

Programming for a Thematic Choral Concert
Louisiana Music Educators Association
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Definitions

Theme – a unifying or dominant idea, motif, etc., as in a work of art; in music, a principal melodic subject in a musical composition; a short melodic subject from which variations are developed

Program – to schedule

Thematic Program – a (choral) concert designed or created around a central idea or thought

Questions

- What is a thematic program?
- Why program thematically?
- What are some advantages to thematic programming?
- What are some disadvantages to thematic programming?

Examples of/Approaches to Thematic Programming

**VANCOUVER
CHAMBER CHOIR**

SOPRANOS
Kathleen Allan
Beth Buono
Catherine Laub
Lorraine Reinhardt
Madeline Lucy Smith

ALTOS
Grace Chan
Fabiana Katz
Karen Mang
Maria Mayson
Jennifer McLaren

TENORS
Gordon Crozier
Mark De Silva
Tom Ellis
William George
Grant Wutzke

BASSES
Steven Bellanger
Cameron Haney
Paul Nash
Larry Nickel
Bill Vermeulen

**ASSOCIATE
CONDUCTOR**
John William Trotter

VANCOUVER CHAMBER CHOIR
STEPHEN SMITH, PIANO
JON WASHBURN, MASTER CONDUCTOR

WITH

CHRISTOPHER CHENG (HONG KONG), SYMPOSIUM CONDUCTOR
WEI CHENG (COLUMBUS, OH), SYMPOSIUM CONDUCTOR
DERRICK CHRISTIAN (VANCOUVER, BC), SYMPOSIUM CONDUCTOR
CHRIS KRAMPE (LAWRENCE, KS), SYMPOSIUM CONDUCTOR
ANDREW SCHMIDT (PRINCETON, NJ), SYMPOSIUM CONDUCTOR

Musical Circles: Famous Families and Friends
Final Concert of the 32nd National Conductors' Symposium

PROGRAMME

I. A. Flemish Fraternity

El grillo - Andrew Schmidt
Joachim des Prez
(c. 1450-1521)
Queen dicest homines - Derrick Christian
Adrian Willaert
(1490-1562)
Oja o che bos eschof - Christopher Cheng
Orlando di Lasso
(1532-1594)
Kathleen Allan, Jennifer McLaren, William George, Bill Vermeulen

II. Venetian Connections

Magnificat - Jon Washburn
Andrea Gabrieli
(c.1520-1586)
Miserere mei, Deus - Christopher Cheng
Giovanni Gabrieli
(c.1555-1612)
Vater unser, der du bist im Himmel - Chris Krampe
Heinrich Schütz
(1584-1672)

III. Scarlatti Circles

Ereliste Deo - Wei Cheng
Alessandro Scarlatti
(1660-1723)
Plorens, fill breuel - Andrew Schmidt
Giacomo Carissimi
(1605-1674)
Kathleen Allan, soprano
Laudate pueri - Derrick Christian
Domenico Scarlatti
(1685-1757)

INTERMISSION

IV. Bach and his Sons

Kyrie eleison (Missa Brevis in A, BWV 234) - Chris Krampe
Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)
Lorraine Reinhardt, Grace Chan, Mark De Silva, Bill Vermeulen
El miserere (Magnificat) - Christopher Cheng
Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach
(1714-1788)
Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme - Andrew Schmidt
Johann Christoph Friedrich Bach
(1732-1795)

V. Haydn Seek

Credo in unum Deum - Chris Krampe
Josef Haydn
(1732-1809)
Tenebrae factae sunt - Jon Washburn
Michael Haydn
(1737-1806)
Magnificat K.193 - Wei Cheng
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

VI. The Schumann Triangle

O schnee Nacht, Op.92 No.1 - Jon Washburn
Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)
Abendfeier in Venedig - Wei Cheng
Clara Schumann
(1819-1896)
Zigeunerleben, Op.29 No.3 - Derrick Christian
Robert Schumann
(1810-1856)
Madeline Lucy Smith, Lorraine Reinhardt, Fabiana Katz, Gordon Crozier, Paul Nash

*We wish to acknowledge
the following foundations for
generously supporting this year's
National Conductors'
Symposium*

The Hamber Foundation
Heathcliff Foundation
The Wolfrige Foundation

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**VOLUNTEER FOR THE
VANCOUVER CHAMBER CHOIR**

Volunteering for the Vancouver Chamber Choir is rewarding. Not only does it bring you closer to the music, but it makes you part of the event. You can be involved behind the scenes by helping in the office or assisting at concerts with front lobby activities. In return, we give you a learning opportunity, the appreciation of giving your time to the arts community, plus complimentary admission to a Choir performance.

