

PROGRAM

ANDOVER CHORAL SOCIETY

Michael Driscoll, music director

Sophie Michaux, mezzo-soprano
Benjamin Bogart, bandoneón
Fernanda Ghi & Guillermo Merlo, tango dancers

January 29, 2017
North Andover High School Auditorium
North Andover, MA

Hanacpachap Cussicuinin

Anonymous
arr. Michael Driscoll

Beatus Vir

Domenico Zipoli
(1688–1726)

Mi Refugio

Juan Carlos Cobián
(1896–1953)
arr. Néstor Marconi
(b. 1942)

El Cielo Canta Alegría

Pablo Sosa
(b. 1933)
arr. Ed Henderson

INTERMISSION

Misa a Buenos Aires ('Misatango')

Martín Palmeri
(b. 1965)

Kyrie
Gloria
Credo
Sanctus
Benedictus
Agnus Dei

FROM THE MUSIC DIRECTOR

The idea for this afternoon's program began with a Facebook post from my high school director, Richard Nickerson. Dr. Nickerson posted a link to an enthusiastic review of a Carnegie Hall concert, which featured his choir in the first half. The second half of the concert included a performance of work and composer I had never heard of: *Misa a Buenos Aires (Misatango)* by contemporary Argentinian composer Martín Palmeri. I searched the internet for a recording of the work and was immediately drawn to the energy, tango rhythm, and harmonic language of Palmeri's music as well as the unique instrumentation: strings, piano, and bandoneón, which is an instrument somewhat like an accordion, but without a keyboard.

Once I found the publisher of *Misatango* and confirmed that we would be given permission to perform it, I set about filling out the remainder of today's program. Because *Misatango* includes a bandoneón, I initially searched for another choral work that includes this instrument, but as I suspected, there are practically no choral works written for bandoneón! I then began searching for other works by South American or Argentinian composers. I knew that we would have a string orchestra available, so I looked for choral works with string instruments and eventually stumbled upon the works of Domenico Zipoli, an eighteenth-century Italian composer who worked at Jesuit missions located in present-day Argentina. The remainder of the choral works on the program represent Argentinian music of various eras, styles, and languages.

I hope that you enjoy today's sampler of Argentina's rich contemporary and traditional music.

Michael Driscoll
Music Director

PROGRAM NOTES

By Michael Driscoll

Music as a Means of Conversion

Music and ritual spectacle were key aspects of urban civilizations in Mesoamerica and the Andes. Christian missionaries quickly realized that music could be used as a means of connecting with and converting the indigenous people. Although Latin was the official language of the Roman Catholic Church, composers in South America frequently employed indigenous languages to aid in the evangelization of the people. This is evident in the first piece on today's program, *Hanacpachap Cussicuinin*, the earliest work of vocal polyphony to be published in the 'New World.' Composed in the early 1600s by an unknown composer, this processional hymn to the Virgin Mary is written in the Quechua language, a language still spoken by millions in Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia and Argentina. The twenty verses contain many metaphors about love and nature that are grounded in the Quechuan culture. Although only four vocal parts were published, original performances likely would have included native instruments in addition to the organ and violins brought from Europe.

Domenico Zipoli (1688–1726)

Organist and composer Domenico Zipoli was born just outside of Florence, Italy and received his early music training in Florence, Naples, Bologna, and Rome. Around 1715 he was granted a prestigious post as organist at a Jesuit church in Rome and, a year later, published a collection of keyboard works. After joining the Jesuits in 1716, he traveled to Seville, Spain before setting sail for South America in April 1717 along with fifty-three prospective Jesuit missionaries. Upon landing in Buenos Aires in July 1717, he traveled to Córdoba (present-day Argentina) where he served as music director for the local Jesuit church. Zipoli completed his studies for the priesthood in 1724 but died of tuberculosis the following year before a bishop was available to ordain him.

