

NANTWICH AND DISTRICT CHORAL SOCIETY

St. Mary's Parish Church

Wednesday 27th June 1979

7.30p.m.

Motet: Praise the Lord

BACH

Mass: Aeterna Christi Munera

PALESTRINA

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| 1 Kyrie | 5 Benedictus |
| 2 Gloria | 6 Agnus Deo I |
| 3 Credo | 7 Agnus Deo II |
| 4 Sanctus | |

INTERVAL

Motet: Tantum ergo

BRUCKNER

Harp solo: Passacaglia

HANDEL

Chichester Psalms

BERNSTEIN

- 1 Psalm 100 (Make a joyful noise unto the Lord)
- 2 Psalm 23 (The Lord is my shepherd)
- + Psalm 2 (Why do the nations rage?)
- 3 Psalm 131 (Lord, Lord, my heart is not haughty,
nor mine eyes lofty)

Harp - Charlotte Seale

Treble - Richard Hutton

Percussion - Geoffrey Hodgson

Organ - Edward Hewison (Bernstein)

Joy Roberts (Bach)

Conductor - Michael Bridger

The works in this evening's concert cover nearly four hundred years of sacred choral music and, as one would expect, differ greatly in style. The Palestrina mass is the earliest of the compositions, but is, nevertheless, perhaps the most refined and sophisticated, representing the highest achievement of Italian late renaissance music, in which ingenious counterpoint is employed with restraint to produce an effect of serene simplicity. The counterpoint of the Bach motet is of an altogether more robust variety, especially in the first of its three main sections, which is an extended fugue making considerable demands on the singers with respect to vocal range and articulation.

Characteristic features of their composers (and, incidentally, of another two national styles!) are to be found in the other two choral pieces - rich harmony in the Bruckner, lilting tunes and jazzy rhythms in the Bernstein. Written for Chichester cathedral in 1965, this piece is quite similar in style to the hit musical West Side Story, composed just a few years earlier. The work will be sung in the original Hebrew, but the mood of each movement is set by the opening words of the psalms, given above. Many aspects of the piece are arrestingly effective - the colourful use of percussion, the combination of strongly contrasting ideas in the middle movement, the quiet, ethereal ending.