

May 21, 2015

Franz Schubert Concert by RCC Choirs and Orchestra Coming June 7

GRANTS PASS, MEDFORD Ore.—Rogue Community College choirs and orchestras from both Redwood and Riverside campuses will present a concert featuring the compositions of Franz Schubert, including Mass in G and Symphony No. 7, also known as the Unfinished Symphony. In addition, the concert will also feature a selection of Schubert’s “lieder” songs for solo voice and piano.



The concert will be at the Performing Arts Center at Grants Pass High School on Sunday, June 7, beginning at 3 p.m. Admission is free.

The singers and instrumentalists of the Rogue Community College choral and orchestral ensembles include RCC students and staff as well as members of the community. The Riverside Chorus in Medford is directed by Christopher Bingham and the Redwood Chorus in Grants Pass is directed by Deborah Pratt. Both orchestras are directed by Gary Kroll.

Soloists for the Mass include Alissa Barry, soprano; Cathy Sue Newens, soprano; Larry Christianson, tenor; Joe Gomez III, bass; and Leon Guillotte, bass, who are all members of the RCC Redwood Chorus.



“We are all excited about the collaboration between these four RCC ensembles,” says Deborah Pratt, director of the Redwood Chorus. “It gives the singers an opportunity to experience performing with an orchestral accompaniment and the bigger sound of the larger combined chorus.

The orchestra also has a chance to experience performing some of the repertoire for chorus and orchestra. We hope to work together on more projects like this in the future.”

The concert focuses on the music of Franz Schubert (1797-1828), an Austrian composer who, along with Beethoven, bridged the Classic and Romantic periods in music. During a career lasting less than 20 years, Schubert produced numerous operas and symphonies; overtures and masses; string quartets, quintets and an octet; 600 songs; 20 piano sonatas; and some 50 choral works.

The *Mass in G major* for chorus, orchestra, and soloists was composed in 1815, when the composer was 18. The most familiar and popular of his six settings of the mass, he composed it in six days during March, 1815, for a performance in the church where he sang as a youth. Though it is one of his early works, it has many Romantic qualities such as dramatic use of dynamics and soaring melodic lines.

Schubert's "*Unfinished Symphony*" is built on some of the most singable tunes in classical music, yet Schubert transforms those melodies into dramatic music full of craggy attacks, monumental moments, and eerie silences with vivid harmony and a remarkable control of orchestral tone color. In spite of its odd form – two movements instead of the customary four– the Symphony in B Minor is a fully satisfying musical and emotional experience, much loved by many classical music fans.

Schubert is perhaps best known for his "lieder," which is German for "song." With a great gift for melody and the ability to bring a literary text to life through music, Schubert was the first important composer of this musical genre, elevating the status of songs from simple folk music to an art form. A concert of Schubert's music would not be complete without including some of his well-known works for solo voice and piano.

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