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Madison Area Concert Handbells

Messenger

Spring 2008

Dear MACH Friends,

We are so looking forward to sharing our Spring Concerts with you and your family, friends, co-workers, and fellow handbell enthusiasts alike. The MACH team has been hard at work putting together a refreshing and spirited program for all to enjoy.

The theme for our Spring concerts is **Clapper Classics!** Clapper referring to the part of the handbell that strikes the bell casting when rung. Classics describing the selection of music representing classical favorites, beloved hymns, patriotic selections, and an original handbell piece, too!

Part one of the program includes music of the master composers from the world of classical music...Bach's *Passacaglia in C Minor*, Chopin's *Grand Valse Brillante*, Debussy's *The Sunken Cathedral*, and Holst's *Mars* from *The Planets* to name a few. The *Mars* piece was arranged for the ensemble specifically for this concert by two of our very own ringers, Rachel Bain and Doug Grovergrys. Read more about this duo's undertaking in this newsletter.

For the second part of the program the MACH ensemble will be assisted by our guest artists. Brass and percussion will add color and liveliness to more of your favorites with beloved hymns and patriotic selections including *Finlandia* (Sibelius), *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, *Thine Is the Glory* (Handel), *Maple Leaf Rag* (Joplin), a medley called *Salute to America*, and a spirited finale called *Caribbean Praise on AZMON* (O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing). All this wraps up with a toe-tapping, hand-clapping encore on *The Washington Post March* by John Phillip Sousa.

We're so looking forward to having you as our guests, so please invite a few friends and join us for a program that will surely have you smiling, humming, and clapping along to your favorite melodies!

Blessings,

Mark Bloedow
Guest Director



Please post the enclosed notice. Thank you!

MACH Welcomes Guest Director for Spring Concerts

MACH is excited to have a guest director conducting all rehearsals and concerts this spring. Mark Bloedow comes to us with a broad music background and handbell experience. He serves as the Director of Worship & Music at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Madison, Wisconsin, where he manages the extensive music program, directs musical ensembles, and serves as principal organist, for the congregation of some 5,000. He also serves as the President and Executive Director of Maestro Productions, Inc., the non-profit ecumenical arts organization he founded in 1989. In addition, Mark currently serves as Past President on the Executive Board of the Madison area Association of Church Musicians (ACM) after having served two years as President of ACM and Dean of the American Guild of Organists' Madison Chapter, and one year as Vice-President. In addition, Mark has served as an adjunct music professor in church music graduate studies at Concordia University Wisconsin, where he has also served as Director of Kammerchor (Concordia's touring choir) and Instructor of Music. He has participated in workshops with leading



handbell clinicians, has lead handbell workshops for church music directors and ringers, has taught handbell methods at the graduate level, and recently became the new owner and administrator of *Handbell Week*, a well-known handbell workshop founded by Robert & Joyce Morrison of McFarland and held locally in the Madison area each summer. He has performed as an organ recitalist and has published works for organ and handbells with Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri; MorningStar Music Publishers, Fenton, Missouri; and Midwest Music, Madison, Wisconsin. Mark earned his Bachelors of Music Education from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh in 1990 where he graduated with Outstanding Senior recognition. He received his Masters of Church Music in December 1999 from Concordia University Wisconsin, Mequon.

Spring Concert on the Road!

The MACH ringers are once again looking forward to taking the Spring Concert to retirement communities in our area. At this writing, the group is scheduled to present concerts at Coventry Village on April 6, Oakwood Village West on April 8, and Meadowmere Assisted Living Apartments on May 14. The concerts bring the arts to people who for a variety of reasons are no longer able to travel to attend concerts in the community. Support for these concerts comes in part from a grant from the Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission and from the Wisconsin Arts Board, the Courtier Foundation, the Strelow Trust, the Evjue Foundation, Research Products, Anchor Savings and First Business Bank.

One of the special attractions of each concert is having the MACH Ringers invite and teach audience members to ring handchimes to accompany everyone singing well-known songs selected for the concert. This is accomplished by handchime song charts and song sheets with enlarged words. One audience member from a previous concert explained it very well:

"I volunteered to play when approached by a member of the choir and enjoyed the challenge. It was fairly easy to follow along because the choir member sat alongside me and I could take my cues from her as well as follow the notations on the sheet."

