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STEREO

The Roger Wagner Chorale

Walton • Bach • Vaughan Williams

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Roger Wagner, KCSG (January 16, 1914 - September 17, 1992) was an American choral musician, administrator and educator, born in Le Bu, France. His younger brother was actor and voiceover artist Jack Wagner. Roger Wagner was immersed in music from his youngest years. His father was an organist of the cathedral in Dijon, France and subsequently in Los Angeles, after emigrating to the United States in 1921. At the age of 12 he assumed his first musical position in his own right, serving as organist at St. Ambrose Church in West Hollywood.

Wagner returned to France in 1931 to complete his musical studies, earning his degree from the College of Montmorency while studying with Marcel Dupré. He then served in the French army, during which time he qualified as a member of the French decathlon team for the 1936 Summer Olympics.

In 1937, Wagner joined the MGM chorus in Hollywood and was subsequently appointed Music Director of St. Joseph's Church in Los Angeles where he established an outstanding choir of men and boys, including a young Paul Salamunovich. In 1945, Roger Wagner became the supervisor of young choruses for the City of Los Angeles, most notably the "Los Angeles Concert Youth Chorus." It was from a madrigal group of twelve of these singers that the Roger Wagner Chorale was born in 1946.

The Roger Wagner Chorale became recognized the world over through its numerous radio, concert, and television appearances, motion picture soundtracks, and more than eighty recordings (they were also famous for singing the theme song and "score" for *I Married Joan*). The *V'moon* recording won a Grammy Award and the popular carol recording *Joy to the World* was a Gold Record Album, selling more than a half million copies. The Chorale toured all over the world and included such outstanding singers as Marilyn Horne, Marni Nixon, Claudine Carbon, Herve Presnell (on several recordings), Sally Terri (on several recordings as well as researching for several of the LP liner notes), Earl Wrightson and Carol Nebbett.

In 1964, on completion of the Los Angeles Music Center, Wagner and representatives of the Junior Chamber of Commerce formed a resident choral ensemble, the Los Angeles Master Chorale, which has since become the resident choir of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Credits include performance with Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra in the Presidential Inaugural at the Kennedy Center in 1973 and a tour of the Soviet Union as a United States State Department "cultural ambassador" in 1974. Wagner served as the Chorale's Music Director for 23 years until he was named Music Director Laureate.

The Chorale's 1951 recording of Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina's "*Pope Marcellus Mass*" was selected by the Library of Congress as a 2010 addition to the National Recording Registry, which selects recordings annually that are "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant".

Notes from Wikipedia

Technical notes

These transfers came from the generous collection of Edward Johnson, to whom I am once more grateful. The discs were both issued in the USA in 1961 but we do not believe elsewhere, nor have they been reissued before. XR remastering has done much to clarify diction and relieve a somewhat "plummy" tonal quality, and I've attempted to ameliorate the rather unpleasant and obvious reverberation used on *Beethoven's Feast* with careful use of a modern convolution reverb. The average pitch of the recordings was around $\pm 443\text{Hz}$ - given that altering this to 440Hz would have lengthened the overall duration to beyond that of a CD I elected to keep it. I've also dealt with quite a lot of pre- and post-echo, particularly in the Walton recording. **Andrew Rose**

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM
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The Roger Wagner Chorale

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Walton

Belshazzar's Feast

John Cameron, baritone

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

J. S. Bach

Christ lag in Todes Banden

Concert Arts Orchestra

Vaughan Williams

Mass in G minor

Soloists: Doralene McNelly, Alice Ann Yates,

Michael Carolan, Charles Scharbach,

Paul Salamunovich

Studio recordings, 1960

The Roger Wagner Choral

WALTON Belshazzar's Feast

1. Thus spake Isaiah (5:42)
2. If I forget thee, O Jerusalem (5:53)
3. Babylon was a great city (4:20)
4. Praise ye the god of gold (5:06)
5. Thus in Babylon (3:20)
6. And in that same hour (1:48)
7. Then sing aloud to God (4:32)
8. The trumpeters and pipers are silent (1:23)
9. Then sing aloud to God (3:54)

Recorded at Abbey Road Studio 1, London, 19-22 September 1960. Transfer from Angel S-36015. First issued in 1961 on Capitol SP 8577

John Cameron baritone
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

BACH Christ lag in Todes Banden, BWV4

1. Sinfonia (1:26)
2. Christ lag in Todes Banden (4:40)
3. Den Tod niemand zwingen kunnt (3:29)
4. Jesus Christus, Gottes Sohn (2:25)
5. Es war ein wunderlicher Krieg (2:32)

6. Hier ist das rechte Osterlamm (3:23)
7. So feiern wir das hohe Fest (2:07)
8. Wir essen und leben wohl (1:50)

Recorded in Hollywood in 1960. Transfer from Angel S-36014. First issued in January 1961 on Capitol SP 8535

Concert Arts Orchestra

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS Mass in G minor

1. Kyrie (3:29)
2. Gloria (3:52)
3. Credo (8:55)
4. Sanctus - Osanna 1 - Benedictus -
Osanna 2 (4:46)

Recorded in Hollywood in 1960. Transfer from Angel S-36014. First issued in January 1961 on Capitol SP 8535

Doralene McNelly soprano

Alice Ann Yates alto

Michael Carolan tenor

Charles Scharbach bass

Paul Salamunovich cantor

Conductor Roger Wagner

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disc
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XR remastering by
Andrew Rose

LP transfers by
Edward Johnson

Cover artwork based
on a photograph of
Roger Wagner and
Rembrandt's c.1635
Belshazzar's Feast

Total duration: 79:52

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