



Crescendo Celebrates 15th Season

with

Baroque Splendor: ***Bach's Magnificat and Handel's Coronation Anthems***

On October 26 and 27, Crescendo presents its 15th anniversary concerts with festive Baroque music for chorus, soloists, and a period instrument orchestra. Together they will perform two of choral music's greatest masterworks, Johann Sebastian Bach's *Magnificat* BWV 243 and George Frideric Handel's *Coronation Anthems* HWV 258-261. Additionally, the program will include excerpts from Bach's much-loved *Christmas Oratorio* BWV 248 with opportunities for audience participation.

Bach wrote the *Magnificat* in 1723 in Leipzig, for the Christmas Vespers, and later revised it, in part to make it more suitable for the trumpets. Conceived on a grand scale, it requires five soloists, a five-part choir and, for its time, an unusually large orchestra consisting of three trumpets, two flutes, two oboes, strings and continuo. In its splendor and jubilation the piece anticipates the great choruses of Bach's later works, such as the *Mass in B minor*. The *Magnificat*, the canticle of the Blessed Virgin Mary, has been set to music more often than any liturgical text other than the mass itself.

Handel's four *Coronation Anthems* use text from the King James Bible and were originally commissioned for the coronation of Great Britain's George II. They have become standard for later coronations. From the time of their composition the four ceremonial anthems, "Zadok the Priest," "Let Thy Hand Be Strengthened," "The King Shall Rejoice," and "My Heart Is Inditing," have been popular and regularly played in concerts and festivals—even during Handel's own lifetime. They were originally composed for an enlarged choir of the Chapel Royal, with an orchestra of 160 players.

The Crescendo Chorus will be joined by soprano Julianne Baird, acclaimed as "one of the most extraordinary voices in the service of early music that this generation has produced," countertenor Nicholas Tamagna hailed by the New York Times as "a standout...singing with a luminous countertenor, strong coloratura and dramatic conviction," tenor Philip Anderson, a much sought-after tenor among early music ensembles in the U.S., and Joseph-Charles Beutel, "an imposing bass-baritone," as reviewed by Opera News, who makes his career across the United States, Europe, Asia, and South America. The Period Instrument Orchestra is comprised of trumpets, timpani, oboes, bassoons, traversi (Baroque flutes), strings and basso continuo, played by Early Music specialists from Boston and New York. Crescendo's Founding Artistic Director Christine Gevert will conduct.

Concerts are Saturday, Oct. 26, 4 pm at Saint James Place, 352 Main St. in Great Barrington, MA, and 4 pm Oct. 27 at Trinity Church, 484 Lime Rock Rd., Lakeville, CT. Tickets are \$35 general, \$10 students, and \$100 premium seating. Proceeds of the premium tickets will benefit Crescendo's music programs. For more information and tickets: www.worldclassmusic.org.

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