

First Half Program Notes

Bogoródytse Dyévo (*Rejoice, O Virgin Mary*)

Sergi Rachmaninoff was, by nature, a solemn, brooding introvert. Throughout his life he suffered extended bouts of severe depression, self-doubt and writer's block. Despite the toll these inner torments inflicted on his creative instinct, Rachmaninoff was able to transcend his legendary gloom and translate his soul-storm into a language of soaring lyricism. He became not only the last truly great representative of Russian late romanticism, but one of the half-dozen greatest piano virtuosos of the twentieth century.

Rachmaninoff remained stubbornly unconcerned with the new aesthetic trends in composition swirling around him, *e.g.*, Debussy and the Impressionists, the Serial music of Arnold Schoenberg and the Second Viennese School. Instead, all of his compositions are imbued with the spirit of Russian singing.

He left Russia in 1917, never to return. His beloved estate at Ivanovka that had provided him with the uninterrupted peace and tranquility he needed for composing was razed to the ground in the revolutionary maelstrom that ensued.

The *All-Night Vigil*, Op. 37 – popularly known as the *Vespers* – stands as the crowning achievement of the “Golden Age” of Russian Orthodox sacred choral music. During that period, which began in the 1880's and lasted until Communist takeover in 1917, dozens of Russian composers turned their creative energies to composing choral music on texts drawn from the Russian Orthodox liturgy.

Rachmaninoff created a monumental work that elevates the spirit by its lofty expressiveness and captivates the ear by its sheer beauty. As his musical vehicle, Rachmaninoff uses a living, breathing instrument – the human chorus – in a way that few composers have used it before or since. His choral writing makes full use of the rich sonority and timbral colors developed by his predecessors in the Russian choral school of the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries.

After giving due praise to God, the Orthodox Church always pays homage to the Virgin. *Bogoródytse Dyévo*, perhaps the most widely known hymn from Rachmaninoff's cycle, captures both the gentle simplicity of the angelic greeting and the awe-struck glorification of her response to God.

This hymn to the Mother of God recurs in many places in Orthodox worship. Here it is sung three times with great solemnity, and afterwards the priest gives a blessing, which brings *Vespers* to an end on a note of rejoicing. All of the lights are then dimmed and the doors are closed. GH

*Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos,
Mary full of Grace, the Lord is with Thee.
Blessed art Thou among women, and blessed
is the Fruit of Thy womb,
for Thou hast borne the Savior of our souls.*

Otche Nash (Our Father)

Alexander Gretchaninov was born in Moscow in 1864. Unlike Mozart, who climbed up on a piano bench at age five and began composing songs. Gretchaninov didn't even see a piano until he was 14. His father was a no-nonsense type who wanted his son to take over the family business. However, Gretchaninov, at age 17, enrolled in the Moscow Conservatory without his father's blessing or financial support. He remained there until moving on to St. Petersburg to begin studies in composition and orchestration with Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov. It was a fortunate association, for Rimsky-Korsakov provided his brilliant but destitute new pupil many extra hours of attention as well as a generous stipend.

In 1896, Gretchaninov returned to Moscow and began writing for the theater, the opera, and the Russian Orthodox Church. His choral works achieved considerable success within Russia, and his instrumental works enjoyed even wider acclaim. By 1910, he was considered a composer of such distinction that Tsar Nicolas II awarded him an annual pension. Even though the Revolution put an end to this largess seven years later, Gretchaninov remained in Russia until he emigrated to France in 1925, then to the United States in 1939 where he remained for the rest of his life, ultimately becoming an American citizen. He died in New York in 1956 and is buried outside the church at Rova Farms, a Russian enclave in Ocean County, New Jersey.

We sing Gretchaninoff's *Otche Nash*, a version of “The Lord's Prayer” in Church Slavonic, the liturgical language of many branches of Eastern Orthodoxy. NM

The Seal Lullaby

It is amazing to realize that during Rudyard Kipling's lifetime, that great English short-story writer, novelist, and poet went from being the unofficial Poet Laureate of Great Britain to being one of the most denounced poets in English literary history! In 1907, Kipling became the first Englishman to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature. By the time of his death in 1936, Kipling had compiled one of the most diverse collections of poetry in all of English literature. Today we recognize Rudyard Kipling as one of the best ballad writers of all time. Here are two Kipling ballads, in musical settings, that justify that claim, leaving no room for doubt.

