

Orchestra draws 7,000 to Civic Center concert

After a 24-year absence, the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra performed in Springfield Saturday night.

By CLIFTON J. NOBLE JR.

Music writer

Holiday cheer filled Springfield Civic Center Saturday night as a crowd estimated at 7,000 turned out to witness the return to Springfield after a 24-year absence of the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra.

Conductor Keith Lockhart, decking his tuxedo with red tie,

suspenders and socks for the concert's second half, led players in characteristic top-notch Boston Pops arrangements of seasonal fare, as well as such classics as Tchaikovsky's "Waltz of the Flowers."

Precise and polished as the Boston Pops was, its arrangers shared at least equal responsibility with its players for the enthusiastic audience response with which each successive number and medley was hailed.

New pops concoctions from the pens of Pat Hollenbeck and Don Sebesky highlighted Saturday's concert. Hollenbeck's stunning arrangement of the traditional carol, "Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day" delivered a winning contrapuntal weave of the familiar tune, cast in piquant doublings like muted trumpet and piccolo.

Sebesky's contribution melded businesslike cuttings from Handel's "Hallelujah" chorus with "Angels We Have Heard on High," "Ding Dong Merrily," "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing" and "Joy to the World," with a tip of the cap to Pops conductor laureate John Williams' "Star Wars" score in a slick, cosmopolitan Christmas medley economically titled "Joy."

The 50-voice Gloria Dei Cantors' Choir collaborated with the orchestra on several numbers, including the opening carol collection "A Christmas Flourish."

Director Elizabeth Paterson led



Conductor Keith Lockhart led the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra in a concert Saturday at Springfield Civic Center. It was the first time in 24 years that the orchestra performed in Springfield.

the choir in its single unaccompanied selection, a superb melding of traditional French carols including "Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella," sung in French and English. Whether performing alone or partnered with the orchestra, Patterson's choir radiated the professionalism that has won it acclaim around the world and produced 30 recordings: impeccable diction, superior timbral blend and balance of parts.

Lockhart's and the Pops' other guest for the evening — besides Sarma, who arrived at the appointed time with predictable topical humor — was Rob Mathes. In addition to his guitar facility and an eclectic style of singing and piano-playing that recalls the sounds of such masters of the technique as Ethos John and Michael McDonald, Mathes is one of those behind-the-scenes jacks of many trades that often find their niche with the Pops.

During Saturday's first half,

Mathes played "Christmas is Coming" from his PBS special of the same name, and a funky guitar version of "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen" with verses fingered in subdued Leo Kunkle fashion, and a hot-picked solo worthy of George Benson. A hard-swinging but over-sing gospel take on "Deck the Halls" and Mathes' own "William the Angel" brought him back to the stage during the second half.

The evening's warmest response was accorded WWLP-TV22 meteorologist Brian Lapis for his engaging, nimble narration of Clement Moore's "A Visit from St. Nicholas." The orchestra concluded the program proper with their new sing-along "Christmas is For Children." Secure in the knowledge that they can sell out the Civic Center, there is little doubt that the Boston Pops will not let 24 more years go by before they play again in Springfield.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2000

Sept 29, 2000 The Boston Globe

THE BOSTON GLOBE

Richard Dyer

By Richard Dyer

GLOBE STAFF

Home on the Cape

Gloriae Dei Cantores sings its first concert in its new home, the Church of the Transfiguration in Orleans, tomorrow night at 8. The program includes the premiere of Daniel Pinkham's "The House of the Lord," which was commissioned for the occasion.

The choir, which is under the direction of Elizabeth C. Patterson, made its Jordan Hall debut last season and returns there Oct. 29. The ensemble's next CD will arrive in November, choral music by Aaron Copland and Virgil Thomson. The choir will sing 22 holiday concerts with the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2000

ORLEANS CHOIR SINGS PRAISE TO GOD IN RARE BOSTON VISIT

Author: By Ellen Pfeifer, Globe Correspondent Date: 10/30/1999
Page: F3 Section: Arts

MUSIC REVIEW

GLORIA DEI CANTORES

Elizabeth C. Patterson, director

At: Jordan Hall, last night Unlike most choruses, the musical life of Gloria dei Cantores (Singers for the Glory of God) proceeds from its overarching agenda, the worship of God. Rather than filling a particular artistic niche or serving to project a conductor's ego, this chorus exists to celebrate the spiritual life of its church community and to spread the celebration around the world.