MACH Ventures Into Outer Space

This spring, MACH will be performing a song that has never before been heard on handbells. Originally composed for 2 pianos, it is most typically performed by a full symphony orchestra. *Mars, Bringer of War* is the first movement in the suite *The Planets* by Gustav Holst. While MACH has played arrangements of other Holst works in the past, it has never taken on something of this magnitude.

MACH ringer, Doug Grovergrys, has always considered Holst one of his favorite composers. One day Doug and fellow MACH member Rachel Bain were malleting some tunes out and talked about *The Planets* and *Mars*. As they say, one thing led to another and over the course of November and December, Rachel and Doug took *Mars* and arranged a setting for handbells.

There are many logistical details to consider when arranging a piece of this size and scale accurately, especially for two people who have never done anything of the sort. Perhaps more importantly, the challenge is just beginning because this is not a familiar piece to most of MACH's ringers. *Mars* involves numerous chromatics, accidentals, and every bell MACH owns, plus several of the chimes. The meter is primarily in 5/4, which is not common in music, especially handbell pieces. Counting to five repeatedly is harder than one might think!

MACH has put a lot of time and effort into preparing this challenging piece. Often the hardest and most frustrating music to learn is the most satisfying to perform, not only because it's great music but also because of one's personal investment. MACH looks forward to turning this orchestral classic into one of this spring's Clapper Classics.

MACH's Newest Additions — Welcome to Kim, Carolyn & Leticia

At the beginning of September 2007, MACH was facing the semester with only 12 ringers – one member short of being able to cover six octaves of handbells. Just a few weeks into rehearsals, Kim Braatz contacted MACH and declared she was ready to rejoin the group. Kim rang with MACH six years ago and she was welcomed back with open arms! Kim comes from a musical family; everyone from her brothers and sisters to her husband and two children play musical instruments. Kim also plays the organ at Lord of Love Lutheran Church in DeForest.

Shortly after Kim returned, Carolyn Kreitlow called to set up an audition which she passed with flying colors. MACH was back up to full strength with one ringer to spare! Carolyn has been playing handbells in church choirs since 1982. She works fulltime at Physicians Plus Insurance in Madison.

New to MACH this spring is Leticia Bode. Her strong musical background and years of handbell experience made for an easy transition into MACH. Currently a PhD candidate in political science at the University of Wisconsin, she studies the politics of new media and teaches several undergraduate courses.

Many Thanks to Our Concert Underwriters!

Our Spring concert, Clapper Classics, is being underwritten by the Norman Bassett Foundation and by the Wahlin Foundation on behalf of Stoughton Trailers. We are most appreciative of the generosity of these two foundations and wish to especially thank Tom Johnson who serves on the Bassett Foundation Board and Don Wahlin who is instrumental in the Wahlin Foundation. Both gentlemen are also members of MACH's Board of Directors and helped us receive this fine level of support.

Are you an experienced ringer? Come ring with us!

**Play challenging and enjoyable music with this fun-loving group.
To arrange an audition, phone Music Director Susan Udell at 608-271-3514.**

Future Concerts

Christmas 2008

Friday, Dec. 12, 2008 at 7:30 pm *and*
Saturday, Dec. 13, 2008 at 7:30 pm
Asbury United Methodist Church
6101 University Avenue, Madison

Sunday, Dec. 14, 2008 at 3:00 pm
First Congregational UCC
1609 University Ave, Madison

Address service requested

How to Contact Us



PO Box 44056
Madison, WI 53744-4056



Music Director Dr. Susan Udell
608-271-3514



Executive Director Kristi Menninga
608-845-2476

See & hear us on the Web!
www.madisonhandbells.org

Taking It to the Schools

For the fourth year in a row, MACH members will present a program to enhance music appreciation in the public schools this Spring. This year's project, although smaller than past years, will teach 420 4th and 5th graders in the Madison and Middleton/Cross Plains school districts how to play the handchimes. The students, teachers, and chaperones will then be bussed to a concert by the full MACH choir at the Middleton Performing Arts Center. This project comes at no cost to the students or schools thanks to support from individuals who contribute to MACH and from the following grantors: Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission, Wisconsin Arts Board, Alliant Energy Foundation, Courtier Foundation, Evjue Foundation, and First Business Bank.

SCRIP Fundraising Program



MACH continues its new fundraising program – the Simplified SCRIP Program. You can help support MACH by purchasing gift cards to spend just like cash at those businesses you already patronize. More information and an order form are included in this newsletter.