Rudyard Kipling's poem “The Seal Lullaby” prefaces the story “The White Seal” from *The Jungle Book*, first published in magazines in 1893 and '94. “The White Seal” is the story of Kotic, a seal who saved his species by finding a beach hunters couldn't get to by land or sea. We sing “The Seal Lullaby” set to music by the popular contemporary composer Eric Whitacre.

Kipling (1865-1936) wrote *The Jungle Book* in a farm cottage near Brattleboro, Vermont, not far from his wife's family's estate. His tiny study and the quiet location suited him perfectly. He claimed that he blocked out the stories in his head, after which his pen took charge and he watched it begin to write.

Hundreds of Kipling's poems, ballads, and ditties have been set to music, so it is somewhat paradoxical that he himself was utterly tone deaf. One of Kipling's daughters wrote that her father admitted that God “had excluded all music from his make-up except the brute instinct for beat, as necessary for the manufacture of verse.”

Eric Whitacre follows a long line of noted composers who have set Kipling's poetry. Whitacre is widely known for his “Virtual Choir” projects on YouTube, stitching together individual voices from around the world in a cyber internet choir. YouTube has exposed Whitacre's music to a new audience and helped it gain an unprecedented popularity. Orpheus sang his *Lux Aurumque* during the Christmas season. GH

*Oh! Hush thee, my baby, the night is
behind us,
And black are the waters that sparkled
so green.
The moon, o'er the combers, looks
downward to find us,*

At rest in the hollows that rustle
between.

Where billow meets billow, then soft be
thy pillow,

Oh weary wee flipperling, curl at thy
ease!

The storm shall not wake thee, nor shark
overtake thee,

Asleep in the arms of the slow swinging
seas!

Danny Deever

Rudyard Kipling's poem *Danny Deever* deals with what, for the times, was an almost unimaginable subject matter – the description of a military execution, the hanging of a soldier, Danny Deever, in the presence of his garrison.

First published in a weekly, the *Scot's Observer*, in 1890, the poem was issued two years later in the Kipling collection, *Departmental Ditties, Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Verses*. Since its publication, it has been singled out as one of Kipling's outstanding works. It is the first of his poems to articulate the views and dialect of the ordinary soldier. The verses are written in a "question and answer" sequence, each verse beginning with questions posed by Files-on-Parade, a soldier in the ranks, and answered by his Color Sergeant.

Kipling's macabre masterpiece describes how a military execution was dealt with in the British Army in India in the 1880s: the infantry was paraded in "hollow square" formation, wheeled forward to face inwards in order to witness the execution. A gallows was at the center of the "hollow square." The condemned man was marched onto the parade ground, his coffin on a gun carriage in front of him. The execution is carried out and the garrison is quick-marched past the scaffold and off parade.

There are numerous musical settings of this remarkable poem. It is the Walter Damrosch version that is remembered today. Damrosch (1862-1950) published his famous setting in 1897. It was first performed by the American baritone David Bispham at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia in December of that year.

In his musical setting Damrosch completely captures the feeling of marching feet, the movement of soldiers in disciplined formation and the intense horror of the occasion. Little wonder that over the years, Danny Deever has been a concert favorite of baritones the likes of no less than John Charles Thomas, Laurence Tibbett and Leonard Warren.

GH

Ave Maria

Mascagni's immortal *Imtermezzo Sinfonico* from *Cavalleria Rusticana* provides the melody for this piece. The text, an *Ave Maria* by Piero Mazzoni, was set as a solo for a tenor or a soprano a decade or so after the opera's premiere, with the composer's blessing. Orpheus will sing Mascagni's immortal melody for you in a 4-part arrangement for men's voices by our own Michael Fraser.

When Pietro Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana* won first prize in a contest for one-act operas sponsored by the publishing house of Edoardo Sonzogno, it started a trend in Italian opera known as *verismo* (naturalism or realism). Later examples of *verismo* opera are Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* and Puccini's *La Bohème*. Mascagni and Puccini were fellow students at the Milan Royal Conservatory. Italy's two most prominent composers would remain life-long friends.

