

Ripped from the headlines ... Choral Director David Chase

Twenty-four years after it premiered to some mocking reviews, John Adams' opera, *Nixon in China*, has recently ascended to exalted ground—the stage of the Metropolitan Opera. Over those years, there's been much said about so-called "Headline Operas" and whether current affairs make good art. It's an interesting debate, but no one has ever forgotten that the most powerful effect of art is timelessness. If, like the plays of Euripides, for example, *Nixon in China* is still being performed after thousands of years, it won't be because it represented the headlines, but because the headlines represented timeless elements of the human condition.



Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* has this timelessness, and it strikes us to the pit of our stomachs. It was written as a liturgical work, yet its overwhelming effect is achieved by an uncanny theatricality. It transcends its original, churchly context and draws us into its own dramatic world, much as great opera does.

Of course, Bach wrote this work as part of his duties as Cantor at Thomaskirche; he was required, like all church musicians, to provide the music for Holy Week, the most important week in the Christian calendar. But he clearly knew that this huge work, of all the great works that he provided for that often-thankless "church job," was something very special. He carefully copied the score—in two colors of ink—and he protected it carefully over time . . . He knew!

Indeed, it was *St. Matthew Passion* that ignited the world's rediscovery of Bach when Mendelssohn revived it a century after it was forgotten. Originally composed for a Good Friday church service and intended to amplify the sermon and gospel readings on that holy day, this piece became a monument, a transcendent work of art with timeless relevance. And we perform it today in that spirit.

When the High Priest declares that Jesus, this man of a different faith, has "blasphemed" and declares, "What need of witness have we now?" the crowd becomes blood-thirsty. They ultimately stun us with the unthinkable: "His blood be on us and on our children." Could this not have been ripped from the headlines of last week's Mideast news coverage?

All of this comes from a story that is held dear by Christians and is recounted as the cornerstone of Christian belief. But its impact is universal, and when it is shaped by Bach's wrenchingly beautiful and dramatic music, the result is profoundly moving to all who hear it.

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As we contemplate the cyclical nature of these ancient “headlines,” it’s comforting to note, as Eric Bromberger writes in his program note, “This is not angry music, nor is it violent. . . the mood is of grieving acceptance rather than violent denial or resistance.” Perhaps the greatest gift we receive from Bach’s work is the knowledge that, while we must experience cruelty and pain, we may do so without despair.

Facsimile of Score: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Jsbwv244.jpg>

Also, a remarkable sculpture of St Matthew:
<http://graphics.stanford.edu/projects/mich/matthew/>



News from the Executive Director ... Diane Salisbury

The LJS&C office has moved to new quarters as of April 4. We are now located in Warren Lecture Hall, Room 2126, just east of Price Center and a short walk to Conrad Prebys Music Center. All of our contact information remains the same (address and phones). Stop by and say “hi” next time you’re in our neighborhood.

Sales for our upcoming concert, ***The Passion According to St. Matthew***, are very strong. I expect full houses both days, and possibly a sell-out on Sunday. You can help make this concert a huge success by spreading the word. We have an e-postcard on our web site’s concert page that can be emailed to friends and family. Don’t forget to let people know that Saturday’s performance starts at **7:30 pm**. The office has sent reminder postcards to all of our Saturday subscribers and will follow up with reminder phone calls next week to make sure no one is disappointed by showing up late.

Mark your calendars for our Saturday, May 7 **Wine Tasting—“All that Sparkles.”** This year the blind tasting will showcase sparkling wines from Champagne to California. The event begins with a reception of food and wine and ends with a fabulous raffle of rare and special wines from private collections. For those who haven’t attended before, this is a casual afternoon event (Tommy Bahama shirts and safari hats welcome). The fun begins at 2:00. An e-vite can be found on our web site’s home page, and tickets can be purchased online at www.lajollasympphony.com.

The 2011-12 Season—***Stravinsky Circus!***—was announced to great success at the March concert. We received 40 subscriptions that weekend. Our Early-Bird subscription mailer is scheduled to be mailed out to 6,000 households the week before the Bach concert. If you are interested in learning of the Early-Bird rate for ensemble or UCSD faculty/staff members, please call Adam Perez in the office at 858-534-4637. Early-Bird rates expire June 10.

I was recently asked the cost of sponsoring a concert for the upcoming season. Concert sponsorships are \$2500 for a single day, or \$5,000 for both days. Please contact me by email or phone (858-822-3774), if you are interested in contributing to the organization in this way.

We welcomed another new LJS&C Board Member last month. Eric McCall is a staff financial analyst at a division of Qualcomm. He brings his financial strategizing expertise to the Board and has also joined the Development Committee to help with fundraising.

