



May 8, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -- HANDEL CHOIR OF BALTIMORE

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THE HANDEL CONNECTION!
HANDEL CHOIR CELEBRATES 75TH ANNIVERSARY

There's no better time than Handel Choir's 75th anniversary to celebrate Handel's amazing musical contributions and influence. It's simply astonishing, the pervasive "Handel connection"!

Through a remarkable outpouring of support from patrons, long-time and new supporters, board members, singers and orchestra players, Handel Choir is proud to announce its 2009-2010 season. Collaborations with partner Baltimore arts organizations make the season even more engaging, as we celebrate Handel Choir's 75th anniversary with a four-concert series.

I. October 18, 2009 Collaboration with Baltimore Chamber Orchestra in music by Mendelssohn.

Leopold Mozart	Toy Symphony
Mendelssohn	Psalm 115, Op. 31 Nicht unserm Namen, Herr (Not unto us, Lord), <i>Verleih uns Frieden gnädiglich</i> (Grant us peace)
Beethoven	Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67

Clara Rottsohlk *soprano*
Jeffrey Fahnestock *tenor*
Phillip Collister *baritone*
Markand Thakar *conductor*

With a combined 102-year history of providing music performances to Baltimore audiences, HCB and BCO join for their third collaboration. We honor Mendelssohn's 200th anniversary (b. 1809) and the role his music played in Handel Choir's founding with two works composed in this prodigy's early twenties. And then, well, there's nothing quite like Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.

Pre-concert discussion with WBJC's Jonathan Palevsky.



II. December 12 and 13, 2009 Handel's *Messiah* – two performances in two locations with period instruments

1. Saturday, December 12 at 8pm, St. Ignatius Church, Baltimore 21202
2. Sunday, December 13 at 4pm, The Church of the Redeemer, Baltimore 21210

Messiah's first performance in Dublin, 1741, set in motion the popularization of oratorios throughout English-speaking cultures. Enjoy this Handel Choir annual holiday tradition!

Katharine Dain *soprano*
Ian Howell *countertenor*
Steven Brennfleck *tenor*
Craig Phillips *bass*
Melinda O'Neal *conductor*

Pre-concert lecture by Andrew Talle, Department of Musicology, Peabody Conservatory of The Johns Hopkins University.

III. April 18, 2010 British/American Connection – a music extravaganza, including Vaughan Williams' exquisite G minor Mass for *a cappella* double chorus and soli.

Britten	Antiphon
Vaughan Williams	Mass in G minor (double chorus and soli)
Howells	Rhapsody No. 3, Op. 17 for organ
Tavener	Funeral Ikos
Ives	Psalm 67
Thompson	Bitter-Sweet, Alleluia

and selected British and American folk songs

Handel Choir & Chandos Singers
Jonathan Moyer *organ, piano*
Melinda O'Neal *conductor*

Our great 19th- and 20th-century American and British choral traditions were ignited by Handel in the 18th century. Here are astounding modern fruits of Handel's legacy.

Pre-concert lecture by Richard Giarusso, Department of Musicology, Peabody Conservatory of The Johns Hopkins University.

IV. April 30 and May 1, 2010 A co-production with American Opera Theatre: two staged performances of Handel's final oratorio, *Jephtha*, with period instruments.

Forced to stop several times due to impending blindness, Handel composed his final oratorio *Jephtha* (based on the Old Testament's Book of Judges) in his last days. Choose one of these two staged performances to experience this most powerful and human of Handel oratorios.

THE
HANDEL CHOIR
OF BALTIMORE



Melinda O'Neal
Artistic Director &
Conductor

Jephtha	Tony Boutté
Storge	Sophie Louise Roland
Iphis	Emily Noel
Hamor	Andrew Rader
Zebul	Adonis Abuyen

Chandos Singers & Ignoti Dei Baroque Orchestra
Timothy Nelson *artistic director*
Melinda O'Neal *conductor*

MORE INFORMATION

There's no better time than Handel Choir's 75th anniversary to celebrate Handel's amazing musical contributions and influence. It's simply astonishing, the pervasive Handel connection!

Our first concert celebrates both the founding of Handel Choir and Handel's influence on Mendelssohn. Before Handel Choir was established, the organizers sang Mendelssohn's *Elijah* for a national conference held in Baltimore — Mendelssohn's music provided the springboard for the formation of the Handel Choir! Moreover, he was an avid student of Handel's music. We are pleased to perform Mendelssohn's Psalm 115 and *Verleih uns Frieden gnädiglich* (Grant us peace) with Baltimore Chamber Orchestra in celebration of these Handel-Mendelssohn connections.

Every year since 1935 Handel Choir has performed Handel's glorious *Messiah*. Once again we offer *Messiah* to our audiences, now in our unique-to-Baltimore performances with period instruments (instruments or replicas of instruments used during Handel's day) and in two intimate venues, St. Ignatius Church and Church of the Redeemer.

Our third concert celebrates Handel's influence on his 19th- and 20th-century English-speaking successors: British composers Britten, Vaughan Williams and Howells; and American composers Ives, Thompson and Copland. Plus we will perform a delightful selection of folk songs arranged by British and American composers.

Handel's hallmark – the popularization of the English oratorio – led to the founding of oratorio societies throughout Europe and America, including Handel Choir of Baltimore. We are proud, for our final event of the season, to join American Opera Theatre in presenting a staged version of Handel's final Old Testament oratorio, *Jephtha*, with period instruments.

Music is an irrepressible expression of the human spirit. Handel certainly understood this. Join us for our 75th anniversary celebration of this amazing legacy.

– Melinda O'Neal

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The Handel Choir of Baltimore is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization