

Renaissance Chorus Association eNewsletter

Winter 2017

Reviewing our recent Events:

As in previous eNewsletters we refer you to the wonderful event listings shared at “Events” in our website, www.RenaissanceChorus.org. Click on “The Chorus” for touching memories by members, and at the bottom of that page, “Performances” for a review of our history. And you’ll find much more in the website.

Subsequent to the July 17, 2015, Monteverdi’s *Orfeo* conducted by Alan Aurelia, again featuring Darrell Lauer at Hudson View Gardens Lounge, we went further! We embarked on exploring the incredible Mantuan background to Monteverdi’s pioneering *Favola* (mythological/pastoral story) as represented in the Gonzagas’ chapel and court by Monteverdi’s teacher Giaches de Wert and colleague Salamone Rossi.

For this, on November 5, 2016, we called again upon Marty Morell (www.italianmadrival.com) and his Italian Madrigal specialists – many of whom had been in *Orfeo* – who presented several of Marty’s *Il Pastor Fido* editions of Marenzio, Pallavicino, Gastoldi, Rossi and Monteverdi madrigals. Claude Lévy directed the sacred motets of de Wert and Rossi and the instrumental chamber works of Rossi. In addition, as we were repeating the sacred section of the November 12 program at Fort Washington Collegiate Church, we were able to enlist the noted organist Daniel Ficarri to feature several of Antegnati’s works. I invite all to see the beautiful program notes/translations written and edited by our expert performer/musicologists and designed by Marilan Lund: <http://renaissancechorus.org/pastorfidopgm.pdf>

At the December 21, 2016, board and associates business meeting (John Hetland, Darrell Lauer, Alec Spencer, Jean

Townsend, John Graziano, Marty Morell, [& via SKYPE from France: Claude Lévy], and Dorrie and Sig Rosen), we discussed the year and ongoing proposals for performance and publishing. John Graziano had specific recommendations for new Harold Brown engravings, which were shared with the Brown estate. Alec described our then current financials. As expected our events, however satisfactory musically, extracted our limited resources.

We, together with Claude and Marty, however, proposed that a consideration should be maintained to present the rarely presented Venetian choral works by Croce, newly edited by Marty Morell. (I subsequently attempted to secure a suitable venue at United Palace Lobby series for same but was not approved). Another proposal for 2017, Fairfax *Missa Tecum Principium*, I later dropped as our colleague and friend John Bradley had already scheduled this for Polyhymnia in the fall at St Ignatius!

Another project we had developed initially for the 2004 NYEMC (New York Early Music Celebration), “Music About Music and Musicians,” had been led by Marjorie Naughton for the Friday Night Singers. We were able to revisit this performance, with new editions thanks to John Hetland, and rehearsals commenced in Fall 2017. Thankfully, we joined Frederick Renz’s great NYEMC project, scheduling at Riverside Church October 14 and Fort Washington Collegiate Church for October 18, 2017 (www.NYEMC.com).

Again Claude Lévy directed. This project included many singers from the previous two events and several new ones. We invite all to see the beautiful notes/translations written and edited by our members and designed by Aileen Hengeveld: <http://renaissancechorus.org/renchorny2017programfinal>
Attendance was enhanced also by this wonderful poster designed by Aileen!: <http://renaissancechorus.org/renchorny2017flyerfinal.pdf>

As NYEMC has been gathering national attention in the Early Music community, we were proud to see our modest contribution to it acknowledged, but most happy to see Harold Brown's pioneering role presented!:

<https://www.earlymusicamerica.org/web-articles/ny-celebration-esteems-local-artists/>

The upcoming Business Meeting/Luncheon scheduled at Le Cheile restaurant for Thursday December 21, 2017, will turn to a review of the year, our financial status, Claude Lévy's proposal for the upcoming year, our contacts with the Brown Estate, and Dr. Graziano about the Brown oeuvre publishing project. We will hear proposals for taking *Orfeo* "on the road," revisiting Croce, and others; we of course welcome YOURS too.

(Our personal role apart from much singing seems to be as a "networker," so we continue to add to pages on Facebook for the Renaissance Chorus Association, Inc, Renaissance Chorus Associates (a group for colleagues' and supporters' news), a [private] group: RenChorNY (designed for those singing or playing or expressing an interest for such with us), a page devoted to the visual art of our original member the late Laurie Sucher-Gaster, pages devoted to exploring the work of Nicola Vicentino and microtonal experimenters, and one for a favorite composer of our circle – Heinrich Finck. I welcome inquiries about these, of course. Do message me at: sigrosen@earthlink.net)

Of obvious interest is the marketing of our production: "Harold Brown: Music for Strings" CD – Albany **TROY1352** – by the Tessera Quartet & Louise Schulman. As of last year there were 222 sold. We should do much better. Every library should have this; we have a limited number which we can sell for \$15/ (list 16.99). Please buy one for your public or academic library!

Proud here to display the learned comments:

<http://www.renaissancechorus.org/CDcomments.html>

We were happy to note that University of Maryland Library has created a special collection of Mr. Brown's legacy, formerly at the American Composers Alliance:

<https://digital.lib.umd.edu/archivesum/actions.DisplayEADDoc.do?source=MdU.ead.scpa.0124.xml&style=ead>

In addition we presented to Columbia Library, which had only Brown's Four Symphonic Movements, copies of other important scores, including his Columbia 1930 Bearn-Prize-winning "Christopher Robin" quartet, which they lacked. We thank Dr. Susan Boynton and Nicholas Patterson for their interest, and Chelann Brown and Alyssa Blair for their support.

Of concern for our future is our current "non-performance" in self-funding. Unlike the 2009 Centenary when the Brown Family was so generous, we aspire to remain independent, based on member dues, and possibly grow our chorus slightly. As a specialized Renaissance Chorus, chamber chorus size is artistically relevant. I hereby solicit advice as to recommended funding sources, many now coming on-line, and to governmental and private cultural charities. If any wish to donate grant-writing skill to our organization, we might aspire to an ongoing two-performance season, which makes retention of and interest by singers easier, as is the norm. A collaboration with a cultural space – academic or institutional – could make rehearsal/performance venue less a cause of annual angst!

Do recommend us!

Our deepest thanks to our many friends and fellow singers who have rejoined us as from the 1970's (!) to perform our annual artistic miracle. Thank you John Hetland, Paul Geidel, Steve Bonime (our former conductor from the '80s), Dorrie Rosen, Sally Elliott, Bruce Rickenbacher, and Elaine Tokunaga; and we thank our recent members: Lee Ann Beauchamp, Susan Daum, Martin Donach, Kate Ellis, Ross French, Tom Frenkel, Ezra Halleck, Virginia Kaycoff, Ruth

Helfrich, Art Manabat, Sara Ruderman, Anna Stratis, and Jonathan Wiener.

Thanks are owed to our organization accountant Alec Spencer for inestimable support and to Jean Townsend for wise advice and volunteering at the door.

Lastly, so much was accomplished due to the experience and professionalism of Claude Lévy, who is so capable of bringing music alive.

In any event, to all – remain friends and supporters of our unique legacies!

Sigmund Rosen

For the Board:

John Hetland
Dorrie Rosen
Ruth Horowitz
Darrell Lauer

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