In a way, then, the singers have it backwards (although they probably don't think so). Like so many church choirs, the one at the Church of the Holy Paraclete, in Orleans, Mass., started out with people of faith and fervor but little musical sophistication. Under the direction of Elizabeth Patterson, however, the singers have committed themselves to a transformation - into an ensemble with the highest artistic ambitions. Funded mainly by money raised within the church, the group has a core of 42 singers, ranging in age from 20 to 60. Nearly half of the singers are identified as Sister or Brother, denoting their membership in the monastic Community of Jesus that is based at the Orleans church. The choir has toured 23 countries, made more than 30 recordings, appeared on television and radio, and even accompanied the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra on three of its holiday tours.

Despite its globe-circling travel, the group has not often ventured into Boston to perform, and the concert at Jordan Hall last night was this listener's first encounter with the group. The audience was small and seemed composed mainly of supporters who had driven in from the Cape. Although the group's roster includes three organists and a fledgling orchestra, the program selected by Patterson was unaccompanied. It featured works by Samuel Adler, William Mathias, J.S. Bach, the Russian Georgi Vasilevich Sviridov, as well as some

Gregorian chant.

With the women dressed in royal blue gowns and the men in tuxedos, the singers - first women, then men - proved impressive in the opening chant settings. The text was the lovely one from Psalm 84 about the beauty of the Lord's dwelling places. Both men's and women's voices sounded sweet and pure in the unison melodic lines - the intonation was true and the ensemble neat and tidy. What's more, the singers clearly knew and appreciated what the words mean.

In Adler's tangy settings of three Psalms, including No. 84, the chorus sounded a little more dicey. High notes were strained. Pitch was not invariably accurate. And entrances were sometimes ragged because Patterson moved too quickly between individual numbers.

The Welsh composer Mathias's four motets proved rather interesting - particularly "Victimae paschali" with its pedal points, coloristic use of dissonance, and atmospheric tone painting of Mary's vision of the risen Lord. Here, as elsewhere in the program, the choir's singing was most successful from a musical standpoint in passages where the textures and melodic lines were comparatively simple.

In the Bach motet, "Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied," the chorus seemed out of its depth. Bach's complicated counterpoint is challenging for even a professional chorus and the group could not keep the threads of discourse clear.

On the other hand, the chorus sounded very beautiful in the richly chordal textures of Sviridov's wonderful Russian Orthodox works.

Patterson voiced the harmonies with great skill and the singers were clearly savoring the music and its religious message.

FAITH & VALUES

Community creates a haven by the harbor

By Nicola Francis-Burnell

Rock Harbor is renowned for its stunning sunset scenes and peaceful beach walks. It is also known as the home of the Community of Jesus, a residential Christian community dedicated to the transformation of its members' lives through communal living and daily worship.

"It wasn't intentionally started as a community," says publicist Blair Tingley. Founded by Cay Andersen and Judy Sorensen in the 1950s, the group grew out of what was essentially a Monday evening Bible study and prayer assembly, which gathered at the guest house. When requests for retreats came in from people traveling around the New England area, the Community of Jesus was created.

Current members pursue occupations outside of the Community, including teaching, publishing and painting. Their spiritual identity is represented by various branches of Christianity. "Our community comes from many denominational backgrounds," explains the Rev. Martin Shannon, an Episcopal priest and liturgist who is pursuing his doctoral studies. "My bishop has approved my call here. This is a genuine vocation," he explains.

Although Christianity has been split over generations, the Community employs certain roots of tradition that predate religious divisions. "Many of the prayers that we use are common now to various branches of the church," says Shannon. "Different denominations would recognize elements of their own service within the Community services." The Basilican church, built 30 years ago, reflects this diversity within its architecture. "I like to think of it as a mosaic, bringing together many traditions and many facets of the body of Christ," says Tingley.

With 12 clergy on staff and more than 330 residing members, Community life resembles that of the Benedictine monastic tradition. "I think the desire for genuine community has always been a part of our own human condition," Shannon notes. "People have uprooted from their homes because they felt a call to this community life."

In addition to families and single people, the Community is also home for sisters and



Members of the Community of Jesus gather for worship in the new Church of the Transfiguration at Rock Harbor.

