

*“Music gives a soul to the universe,
wings to the mind, flight to the
imagination and life to everything.”*
~ Plato ~

February 2017

Pro Arte Chorale

Noteworthy



A Grammy Nomination for our Maestro, Steven Fox!

The Pro Arte Chorale congratulates our Music Director Steven Fox and The Clarion Choir on being nominated for a 2017 Grammy Award for Best Choral Performance of the Year, for their brilliant recording of Maximilian Steinberg's *Passion Week*. As noted in our last newsletter, [BBC Music Magazine](#) awarded this recording five stars, and made it the choral/song feature of their last issue. In addition to the Grammy nomination, Clarion will also be awarded the *Diapason Découverte* for their recording of *Passion Week*. The 'Discovery' award is one of the most prestigious in the French classical recording industry, and is given by the magazine *Diapason*.

We are thrilled for Steven and The Clarion Choir, and are honored to have Steven leading the Pro Arte Chorale to greater musical heights, and to share his talent with our audience!

The Grammy Awards ceremony will be held on February 12, so we will all be keeping our fingers crossed for Steven and The Clarion Choir.

Giving the Gift of Music



During the December holidays, Pro Arte Chorale enjoys sharing the gift of music with our community, especially those in need of holiday cheer - from caroling at nursing homes to even visiting the homes of sick friends. This past December we brought joy to the residents of Brighton Gardens, visited the home of a friend's mother who is fighting cancer, and sang carols at the Ridgewood Country Club's ladies Christmas luncheon. The Chorale also hosted its annual Messiah Sing at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Ridgewood, followed by refreshments and fellowship. Our members truly enjoy participating in musical outreach, and bringing people together through song and fellowship during the holidays!

The Wines of Italy



Come in from the cold and dream of a lazy afternoon in the Tuscan sun.
Join the Pro Arte Chorale for a tasting of the wines of Italy!

Sunday, March 12, 2017 @ 5:00pm
Ridgewood Unitarian Society, Ridgewood

An Afternoon at the Opera



Chase away the winter blues and join us for an afternoon of favorite opera choruses and solos including Verdi's Anvil Chorus, Wagner's Bridal Chorus, Puccini's Humming Chorus, and more!

Sunday, March 26, 2017 @ 4:00pm
Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Ridgewood

Choral Masterpieces of Anton Bruckner



Members of the Clarion Orchestra (NYC) will join the Pro Arte Chorale in a glorious all-Bruckner concert featuring Six Motets and Mass in E Minor.
Don't miss what promises to be a grand finale to our season!

Saturday, June 10, 2017 @ 8:00pm
Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Ridgewood

***To purchase tickets, please visit our website at www.proartechorale.org
or call 201-497-8400***

Did You Know?



Some Interesting Facts about Opera

The term “opera” comes from the Latin *opus*, or “work.” The term “**soap opera**” was first recorded in 1939 as a derogatory term for daytime radio shows that were sponsored by soap manufacturers.

The famous proverb “**the opera ain’t over ‘til the fat lady sings**” in reference to buxom Brunhilde’s 10-minute aria at the end of Wagner’s *Ring* cycle operas is usually attributed to pro basketball coach Dick Motta, who in turn attributes it to San Antonio sportswriter/broadcaster Dan Cook, who says he overheard a friend say it.

In 1994, Warner Brother’s 1957 classic “**What’s Opera, Doc?**” featuring Elmer Fudd chasing Bugs Bunny in a parody of Richard Wagner’s *Ring* cycle operas, was voted #1 of the 50 Greatest Cartoons. It was also deemed “culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant” by the Library of Congress and was selected for preservation in the National Film Registry.

When the notorious soprano Francesca Cuzzoni refused to sing the aria “Falsa imagine” from Handel’s *Ottone*, Handel grabbed her by the waist and swore he would **throw her out the window if she did not agree**.

In eighteenth-century *opera seria* (serious opera), the main **singers would stand in ballet’s third position**, with bent, bowlegged knees and heels together, with one ankle in front of the other. They remained in that position the entire song.

The first performance of Puccini’s opera *Madama Butterfly* was **one of opera’s all-time worst flops**. The audience made bird, cow, and goat calls and booed. *Madama Butterfly*, however, became one of the best-loved operas in history.

Richard Wagner’s *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (*The Ring of the Nibelung*) is a cycle of four operas (*Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried*, and *Götterdämmerung*). They are usually performed individually, but Wagner intended they be performed in a series as a coherent whole. When an opera company dares to take on that herculean task, the *The Ring* becomes **the world’s longest opera at over 14 hours** (and close to 18 hours, including intermissions). Wagner wrote it over a 30-year span. It is based loosely on a Norse legend of the Nibelungenlied and has many parallels with J.R.R. Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings* trilogy.

After Plácido Domingo performed the title role in Verdi’s *Otello* in Vienna on July 30, 1991, the **audience clapped for one hour and 20 minutes** (and 101 curtain calls), setting a new world record for the longest applause ever.

Mozart inherited the legacy of *opera seria* and *opera buffa* as well as the German *Singspiel*, but he transformed them and incorporated **music of rare inspiration**. Opera history is often divided into pre-Mozart and post-Mozart.

Mozart wrote his first opera, *Bastien und Bastienne*, a parody of Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s operatic intermezzo *Le devin du village* (*The Village Soothsayer*), when he was **only 12 years old**.

Beethoven wrote only one opera, *Fidelio*, a fiercely humanistic opera. **He worked on it for 11 years**, revising it over and over again. It was produced in 1805, just as his deafness was plunging him into depression.

Support the Pro Arte Chorale



The Pro Arte Chorale is committed to enriching the lives of its audience and the broader community by exploring a variety of classical musical traditions over more than six centuries, up to and including Opera Choruses, American Spirituals and Broadway Show Tunes. However, producing excellent musical experiences with talented leadership, soloists, and musical accompaniment is costly. Contributions from our loyal supporters and broader community are critical to our success as we continue to present quality concerts for our audiences. We hope you will join us in keeping the music alive by supporting the Pro Arte Chorale. Thank you!

For online donations, please visit www.proartechorale.org

To donate by mail, please make check payable to Pro Arte Chorale
PO Box 662, Ridgewood, NJ. 07450

Join Us!

The Pro Arte Chorale welcomes voices in all sections. We will be hosting auditions throughout the season on Monday nights @ 7pm. Singers interested in auditioning will be asked to prepare a piece of music that best highlights their voice, and will also be tested for range and reading ability. To schedule an audition, please contact us via email (info@proartechorale.org) or via phone (201) 497-8400. We rehearse on Monday nights, 7:30 – 10:00pm at The Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Ridgewood.



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