

ROBERT DALE CHORALE

March 2006

Dr. Steven Thomas, Music Director • (570) 586-3921 • www.robertdalechorale.org

Notes

Dear Friend of Choral Music,

Welcome to another exciting spring season with the Robert Dale Chorale!

We are in the midst of a very full year: in October, the Chorale began its season with *Night and Day*, a program that featured music on themes of light and darkness. Highlights of that concert were Eric Whitacre's hauntingly beautiful *Lux aurumque*, the premiere of *Look to this Day*, a new work I wrote for the Chorale and, of course, Cole Porter's *Night and Day*.

In December, the Chorale performed a selection of carols from England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland and Cornwall on the program *Christmas in the British Isles*. This concert was so well-received that we're planning to release a CD of the repertoire next fall. And for the 22nd year, the Chorale sponsored the annual *Messiah Sing-Along*, which was broadcast on WVIA-FM on Christmas Eve.

What's Coming Up

On February 26, the Chorale will sing one piece on a **Pipedreams Live!** organ concert at St. Stephen's Church in Wilkes-Barre, featuring Mark Laubach on St. Stephen's organ. Portions of the concert will be broadcast on the American Public Media **Pipedreams** radio program. It is an honor for the group to be invited to perform at this concert, and it is also a great opportunity for the Chorale to get some national exposure!

The main event of the spring is the **22nd Annual Bach Festival** on Saturday and Sunday, March 25 and 26. This year the Festival will be held at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Scranton – not only is it a beautiful space, but it's especially appropriate since Bach wrote so much of his music for the Lutheran church. As always,

the Festival features the music of Bach, but this year we are also taking the occasion of Mozart's 250th birthday as an opportunity to expand the Festival's scope.

Bach Festival - Saturday Afternoon

Saturday afternoon's Organ Concert features **Kola Owolabi**, an organist who has studied at Yale and who is currently pursuing a doctorate in organ at the Eastman School of Music. He is performing several works by J. S. Bach, three fugues composed by Robert Schumann as a tribute to Bach, and Mozart's *Fantasia in f minor*. He will also play his own improvisation on a Lutheran chorale tune.

Bach Festival - Saturday Evening

On Saturday evening, members of the **Bach Festival Orchestra** will present a concert of chamber music. Of particular interest is J. S. Bach's *Alles mit Gott und nichts ohn' ihn*, an aria for soprano that was lost for centuries and was only rediscovered last June. Also on the program are several chamber works by Bach and his contemporaries, and Mozart's masterpiece of chamber music, *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*.

Bach Festival - Sunday Afternoon

The Festival culminates on Sunday afternoon with the **Robert Dale Chorale's** performance of J. S. Bach's *Magnificat* and Mozart's *Vesperae solennes de Confessore* (Solemn Vespers of the Confessor). The *Magnificat* is one of Bach's most joyful works, and Mozart's *Vespers* is a majestic work whose *Laudate Dominum* movement for solo soprano and chorus is one of the most beautiful in all of sacred choral music.

Please accept my invitation to hear all this great music – see you at the Bach Festival!

Sincerely, *Steven*



The Robert Dale Chorale Music Director,
Dr. Steven Thomas

You're Invited!

to RDC's Annual Fundraiser

CABARET!