Staff photo by Barry Donahue

monks who have taken vows of poverty and celibacy. "We all take vows, which involve commitment to Christ and living out our life with Christ here. It's a commitment to one another, so in that respect it very much reflects the tradition of Benedict," says Shannon.

Families live in privately owned homes within the neighborhood. "We may have two or three families in each home," says Tingley, who admits that life is not always idyllic. "It takes a lot of working things through and coming to peace and reconciliation with each other," she explains. "Living the best we can, in Christian love, is not just an ideal, it's preferring each other even when we don't feel like it."

Shannon believes this commitment is necessary for the Community to effectively support its members. "We have these principles, that we've all agreed on, and among them is our commitment to live out daily with one another in a way that expresses honesty and love."

Daily life is very much centered around the liturgy. Members celebrate the Eucharist seven days a week and worship together several times a day to chant the Divine Office. "The worship in our church is the glue, the foundation that holds our community together," Tingley professes.

Becoming a member of the Community can take a couple of years. "It's definitely a vocation," says Tingley. The monastic model means that preparation is necessary. "You are talking about a commitment that ultimately is lifelong, like a marriage," cautions Shannon. The process of initiation involves instruction through various stages, from attending retreats to actually living among its members. "We call this a process of discernment, before any vows are taken," says Shannon.

The Community welcomes non-members to attend its worship services and hosts retreats for groups who are not affiliated with them. It also has several programs for people in search of spiritual guidance but

who may not be looking for membership. Personal retreats, for example, may include accommodation in the guest house, daily worship and pastoral counseling.

"We have a live-in program for families going through rough patches, or for people in transition," Tingley adds. "Some have stayed for as long as a year, or as short as a week. For some people, the Community may be a stop along the way," Shannon explains. "We also have an oblate program for groups who are connected to us. They don't reside here, but they consider this their spiritual home."

Shannon has been with the Community for 13 years. "What we're finding is that a village, which is what we are, does a great deal to solve some of life's problems, before they even get started." When problems do occur, the support structure within the Community reflects a tradition that society has lost touch with. "The sense of disconnectedness, which is so prevalent now in society, is something we are striving to do the opposite of, which is to connect with one another," says Shannon.

When it comes to celebrating the holidays, the Community is renowned for its festive energy. "Christmas, for us, is an extremely important time," explains Shannon. "As a Christian community, the both of Christ is our joy, our time of celebration." These celebrations begin with Advent. "Advent is an important time because we try to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ," Tingley enthuses.

The Community hosts a festival of music, crafts, games, drama and worship during the first weekend in December. "We try to glorify God through various art forms," says Tingley. This year's performance will be "The Messiah." There will also be a hand bell choir and brass groups performing throughout the weekend. "We will have a live crèche at the goat barn with a cow, donkey, sheep, goats and people dressed in costume," Tingley adds. Activities for children range from gift-making to a puppet show.

"We don't make any hesitation, it's a Christmas fair," concludes Tingley. "It's all about Christ and the joy of God coming to earth."

FAITH & VALUES

Gloriae Dei: Committed to music and to God

By Beth Seiser

They've had it all: critical acclaim, an impressive list of recordings, world tours. But the essence of the Orleans-based Community of Jesus' Gloriae Dei Cantores choir is found in the translation of their name: Singers to the Glory of God.

"For the members of the choir, the first step is to be willing to give thanks to God, in praise for all that he has done for us," says Elizabeth Patterson, the artistic director of the choir.

"After that, it's a question of being committed and to what extent you are willing to run the risk of your pride," she says.

And this may be where Gloriae Dei diverges from other church choirs. Not satisfied by simply getting together on Sundays to sing for their own congregation, this choir has toured 23 countries in Europe, Asia and North America. The members sing in 18 languages, and have received glowing reviews worldwide for their performances of sacred choral music of all styles from the 11th through 20th centuries.

"I've worked with other church choirs before I started with Gloriae Dei," says Patterson. "It was very, very difficult to foster the commitment necessary for excellence when the choir members were pulled in many directions by their many obligations."

"I'm at an advantage here, because we are a religious community. I see people often," she says, laughingly acknowledging that it would be hard for members to skip practice or make other excuses.

But she credits the overwhelming success and popularity of the group not to her own pursuit of excellence, but to the individual members of the choir.