For more information, please call Karen at 604-738-6872 or email info@vancouverchamberchoir.com.

YOUTH TICKET PROGRAM

The Vancouver Chamber Choir is pleased to offer the Youth Ticket Program - affordable tickets to some of Canada's finest choral concerts. Students and youth may purchase rush tickets to Vancouver Chamber Choir regular season performances for \$10 at the concert venue, one hour before the concert starts.

The Youth Ticket Program is available to:
STUDENTS:

Any student with valid student ID, no age restriction

YOUTH:

Anyone aged 26 or under, with valid ID

Youth Ticket Program is not valid with any other offer. Special rates are outside.

*In order to sustain
the mood, it is best to
hold your applause until
the end of each set.*

Bluegreen Productions Inc.
Stage Management
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ROMANCE TO REQUIEM with Susan Graham, Special Guest Artist

Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis, Santa Fe
August 10, 8pm

Cathedral Church of St John, Albuquerque
August 11, 4pm

*The August 10 performance is sponsored in part by
Los Alamos National Bank.*



REVECY VENIR DU PRINTEMPS

Claude Lejeune (1528-1600)

TOUTES LES NUITS AU JOLY JEU DU POUSSE AVANT

Clément Janequin (ca. 1485-ca. 1558)

CALME DES NUITS LES FLEURS ET LES ARBRES Ô NUIT

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)
Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683-1764)

TROIS CHANSONS DE CHARLES D'ORLÉANS

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

1. Dieu qu'il la fait bon regarder
2. Quand j'ai ouy le tambourin
3. Yver vous n'êtes qu'un villain

FROM HUIT CHANSONS FRANÇAISES

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

1. Ah! mon beau laboureur
2. Pïlons l'orge
3. La belle se siet au pied de la tour
4. Les tisserands

INTERMISSION

REQUIEM

Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986)

1. Requiem Aeternam
2. Kyrie
3. Domine Jesu Christe
4. Sanctus
5. Pie Jesu
6. Agnus Dei
7. Lux Aeterna
8. Libera Me
9. In Paradisum

Susan Graham, *mezzo-soprano*
Jonathan Dimmock, *organ*
Dana Winograd, *cello*

Hymns Program

- Marching to Zion
Text: Isaac Watts and Robert Lowry/Music: Robert Lowry
arr. John Ferguson
- This Is My Father's World
Text: Maltbie D. Babcock/Music: Franklin L. Shepherd
arr. Paul Christiansen
- Festival Piece on ST. ANNE
Text: Isaac Watts/Music: William Croft
arr. Eugene Butler
- Lead Me, Lord
Text: Psalm 5:8, 4:8/Music: Samuel Sebastian Wesley
arr. Frank Sargent
- Take My Life
Text: Frances Ridley Havergal/Music: H. A. Cesar Malan
arr. Allan Robert Petker
- When I Survey the Wondrous Cross
Text: Isaac Watts/Music: Lowell Mason
arr. Gilbert Martin
- Jesus Paid it All
Text: Elvina M. Hall/Music: John T. Grape
arr. Robert Sterling
- Jesus Loves Me
Text: Anna B. Warner/Music: William B. Bradbury
arr. John Ferguson
- Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing
Text: Robert Robinson/Music: Melody from Wyeth's *Repository*
arr. Howard Don Small
- My Shepherd Will Supply My Need
Text: Isaac Watts (Psalm 23)/Music: Walker's *Southern Harmony*, 1835
arr. Mack Wilberg
- Psalms 148
Text: Paraphrased by Francis Ralph Gray/Music: *Geistliche Kirchengesang*
Gustav Holst
- There's a Wideness in God's Mercy
Text: F. W. Faber
Maurice Bevan
- The Old Hundredth Psalm Tune
Text: William Kethe/Music: *Genevan Psalter*, 1551
Ralph Vaughan Williams

Jackson Berkey

- Homage to Thomas Campion
Trumpet Solo with Piano Accompaniment
- INGs
- Reminiscing
Counting and Dancing
Mourning
Building
Morphing
Caressing and Sighing
Waiting
Dancing and Counting
Woodwind Quartet (Flute, Oboe, Bassoon, Piano)
- Solitude
Horn Solo with Piano Accompaniment
- PIANO MUSIC OF JACKSON BERKEY
- Homage to Emily Dickinson
Trumpet/Trombone Duet with Piano Accompaniment
- American Journey
Sacramento ~ Sis Joe
Black is the Colour
Tenting Tonight
Silent Tents
Amazing Grace
Hold On!
Mixed Choir with Strings, Percussion, and Piano

