



Ottawa Choral Society

Media Release

For immediate release

Matthew Larkin and the Ottawa Choral Society open the choir's 67th season of great masterworks on Friday, November 23rd at 8:00 pm at St. Joseph's Church in Sandy Hill with Johann Sebastian Bach's glorious *Magnificat in D* BWV 243 and a program of music for the Advent season.

Ottawa – Fresh from its appearances on the National Arts Centre Orchestra's monumental Beethoven Festival and the Ottawa Symphony Orchestra's Mahler Symphony No. 2, the Ottawa Choral Society opens its 2007-08 subscription series on Friday November 23rd, at St. Joseph's Church in Sandy Hill with *Magnificat in D* BWV 243, a work of genius by that OTHER great 'B' composer, J.S. Bach. A rich tapestry of music for the Advent season appropriately entitled 'I sing of a Maiden', the evening includes audience favorites by Mozart and Bruckner and introduces the works of two relatively unknown masters certain to entertain and please.

The concert begins with a graceful setting for women's voices, by the living Englishman Patrick Hadley, of a text in Olde English 'I sing of a maiden'. To follow this tranquil opening, the choir turns to two of Mozart's most exultant adorations of the Virgin Mary, *Regina Coeli*, with orchestra and soloists, and with strings, *Sancta Maria, mater dei*.

Throughout the ages, composers have been inspired by the text of the 'Ave Maria'. This evening's program samples a gorgeous triptych of Ave Maria's: the first is in the seamless polyphony of the English Renaissance by the almost unknown 16th century composer, Robert Parsons; the second, filled with the passionate romanticism of Anton Bruckner while the last, reflects the calm austerity of contemporary Canadian composer, Imant Raminsh.

To end the evening, Larkin has chosen a delicate vignette of Mary's song of praise, *Mary's Magnificat*, by the contemporary English composer Andrew Carter and set beside it, Bach's truly magnificent *Magnificat in D* BWV 243, a superb example of the composer's genius and the art of the High Baroque.

The choir is pleased to introduce soprano Leslie Fagan who will make her Carnegie Hall debut this season and the amazing young counter-tenor Scott Belluz, two outstanding young soloists who participated in the OCS's 2006 New Discoveries Audition for Young Artists, and welcomes back mezzo-soprano Marion Newman, who received warm critical mention for her 2005 debut appearance with the choir in Raminsh's

Magnificat, tenor Nils Brown, recently returned from an exciting *Don Giovanni* in Ireland, and baritone Sean Watson, who performed the role of Dr. Bartolo so brilliantly in Opera Lyra's silver cast of the *Barber of Seville*.

A chamber orchestra composed of many of Ottawa's leading instrumentalists, including Karen Donnelly, principal trumpet of the NACO on piccolo trumpet, will join the choir for the performance.

Tickets (\$10-\$40) may be purchased on-line at www.ottawachoralsociety.com, at Collected Works in Westboro (Wellington at Holland), Leading Note (370 Elgin), Compact Music in the Glebe (785A Bank St) and CD Warehouse (all Locations) or at the Door.

Listing information

Ottawa Choral Society

Matthew Larkin Conductor

I Sing of a Maiden featuring J.S. Bach's *Magnificat* in D BWV 243
with Orchestra and soloists

Leslie Fagan, soprano

Marion Newman, mezzo-soprano

Scott Belluz, counter-tenor

Nils Brown, tenor

Sean Watson, baritone

8:00 p.m. Friday, November 23 2007

St Joseph's Church (corner of Wilbrod and Cumberland), Ottawa

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At the Door

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