"Being committed to music and to God means getting over our own pride. It means being willing to take risks," Patterson says.

"So many people become extremely self-conscious when they hear their own voices," she says. "Our voices are not a record of our identity. We hear them and we have a conscious thought of our inadequacies. When you sing, you can feel exposed and inadequate."

What inspires her members to overcome that, particularly when they don't have an overwhelming desire to be on stage, is their original mission to give praise to God. She sees this as the first stepping-stone to getting over fear and self-consciousness.

"Once a person feels the necessary inspiration, that gives them the foundation to be willing to face a lot of other things," Patterson says.



Elizabeth Patterson, director of the Gloriae Dei Cantores choir at the Community of Jesus in Orleans.

"Then it's just a matter of being willing to give the time and do the things that are suggested," she adds.

But this is no small task. Choir members are expected to attend daily rehearsals, to sing in services at the Community of Jesus, and to tour, sometimes up to two months out of the year.

"It takes a tremendous commitment," Patterson admits. "But when people try out for the choir it is with the understanding that the choir and its schedule comes first."

Many of the members have worked out arrangements with understanding employers, which allows them the necessary flexibility. Others have gone into business for themselves to accommodate the schedule.

Patterson looks beyond a person's singing ability and into their psyche to foster the growth necessary to keep up with their demanding schedule.

"What you have in this choir are people who have faced their own insecurities and are inspired among themselves to grow. As long as you have a group of people who want to learn, who want to risk, then there's no stopping them," she says.

"This alone explains our fast-paced schedule. I found myself suddenly with a group that I'm doing a fast dance to keep ahead of," she says.

Patterson's modesty does not accurately reflect the brilliance she has been credited with. In review after review, Patterson has been described in every flattering superlative possible, with papers such as The New York Times and The Washington Post singing her praises.

But she persists in downplaying her role.

"My task is to simply guide the choir members' motivation to the sources where they can improve. I help them to gain more confidence in themselves. I feel as if I'm acting more as a friend; I stand by and say yes, you can do this," she says.

"I just keep raising that bar of commitment, and they just stay right with me," she adds.

Patterson talks about the importance of artistic expression, and how that fosters personal and spiritual growth. She used an example of a recent survey she heard on the news to illustrate her belief that music can be a lifetime to God.

"In this survey, teenagers who were not involved in drugs were asked to name some of the contributing factors in their lives that kept them on track. They named music, family and friends. This was astounding to me and reminded me of the importance that music can have, not just in one's personal growth, but in one's spiritual growth," she says.

"I remember being in music school as a young person, working with younger people in choirs and orchestras. It was that group experience that really seemed to help them, to help them understand that they belong, that they are part of something larger than themselves," she says.

"It's been with a very heavy heart that I have watched so many music programs disappear from schools. There's a lack of understanding about what these art forms are able to do for kids," she says.

The Gloriae Dei Cantores choir members make time in their schedule to go to school and work with children pursuing musical interests. Patterson notes that helping children go beyond their preconceived limitations gives them a tremendous amount of confidence and self-esteem.

"I believe this experience gives them a better respect for themselves, which helps them to say no to more things such as drugs and alcohol," she says.

When describing the spiritual growth and transformation of the members of her choir, Patterson refers to a "divine conversation between the singers and God."

"Singing with the choir becomes a wonderful way for them to empty their hearts. As their hearts begin to fill up with a sense of how God interacts with them in everyday life, singing becomes a way for them to pour out what is in their hearts, not only the love of God, but also their own human sorrows and griefs," she says.

"Once they discover the tremendous reward of what I would call this 'divine conversation' — that the music helps them express things that they would otherwise have difficulty saying — their faces light up with this discovery," she says.

"It is this sort of personal discovery that drives the choir members to meet higher and higher challenges. It is their commitment that dictates our schedule. They just keep getting better and better," she says.

The Gloriae Dei Cantores choir performs Dec. 26 through 30 at Boston Symphony Hall in Boston. Locally, they will perform Dec. 24 at 9 p.m. at the Church of Transfiguration on Rock Harbor in Orleans.



inside

Day & Night
Your
entertainment
guide

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3 Sections

\$4

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Page 6, Box 4 Box, SEPTEMBER 27 TO OCTOBER 5, 2000

MUSIC & MORE

Singing God's glory

The Gloria Dei Cantors choir will present a gala concert on Saturday.
Photo by Steve J. Sherman

BY JOHN THOMAS

Gloria Dei Cantors, the celebrated choir of the Community of Jesus in Orleans, has achieved recognition far beyond its Rock Harbor home.