SAVE THE DATE:

Gala 2011—*Fly Me to the Moon!*
October 15
Marriott Del Mar



Contributors:

Barbara Peisch, Ed.

Kay Bryant

David Chase

Walt Desmond

Karen Erickson

Beda Farrell

Karen Kakazu

Anne Gero-Stillwell

Marty Hambright

Douglas McLeod

Diane Salisbury

Mary Ellen Walther



Member Spotlight

Anne Gero-Stillwell, viola

I started with the Orchestra so long ago that I hate to admit it to you. I started playing viola instead of violin when Tom Nee said, doubtfully, that there might be space in the viola section. This was after I took a couple of months off to teach National University evening classes.

I have changed occupations several times. I taught for years: anthropology at National University, environmental psychology at Design Institute of San Diego, a bit of cross-cultural psychology at the California School of Professional Psychology, and anything I knew that someone wanted to learn before that at Prescott College in Arizona. After suffering burnout from teaching, I flipped a few houses. (Sounds muscular, doesn't it? It means buying houses that need repair, fixing them up and reselling. I found I love physical work and design. I was the boss, buyer, project manager and unskilled laborer.), Now I am obsessively making pottery. I've got pots in a group booth at Artwalk next May, the big time for me! Perhaps it's a retirement amusement but I hope for more.



How does all that fit together? My training was in applied anthropology, once I found out how much patience it takes to do archeology. That developed into environmental psych; it's not more psych than anthro, it's just the ways the physical environment affects people in it. I wanted to get more information about actual lifeways from the patterns of things archeologists dig up. I invented environmental psych. (Or so I thought. It turns out lots of other people before me had been working in it for years.) That led me to working with and teaching interior designers and that to feeling fairly confident working on houses. My husband, Will, and I had "helped" the contractors who moved and built onto our house—lots of fun.

I have a long marriage to Will and two adult daughters beautifully on their own. Neither of them plays music. Sorry to say, the childhood music lessons didn't take. What is different for those of us who choose music? Not interest; Will is a serious and sophisticated listener. At an amateur level, not talent I think.

Music has been a constant for me through all this. I've played violin since I was 7, when my father asked which instrument I wanted to play—there was no option not to play something—and viola since I got jealous of my father and brother playing Bach cello suites around the house. There was a point in junior high, when my teacher required me to choose between playing violin and having long fingernails; I remember thinking about it seriously. I like chamber music. Who doesn't? I am intrigued, more with the historical than the musical aspect of playing parties and weddings.¹ I really love playing in an orchestra. Partly I enjoy playing with musicians better than I am; mostly I love being part of the huge singing creature that is an orchestra.



You can view *Tutti* online!

You can download this and previous issues of *Tutti* from:

www.peisch.com/tutti



¹ These occasions are not much fun musically; we play well enough, not our best, and are not listened to. It used to be background music for dancing and now is part of the decor for parties and weddings, like the flowers. But this is the sort of use that aristocrats commissioned the great composers to write for and the great performers to play for, so, historically, we are participating in a tradition that includes greatness.

LJS&C in the news ... submitted by Mary Ellen Walther

Below is a re-print of an article that appeared on March 31, 2011 in the Rancho Santa Fe Review.



From left: La Jolla Symphony and Chorus performers Marc Madison, Connie Lawthers, Kyle Malone, Marianne Schamp and Ken Bell at Solana Santa Fe. Photo/Lisa Sullivan

Solana Santa Fe welcomes La Jolla Symphony and Chorus performers

Five performers from the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus entertained students at Solana Santa Fe School on March 22. This was the first of six schools they will be performing at as part of their student outreach program. Fourth, fifth and sixth graders heard a variety of songs from different time periods as long ago as the 1500s. They also learned about the three elements of music: rhythm, melody and harmony. "Our goal is to bring music education and the thrill of live performances into the schools," says Ken Bell, the assistant conductor. The performance was made possible by a grant from the Betty Scalice Foundation, a fund of Coastal Community Foundation.

Established more than 50 years ago, the 110-person orchestra and 120-person chorus mostly performs at the Mandeville Center on the UC San Diego Campus.

Free Friday night dress rehearsals are offered to the public. More information about the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus is available on their web site:
<http://www.lajollasympny.com/index.php>



Need to contact the LJS&CA?

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Diane Salisbury,
Executive Director
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Article watch

From Beda Farrell:

The Bach Choir of Bethlehem

"Bach 101 – St. Matthew Passion"

http://www.bach.org/bach101/passions/st_matthew_passion.html

The San Diego Union-Tribune, March 13, 2011

"Florist proves irresistible in La Jolla Symphony program"

By James Chute

A review of our last concert.

