

SOUNDS

Of

Volume 39 No. 30

August 16, 2009

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Grant, we beseech thee, merciful God, that thy Church, being gathered together in unity by thy Holy Spirit, may manifest thy power among all peoples, to the glory of thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

LISTEN UP

AN ANGLICAN MUSIC MINISERIES:

III. HENRY PURCELL & THE ENGLISH BAROQUE

“Beginnings and endings are just plain lumpy.” That is the considered and colorful opinion of a good friend of mine. My own philosophical musings lead me to think, by extension, one is simply the front or back end of the other; succinctly put, a state of transition. Now while I get a good chuckle out of my colorful friend and could list a volume of “lumpy” beginnings and endings in my own life, I don’t necessarily find that all transitions are such. In fact, many are hardly noticeable and happen quite smoothly.

If there is a single moment – lumpy or not – in music history where one can point to the end of the Renaissance and the beginning of the Baroque era, I confess ignorance. However, in the first two decades of the 17th century, a new form of secular music blossomed and took root in Italy. It was opera. In short, the musical interludes provided for stage plays during the Renaissance expanded into accompaniment for some or all of the spoken text. This became what we recognize now as “recitative.” The development of its companion, the aria, soon followed with Claudio Monteverdi (c.1567-1643) bringing it to its first maturity.

The first opera known to us, although sadly most of the music is lost now, is a setting of *Dafne*, by the Italian composer, Jacopo Peri (1561-1633), which was given its premiere in 1597 in Florence. So successful was this new form that in a mere 40 years the very first public opera house opened in Venice and the stage was set, so to speak, for a major shift and development in refined music of the Western world.

Let’s fast forward just a bit to late 17th century London. Even though there was no proper opera house, the popularity of plays and masques, for which composers still provided incidental music, flourished. Indeed, professional musicians would very often be on stage with their actor counterparts and sing “Airs,” which commented on or in the persona of the one being portrayed by the actor. Among those writing for the English stage was none other than the Organist of Westminster

Abbey and soon thereafter of the Chapel Royal, Henry Purcell (c.1659-1695). His landmark chamber opera, *Dido and Aeneas*, is considered the finest English opera until those of Benjamin Britten (1913-1976), an avid admirer of Purcell.

What may be less known but more important for our purposes is that Purcell wrote the first setting of the *Te Deum* and *Jubilate* in English to an instrumental accompaniment. It was for Saint Cecilia’s Day 1693. For 20 years it was sung at St Paul’s Cathedral for that occasion and then in alternation with Handel’s *‘Utrecht’ Te Deum* and *Jubilate* for another 30 years! Both works were replaced in 1743 with Handel’s *‘Dettingen’ Te Deum*.

With the heavy influence of opera, we find English church music receiving more and more instrumental accompaniment and a nature more overtly dramatic than in previous times. Forms expanded and multi-movement works won favor. This renders much of it impractical for our current liturgical requirements. Excerpting a movement from that most English of beasts, the Oratorio (*Messiah* undeniably the most popular), puts it adrift and loses context, is expensive to perform if one hires the proper orchestral forces, and most often impossible or ineffective to play on the organ alone. Therefore, we hear much of this treasury now in a concert setting than as part of a church service. That suits me, just as long as it’s heard!

Purcell, with his chromatically daring harmonic language and masterful setting of text, remains one of the most unique voices in Anglican music and alongside Handel (who had the advantage of living nearly twice as long) stands as a pillar of the English baroque era. I highly recommend the 11-CD set of *The Complete Sacred Music of Henry Purcell* as recorded by The King’s Consort on the Hyperion label. For those with a lighter appetite, a single disc from the same group entitled *Essential Purcell* is an excellent collection. Among my favorites is the sublime devotional song, *An Evening Hymn*, and the brief but moving anthem, *Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts*.

