Musica Sacra Performs Buxtehude, Telemann for Baroque Christmas Concert

Musica Sacra Chorus and Orchestra’s “A Baroque Christmas,” will usher in the Yuletide season with music by Dietrich Buxtehude and Georg Philipp Telemann at 7 p.m., Friday, Dec. 6, at St. Francis Xavier Church, 52nd and Troost Avenue.

Dietrich Buxtehude’s glorious Magnificat will be the concert’s centerpiece performance. Although a large number of his works have been lost, evidence supports that his life’s work chiefly consisted of sacred vocal music.

In addition, the ensemble will perform a cantata by Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767), O Jesu Christ, mein Kripplein ist (O Jesus Christ, thy Bed of Straw Is Paradise), a cantata for the second day of Christmas for soprano, chorus, strings and organ.

The concert also will feature an instrumental suite of French Christmas carols by Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1643-1704). Charpentier was one of France’s premier 17th-century composers and worked and composed for Jesuit churches and colleges.

Musica Sacra will conclude the concert with an audience favorite—the singing of traditional Christmas carols.

Director Timothy L. McDonald will present “Live Program Notes” at 6:15 p.m. For tickets ($18 adults, $12 students and senior citizens), call the Central Ticket Office at 816-235-6222, visit www.rockhurst.edu/mstickets or purchase at the performance.

Student Choruses Perform Christmas Concert Tradition Dec. 7

Nearly 100 years ago on Christmas Eve in King’s College Chapel at the University of Cambridge, Cambridge, England, the chapel choir introduced Ceremony of Nine Lessons and Carols, which interlaced specifically chosen music with biblical readings to tell the Christmas story.

This Christmas tradition is now embraced by choirs all over the world, including the Rockhurst University Chorus and Chamber Singers. Rockhurst’s 30-voice student choruses and instrumental ensemble of strings, winds, percussion and piano under the direction of Timothy L. McDonald, Ph.D., will perform its 23rd Ceremony of Lessons and Carols at 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 7, in St. Francis Xavier Church, 52nd and Troost Avenue.

Chosen to complement the biblical readings, the musical selections will include the sublime medi-
Midwest Poets Series Guest Needs Danger in His Poems

“No threat, no poem,” Dave Smith says in a 2005 interview in Southern Literary Review. A writer, he suggests, must confront complexity. Smith speaks of his “religious reverence for the natural world” but follows it with a caution: “The worst kind of poems are those that gush over nature’s glorious spots but fail to recognize the threat that reality always holds.” Visitors to this Midwest Poets Series reading will have an opportunity to discover Smith’s tough-minded poems wrapped in dazzling lyricism.

Dave Smith, the author of more than 20 books of poetry, fiction and non-fiction, will read for Midwest Poets Series at 7 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 5, in Mabee Theater, Sedgwick Hall.

Smith recently joined the writing faculty at the University of Mississippi, after 11 years with Johns Hopkins University’s Writing Seminars program. In the 1970s, Smith taught briefly at Cottey College, in Nevada, Mo. Born in Portsmouth, Va., Smith is an elected member of the Fellowship of Southern Writers; his work has appeared in the Paris Review, The New Yorker, The Atlantic Monthly, The Kenyon Review, The New Republic, The Nation, The Partisan Review and The Yale Review. His essay “When Bird Dogs Roamed the Earth” will debut this December in New Letters. “The point of hunting was food,” Smith writes in his essay. “Nature had it; we wanted it.” He is no fooling flower when it comes to his poetry. “Poems organize images to point out our real selves, the Truth, you might say,” Smith writes. “They have the power to show us fundamental and ultimate things.”

Critic Helen Vendler says that Smith’s work is “reclaiming the grittiness of ordinary life for lyric.” Smith’s influences include Robert Penn Warren, and much more.

Center for Arts and Letters Plans England Spring Trip

Could there be a better time to travel to England? I think not. The country is in a fabulous mood, riding high and bursting with pride over its recent good fortunes. Topping the list, of course, is the arrival of Bonnie Prince George.