The electrifying debut of *Cavalleria Rusticana* took place on May 17, 1890 at the Teatro Costanzi in Rome. It created a sensation equaled by few other operas. The obscure, impoverished 27-year-old composer was suddenly catapulted to stardom. He took forty curtain calls! Outside the theater, thousands waited to acclaim him. In just two years *Cavalleria* had taken Paris, Berlin, London and New York by storm. This single opera made Mascagni famous and rich. In a never-ending attempt to prove that the tradition of Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti and Verdi was still a dynamic force in the world of music, Mascagni battled throughout his life on behalf of *italianità* and against the winds of modernism sweeping in from France and Germany. He wrote fourteen operas after *Cavalleria Rusticana*, several achieved only minor success. Passionately patriotic, he was bitterly opposed to his country's involvement in both world wars; a political naïf, Mascagni was denounced as a Bolshevik in 1920 and as a Fascist in the aftermath of World War II.

The seeds of the disaster that would overtake Italy were being sown. In 1940, the true magnitude of the nation's tragedy was about to emerge. Despite the warning signs, Mascagni continued to trust his hero. His dogged devotion to Mussolini remained intact. Mascagni composed works glorifying fascism and Il Duce, notably the opera *Nerone*. During World War II, the composer came on bad times. Arteriosclerosis reduced him to an invalid for the last few years of his life. Mascagni appeared as conductor for the last time in February, 1944 leading a single performance of *Cavalleria* in the same theater in which it had received its 1890 premiere. His property was confiscated and he was held in contempt for his avowed Fascist

sympathies. The last year of his life, 1945, was spent in poverty and disgrace in a small room at the Hotel Plaza in Rome. With few activities to fill his days and with visits from friends rarer as the war went on—others avoided him for his erstwhile Fascist connections—he was often alone and lonely.

Mascagni was never able to duplicate the success of his first opera. He once remarked, "It is a pity I wrote *Cavalleria* first. I was crowned before I became king!" Mascagni died August 2, 1945. A band played the *Imtermezzo* from *Cavalleria Rusticana* at his funeral.

GH

Hail Mary, mother and Saint,
Sustain the devout one who implores you.
As you walk by the river of sorrow
And faith, instill (this faith) in my heart.
O compassionate one, you who have suffered
so much.

See, Ah! See my pain.
In these cruel times, I embrace you
With an infinity of tears.
Ah! Do not abandon me
Hail Mary!

Look down on me and do not leave me,
O my holy Mother!
Look down on me and do not leave me,
O my holy Mother!
Look down on me and do not leave me,
Do not leave me.

The Anvil Chorus

Giuseppe Verdi set about composing his 17th opera, *Il Trovatore*, in November, 1852. Though probably long pondered and planned, the actual putting of music to paper is said to have taken place between the 1st and 29th of the month. Only twenty-eight days to write down the music of *Il Trovatore*? One can hardly believe it, but then the mysteries of so great a genius are not easily fathomed. It is certain that the full score was finished by the 14th of December. Rehearsals began immediately after Christmas.

Verdi had selected the *Teatro Apollo*, Rome's leading opera house during the 19th century, to stage the first performances of his *Il Trovatore*.

The opera received its premiere on January 19, 1853. And what an opening night it was! The eagerness of the Roman public to hear Verdi's new work was extraordinary. The Tiber had risen in flood, overflowed its banks and invaded the whole district near the theater. Even so, the public would not be deterred; lines began to form from eight o'clock in the morning. The Apollo was besieged by a great crowd, who despite

everything – increased prices for admission, the cold, the mud, their feet in water up till their ankles – squeezed, shoved and disputed in order to get places for that evening's performance. By midday the house was sold out!

The opening evoked frenzied excitement. The audience was overwhelmed. *Il Trovatore* was received with the greatest possible enthusiasm. And yet, some critics were harsh: "Bel canto has been ruined, to be replaced by sobs and shouts of rage."

The short-sighted critics failed to see that Verdi had turned away from earlier 19th century models toward more modern vocal conquests. Verdi, by virtue of his own innate, irrepressible Italian fury, had burst through the Victorian crinolines, antimacassars and eiderdown. *Il Trovatore* is a late flowering of the Italian romantic tradition possible only to one who had seen beyond it. Heroic singing had been born.

Il Trovatore has enjoyed uninterrupted success from the day of its first performance. From the *Teatro Apollo*, Verdi's remarkable expression in music of the romantic, hot-blooded drama of chivalry began its world. Its melodies are more widely known than perhaps those of any other opera. In spite of Enrico Caruso's famous dictum to the effect that all the opera requires is the four greatest singers in the world, and notwithstanding imitation, parody, inadequate singing and barrel organs, *Il Trovatore* has survived for a century and a half. That is because it is a work of immense verve, dramatic power and passionate expression, an explosion of emotional fire. It is the Verdi of forty working at white heat.