Although Zipoli is known today primarily for his keyboard works published in Italy, he also composed a number of choral works while living and working in South America. These works include two Masses, three Psalm settings (including *Beatus Vir*, performed today), two hymns, and a *Te Deum*. His South American works come to us via twenty-three manuscripts that were discovered in the 1970s at two Jesuit missions in present-day Bolivia and are now held at the Jesuit church in Concepción, Bolivia.

Beatus Vir

Celebrated at dusk, Vespers is the principal Christian evening prayer service. The parts of the Vespers service that were most commonly set by composers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries included five psalms and the Magnificat canticle, each of which concluded with the doxology (*Gloria Patri*). *Beatus Vir* is the Latin text for Psalm 111 and is sung at many Vespers services.

The work is scored for soprano soloist, two violins, and a continuo group, which likely consisted of cello, contrabass, and organ. As with Zipoli's other two Vespers psalm settings, the chorus parts for *Beatus Vir* contain parts for soprano, alto, and tenor voices. The absence of a choral bass part is somewhat unusual and suggests that perhaps low-voiced singers were in short supply in South America. A choral bass part was added by Michael Driscoll for today's performance.

Zipoli's setting of this psalm reflects the *galant* compositional style that was becoming increasingly popular in Italy in the 1720s. Music in the *galant* style avoided the complexity of the Baroque style, instead moving toward simpler, more song-like melodies; less polyphony; shorter, repeated phrases; and a reduced harmonic

vocabulary. Zipoli divides the nine verses of Psalm 111 (112) and the doxology into six sections, each of which is characterized by a change of tempo, meter, key, and mode (major versus minor). The text of the first section (verses 1–3) pronounces the health, wisdom, and prosperity that will be bestowed upon those who follow the Lord’s commandments, and is set in an exuberant major key with the soprano soloist and the chorus alternating verses. The minor key of the slow triple meter section that follows illustrates the darkness of the world prior to the Lord’s arrival. The four psalm verses that follow relate the happy life that is granted to people who are generous and exercise good judgment, and is portrayed musically with a fast, dance-like triple meter. Fast-moving string parts in the next section depict the anger of the wicked. The theological importance of the Trinity in the first verse of the doxology is illustrated through the use of triple meter and by featuring the choral voices without instrumental accompaniment. The latter half of the doxology text, *sicut erat in principio...* (as it was in the beginning...), features a literal repetition of music from the opening of the work.

Tango and the Bandoneón

Tango is a partner dance form that is thought to have originated in the late nineteenth century in the urban slums along the Plate River, the river that forms the border between Argentina and Uruguay. The tango dance form was influenced by both European and African cultural traditions, while tango music is a fusion of many European musical forms. Early tango instrumental ensembles consisted of violin, guitar, and flute, with the accordion sometimes replacing the guitar. By around 1900, the typical musical ensemble consisted of piano, violin, and bandoneón, an accordion-like instrument that was developed in Germany by Heinrich Band in the mid-1800s and was brought to Argentina by German and Italian immigrants and sailors. In the early twentieth century, orchestras and dancers from Buenos Aires traveled to Europe, setting off a tango craze in various European cities, a fad that spread to New York City in 1913.



Juan Carlos Cobián (1896–1953)

Argentinian tango composer, conductor, pianist, and lyricist Juan Carlos Cobián was known as the ‘Chopin of Tango.’ Cobián composed *Mi Refugio* (My Refuge) in 1921 and first recorded it in 1922 with the orchestra of Osvaldo Fresedo. *Mi Refugio* was performed and recorded by a number of tango musicians, including the arrangement for solo bandoneón by Argentinian composer, arranger, band leader, and bandoneón player Néstor Marconi (b. 1942). Ben Bogart will play that arrangement today.