Additionally, London scored a perfect 10 when it received widespread acclaim for its organization of the last Summer Olympic Games. The hit period drama “Downton Abbey” has captured an extensive international audience that eagerly awaits season 4. Jane Austen, the pride of Bath, is still soaring in popularity almost 200 years after her first novel and the recently released romantic comedy film Austenland keeps her memory alive. Yes, it’s a great time to visit England. So, join us April 23-May 2.

The trip itinerary includes some of the region’s most historic and romantic offerings. After arriving in London, the group will visit Windsor Castle en route to its home base for three nights—Bath. An architectural triumph of Georgian style, Bath’s town square brims with must-see sights—the Abbey, the Roman and medieval baths, and the royal Pump Room where one can enjoy tea and scones with live classical music. Other must-see sites include the Royal Crescent and the North and South Parade. Day trips from Bath include a tour of the exquisite Elizabethan Longleat House, a sojourn into Wales to visit Chesterfield and Ragland castles as well as the romantic Tintern Abbey ruins and the scenic Wye River Valley.

On our way to the next stop, we will visit Oxford, then Blenheim Palace before settling into Broadway, one of the storybook Cotswold villages. With the collapse of the wool industry, the Cotswold region entered a time warp, leaving the pristine English countryside dotted with time-passed villages with colorful names like Moreton-in-Marsh and Chipping Norton.

Greenlease Gallery Presents Paintings, Collages, Sculptures by Mühsam, Taylor

is a visual manifestation of the lectures, discussions and critiques shared by these two artists during the last 13 years. Both artists examine the modernity of structures through contrasting modes of representation. Mühsam paints cultivated landscapes that have witnessed extreme states of human intervention. Depicting dikes, overpasses and fragmented architecture, his work investigates the influence of technology on our ever-changing environment.

Taylor’s abstract paintings and collages examine the role of the body in our interpretation of constructed spaces. Together, their works propose questions about the permanence of actions and the meaning within constructed realities.

The public is invited to hear Mühsam and Taylor discuss their art and the meaning within constructed realities. The exhibition will be on display through Dec. 7.
Ibsen’s *An Enemy of the People* Comes to the Mabee Theater Stage

Rockhurst Theatre continues its season with a performance of Henrik Ibsen’s 1882 play, *An Enemy of the People*. Set in an economically struggling coastal town in Norway, Dr. Stockmann urges the citizenry to invest in curative Baths as a way to lure tourists and their dollars. Success is almost certain until the doctor discovers that the water is teeming with bacteria.

Ibsen’s play is told in a translation/adaptation by Rebecca Lenkiewicz whose 2012 Broadway production was hailed as bold and new; Alan Nichols directs.

Curtain times for *An Enemy of the People* are 7:30 p.m. Thursday and Friday, Nov. 21 and 22, and 2:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 23 and 24, in Mabee Theater, Sedgwick Hall. Tickets, sold at the door, are $10.

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Mark your calendar for April 10-13 when Mabee Theater will be transformed into the back streets of New York City for the rock musical *Rent*, under the direction of Susan Proctor. Music direction will be provided by Tom Kodera, choreography by Liz Reiter.

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Return to the Classics to Discuss James Joyce’s *Ulysses*

*Ulysses*, by Irish writer James Joyce, will be the subject of discussion at the upcoming Return to the Classics great books conversation led by Tom Ventresca, ’70. The discussion will take place at 7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 4, in Massman Hall, room 241.

*Ulysses* is considered one of the most important works of Modernist literature. In 1998, the Modern Library ranked *Ulysses* number one on its list of the 100 best English-language novels of the 20th century.

To reserve a space for the book discussion, contact The Center for Arts and Letters at 816-501-4607 or email cynthia.cartwright@rockhurst.edu. The cost, $25 per person, includes a copy of the book (Modern Library edition) and refreshments; $10 for the discussion and reception only.

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