Each of the four acts has a title. Act II (La Gitana – the Gypsy) takes place at a gypsy camp on the slopes of a mountain in Biscay. It is dawn. A great fire is burning. As daylight grows brighter, a band of gypsies sings the famous *Anvil Chorus*. While working at their forges, they swing their hammers, bringing them down in rhythm with the music, the upper voices on the weak beats, the lower voices on the strong. The chattering 2/4 rhythm with an abundance of triangle was nothing new to the audiences of the day, but men striking anvils in alternation on stage? This was quite new to Italian opera in 1853. The percussive effects would have been sufficient to ensure the piece's popularity, but the tune itself, a lusty unison C-major refrain, is memorable. GH

*See how the clouds melt away
from the face of the sky when the sun shines,
its brightness beaming;
just as a widow, discarding her black robes,
shows all her beauty in brilliance gleaming.*

*So, to work now!
Lift up your hammers!
Who turns the Gypsy's day from gloom to
brightest sunshine?
His lovely Gypsy maid!*

*Fill up the goblets! New strength and courage
flow from lusty wine to soul and body.
See how the rays of the sun play and sparkle
and give to our wine gay new splendor.
So, to work now!
Who turns the Gypsy's day from gloom to
brightest sunshine?
His lovely Gypsy maid!*

Nessun Dorma

In 1911, Gustav Mahler died leaving his *Tenth Symphony* incomplete. In July 1924, Ferruccio Busoni died leaving incomplete the finale is most ambitious operatic project, *Doktor Faust*. In 1935, death would prevent Alban Berg from finishing the third act of *Lulu*. All are masterpieces of the 20th century, conceived and realized on the threshold of their composer's deaths. The same was to be the fate of Giacomo Puccini's final masterpiece, *Turandot*.

Toward the end of 1923, Puccini developed a violent cough and very painful sore throat, but, having always been a heavy smoker, he was not very concerned. By mid-November he had completed Act III of *Turandot* up to the torture scene; only the last act finale was lacking. Puccini's health continued to worsen. Always afraid of illness and terrified by death, he was finally forced to consult a specialist in Florence. The diagnosis was kept from him, but was given to his son, Tonio: throat cancer, too advanced to operate. It was decided that Puccini's only hope for recovery was to undergo radiation, a kind of treatment then in its infancy. In order to do so, he would have to travel to Brussels where the method was being pioneered at the *Institute de la Couronne*. Puccini took with him sketches of the finale –thirty-six pages in all – hoping to complete the last act while convalescing at the clinic. In *Turandot*, Puccini wanted beyond all else to glorify love as an all-conquering, exalting power. This idea was to find its apotheosis in the finale. What bitter irony of fate that he was unable to complete his dream. Puccini died at four o'clock in the morning on November 29, 1924.

The glorious lineage of Italian opera, dating from the second half of the seventeenth century onwards, had come to an end. Puccini died without musical heirs. There was then no new figure on the horizon giving promise of equal or similar gifts as a

great melodist, and no other has arisen since then to take the world by the ears.

Seventeen months after his death, Puccini's unfinished *Turandot* was scheduled to receive its world premiere at Italy's foremost opera house, Milan's *Teatro alla Scala*. The management of *La Scala* considered it politic to invite Italy's new fascist dictator, Benito Mussolini. *Il Duce* said he would attend on condition that the *Giovanezza*, the Italian counterpart to the Nazi *Horst Wessel Lied*, would be played before the start of the opera. But *Il Duce* had not reckoned on the powerful Arturo Toscanini: either *Turandot* would be performed without the *Giovanezza* or they would have to find another conductor! *La Scala's* management dared not replace their world famous conductor, nor could they postpone opening night to which critics from around the world had been invited. The political dictator was no match for the musical dictator. Toscanini won the day. There was no *Giovanezza* and no *Duce* to mar the baptism of Puccini's final masterpiece.