Pablo Sosa (b. 1933)

Pablo Sosa is a Methodist pastor currently living in Buenos Aires. Sosa studied music at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey and in Berlin before attending the Union Theological Seminary in New York. He began writing his own worship songs early in his career and is recognized for his ability to encourage congregations to sing. Much like the Spanish missionaries of Zipoli’s era, Sosa connects and engages his congregations by writing songs that incorporate forgotten and sometimes disdained dance and song forms. Sosa composed *El Cielo Canta Alegría* (Heaven is Singing for Joy) while in his mid-twenties. The piece is written in the style of *carnvalito* (Little Carnival) – a cheerful traditional South American dance that is a combination of indigenous and colonial Spanish

cultures. The song's catchy melody consists of short verses followed by a refrain and can be quickly learned by worshippers.



Martín Palmeri (b. 1965)

Argentinian composer, pianist, choirmaster, and orchestra conductor Martín Palmeri has written numerous choral and instrumental works, many of which are inspired by the form and harmony of the *Tango Nuevo* style developed by Piazzolla. His compositions include two operas, a Christmas oratorio (2003), *Magnificat* (2012), *Gloria* (2014) and a *cappella* arrangements of tango music. His latest work, *Tango Credo*, will receive its world premiere at New York City's Lincoln Center in April.

Misa a Buenos Aires (Misatango)

Palmeri composed *Misa A Buenos Aires (Misatango)* between September of 1995 and April of 1996. The Mass is scored for mezzo-soprano soloist, mixed choir, string orchestra, piano, and bandoneón. The premiere performance was given by the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Cuba, the Choir of the Faculty of Law of the University of Buenos Aires, and the Polyphonic Town Choir of Vicente López. *Misatango* has been performed in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Chile, the United States, Israel, and many European countries.

Composer's Note

From two important musical experiences in my personal musical history – arranging tango music and directing choirs – the idea emerged to write a work that somehow integrates these two experiences that developed independently. It was always my intention to arrange tango for choral groups, attempting to maintain the 'essence' of the genre. The existing choral repertory lacked neither a *cappella* nor accompanied tango arrangements, but while previous arrangements were sometimes acceptable, they have not been satisfactory. Though the technical and expressive possibilities of choral voices are great, for some reason it is difficult to achieve the precision that the tango genre requires.

Taking this into account, my objective in this composition was to maintain the harmonic language, rhythms, melodic designs, and all of the characteristics of tango within the orchestral score, thus allowing the chorus to have full liberty to just 'sing the mass.' My decision to use the Latin text could be explained by the place of the Latin language among centuries of choral music and the universal connection to the language. But I have to say that my decision also carries the weight of my aesthetic requirement: Latin gives the work a reserved, esoteric quality which, from my point of view, has much to do with tango—especially progressive tango.¹

Misatango follows many of the musical models of Mass settings by composers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Like the Viennese Mass forms of Mozart and Haydn and their contemporaries, Palmeri sets the Mass in six movements: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Benedictus, and Agnus Dei. As with Bach's *B Minor Mass*, the 'Kyrie' of *Misatango* begins with a brief homophonic introduction by the full chorus and orchestra, which then leads to an extended minor mode fugue, first heard in the bass voices. The 'Gloria' movement is set in a three-part ABA form with the prayerful inner section sung by the soloist. As with many earlier musical models, the 'Gloria' movement concludes with an exuberant fugue on the *Cum sancto spiritu* text. The extended text of the 'Credo' movement is set as several contrasting sections. The influence of jazz is evident in the extended piano solo that opens the 'Sanctus.' The ethereal opening of the 'Benedictus' leads to the main melodic idea of the movement, first sung by the vocal soloist, and then followed by the chorus. The extended 'Agnus Dei' movement consists of several large sections. The movement opens with a melancholy bandoneón-contrabass duet that reflects the ethos of many Argentinian tango works. The fugue subject that was heard in the 'Kyrie' returns, this

¹ https://www.dcity.org/wp-content/plugins/sf_sync/cache/00P5000000tQyA.pdf

time on the *Dona nobis pacem* (Grant us peace) text. The *Dona nobis* fugue begins in the minor mode that was heard in the 'Kyrie' movement, but it then modulates to the major mode, suggesting a more hopeful prayer for peace.

