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Marshall University Music Department Presents a Mass in E Minor by Anton Bruckner, Marshall University Choral Union, Marshall University Chorus, Robert Wray, conductor, Marshall University Chamber Choir, David Castleberry, conductor

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Mass in E Minor
by
Anton Bruckner

Marshall University Choral Union
Marshall University Chorus
Robert Wray, conductor

Marshall University Chamber Choir
David Castleberry, conductor

Smith Recital Hall
Sunday, December 8, 2013
5:00 p.m.

Program
Mass in E Minor, WAB 27
Anton Bruckner
(1824-1896)

1. Kyrie
   Lord, have mercy.
   Christ, have mercy.
   Lord, have mercy.

2. Gloria
   Glory to God in the highest,
   and on earth peace to all those of good will.
   We praise thee. We bless thee.
   We worship thee. We glorify thee.
   We give thanks to thee according to thy great glory.
   Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.
   Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son.
   Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father.
   Thou who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.
   Thou who takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer.
   Thou who sittest at the right hand of the Father, have mercy upon us.
   For Thou alone art holy. Thou alone art the Lord;
   Thou alone art the most high, Jesus Christ.
   With thy Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father.
   Amen.

3. Credo
   I believe in one God,
   the Father Almighty,
   maker of heaven and earth,
   and of all things visible and invisible.
   And I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
   the only begotten Son of God,
   born of the Father before all ages.
   God of God, Light of Light,
   True God from true God.
   Begotten, not made, of one substance with the Father
   by whom all things were made.
   Who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven.
   And was incarnate by the Holy Spirit
   of the Virgin Mary. And was made man.

   Crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate,
   he suffered, and was buried.
And on the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and He sits at the right hand of the Father. He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead; and of His kingdom there will be no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and Son who together with the Father and Son is adored and glorified, who spoke to us through the Prophets.

And I believe in one, holy, catholic and Apostolic Church. I confess one baptism for the remission of sins. I await the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

4. Sanctus

Holy, Holy, Holy
Lord God of Hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Hosanna in the highest.

5. Benedictus

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

6. Agnus Dei

Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.

Program Notes

Anton Bruckner (1824-1896) has long been recognized for his contribution as a symphonic composer. With 10 symphonies to his credit, he was known as “Wagner’s Symphonist” because these works are indebted to Richard Wagner’s orchestral music for his operas. But while his symphonic music has been largely acknowledged, his sacred compositions have not garnered as much attention. Bruckner spent much of his life as a church composer and organist, and composed three masses and a number of motets. Two of his masses are written in a symphonic concert style and feature a full orchestra, but the Mass in E minor (1866) was conceived as a sacred vocal work.

Composed for the consecration ceremony of the new Votive Chapel of the Dom in Linz, Austria, The Mass in E minor was a request by the Bishop of Linz. When the ceremony took place the chapel construction was not yet completed, and the building was missing a roof as well as an organ. Bruckner created the mass with the knowledge that the work would be performed outdoors and so scored the mass to utilize an eight voice mixed choir with a small chamber wind ensemble to accommodate both the performance space and the lack of an organ. Bruckner made numerous revisions of the work for performances in 1869, 1876, and 1882. The first revision of the mass in 1869 added a part for organ, and Bruckner, an accomplished organist joining the ensemble for that performance.

Certain aspects of this mass—most particularly Bruckner’s approach to its orchestration and his harmonies—have long been steeped in controversy. Several scholars have considered the work to be the result of the criticism Bruckner received for his first mass in which it was insinuated that the work was too symphonic in nature. Therefore, Bruckner’s response to this criticism manifested in the creation of the scaled back Mass in E minor. Other scholars have posited that Bruckner’s change in approach to this mass actually results from his desire to use extended chromatic harmonies within the composition. Because these harmonies create dissonances that require resolution, one can attribute his harmonic approach to Bruckner’s striving to convey the notion of the transformation of the individual through faith. An additional theory suggests that confinement of Bruckner in a sanatorium shortly after the first performance of this mass demonstrates he was not in his right mind, and thus the many dark and mysterious images found throughout the mass are evocative of the inner turmoil of his impaired mental state.

The Mass in E minor consists of the five movements of the ordinary of the Catholic service: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus-Benedictus, and Angus Dei. The Kyrie and Gloria begin with a cantor intoning a musical line reminiscent of a Gregorian chant prior to the entrance of the choir. The Kyrie is primarily a vocal work with only intermittent accompaniment by the trombones and horns. The closing of the Gloria in a fugal style is typical of Bruckner’s other masses. The Sanctus shows Bruckner’s training in counterpoint, as he uses a theme borrowed from the Sanctus of the Missa Brevis by the
famous Renaissance composer, Giovanni Battista Pierlugi da Palestrina (c. 1525–1594). Palestrina’s approach to counterpoint has been studied for centuries by composition students worldwide, and was certainly a part of Bruckner’s early training at the Vienna Conservatory.

Kelly Fallon
M.A. Candidate in Music History and Literature

Marshall University Chorus
Robert Wray, conductor

Soprano
Selena Baker
Abi Black
Brittany Blair-Martin
Rachel Blum
Stephanie Boothe
Sierra Burford
Laura Campbell
Courtney Crenean
Destiny DiGiovanni
Sarah Goddard
Alexa Griffey
Rachel Hagley
Amber King

Tenor
Joe Crowe
Gabriel Gray
Sean Price

Bass
Jeff Dickerson
Daniel Gray
Bill Rath
Jonathan Thorne

Soprano
Allison LaRoza
Kali Libby
Meagan Mahaffey
Arika Michaels
Lauren Milton
Christa Navy
Catie Pinson
Christina Rodes
Marissa Snyder
Kelsey Suprano
Ida Ward
Lauren Whisman

Alto
Emma Hensley
Olivia Hughes
Courtney Perry
Colleen Wermers
Ali Wimbish

Tenor
Justin Bahawi
Keith Bailey
Joe Crowe
Ty Eller
Gabriel Gray
Jordan Henry

Soprano
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