Stay tuned.... Gary Davison, O-C



POTOMAC COUNTRY HOUSE TOUR

Our Potomac Country House Tour is entering its **54th year**. The **Women of St. Francis** have maintained the momentum by emphasizing the tour as a **CHARITY EVENT!** For the last five years we have luckily ridden the wave of consistent proceeds between \$50,000 and \$60,000, with which we support multiple worthy charities both local and abroad.

The tour is designed for entertainment and sharing of home building and decorating ideas. This year as publicity chair, I need each and every parishioner to make a personal effort to spread the word and participate as a volunteer and a tour-goer. Please contact me at Jarvis.carol@gmail.co, or 301-299-4296 if you would like to help out.

—Carol Jarvis



HOUSE #1— ON THIS YEAR'S TOUR

WEATHERWOOD HOUSE

When Carmen and Sarah Facciobene expanded their family by 3 with the birth of triplets, the footprint of their inviting neighborhood colonial doubled to 5,200 sq. ft. This family oriented home is tastefully designed for both beauty and maximum efficiency. Original artwork and a creative mix of furnishings including family heirlooms accent each room.

Continued in Col. 2

JOY AND CONCERN

Please pray for Mary Squires, wife of Burt Squires, who is ill.

POTOMAC COUNTRY HOUSE TOUR

Continued from Col. 1

Of particular note is Kennedy era memorabilia from Sarah's grandfather, Brooks Hays, who was a Congressman from Arkansas, including photos with JFK and a Kennedy White House photo signed by Jacqueline.

TIME IS RUNNING OUT-

FOR THE INN AT PERRY CABIN

Our window of opportunity is closing on taking up the offer of a free night at the Inn at Perry Cabin. We would love to offer 2 relaxing nights in a luxurious signature room in the historic section of this lovely Inn. They have graciously offered to donate a second night's stay with our purchase of the first night.

If you can make a cash donation so we can take advantage of this generous offer, please send your donation to the Potomac Country House Tour, St. Francis Church, 10033 River Rd., Potomac, Md. 20854, Attn: Cindy Buck. Thank you for your help.

USED BOOK AND BAKE SALE

The Church of the Epiphany, 1317 G St. NW (Metro Center 13th and G Sts. exit) is having a **Used Book and Bake Sale** beginning Sunday, August 16, 12:15 to 3pm, and continuing Monday & Tuesday, 10am to 6pm. in the Parish Hall. All proceeds go to support Epiphany's ministries to the poor and workers in downtown Washington. For more information, please call 202-347-2635, or www.epiphanydc.org.

COMING UP AT ST FRANCIS

For more information, please visit our website at www.stfrancispotomac.org

SUNDAY, AUGUST 16

8:00am Holy Eucharist
10:00am Holy Eucharist
7:00 pm Youth to NIH Film Festival

TUESDAY, AUGUST 18

7:00 pm Centering Prayer—Undercroft
7:00 pm Youth to NIH Film Festival

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19

8:30 am Golf Outing Committee—Kincaid
10:00 am Holy Eucharist
5:00 pm Sounds deadline for 8/30
Please note the change in date

SUNDAY, AUGUST 23

8:00am Holy Eucharist
10:00am Holy Eucharist

TUESDAY, AUGUST 25

7:00 pm Centering Prayer—Undercroft

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26

10:00 am Holy Eucharist

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27

5:00 pm Sounds deadline for 9/06

SATURDAY, AUGUST 29

8:00 am Loaves & Fishes Preparation

SUNDAY, AUGUST 30

8:00 am Holy Eucharist
9:00 am Loaves & Fishes Delivery
10:00 am Holy Eucharist

The Scripture appointed for the Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost:
1 Kings 2:10-12; 3:3-14, Psalm 111 *or* Proverbs 9:1-6, Psalm 34:9-14; Ephesians 5:15-20,
John 6:51-58

The Scripture appointed for the Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost:
1 Kings 8:(1, 6, 10-11), 22-30, 41-43, Psalm 84 *or* Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18, Psalm 34:15-22;
Ephesians 6:10-20, John 6:56-69.

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