Warm up your winter with the
hot vocals of soprano

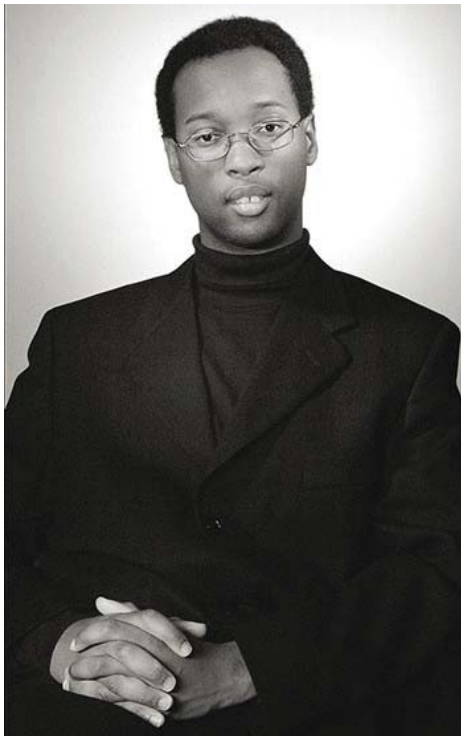
EILEEN HANISCH

Friday, March 3, 2006
The Inn at Nichols Village
Clarks Summit PA

Cash Bar at 6:45 pm
Dinner at 7:30 pm
\$55.00 per person

LAST MINUTE TICKETS CALL- 586-3921

... an aria for soprano that was lost for centuries... rediscovered last June.



Organist Kola Owolabi,
currently at the Eastman School of Music

The 28-year-old Canadian organist Kola Owolabi will kick off the Robert Dale Chorale Bach Festival with a concert Saturday, March 25, 5:30 p.m., at St. Peter's Cathedral, Scranton. The program will include Johann Sebastian Bach's Prelude and Fugue in G Major and Concerto in d, Robert Schumann's Six Fugues on the name B-A-C-H, and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Fantasie in f.

"The program will show that Bach grew into a musical tradition, absorbing the influences of the German baroque organ tradition and the Italian concerto, ultimately developing a mature style which was uniquely personal," Mr. Owolabi said in an interview. "I will play his setting of "Ein Feste Burg" written shortly after his encounter with Buxtehude. I have programmed Bach's transcription of a concerto by Vivaldi and you will hear the influence of this work in the Prelude and Fugue in G major, and the chorale prelude on 'Dies sind die heiligen zehn Gebot.'

"I will also improvise a chorale partita, using the contrapuntal techniques and musical language of Pachelbel, Bohm and Walther.

Bach studied the works of these three composers and also composed partitas in this tradition. I am trying to recreate and demonstrate the process that Bach went through to learn the standard compositional techniques of his day. Finally, I will play three fugues by Schumann on the name B-A-C-H which show Bach's legacy extending to the 19th century."

Kola Owolabi, from Toronto, Canada, won second prize in the American Guild of Organists Young Artists Competition in Philadelphia in 2002, and was a semifinalist in the International Gottfried Silbermann Competition in Germany in 2005. He currently is finishing work on a Doctorate of Musical Arts in organ performance at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY. He is well established in his career as organist, continuo player and conductor.

Kola's musical career began when he was seven, living with his family for a time in Nigeria. His mother is a vocalist and piano player, his father plays African drums, and his brother also is an organist.

Those Who Make It Happen

"We Couldn't Do it Without You"

It's a well-used phrase, but in our case it's very true. We really couldn't do it without our Director (naturally!), our Singers (of course!), our Board of Directors, Advertisers, Concert Audience, and our Contributors.

Whether you have supported our activities with a small gift or large, we thank you for your support of the Robert Dale Chorale and your belief in our mission: to provide the highest standard of excellence in the performance of choral music.

Special thanks to our concert sponsors and co-sponsors thus far this season: **John & Connie Weiss, Bill & Doris Lees, Keystone College and Sandvik Materials Technology.**

The Chorale is also a recipient of valuable support from the **MetLife Foundation's Volunteer Venture Program;** the **Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts,** a

Our Grateful Thanks

program of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts locally ; the **Luzerne Foundation's** Hospice Community Care Fund; and from a **Lackawanna County Arts and Cultural Grant,** a program of the Lackawanna County Commissioners and the Lackawanna County Council on the Arts.

Volunteers and Venues

The dedicated folks of **R.S.V.P.** at the **Voluntary Action Center** help us get the newsletters and mailers into your hands. The following churches provide beautiful venues in which to experience live choral music: **St. Matthew's Church, St. Stephen's Church, St. Nicholas' Church, St. Luke's Church, & St. Peter's Cathedral.** We thank them all.

