



Michael Harrington

Social critic Michael Harrington will be the guest of the Carolina Forum at 8 p.m. in Memorial Hall. Free tickets are still available at the Carolina Union Information Desk. Harrington is the widely-read author of "Socialism" and "The Other America."

## Adrian Scott

# Wagner Chorale: perfect unity

It's pitiful. People on this campus seem to have no taste.

Out of a University community of over 20,000, barely 200 showed up to hear one of the finest choral groups in America.

Last Tuesday, the Roger Wagner Chorale sang, and sang very well, to an audience that dotted Memorial Hall as sparsely as Republicans in Chatham County.

This does not baffle an ensemble of such excellence.

And excellent it most assuredly is. Roger Wagner, who is in his own right a most distinguished choral scholar, has collected a group of enormous individual talent and moulded it into a homogenous and unified whole.

This was finely demonstrated with the opening work of the concert, a Gregorian setting of the "Ave Maria." The piece consists of a unison plainsong melody sung by the tenors and basses. To accomplish smoothness and intonation in such a style starting off cold is a considerable achievement, but the male singers of the Chorale handled it perfectly.

Without a break, the Gregorian setting melted into another "Ave," by Victoria. With the upper voices joining for the first time, the full and resonant tone of the group made itself evident. There was a fine maturity, a sort of well-aged purity about the Chorale's singing that was absolutely gorgeous.

The group rounded off this section of the evening with Sweelinck's setting of the 81st Psalm, "O sing with full voice." Vitality was the key here, as performance was matched with meaning.

Moving next to secular, as opposed to sacred, Renaissance music, the Chorale performed "Au Joly Bois," by Sermisy, and Le Jeune's "Reveny venit du printemps." These were characterized by great precision and clarity, so much so that it was not only clear that the pieces were in French, but one could admire the authenticity of the French accent.

For the Le Jeune, a small solo group split away from the main choir. Verse by verse, more voices were added until a five-voice group was spotlighted against the backdrop of the larger ensemble.

At this point the Chorale's resident pianist, Albert Dominguez, played

Debussy's "L'He Joyeuse," for solo piano. Far from interrupting the flow of the concert as might be expected, the interjection of some instrumental music into the evening was a nice contrast, as well as giving the singers a chance to rest their voices before the main work of the night. Mr. Dominguez was more than adequate with the Debussy, and very impressive in Scarlatti's B minor Sonata, which he inserted in the program.

Respighi is most widely known in connection with the works of Rossini, which he revised and edited. But he was a capable composer in his own right, and "Laud to the Nativity" is one of his most satisfying works.

It is a setting of the Christmas story, and includes passages for solo voices. This gave some of the excellent soloists in the Chorale the chance to display their skill. Perhaps most outstanding was Mary Rawcliffe, in the role of the Angel. She has a pure and clear soprano, with an effortless top register well supported from below.

Kenneth Westrick, tenor, and Andre Jordan, mezzo-soprano, were equally impressive, though Westrick was a little shaky at times on his top notes.

A work set firmly in the twentieth century but with definite roots in the past, "Laud to the Nativity" is a showcase for a fine choir. The Chorale gave it an impressive performance.

After the interval, we moved to a piece by Ravel, "Three Chansons." These are three short songs in the French style, with many running passages and tricky time changes. Jeannine Wagner, who soloed in the second song, was a trifle lousy at times, but sang musically enough.

Instead of the Ravel work on the program, Dominguez played two pieces by Brahms in his second-half appearance.

the Intermezzo in A and the D minor Capriccio. This was probably a wise decision, since I doubt he could have equalled, far less bettered, his interpretation of Brahms. This was his finest playing all night, with breadth and lyricism, and a fine sense of style. Next we heard the delightful Mary Rawcliffe again, this time in Wilbur Chenoweth's "Vocalise," a work that is rapidly becoming an established part of the soprano repertoire. It is a song without words; there is no text, and the soloist and the chorus simply vocalize. Miss Rawcliffe's wonderful clarity was most excellently balanced by the male voices of the choir, who constituted the accompaniment.

The males really had a field day when they came to the next item on the program, a collection of Cowboy songs: "Home on the Range," "Bury me not on the lone prairie" and several others were given rousing but sympathetic renditions. Next came three American folk-songs, the most impressive of which was probably "Glendy Burke," the tale of a tall ship with a "fast crew."

The last item on the program was a group of French carols, always popular with audiences. Again, there was a clarity and a unity, as well as a fineness of diction, that was impressive.

And now the fun began.

Starting off with composure, the Chorale performed a series of encores that rapidly became more frenzied and more hilarious. "Oh Dear, What Can the Matter Be?" was only a start; "Polly-Wolly-Do!" featured a trio of nasal grasshoppers and "Dry Bones" was accompanied by a myriad of ad hoc percussion instruments and a skeleton dangling from the ceiling.

It was a suitably ghoulish end to a superb Halloween concert.

## Goes professional

# Readers Theatre troupe funded

UNC News Bureau

A \$3300 grant from the North Carolina Arts Council will fund North Carolina's first professional Readers Theatre troupe.

The Carolina Readers Theatre, a non-profit corporation, will be created and a spring 1973 tour financed by the grant voted by the Council's Board of Directors. Edgar Marston, executive director, announced the award.

Directors of the tour are Dr. Howard Doll and Mrs. Martha Nell Hardy, both assistant professors in the Speech Division of the University of North Carolina here.

The Carolina Readers Theatre will be a company of eight experienced actor-readers, five men and three women,

who will perform pieces of literature. "The N.C. Arts Council wants to promote the practice of presenting literature in performance, not just dramatic literature such as plays. Limiting productions to drama passes by marvelous funds of literature," Mrs. Hardy said.

"They also want to provide programs which will go to towns that don't have facilities to stage a theatrical touring company," she added.

Readers Theatre, a relatively new form of entertainment which has come into prominence within the last two decades, is tailored to meet these needs. It puts literature into performance form, bringing to the audience exciting interpretations of all genres of literature

—stories, novels, journals, and letters.

Readers Theatre also uses a cast of reader-actors performing with simple staging. Sets may be nothing more than a group of platforms at various levels. Lighting, music, minimal costuming and other effects aid the performance.

Another purpose of the N.C. Arts Council grant, according to Mrs. Hardy, is to reward reader-actors from North Carolina for their excellence in the field of readers theatre. "We will be using the most qualified and best trained actor-readers we can find to give the state the best possible talent."

Members from the Carolina Readers Theatre company will be chosen from open auditions to be held November 17-19 in Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel

Hill. Specific locations will be announced.

In the spring of 1973, the Carolina Readers Theatre will tour ten towns in North Carolina, presenting three different programs selected from great works of literature on the basis of appeal to a variety of audiences.

"We hope to build Readers Theatre all over the state," said Mrs. Hardy, expressing her expectations for the tour. "Hopefully it will not be a one-year venture but it will be enlarged and possibly taken out of state eventually. We see this tour of the Carolina Readers as a pilot, just a first step."

Mr. John Barch will be on campus November 9 to speak with students from all disciplines interested in a graduate business education. For details, contact the Placement Office.

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