

Spotlight

Choir, orchestra to team up in performing Haydn Mass

By D'ANN PLETCHER

Staff Writer
It isn't often that UNC students are given the opportunity to hear an 80-voice choir and 40-instrument orchestra perform Franz Joseph Haydn's "Mass at Time of War."

The opportunity is even rarer when those 80 voices and 40 instruments belong not to professionals, but to fellow students.

But for the first time, students in the Carolina Choir and UNC Symphony Orchestra will present the classical masterpiece at 8 p.m. in Hill Hall Auditorium.

This concert marks the first time the Carolina Choir and the UNC Symphony

Orchestra have performed together. In addition to "Mass at Time of War," the choir will sing a motet by Heinrich Isaac a cappella, and the orchestra will play a J.S. Bach piece, rescored by William Walton.

But the opportunity to work together on Haydn's Mass is what has proved the real source of inspiration for both choir and orchestra members. "It's been a fantastic experience," said bass soloist Joel Fox. "It's very inspiring to hear your friends out there sawing away on the violin instead of professionals — it's euphoric. It's a surprise to hear the degree of precision and quickness. I never knew how good they (the orchestra) were."

Angela Gomes, who plays first cello and accompanies Fox in a musical dialogue at the end of the Gloria movement of the Mass, said that the combined sounds of the orchestra and choir were magnificent and powerful, but that the achievement of this brilliance was a challenge.

"With a choir, you are listening to something besides yourself. This takes a lot of concentration," she said.

The improved quality of the orchestra is one of the reasons the group is able to tackle such a difficult piece, said Andrea Bath, first violinist and concertmaster.

As a senior, Bath has seen three changes in conductors. But the current

conductor, Tonu Kalam, is now in his second year and has done a good job recruiting new musicians and strengthening the important string section, Bath said.

Though both the choir and orchestra will also be performing separately, the Haydn Mass is what the groups are most excited about.

Harry Bleattler, the tenor soloist, finds the historical background of the piece very relevant to its tonal and thematic qualities.

"Haydn's version of the Mass, which is traditionally composed of five movements, was written as Napoleon's troops were on the move toward Austria. This means Haydn was writing from the

point of view of the victim. The piece asks God to end the war. It is very moving — a pleading for God to end the craziness," he said.

"The Agnus Dei, the fifth and final movement, has a distant sound of drum rolls and cannons going off in the distance. It is a poignant way to end."

But "Mass at Time of War" is not all foreboding and somber. Bleattler said the Benedictus, in which he performs a solo, was very light. "It's a slower piece, where other parts of the piece are upbeat and fast."

The general feeling of the work is positive, Fox said, though there are "sudden harmonic changes which pro-

duce a tone of foreboding." Sudden shifts from a minor to a major key also create an element of surprise, but the basic feeling is one of exultation in praise for God, he said.

While choir and orchestra members hope their combined performance will become a tradition on campus, Bleattler advised students to grab the chance to witness UNC's musical talent while it's available. "It's a rare opportunity, and a glorious piece of music," he said. "It's just too much talent to pass up."

The Carolina Choir and the UNC Symphony Orchestra will present their combined concert Tuesday at 8 p.m. in Hill Hall Auditorium. Admission is free.

Carrboro's ArtsCenter to play host to jazz pianist Chick Corea

By BEVIN WEEKS

Staff Writer
For 20 years Chick Corea has been thrilling jazz and blues piano fans with his electrifying talent.

Tonight Corea brings the latest incarnation of his talent, the Chick Corea Akoustic Band, to the ArtsCenter in Carrboro for two performances, at 7 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.

The Akoustic Band comprises Corea

and two members of the Chick Corea Elektrik Band, bassist John Patitucci and drummer Dave Weckl. The move to an acoustic sound brings Corea back to his early roots in jazz. As the leader of the Akoustic Band, Corea also returns to his first instrument, the piano.

Born in Massachusetts, Corea began playing piano at age 4. One of his strongest musical influences was his father Armando, a bandleader in the

1930s and '40s. Corea grew up listening to Beethoven and Mozart, as well as to Charlie Parker and Horace Silver.

Corea's music has also been greatly influenced by some of the first musicians he worked for. These artists, including Horace Mann and Mongo Santamaria, instilled in Corea a love for Latin American music, and his music still carries a feel for that sound.

In the late 1960s, Corea worked with several influential jazz musicians, and in 1968 he joined the Miles Davis Band. As a member of that band, he played the electric piano on the milestone album *In A Silent Way*.

From 1969 to 1971, Corea was the leader of Circle, one of the most impor-

tant bands in free-form improvisation. After Circle broke up, he formed another group, Return to Forever.

That band initially produced Latin music, but by 1974, Corea found himself at the forefront of the jazz fusion movement, as Return to Forever led the way in the development of that style.

Since the late 1970s, Corea has recorded and performed in many forms, from fusion to jazz to classical. He has collaborated with artists including Herbie Hancock and Friedrich Gulda.

Since 1975, Corea has won seven Grammy awards and has been nominated for 10 more. He also earned the titles of 1974 "Jazz Musician of the World" from *Jazz Forum* magazine

and 1988 "Musician of the Year" from *Jazz Life* magazine.

The Chick Corea Akoustic Band was formed out of requests Corea received to do trio performances in Europe. He, Patitucci and Weckl developed a repertoire and began performing as the Akoustic Band in between their work with the Elektrik Band.

The trio's debut album, *Chick Corea Akoustic Band*, was released earlier this year. The album is a collection of jazz standards and original Corea works.

Corea's appearance at The ArtsCenter is a special performance of the center's Sunday Jazz Series. The program began quietly six years ago with local bands, and has gradually ex-

panded, said Bett Wilson, ArtsCenter communications director.

Corea is "one of the most honored jazz musicians in the world," Wilson said.

The layout of the theater at the ArtsCenter should provide an excellent setting for Corea's performance, Wilson said. The theater holds 400 people, with seats right up to the stage. To see Corea up this close "is going to be great," she said.

The Chick Corea Akoustic Band will perform tonight at 7 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. at the ArtsCenter in Carrboro. Tickets are \$18. For more information, call 929-ARTS.

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