The choir has produced more than two dozen compact disc recordings that present American, European and Russian music from the 11th through the 21st centuries. With an average membership of 40 singers age 18 to 60, the group has toured more than 20 countries in North America, Europe and Asia. They sing in nearly 20 languages and have shared their music at some of the world's most sacred places, from Venice's St. Mark's Church to the dilapidated temple of Medjugorje in Croatia. They are a perennial performer on the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra's holiday concert schedule. Dr. Robert Schuller, famous pastor of the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, Calif., has called them "truly one of the great choirs in the world."

But it was not always like this. Elizabeth Paterson has been the artistic director of Gloria Dei Cantors since 1988. A graduate of Millikan University in Decatur, Ill., with a major in keyboard and minor in organ, she and her husband joined the Christian community when they moved to Orleans in 1972. Paterson was asked to work with the music program at the church, and she recalls that the singers had a high level of spiritual conviction but needed great encourage-

ment and confidence-building as musicians. By keeping the focus on praising God, along with substantial work on the basics, eventually a critical mass of singers emerged. Out of the Community of Jesus choir the Gloria Dei Cantors was born.

James Jordan, Paterson's assistant since 1988, describes the group's mission. "Our purpose is to reach out by using music as a connecting bridge between us and the people who hear the music. We have found that so much music in so many styles can slip through the walls that we have with each other. We all believe very strongly that this is what God has called us to do."

The choir rehearses every day, and Jordan works full-time at his job. While Paterson tends to meet with the choir for the "finishing polish and refinements," the group has much more contact with Jordan and several other staff who teach the theoretical background of the music.

"We show what makes the music tick," says Jordan. "We have a staff person who deals with the vocalism and singing production, and another who works with rhythms." The group's members are all volunteers. "But they make it a top priority commitment. Even their employers know this so that they can make arrangements as needed with them."

Jordan finds great satisfaction in working with the group to understand why each piece of music sounds the way it does.

"Our goal is to realize why a composer was

moved by a certain text," he says. If a composer was moved so much that he or she wrote this music, how do we discover what the composer perceived and present it effectively? That's why we discuss theoretical matters in music, chord structures, voicings. The harder we work in pulling the vision of the composer from the page into sound, the stronger the connection becomes."

The universality of music — and its power to break through barriers of political borders and language — has found its deepest expression in some of the group's world tour experiences. The trip to Medjugorje, the village where many have seen visions of Jesus' mother Mary, was particularly moving for the choir. Jordan recalls "the privilege of singing in the church and to be part of the pilgrimage with so many people."

In Venice, Italy, the choir performed music written by Monteverdi in the church that was built for the occasion to give thanks for the end of a plague.

The music for the concert at the new Church of the Transfiguration in Orleans has been chosen to showcase the basilican style and acoustics designed by R. Lawrence Kirkgaard, whose impressive list of projects include Tanglewood's new Seiji Ozawa Hall, New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall, Boston's Wang Center and New York's Carnegie Hall. The church also features a Skinner pipe organ.

The concert will include music by

Palestrina, J.S. Bach, William Mathus, Leo Sowerby, Rachmaninoff, and the world premiere of a new work by esteemed composer David Fieldham, titled "The House of the Lord."

The choir will also sing the Monteverdi "Gloria," which was written more than 300 years ago for a new church in Venice. Jordan finds this choice particularly appropriate.

"We know the circumstances for which it was written, and it is such joyous music. We finally have this opportunity to perform in our own home in our own church — to have the choir and the church wedded together," he says.

But no matter how far Gloria Dei Cantors travels to sing its message, it is never far from its Orleans home.

"The choir remains an outgrowth of our life as a community. Everything we perform or record is heard in our worship services first," Jordan says.

Gloria Dei Cantors performs at Church of the Transfiguration in Orleans at 8 p.m. Sept. 30. A pre-concert dinner and champagne reception is also being offered. Hors d'oeuvres will be served at 5:45 p.m. and dinner will be served at 6:15 p.m. at Paradise House. Black tie optional. Tickets for concert and dinner (including preferred seating) are \$75. Tickets for the concert only are \$30 (students/seniors: \$20). For reservations, call 240-2400.