Opening night took place on April 25, 1926. The evening was dedicated to Puccini. The performance terminated when Toscanini laid down his baton, turned to face the audience and made the first and last public utterance in his life. In a voice hoarser than usual, he said: "Here at this point, the Maestro laid down his pen. Death on this occasion was stronger than art." Toscanini might have been speaking not just of Puccini's last work, but of Italian opera in general. Puccini left no Crown Prince. With him the glorious line from Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti and Verdi came to a conclusion. It is tempting to speculate whether the Great Tradition would have gone on had Puccini completed *Turandot* and produced more operas in his old age. Or was it inevitable that all would go on as it has. We will never know

Puccini's incomplete masterpiece necessitates an extremely strong protagonist. Along with Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, Calaf is the most important of Puccini's tenors. The night scene in the palace garden at the opening of Act III is one of the last supreme moments of heroic lyricism in the autograph of the score. A chorus of heralds offstage introduces the famous *Romanza* of the unknown Tartar Prince. *Nessun dorma* is based on the repetition of a *motivo* called "the theme of the Prince's name." GH

Heralds:

Turandot commands thus:

"Tonight no one must sleep in Peking!"

Distant Voices:

No one must sleep! No one must sleep!

Heralds:

*“Under the pain of death, the name of
the stranger must be revealed before
morning!”*

Distant Voices:

Under the pain of death!

Heralds:

“Tonight no one must sleep in Peking!”

Distant Voices:

No one must sleep! No one must sleep!

The Unknown Prince:

No one must sleep! No one must sleep!

You, too, oh Princess,

In your cold room

Look at the stars, that tremble

With love and with hope!

But my mystery is shut within me;

No one will know my name!

No, I will say it on your mouth

When the daylight shines!

And my kiss will break the silence

That makes you mine!

Distant Voices:

No one will know his name...

And, alas, we must die!

The Unknown Prince:

Vanish, oh night...

Set, your stars!

At dawn I will win!

I will win! I will win!

Second Half Program Notes

Cantique de Jean Racine

This work, originally for mixed chorus and organ, was written in 1865 by Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924). *Cantique* (Op. 11) won for him the first prize when he graduated from the École Niedermeyer – a school for church music in Paris founded by L. Niedermeyer, a failed opera composer albeit a moderately successful composer of vocal music and an influential music educator. After his *Requiem*, Op. 48, *Cantique* remains Fauré's most popular choral work. Its sober, limpid harmonies and pliant, unfolding melodic lines reveal Fauré's deep familiarity with the polyphonic masters of the 16th and 17th centuries. The text comes from a prayer by the 17th-century French dramatist, Jean Racine (1639-1699). GH

Word of God the most high, out sole hope eternal day of the earth and heavens, as we break the silence of the peaceful night, divine savior look down upon us.

Imbue us with the fire of thy great mercy so that hell itself will flee at the sound of your voice; disperse the sleep which leads our languishing souls to stray from the path of righteousness. O Christ, show your favor to your faithful people who have come together to worship you; receive the praises that they offer up to your immortal glory and may they come back laden with the gift of your grace.

Flight of the Bumblebee

Born into an aristocratic Russian family in 1844, Nikolai Andreyevich Rimsky-Korsakov displayed musical genius as a child. His parents considered such behavior beneath their social status, and insisted he study navigation and join the Russian Navy. Rimsky-Korsakov was encouraged to return to composing by an 1861 meeting with the magnetic Mily Balakirev, the central figure of a circle of young amateur Russian composers who embraced the folk music of their heritage. He wrote portions of his first symphony while on a 3-year naval cruise around the world, and composed a number of songs, symphonies, and other orchestral works over the next several years.

In 1871, buoyed by the strength of his early works, Rimsky-Korsakov accepted the position of professor of composition and orchestration at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. There he rigorously studied music theory and orchestration and

incorporated his training into new compositions, moving through Classical influences and forms back toward a distinctly Russian music.

With the death of Tchaikovsky, in 1893, Rimsky-Korsakov stepped into his former rival's position, writing for the Imperial Theatres. He wrote eleven operas over the next fifteen years. The middle opera of this period was *The Tale of Tsar Saltan*, premiered in 1900, based on a Russian fairy tale. *Flight of the Bumblebee* closes Act III, Scene 1, as an enchanted swan aids in transforming the tsar's unjustly exiled son into a bee so that he may secretly fly to visit his father.

Flight of the Bumblebee has since become famous in its own right, due to its frenzied pace of chromatic sixteenth notes. Originally written for violin, the solo has been performed on many instruments, including flute, clarinet, tuba, guitar, trumpet, trombone and others. In this presentation, the solo goes to young violinist Nicole Skaggs. Choir member Thomas Wentzel has created an arrangement wherein the men of Orpheus accompany the soloist with nonsense syllables and toots on their trusty kazoos, which they otherwise wield perennially in December performances of P.D.Q. Bach's *Good King Kong*. TW

Tiritomba

Napes – land of sunshine and blue skies that spread like a magic canopy over the sea – that sea which has been the inspiration for songs known the world over.