Revolutionary Texts and Music

The Star Spangled Banner

arr. Lloyd Pfautsch

Benjamin Franklin's 13

Jackson Berkey

Seven Ghosts

Libby Larsen

I. Grace and Glory

Chester

William Billings

David's Lamentation
Manchester

Politics & Hope

Elisabeth Greene

~ *premiere performance* ~

The Testament of Freedom

Randall Thompson

- I. The God who gave us life
- II. We have counted the cost
- III. We fight not for glory
- IV. I shall not die without a hope

Late 19th Century American Poets / Authors

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882)

Longfellow's Carol

Jonathan Miller

world premiere

The Day Is Done

Daniel Gawthrop

Paul Revere's Ride

John Biggs

Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)

Walden Recessional

Jonathan Santore

Acquaintance with Nature
Prologue

Gwyneth Walker

Mornings

Dry, Hazy June Weather

The First Star is Lit

Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

A Procession Winding Around Me

Jeffrey Van

I. By The Bivouac's Firtful Flame

II. Beat! Beat! Drums!

III. Look Down Fair Moon

IV. Reconciliation

Sing Me to Heaven

Daniel Gawthrop

Sing me to God...

Gloria

Jan Sandström

Wrap me in song...

Ubi Caritas

Ola Gjeilo

The Music of Living

Dan Forrest

If you would comfort me...

Where charity and love are, God is there.
The love of Christ has gathered us together.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Sure on This Shining Night

Morten Lauridsen

There Will Be Rest

Frank Tichelli

Let us revere and love the living God.

And from a sincere heart let us love one another.
Amen

If you would win my heart...

How lovely is thy dwelling place
From *A German Requiem*

Johannes Brahms

With a Lily in Your Hand

Eric Whitacre

Arise Shine

Dan Forrest

Amor de mi Alma

Randall Stroope

I was born to love only you

Sing me to Heaven...

My soul has formed you to its measure;
I want you as a garment for my soul.

The Heart's Reflection

Daniel Elder

Your very image is written on my soul;
Such indescribable intimacy
I hide even from you.

My Flight for Heaven

Blake Henson

All that I have, I owe to you,
For you I was born, for you I live,
For you I must die, and for you
I give my last breath.

See the Chariot at Hand

R Vaughan Williams

Special Thanks to:

Wilshire Baptist Church

Doug Haney

Sarah Stafford

“Side by Side” : A Comparison of European and American Music”

University Chorus

University of Oklahoma

April 27, 1993

David Guess, Conductor

COMPOSER COMP. DATE	COMPOSITION	
François-Joseph Gossec (1734-1829)	“Te Deum”	1779
William Billings (1746-1800)	“Modern Music”	c. 1781
John Antes (1740-1811)	“In Joyful Hymns of Praise”	1790
Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)	“Kyrie” from Paukenmesse	1796
Oliver Holden (1765-1844)	“Chester”	1841
Felix Mendellsohn (1809-1847)	“Richte mich Gott”	1844
Gabriel Faure (1845-1924)	“Tantum Ergo”	1894
F. Milius Christiansen (1871-1955)	“Beautiful Savior”	1920
William Walton (1902-1983)	“Set Me As A Seal Upon Thine Heart”	1938
Randall Thompson (1899-1984)	“Alleluia”	1940
Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)	“Jubilate Deo”	1961
Aaron Copland (1900-1990)	“Ching-A-Ring Chaw”	1952

Programming the Choral Concert

General Considerations

- Appropriate level of difficulty
- Quality of music
- Quality of text
- “Shotgun” vs. sets
- Purpose/audience

Musical Variety

- Historical
- Compositional Style
- Voicing
- Instrumentation
- Length
- Mode

Text

- Similar Sources
 - Psalms
 - Same poet
 - Same nationality
 - Same language

Thematic Connections

- Nature
- Love
- Death
- Women’s Names
- Political
- Idea
- Color

Music

- Style
 - Spirituals
 - Early American hymn arrangements
 - Renaissance motets
 - Romantic part-songs
 - Nationality
 - Genre
- Order
 - Historical
 - Heavy vs. Light
 - Other

Finding Music

- Composers’ works lists
- ChoralNet website
- Personal file
- University library
- Choral Journal articles
- Convention reading sessions
- Music stores
- Colleagues
- Choral textbooks

Toward livelier orchestra programs: Pick a theme

Scott Cantrell, Classical Music Critic, The Dallas Morning News

Published: 20 June 2014 06:06 PM

Orchestras naturally rely on audience-favorite repertory — Beethoven symphonies and Rachmaninoff piano concertos — to sell tickets. Traditionally, they've also relied on star soloists to fill concert-hall seats.