Friday, 9/29/00 to Thursday, 10/5/00

CAPEWEEK

CAPE COD TIMES

BEST BETS



Homecoming concert

Gloriae Dei Cantores has been receiving rave reviews for performances in Europe, Asia and North America. Now the choir returns to Orleans for a debut concert at 8 p.m. Saturday in the newly dedicated Church of the Transfiguration in Rock Harbor. The program features works by

Palestrina, Bach, Mathias, Sowerby, Monteverdi and Rachmaninoff, and the world premiere performance of a new work by Daniel Pinkham. Tickets for dinner (black tie optional) and the concert are \$75; concert-only tickets are \$30, \$20 for seniors and students. To reserve tickets call 240-2400.



Choir to perform its new home



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Cancer map

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rate upstate. Page B2

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ALBANY, NEW YORK

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2000

ENCORE

Lockhart and Co. serve up festive fare

By GREG HAYNES
Staff writer

ALBANY — Right on cue, Mother Nature dropped a dose of fluffy white stuff on Albany Tuesday, just as Keith Lockhart and the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra rolled into the Pepsi Arena for their holiday show.

Everyone, it seemed, was in a festive mood.

The Boston Pops can be a bit corny, especially at the holiday season, but this performance — co-sponsored by Proctor's Theatre and WMHT-TV — managed to keep the sugarcorn to a minimum.

With a cascade of chiming bells, the program began with "A Christmas Flourish," a medley of holiday favorites including "Joy to the World" and "Angels We Have Heard on High."

The orchestra hit its high-water mark with "Waltz of the Flowers" from Tchaikovsky's classic "The Nutcracker," and from harpist Anna Reinerstein's shimmering introduction, a piece taken at an appropriately light and breezy pace. It was also the only classical selection of the night.

Playing guitar and piano, the multitalented Rob Mathes delivered the pop end of the musical spectrum. Best known for his PBS-TV Christmas special, Mathes has become the sort of contemporary musical ambassador to the holidays.

On Tuesday, he lent his earnest voice to a mix of carols, including a surprisingly downcast treatment of "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" and a funk-funk reading of "Deck the Halls," with the orchestra's brass section providing strutting punctuation.

But he and his small combo also served up a pair of Mathes originals — "Christmas Is Coming" and "William the Angel" — which only posed how difficult it is to conceive a new holiday standard.

Gloria Dei Cantors, a Cape Cod-based choir under the direction of Elizabeth Peterson, was a much better match for the Boston Pops, especially weaving their choral harmonies through the Appalachian holiday medley, "Songs From the Hill Folk," which featured well-known favorites such as the haunting "I Wonder as I Wander" and the roosting "Go Tell it on the Mountain," as well as

MUSIC REVIEW

THE BOSTON POPS
ESPLANADE ORCHESTRA
Conducted by Keith Lockhart
With Rob Mathes
and Don DeLaise

- **When:** 8 p.m., Tuesday
- **Where:** The Pepsi Arena, South Pearl Street, Albany
- **Highlights:** "Songs from the Hills," "Waltz of the Flowers" and, of course, Santa
- **The crowd:** Fashion-wise, the crowd ran the gamut from jeans and black leather jackets to gold brocade gowns and tuxedos.

lesser-known nuggets like "The Seven Joys of Mary" and the majestic lullaby, "Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head."

Pat Hollenbeck earned a nod for his "Hill Folk" arrangement, and there was no question that he was also a percussionist with the orchestra, as he trotted out a washboard for "The Kentucky Wail." His arrangement for the high-stepping "Tomorrow Is My Dancing Day" was spirited, with a Celtic flair, and he added an equally inventive element — an African talking drum — to fuel the rhythm.

Special guest Don DeLaise was a late addition to the program, and its biggest disappointment as well. On hand to provide the narration for Clement C. Moore's "A Visit From St. Nicholas" (better known to most as "Twas the Night Before Christmas"), comic actor DeLaise fumbled through several lines of the poem and padded his appearance onstage with less-than-buoyant jokes, Christmas memories and a stab at conducting the orchestra through "Stars and Stripes Forever."

But then just before 10 p.m., Sara Claus arrived to save the night. He walked through the crowd shaking hands as the orchestra and chorus led the crowd through a Christmas sing-along.