Non-native singers must first acquire the proper stylistic accent of Neapolitan before performing this music. They can be hindered in their desire to sing Neapolitan songs since several letters and letter groups do not represent the same sounds in Neapolitan that they do in Italian. The rich vibrant dialect of Naples is not a variant of modern Italian, but a distinct dialect with roots in medieval Latin and a literature that goes back many centuries.

The Neapolitan canzonetta *Tiritomba* has its roots in folk music. Over the years, it has stood the test of time to become a classic. Here, with sunshine in every note and the unique flavor of Naples, is Michael Fraser's arrangement of *Tiritomba*. GH

*In the evening, I went to the shore
To meet a pretty little gal,
White and red and curly-haired,
Full of life and cheer.*

Tiritomba floats like a vision in the air

*She was pretty, more than pretty,
She looked like the star of Love.
She was the nail that
Knows how to pierce the heart*

Tiritomba floats like a vision in the air

*I watch her and she laughs,
I speak to her and she responds.
I was a man who had now
Walked into the waves of love.*

Tiritomba floats like a vision in the air

Mamma

Italian composer, Cesare Andrea Bixio (1896-1978) was one of the most popular songwriters of the 30's, 40's and 50's. His hits included *Vivere*, *Parlami d'amore*, *Mariù*, *La Mia Canzone de Vento* and numerous others. The lyricist for most of his hits was Bruno Cherubini. Famous singers who performed Bixio's songs included: Beniamino Gigli, Tito Schipa, Ferruccio Tagliavini, Guisepppe De Stefano, Luciano Pavarotti, and Andrea Bocelli.

Orpheus will sing Bixio's famous 1941 canzone, *Mamma*, in an arrangement by our own Jim Filipek. JF

*When it becomes dark here
and the night overtakes the day,
images arise in my heart
of mother and son*

*Mamma, I am so happy
to be returning to you.
My songs tell you that this
is the most wonderful day for me!
Mamma, I am so happy...
Why should I live far away?*

*Mamma...
for you alone I sing!
Mamma...
You'll be with me, you won't be lonely any
more!
I love you so much!
These words of love*

which my heart sighs for you,
may be old-fashioned...

Mamma...

but you are my loveliest song!

You are life itself

And while life shall last I shall not leave you
again.

I can feel your weary band seeking my golden
curls

Your failing voice no longer

Sings the old lullabies

Today I want to clasp

Your white bead to my heart!

Mamma...

For you alone I sing, etc.

...Mamma...never again! (will I leave you)

Musical Risotto

When Sons of Orpheus traveled to Germany in June 2008 to sing in the Leipzig International Choral Festival, they paid homage to Johann Sebastian Bach in the same Thomaskirche (St. Thomas Church) where the great man wrote and performed much of his glorious music while serving as cantor/music director from 1722 until 1750. In addition, they sang in the home where Felix Mendelssohn lived with his family during the 1840's, then joined nine other choirs at St. Nicholas Church to sing two selections from *Elijah*, Mendelssohn's dramatic oratorio.

Jonathan Willcocks, who conducted the massed choirs, was best known as an important English composer and choral director of church music. But he also had a lighter side, as evidenced by *Musical Risotto* (1992), his delicious stew of almost 60 Italian musical terms served up in the style of Rossini, Handel, and Beethoven. You'll hear *piano* (softly), *forte* (loudly), *crescendo* (louder), and *diminuendo* (softer). And you'll be able to guess at others like *calmato* (calmly) and *ma passionato* (but passionately). But watch out for those more obscure ones like *strepitoso* (noisy, boisterous), *martellato* (hammered, strongly marked), and *affretando* (quickenning, accelerating)! MF

Hands Off Please (A Tribute to Victor Borge)

Born Børge Rosenbaum in Copenhagen into a Jewish family of musicians, Victor Borge (1909-2000) was a comedian, conductor, and pianist, affectionately known as the "Clown Prince of Denmark." A former prodigy who gave his first piano recital when

he was eight years old, Borge was playing a concert in Sweden in 1940 when the Nazis occupied Denmark. He managed to escape on the last neutral ship to make it out of Petsamo, Finland and arrived in America with only twenty dollars. Even though Borge did not speak a word of English upon arrival, he quickly learned English by watching movies.