(The link below is for Mike's reference only.)

<http://www.dciny.org/palmeri-martin/>

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Hanacpachap cussicuinin

Hanacpachap cussicuinin,
Huaran cacta muchas caiqui.
Yupairuru pucoc mallqui,
Runa cunap suyacuinin.
Call pan nacpa quemicuinin,
Huaciascaita.

Uyarihuai muchascaita
Diospa rampan Diospa maman
Yurac tocto hamancaiman
Yupascalla, collpascaita
Huahuaiquiman suyuscaita
Ricuchillai.

The bliss of Heaven,
I will worship you a thousandfold,
Revered fruit of a mature tree,
Long awaited by your people,
Protection of spiritual strength,
Heed my call.

Hear my prayer,
Litter of God, Mother of God,
White shoot of the lily,
Worshipped, my barren state,
Show me your son,
Whom I await.

Beatus vir (Psalm 112)

Beatus vir, qui timet Dominum,
in mandatis ejus volet nimis.

Potens in terra erit semen ejus,
generatio rectorum benedicetur.

Gloria et divitiae in domo ejus,
et iustitia ejus manet in saeculum saeculi.

Exortum est in tenebris lumen rectis,
misericors et miserator et iustus.

Lucundus homo,
qui miseretur et commodat,
disponet res suas in iudicio,

Quia in aeternum non commovebitur.
In memoria aeterna erit iustus,
ab auditione mala non timebit.

Paratum cor ejus, sperare in Domino,
confirmatum est cor eius,
non commovebitur,
donec despiciat inimicos suos.

Dispensit dedit pauperibus;
iustitia ejus manet in saeculum saeculi,
cornu ejus exaltabitur in gloria.

Peccator videbit et irascetur,
dentibus suis fremet et tabescet.
Desiderium peccatorum peribit.

Blessed is the man who fears the Lord,
who delights in his commandments.

His seed shall be mighty upon the earth;
the generation of righteous shall be blessed.

Glory and prosperity shall be in his house;
and his justice endures from generation to generation.

A light has risen in the darkness for the upright:
one who is merciful, compassionate, and just.

Happy is the man
who sympathizes and shares,
who chooses his words with discretion.

Because he will not be troubled for eternity;
the just man shall be in everlasting remembrance.
he shall not fear evil tidings.

His heart is ready to hope in the Lord.
His heart is strengthened;
He shall not be shaken
Until he looks down upon his enemies.

He disperses, he gives to the poor;
His justice endures from generation to generation
His horn shall be exalted with honor.

The wicked will see, and be angered;
He will gnash with his teeth, and waste away.
The desire of the wicked shall perish.

Doxology

Gloria Patri, et Filio,
et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio,
et nunc, et semper,
et in sæcula sæculorum.
Amen.

Glory to the Father, and the Son,
And the holy spirit.
As it was in the beginning,
and now, and always,
and to the ages of ages.
Amen.

El Cielo Canta Alegría

El cielo canta alegría.
Aleluya!
Porque en tu vida y la mia
brilla la gloria de Dios.
Aleluya!

Heaven is singing for joy,
Alleluia!
Because in your life and mine
shines the glory of God.
Alleluia!

El cielo canta alegría.
Aleluya!
Porque en tu vida y la mia
las une el Amor de Dios.
Aleluya!

Heaven is singing for joy,
Alleluia!
Because your life and mine
are on in the love of God.
Alleluia!

El cielo canta alegría.
Aleluya!
Porque en tu vida y la mia
proclamarán al Señor.
Aleluya!

Heaven is singing for joy,
Alleluia!
Because your life and mine
will always proclaim the Lord.
Alleluia!