ruth Marie Moore Cobb Chair

## ORGAN

Ted Gibboney and Sarah Wiese

## REHEARSAL ACCOMPANIST

Sarah Wiese







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