Bach Festival Society of Winter Park

Elizabeth Gwinn, Executive Director | John V. Sinclair, Artistic Director | Eric Ravndal III, President

Contact: Margo Stedman
Phone: 407.646.2342
Fax: 407.646.2692
E-mail: mstedman@bachfestivalflorida.org

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Bach Festival Society presents two major choral works on the 73rd Annual Bach Festival: Haydn's *The Creation* & J.S. Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*

Winter Park, FL The Bach Festival Choir and Orchestra, as part of its 73rd Annual Bach Festival, will perform two major choral works, Haydn's ***The Creation*** on March 1, 2008, at 8pm and J.S. Bach's ***St. Matthew Passion*** March 2, 2008, at 3pm. The Bach Festival Choir and Orchestra under the direction of Dr. John V. Sinclair are perfectly matched to bring these magnificent works to life.

The Creation is one of Haydn's most beloved choral masterworks, considered by many to be his masterpiece. The theme for the work is the Creation of Earth, with text drawn from both the Old Testament Biblical account and Milton's *Paradise Lost.* Haydn was inspired to write a major oratorio after traveling to London and hearing the impressive, forceful oratorio works of George Frideric Handel.

Haydn's magnificence is displayed in his ability to represent the chaos before the Creation, the highly dramatic moment of Creation itself, and the subsequent joyful reverence, through a variety of musical techniques. This work is an especially wonderful example of tonal painting—a musical illustration of the text or a particular theme expressed in the work. One of the most famous and moving examples of tonal painting is Haydn's climactic chord where the full force of

the orchestra and Choir combine to portray the rising sun on the last words “And there was light.”

Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion*, one of the Baroque era’s greatest masterworks, is a passionate and dramatic oratorio portraying the last days of Christ’s life from the Biblical account by St. Matthew. The work was composed by Bach in 1727, although it did not receive much public attention outside of Leipzig, Germany, where Bach was Kapellmeister at the St. Thomas Church from 1723 to 1750. It wasn’t until Felix Mendelssohn performed a shortened version of the work in 1829 in Berlin that it received critical and public praise. Dr. John V. Sinclair, Artistic Director and Conductor, says of this work, “This is just about one of the greatest pieces of music ever written. To perform this work is to be given a priceless piece of artwork to carry from the 1700s all the way to 2008 and make it relevant. Bach has helped to do this by being such a wonderful dramatist.”

Joining the Bach Festival Choir and Orchestra on these works are soprano Sharla Nafziger, mezzo-soprano Mary Ann Hart, tenor Robert Bracey, tenor/Evangelist Brad Diamond, and bass Kevin Deas. Though *The Creation* and *St. Matthew Passion* were originally written in German, the Bach Festival Society will perform them in English to make these celebrated works more accessible to its audience.

More information on each of these works can be obtained by downloading the program notes for the programs at www.bachfestivalflorida.org/pages/notes.shtml.

Performance Information

What: The Bach Festival Choir and Orchestra performing Haydn’s *The Creation*
Where: Knowles Memorial Chapel, Rollins College
When: Saturday, March 1, 2008, at 8:00pm
Tickets: $20, $35 and $45, depending on seat location

What: The Bach Festival Choir and Orchestra performing J.S. Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*

Where: Knowles Memorial Chapel, Rollins College

When: Sunday, March 2, 2008, at 3:00pm

Tickets: $20, $35 and $45, depending on seat location

About the Bach Festival Society

The Bach Festival Society, located in Winter Park, Florida, is one of the longest continuously operating Bach Festivals in the country and among America's great oratorio societies. The Bach Festival Society brings the highest caliber of classical music to Central Florida. Performances are held in the intimate settings of Tiedtke Concert Hall and Knowles Memorial Chapel on the beautiful campus of Rollins College.

For more information regarding the upcoming season or to order tickets, please call the Bach Festival Society at 407.646.2182 or visit us online at www.bachfestivalflorida.org.

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