Public Broadcasting Station

WVIA has been a long-time supporter of the Chorale, and makes audio recordings of each concert. Each December, WVIA broadcasts RDC's Annual Messiah Sing-Along.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP

The Chorale offers music that is entertaining, of high quality, and unique in this NEPA. We brought the Bach Festival to the area 21 years ago, and 22 years ago the Messiah Sing-Along – both now staples in the area's music repertoire.

The Chorale's Board of Directors is a dedicated group of 16 people drawn from all walks of life, including bankers, architects, educators, business men and women, authors, and retirees. The community has grown more supportive each year of their efforts to offer the highest quality music in the area.

You can support the Chorale in many ways that will continue giving to the community:

- Attend concerts** - hear exciting music; meet new friends at receptions afterward
- Come to fund raising events** - like the Annual Cabaret or Spaghetti Dinner
- Take out an ad in a program**
- Sponsor an event** - the Fall or Christmas concerts, Messiah Sing-Along, or Bach Festival
- Join the Board** - help by pitching in
- Make a donation** - become a Friend of the Chorale & invest in your community

Call 570-586-3921 for more ways to help.

Principal tenor Wes Poole, who joined the Robert Dale Chorale at the beginning of the 2004-2005 season, is the group's principal tenor. His voice is ideal for the kind of Baroque solo work to be featured in the Bach Festival March 25-26.

Wes, who is pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Kingston, can't remember when he wasn't a musician. Born in Greenville, SC, in 1967, his grandmother tells of a four-year-old Wes sitting with a guitar in his lap on the front lawn of his family's home and serenading older children as they walked home from school. He sang his first solo in the Children's Choir of Trinity Lutheran Church in Greenville, SC, and has thought of himself as a musician ever since.

"Although I'm Pastor Poole now to many people, I still tend to think of myself first as 'Wes, the tenor,'" he says.

Wes graduated from Newberry College in Newberry, SC, with a bachelors degree in



vocal performance, and earned a Master of Divinity degree from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, SC. He moved to Northeast Pennsylvania six years ago. He says he loves winters here, and intends to stay "for the foreseeable future."

Wes is married to Christine, who patiently endures the many nights he's away rehearsing. They have two children, Ian, age 3, and Julia, age 2. Wes also sings regularly with the College Misericordia Choral Society and recently sang the role of St. Nicolas in Benjamin Britten's *St. Nicolas Cantata* with that group.

In his spare time Wes enjoys buying, selling, trading, and playing guitars to "channel his inner rock star." He loves to cook, read, spend time with his family, and travel, especially home to South Carolina and Newberry College Homecomings, and to the beach, which is where he and his family spend every vacation.

Wes' sister Laura is a fine mezzo, and they love singing together when the occasional opportunity arises.

Wes' dedication, musicality and sense of humor contribute enormously to the true spirit of the Robert Dale Chorale.

You Won't Want to Miss 22nd Annual Bach Festival - World Class Music Right Here at Home

Organ Recital

Saturday, March 25, 2006 at 5:30 pm
St. Peter's Cathedral, Scranton

Featuring Mr. Kola Owolabi, Organist

Music lovers, this is the moment you've been waiting for - the opening event of the 2006 Bach Festival. Delight in the delicious sounds of St. Peter's Casavant organ played to perfection by guest organist, Kola Owolabi.

Mr. Owolabi will take listeners on a musical exploration of composers who influenced Bach and those who were influenced by him. Sit back, close your eyes and enjoy the journey through musical genius with this internationally-known organist.