By the end of World War II he had developed many of his trademarks, including repeatedly announcing his intent to play a piece but getting "distracted" by something or other, making comments about the audience, or discussing the usefulness of Chopin's "Minute Waltz" as an egg timer. Among his famous bits is the "Phonetic Punctuation" routine, in which he recited a story with full punctuation as exaggerated onomatopoeic sounds, and his "Inflationary Language," where he "inflated" all words that sounded like numbers, so that "forehead" became "fivehead," etc.

In his stage shows in later years, he often included his classic "Hands Off" segment with Marilyn Mulvey, a talented coloratura soprano and an alumna of City Opera performances. She would try to sing an aria and would manage to keep a straight face while Borge would react and interrupt. After this routine, the spotlight would fall upon the "straightman," and Mulvey would sing a serious number with Borge accompanying in the background. CD

Cowboy Classics

A Tribute to Arizona's Centennial

We celebrate Arizona's centennial with a group of songs that are closely associated with the Copper state. Arizona is loved the world over for its blazing drama, its legends, and its music. Cowboy songs are one of the most important parts of the folk music of Arizona. We have strong cowboy ties. Tucson is a mecca of Western music. Just down the road a-piece, is the birth place of many legendary Western movies: Old Tucson Studios. The songs and stories of Arizona, its history, its memorable movies excite the imagination enormously.

A hundred years ago, the reality of hardships and lawlessness in the Arizona Territory were matters of life and death. Our forefathers and mothers had to fight to do whatever was necessary to survive. And in so doing, they helped to shape the American character. Their struggle for existence has captured the imagination of the world.

Sadly, the Old West has all but vanished, lost to us a little more each day, drowned in country music and the asphalt ocean of the New West. Lost, but not forgotten.

Over the years Orpheus has collected and performed a large repertoire of classic and modern Cowboy songs and ballads, all of them mirrors of life in the Old West, fleeting reminders of an altogether unique chapter in American history. The songs we sing for you today are our tribute to a hundred years of Arizona statehood. GH

Ghost Riders in the Sky

Stan Jones was born on June 5, 1914, ninety miles south of Tucson in Douglas, Arizona. He learned the fundamentals of guitar playing from Arizona cowboys.

When Stan Jones and an old cowpoke named Cap Watts went ridin' out one day on the D. Hill Ranch in southern Arizona, there was unrest in the air. Ominous cloud silhouettes grouping, regrouping, backlit with yellow and sun-red accents, looked to the imaginative mind like nothing more than a line of riders racing through the ragged skies. Stan Jones and Cap Watts began to tie down the blades on a windmill when masses of dark, fast-moving clouds appeared on the horizon forming spectral figures. Cap Watts warned prophetically, "Ghost riders."

While working as a park ranger in Death Valley in 1949, Stan Jones acted as a guide for movie locations for a film starring John Wayne. With some reluctance, he sang his own special brand of campfire music for the Hollywood group. *Ghost Riders in the Sk* changed Stan Jones' life overnight!

Later that year he appeared in the Gene Autry movie, *Riders in the Sky* that featured his song. He later composed music for John Ford's *Wagonmaster* and the title song for the John Wayne classic *The Searchers* in 1956. He died in 1963 and is buried in his hometown, Douglas, Arizona. GH

Tumbling Tumbleweeds

The celebrated Bob Nolan of cowboy and western music fame was born in the isolated wilds of the Canadian province of New Brunswick in 1908. While he was still a boy his family moved to Tucson, Arizona, where Bob attended school. He excelled at track and field events while he was a student at Tucson High School from 1924 to 1927. He was a pole vaulter on the Badger track team.

In 1937 he became a drifter and explored the American West, often hopping freight trains. He worked for a time as a lifeguard on the beach at Venice, California. In 1931, Bob Nolan joined a singing group, the Rocky Mountaineers, headed by a young man from Ohio named Leonard Slye who later rode to

fame as Roy Rogers! In the fall of 1932, Bob left that job to work as a caddy at the Bel Air Country Club. One wet and windy November afternoon there was no golf and, confined to his apartment, he stared out the window. Leaves from the trees were being tumbled down the street by gusty winds. It was a sense of being confined that rainy day that inspired Bob Nolan to write one of the greatest of all western songs, a philosophical statement about his own propensity for drifting along, *Tumbling Tumbleweeds*.