Today, fewer and fewer soloists have widespread recognition, let alone star power. In fact, you can pretty much narrow the list to five artists. Itzhak Perlman is on the downside of his career and no longer commands absolute technical security. That leaves pianist Lang Lang, cellist Yo-Yo Ma, soprano Renée Fleming and violinist Joshua Bell.

While they draw audiences, their fees, upward of \$100,000 per performance, are way above most other performers'. They're what the business world calls loss leaders, products advertised below cost to lure buyers into stores. That only goes so far. Clearly, another audience hook is needed.

Outside cities such as New York and Boston, even high-profile guest conductors have little drawing power, and they're too busy in major centers to bother with the likes of Dallas. Whatever you may think of the Los Angeles Philharmonic's much-hyped Gustavo Dudamel — at least on DVDs and CDs he strikes me as only superficially exciting — he's not going to appear with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra.

Record companies no longer aggressively market classical musicians. And America no longer has even one mass-market magazine devoted to classical music, something akin to England's Gramophone and BBC Music. Half the time, our local classical-music radio station, WRR, doesn't even identify performers or compositions. Artists such as the tenor Jonas Kaufmann and the pianist András Schiff have their followings, but little widespread name recognition.

Orchestras need to find a new marketing thrust — to some extent, in fact, new identities. A good place to start is more-imaginative programming.

The old overture-concerto-symphony model, with no real relationship among the pieces, gives no identity to a concert, no marketing hook. It's just another "one from column A, one from column B" mishmash. Slapping alliterative labels for single pieces on concerts — "Marvelous Mozart," "Bombastic Beethoven," "Ravishing Ravel" — is pretty lame.

By contrast, truly thematic programs can give concerts real identity — and, if smartly done, make orchestras more a part of a city's intellectual discussion.

Consider this triptych, which the Seattle Symphony performed in May at Carnegie Hall's "Spring for Music" festival: *Become Ocean*, by contemporary American composer John Luther Adams; Edgard Varèse's *Déserts*; and Debussy's *La mer*.

Yes, two out of three pieces are that s-c-a-r-y modern music. Much as Dallas likes to think it's with-it, onto every new trend, classical audiences and presenters here largely consider anything newer than Rachmaninoff as welcome as fire ants. So maybe that particular program wouldn't fly.

But look at the intellectual structure of that program: two pieces about oceans framing one about deserts (both physical and metaphoric, according to the composer); two of the four elements, earth and water; two composers variously influenced by Debussy.

Let's consider some other programs that could fly here. Many of these pieces haven't been performed by the DSO within memory or ever.

"Water Music" — Mendelssohn: Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage. Tobias Picker: Old and Lost Rivers — don't worry: it's gorgeous. Britten: Sea Interludes from Peter Grimes. And, yes, Debussy's *La mer*.

"At the Ballet" — Beethoven: Creatures of Prometheus Overture. Stravinsky: Apollo, another beautiful piece. Ravel: *Daphnis et Chloé*, complete, with chorus, with supertitles delineating the action.

"American Ballets," also with supertitles — Barber: *Souvenirs*. Philip Glass: *Glass Pieces*. Copland: *Appalachian Spring*.

"Pictures," with projected images — Rachmaninoff: *The Isle of the Dead*. Gunther Schuller: *Seven Studies on Themes of Paul Klee*. Musorgsky-Ravel: *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

"Night Music" — Mozart: *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*. Britten: *Nocturne*, an amazing piece for tenor, seven solo instruments and strings. Debussy: *Nocturnes*, with chorus.

"Novel Concertos" — Debussy: *Dances sacrée et profanes*, harp and strings. Vaughan Williams: *Tuba Concerto*. Michael Tippett: *Concerto for double string orchestra*. Poulenc: *Concerto for organ, strings and timpani*.

Thematic programming could also be useful in a chamber-orchestra series, which I've long wished the DSO would undertake. There's so much great repertory that we just don't hear here, and the new Dallas City Performance Hall — more intimate than the Meyerson Symphony Center, more informal — could be a great venue for it. Here are a couple of ideas:

"Serenades for Strings" — Mozart, Tchaikovsky, Elgar and Dvorák.

"Classic and Neoclassic: Mozart and Stravinsky" — Stravinsky: *Circus Polka*. Mozart: *Piano Concerto* (take your pick). Mozart: *Marriage of Figaro Overture*. Stravinsky: *Dances concertantes*.

Not every concert needs to be thematic, but a fair sprinkling of such programs could certainly enliven a Dallas Symphony season. They might even make concerts easier to sell.

And just imagine the conversations at intermissions and afterward. Anything that gets people talking about orchestra concerts is a good thing.

<http://www.dallasnews.com/entertainment/columnists/scott-cantrell/20140620-toward-livelier-orchestra-programs-pick-a-theme.ece>. Accessed July 16, 2014

