

Behold the Time of Mercy

Medieval Pageants for Lent



Friday, March 30th, 7:00pm
Saturday, March 31st, 2:30pm and 7:00pm
2012

The Play

St. Thomas's Anglican Church and Poculi Ludique Societas present, *Behold the Time of Mercy: Medieval Pageants for Lent*. This production portrays three biblical stories including the Raising of Lazarus, Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, and the Last Supper. The play you will see is a redaction of three original plays from a 15th Century source known as The N-Town Plays. This name is taken from the last stanza of the opening proclamation that the play was to be played at "N-Town." The N-town cycle includes a total of 42 plays spanning the entire history of salvation from Creation to the Last Judgment. It is widely held to originate from East Anglia. The text was modernized by Stanley J. Kahrl and edited by Dr Alexandra Johnston and Linda Phillips.

From the Director

by Kimberley Radmacher

Together, the three plays we've chosen for *Behold The Time of Mercy* are, in many ways, about the contemplation of the most profound questions we all face: the meaning of life and death. Whatever may be our religious beliefs, we all reflect on these mysteries of human existence at some point or another. Whether by gathering in places of worship, through family get-togethers, meetings with friends, or other secular celebrations, we often find meaning in our lives through rituals of communion. Communing and community are essential parts of living. With *Behold the Time of Mercy*, we are presenting a 15th-century interpretation of the events leading up to and including The Last Supper, the origins of the Holy Eucharist or Mass. The Lord's Supper is a sacrament that offers the faithful an experience of profound communion with God and one another.

I want to thank members of the congregation who bravely auditioned and took part in this production. Many have little or no experience with performing live, and they have all taken on their roles with enthusiasm. The rehearsal process is always arduous and can be tedious at times, but they stuck it out and their hard work has reaped rewards in the production you will see. I found working with the experienced actors gratifying, and watching them interact with members of the congregation and seeing them all grow as performers has been elucidating.

Thank you Fr. Mitchell for inviting the *PLS* to work with St. Thomas's again; Alex for bringing us music; Joanne for the beautiful scenic painting; Katherine for imposing some sort of structure on a rather amorphous process; and Linda, of course, who has been the backbone of this production.

The Music

by Dr David Klausner

Music for the performance of the English biblical plays in the fifteenth century would have been drawn largely from two sources. Liturgical music would have been taken from the standard chant settings of the Church, either in the usage of Sarum (Salisbury) or York as geographically appropriate. Much of this music is still in use today, and the processional hymn 'Gloria, laus et honor' is taken from the service for Palm Sunday. Other music, as required, would likely have been composed by local musicians, and very little of this material survives with any direct connection to the plays. Accordingly, the instrumental music is drawn from other fifteenth-century sources, primarily from the large repertoire of carols (for Easter as well as Christmas), and the music of the Old Hall manuscript from the beginning of the century, which includes this Sanctus by 'Roy Henry' - who may possibly be Henry V.

Poculi Ludique Societas

PLS (Poculi Ludique Societas) sponsors productions of early plays, from the beginnings of medieval drama to as late as the middle of the seventeenth century. For more than forty years, PLS has been associated with the university's Centre For Medieval Studies, offering a regular schedule of plays every year. Now, as part of the new Centre for Performance Studies in Early Theatre, PLS operates in affiliation with the Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies. PLS has toured in Canada, the United States and Europe. PLS also collaborates with the theatre history research project Records of Early English Drama (REED) at the University of Toronto.

St Thomas's Church

A beautiful Arts and Crafts building designed by parishioner and renowned Toronto architect Eden Smith, St Thomas's houses a number of architectural treasures, including historical stained glass windows, a First World War memorial baptistery, and a stunning reredos behind the high altar displaying hand-carved statues of nine saints associated with the parish's growth and role in the Anglican Church in Toronto. St. Thomas's also has a wonderful collection of treasured church vestments and vessels. Constructed in red brick in 1892-93, and intended to be a temporary structure until the parish could afford a larger stone building, the church has now served the community for more than a century. St Thomas's has a strong tradition of musical excellence and involvement in the arts.

Cast (in alphabetical order)

Susan Clarke: *Consoler/Messenger, Citizen*
Alice Degan: *Martha, Blind Beggar*
Ciara Dungan: *Child, Demon*
Andrew Dunning: *Philip*
Edward Forrest: *Child, Demon*
Isabel Forrest: *Child, Demon*
Olivia Forrest: *First Child, Demon*
James Jones: *Thomas*
Patricia Kennedy: *Citizen*
Rob Kennedy: *Attendant, James the Elder*
Mahaffy Khan: *Consoler, James the Younger*
Eric Lehman: *Jesus*
James MacMillan: *Andrew*
Nicole Marie McCafferty: *Consoler, Demon, Priest*
Rob Mitchell: *John*
Scott Moore: *Attendant, Judas*
J.P. Napier: *Thaddeus*
Birgitte Nielsen-Worrall: *Citizen*
Martin Reinink: *Lazarus, Simon the Leper, Second Priest*
Joanne Rochester: *Consoler, Burgess, Citizen*
Irene Sheridan: *Citizen*
Simone Shojaat: *Child, Demon*
Sophie Shojaat: *Child, Demon*
Shannon Shura: *Mary Magdalene*
Meredith Thomas: *Bartholomew*
Timothy Wright: *Peter*

Muscians

Velma Ko, Alessandro Ariza: Violin
Jessica Li, Xi Chen: Viola
Alexander Smith: Cello

Production Team and Crew

Kimberley Radmacher: *Director*
Linda J. Phillips: *Producer, Production Manager, Costumes*
Rob Mitchell: *Clerical Consultant*
Joanne Rochester: *Set Design and Donkey Construction*
Katherine Belyea: *Stage Manager, Choral Assistant*
Michele Ponniah: *Assistant Stage Manager*
Musical Consultant: *David Klausner*
Alexander Smith: *Music Director*
Nell Coleman and Alice Degan: *Costume Assistants*
Eric Lehmann: *Donkey Construction*
Alexandra F Johnston and Linda Phillips: *Text Editors/Dramaturgs*
Irenaldo Fumero: *Poster Design*
J.P. Napier: *Props*
Marilyn Ramsingh and Barbara Obrai: *Front of House*
Thomas J. Sheridan: *Photography*
David Kent: *Videographer*

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