In late 1933, back with Roy Rogers and the members of a newly formed group, The Sons of the Pioneers, *Tumbling Tumbleweeds* became the group's theme song for their daily radio show. GH

Cool Water

Here's another western classic by Bob Nolan who has been called the finest songwriter ever to appear in country music. Nolan is credited with inventing the sound and style of western harmony singing.

The spell of the desert and its power of the mirage was forever in the soul of Bob Nolan. In it he found beauty and solace. While still a student at Tucson High School, Nolan wrote a poem. Twenty-five years later his composition *Cool Water* was recognized in a national survey as the "best known song of the American West."

The image of the old prospector and his mule Dan, the shimmering heat of the desert, the teasing, taunting mirage, the insistent calls for "water, water, cool, clear water" are vivid and haunting.

Bob Nolan died of a heart attack on June 16, 1980. In accordance with his wishes, his ashes were scattered out on the desert. GH

26 Men

The actor, screenwriter and composer Harold S. "Hal" Hopper was born in Oklahoma on November 11, 1912. The multi-talented Hal Hopper played Corporal Clark in the TV Series *The Adventures of Rin Tin Tin*, and he wrote the show's theme song! He portrayed a chauffeur in *Kitten with a Whip* starring Ann-Margaret. Hopper composed the song *There's No You*, recorded three times by Frank Sinatra. His screenwriting credits include Russ Meyer's *Lorna* (1964)—in which he acted as well—and *Shalako* (1968), which starred Sean Connery and Brigitte Bardot. Hal Hopper also wrote the theme songs for the TV series *Colt 45* and *Judge Roy Bean*. Hopper acted in eight episodes of the TV series *26 Men*. He also composed the series' theme song! A thirty-minute show, which first aired in November 1956, *26 Men* ran for 78 episodes and helped to acquaint a whole new generation of Americans with a colorful chapter in Arizona history.

Formed in April 1860 by Provisional Governor Dr. Lewis S. Owings, the Arizona Territorial Rangers were first headquartered in the gold mining town, Pinos Altos, in what is now New Mexico. Miners and the mining camp were under constant threat from the Apaches and the occasional band of Navajos. When the Territory joined the Confederacy, the men that had formed the Arizona Rangers joined the Confederate Army and the rangers disbanded until after the Civil War. Following the war, many former Texas Rangers and returning soldiers joined the rugged organization. Restricted to no more than 26 men, these dedicated lawmen ranged throughout the Arizona Territory and across neighboring borders, including Old Mexico. As one of the original members put it, "The reason there was only 26 of us was because the Territory couldn't afford no more." The Arizona Rangers were commissioned to eliminate lawlessness in the Territory in preparation for statehood, which was finally achieved on February 14, 1912. Although it was a tall order, they seldom failed. The Arizona Rangers made thousands of arrests but lost only one man in the line of duty. Disbanding for good in 1909, the Arizona

Rangers are credited today with helping to bring law and order to the old west.

Here is a Maurice Hill choral arrangement of Hal Hopper's *This is the Story of 26 Men*, one of the best theme songs of all the TV westerns. GH

3:10 to Yuma

One of the least-known but most respected composers in film, George Duning, was born in 1908 in Richmond, Indiana. He attended the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music where he studied composition with the influential teacher and composer, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco. After leaving the Conservatory, he quickly moved from classical to popular music. Duning joined the musical staff at Columbia Pictures after he mustered out of the Navy in 1946. Over the next 15 years, he scored an average of seven films a year! Although Duning never won an Oscar, he earned five nominations. Among his colleagues, Duning was considered one of the finest creative talents in the studio business. He died in the year 2000 in San Diego.

One of his well-regarded scores is from the *noir* western, *3:10 to Yuma*, scripted by Elmore Leonard. Filmed right here at Old Tucson Studios, *3:10 to Yuma* was released in U.S. theaters on August 7, 1957, by Columbia Pictures. The film was produced in a period when the time of the Great Westerns was coming to an end. As such, it represents an important turning point in the history of the genre. *3:10 to Yuma* is also remembered for the memorable George Duning theme song sung by a man we will forever identify with other classics like *Rawhide*, *Mule Train*, *Do Not Forsake Me*, *Cool Water*, and yes – even *Blazing Saddles*, the one and only, Frankie Lane.

Now, to sing *3:10 to Yuma* for you, please welcome our own multi-talented singer-composer, the gifted and versatile Jim Hogan. GH