<http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/2011/mar/13/La-Jolla-Symphony-Applebaum/>

A video of a very unusual performance of Bach's *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=C_CDLBTJD4M



From Karen Erickson:

The Boston Conservancy

"Karl Paulnack Welcome Address"

<http://www.bostonconservatory.edu/s/940/Bio.aspx?sid=940&qid=1&pgid=1241>



From Douglas McLeod:

The New Yorker, March 14, 2011

"Reverberations"

By Alex Ross

Scroll down to find a review of a concert by Steven Schick.

http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/musical/2011/03/14/110314crmu_music_ross



From Marty Hambright:

"The Cyber Conductor"

This video is very similar (maybe the same?) as one I published a link to several years ago. That older link is no longer valid.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFIttd2838gc&feature=related>



The LJS&CA Board

(Board representatives to the ensemble in bold)

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From Karen Kakazu:

A different kind of St. Matthews Passion performance

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MO64Sh24kHY>



From Barbara Peisch:

The San Diego Union-Tribune, April 2, 2011

“Oregon cops hope classical music deters loiterers”

By Nigel Duara

I find this a somewhat disheartening comment on the state of classical music.

<http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/2011/apr/02/oregon-cops-hope-classical-music-deters-loiterers/>

For those of you who remember Martin Wright when he directed the San Diego Master Chorale:

The San Diego Union-Tribune, April 4, 2011

From Diane Bell’s column:

“Lyric Opera of Chicago has named Martin Wright its new chorus master for the 2012-13 season. Currently artistic director of the Netherlands Opera chorus, Wright is a familiar figure here. He formerly directed the San Diego Master Chorale and was principal guest conductor of the San Diego Lyric Opera from 2000 to 2006.”

<http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/2011/apr/04/firefighters-rescue-mother-mallards-11-ducklings/>

The San Diego Union-Tribune, April 12, 2011

“Musical interaction key to emotion and, perhaps, longevity”

By Mario Garrett

<http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/2011/apr/12/musical-interaction-key-to-emotion-and-perhaps/>



From Walt Desomond:

Voiceofsandiego.org

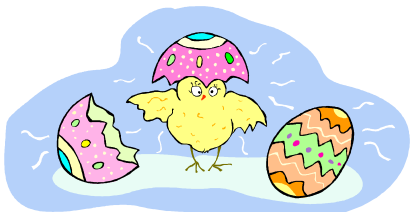
“How the Bach Debate Plays Out in San Diego”

Interviews with Ruben Valenzuela, Founder of Bach Collegium and David Chase on the two Bach Passions being performed this month.

http://www.voiceofsandiego.org/arts/article_f5382d46-662a-11e0-b120-001cc4c002e0.html



Have some news to report?
Let the editor know!
barbara@peisch.com
(Be sure to mention *Tutti* in the subject so I know it’s not spam!)



From Kay Bryant:

[TED.com](http://www.ted.com)

"Eric Whitacre: A virtual choir 2,000 voices strong"

A lecture by Eric Whitacre about his inspiration behind the virtual choir idea, and a preview of his latest project.

http://www.ted.com/talks/eric_whitacre_a_virtual_choir_2_000_voices_strong.html



If you find an interesting, music-related article or Web site, send the information about it to me at barbara@peisch.com. For Web sites, send me a link to the site. For articles, you may either send a link to the article or just the name and date of the publication, along with the title of the article, and I can find it online. You may also hand me the article during rehearsal or mail it to me at:



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The flyer features a blue background on the left and a photograph of two champagne flutes filled with sparkling wine on the right. The text is in white and yellow. The event is titled "La Jolla Symphony & Chorus 10th Annual Wine Tasting & Benefit with syndicated wine columnist Robert Whitley". It is scheduled for Saturday, May 7, 2011, from 2:00-5:00 PM at the Del Mar home of Dr. Robert Engler & Julie Ruedi. Activities include a wine & appetizer reception, a "blind" tasting of sparkling wines, and a killer wine raffle. The cost is \$95 per person or \$180 per couple, with an RSVP deadline of April 22. Contact information is provided: call 858-534-4637 or visit www.lajollasympphony.com. The slogan "All that Sparkles..." is written in a large, elegant script at the bottom. The La Jolla Symphony & Chorus logo is also present, noting its affiliation with UC San Diego.

La Jolla Symphony & Chorus
10th Annual Wine Tasting & Benefit
with syndicated wine columnist Robert Whitley

Saturday, May 7, 2011
2:00-5:00 PM

Del Mar home of Dr. Robert Engler & Julie Ruedi

WINE & APPETIZER RECEPTION
"BLIND" TASTING (Sparkling wines)
KILLER WINE RAFFLE

\$95 per person / \$180 per couple
RSVP by April 22
Call 858-534-4637 or visit
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