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>J S Bach</i> | <i>Prelude and Fugue in G Major</i> |
| | <i>Concerto in d</i> |
| <i>Schumann</i> | <i>Six Fugues on B-A-C-H</i> |
| <i>Mozart</i> | <i>Fantasia in f</i> |

Chamber Music Concert

Saturday, March 25, 2006 at 8:30 pm
St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Scranton

Featuring the Bach Festival Orchestra

Experience world-class chamber music right here in your own backyard with an evening performance by the exquisite Bach Festival Orchestra. Members of the orchestra will perform solos, duets and ensemble pieces, creating a brilliant musical tapestry for your enjoyment and edification.

One of the many treats they have in store for you is a performance of a recently re-discovered manuscript by J.S. Bach, *Alles mit Gott und nichts ohn' ihn*. Enjoy this wonderful aria for soprano in its first public performance in this region.

In celebration of Mozart's 250th birthday, savor the divine *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*.

Choral Concert

Sunday, March 26, 2006 at 3:00 pm
St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Scranton

Featuring the Robert Dale Chorale and the Bach Festival Orchestra

The finale of the 2006 Bach Festival is a wonderful afternoon of rapturous choral works performed by the Robert Dale Chorale, accompanied by the Bach Festival Orchestra.

J.S. Bach's *Magnificat* sets a joyful tone as we celebrate together the blessings of music, and most especially the music brought to us through Bach's prodigious pen.

The festival reaches its conclusion with Mozart's *Vespers*, a searingly beautiful piece, whose raw emotion perfectly complements the mathematical precision of Bach's work. Come share the joyful expression of music!

By Popular Demand - RDC to Release First CD

You've asked and we've responded! Audience members and loyal fans have inquired frequently if the Chorale has recorded any compact discs. At long last, one wintry evening in January, Music Director Steven Thomas assembled the singers and accompanist Tsukasa Waltich for a recording session in the resonant nave of St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Scranton, under the discerning ear of audio engineer Les Turoczi.

The resulting CD, to be released in the Fall, will include repertoire from the Robert Dale Chorale's popular **Christmas in the British Isles** concert, an irresistible collection of carols that span the centuries-long tradition of holiday singing in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Stay tuned in the coming months for further information on acquiring your own copy of our first disc, and don't forget copies for family and friends. Now you can take the memories home with you!



CHRISTMAS IN THE BRITISH ISLES Enjoy these favorites and more:

*The Holly & The Ivy • The First Noel
Wexford Carol • There Is No Rose
Personent Hodie • Dark the Night
Bethlehem Down • Baloo, Lammy
An Irish Carol • Boar's Head Carol
Deck the Hall • Hymn to the Virgin
All This Time • Come to Bethlehem
Adam Lay Ybouden • Suo Gân
Sir Christèmas • This Endrys Night*

2006 TICKET AND PATRON FORM

Event	Quantity	Price	Total
Cabaret	_____	\$55.00	_____
Bach: Organ	<u>N/A</u>	DONATION	<u>N/A</u>
Bach: Chamber	_____	\$15.00*	_____
Bach: Choral	_____	\$15.00*	_____

* Seniors and WVIA Members \$12, Students \$7

- Corporate Sponsor \$1000 +
- Corporate Co-Sponsor \$500-999
- Benefactor \$250-499
- Sustainer \$100-249
- Patron \$50-99
- Friend \$25

Name _____

Address _____

Phone number (____) _____

E-mail _____

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO ROBERT DALE CHORALE.

2006 Bach Festival At A Glance

ORGAN RECITAL

Saturday, March 25, 2006 at 5:30 pm
St. Peter's Cathedral, Scranton
No admission fee. Free-will offering.
Kola Owolabi, Guest Organist

CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERT

Saturday, March 25, 2006 at 8:30 pm
St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Scranton
with the Bach Festival Orchestra

CHORAL CONCERT

Sunday, March 26, 2006 at 3:00 pm
St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Scranton
with the Robert Dale Chorale
and the Bach Festival Orchestra

FOR TICKETS & INFO

(570) 586-3921 or www.robertdalechorale.org
General \$15 / Students \$7 / Seniors & WVIA \$12

Robert Dale Chorale

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