Yes, there was more — a solidly swinging "Jingle Bells," a horrifically overblown "Silent Night" from Mathes (including a spinning disco ball) and the requisite romp through Leroy Anderson's "Sleigh Ride."

But let's face it — nobody, not even Keith Lockhart and the Boston Pops — springs Sara.

A goal achieved

Gloria Dei Cantores debuts in new home

By ANNA CREBO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Having sung in many of the world's most famous cathedrals and churches in 23 countries throughout Europe, Asia and North America, Gloria Dei Cantores - the professional chorus affiliated with Orleans' Community of Jesus - has at last achieved its most cherished goal: singing to the glory of God in a beautiful church of their own on Cape Cod.

Led by founder and artistic director Elizabeth Patterson, the 44-voice choir will present its debut concert in the Community of Jesus' recently constructed Church of the Transfiguration at Rock Harbor at 8 p.m. Saturday. The impressive basilica-style church, begun in late 1997, was dedicated on June 17.

Saturday's program will range from motets by Palestrina, Monteverdi and J.S. Bach to organ- and brass-accompanied anthems by William Mathias and Leo Sowerby. A highlight will be the premiere of "The House of the Lord," by celebrated Boston-composer Daniel Pinkham. The program will also include two excerpts from Sergei Rachmaninoff's stirring Russian Orthodox "All Night Vigil."

"It's truly like a homecoming," says organist and associate conductor James E. Jordan. "The exciting part for us is we finally have a chance to sing this kind of (magically oriented) music here in our own home. Our goal was to have the whole building come to life with our voices - to sing chant in a hall that sings it right back to you. This church is such an incred-

In Concert

- **WHO:** Gloria Dei Cantores
- **WHAT:** Concert of sacred music
- **WHEN AND WHERE:** 8 p.m. Saturday, Church of the Transfiguration, Rock Harbor, Orleans
- **TICKETS:** \$30, \$20 for seniors and students; \$75 includes dinner at 6:15, hors d'oeuvres at 5:45
- **TELEPHONE RESERVATIONS:** 240-2400.

ible blessing to us - one we are anxious to share with others."

He credits the basilica's splendid acoustics to award-winning acoustician R. Lawrence Kirkegaard, who also designed Tanglewood's Seiji Ozawa Hall and the Wang Center.

Jordan, a concert organist who holds a doctorate of musical arts from Eastman School of Music, is especially enthusiastic about the new Skinner pipe organ, which when fully expanded will boast 150 ranks of pipes. There are 35 ranks now.

The instrument is being assembled by noted organ restorer Nelson Barden from pipework and other organ parts taken from ten different churches, including Trinity Cathedral

in Cleveland, Temple Israel in Chicago, and St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Rochester, N.Y., among others. They are representative of the finest 20th century American organs, Jordan says.

Barden has taken compatible pipework from mostly "retired" Skinner instruments built in the period from 1903 to 1940, Jordan said, and revoiced it "so that it can all sound as one."

"We didn't get anything that was not being removed, shut down or (scheduled to be) destroyed," he says. "In a sense, these fine instruments which had fallen silent are given the opportunity to be played again."

Jordan said the organ will be put to good use in Saturday's program. Both Mathias and Sowerby were professional organists who wrote masterfully for the instrument, and Pinkham's work - described by Jordan as "joyfully uplifting and dance-like" - was written with the newly installed Skinner organ in mind. "He knows the instrument well," Jordan says of the New England Conservatory-based composer, who retired last June at age 75 from his long-held post as music director of King's Chapel.

The first half of the program will



The Gloria Dei Cantores

close with the seven-part Gloria from a Mass by Claudio Monteverdi. It was written in 1630 for a thanksgiving service in a new church built by a community grateful for their preservation from the Black Plague. In concerted Baroque style, the work features a group of seven soloists within the larger chorus, flowingly accompanied by strings, trombone and continuo organ.

Other works include Palestrina's eight-part, polyphonically complex "Sublate Deo," Bach's beloved motet, "Jesu, Meine Freude," Sowerby's "Christians to the Pascal Victim" and Mathias' "The Doctrine of Wisdom," "Except the Lord Build the House," and "Veni Sancte Spiritus." The latter two works will be accompanied by brass, organ and percussion. All three works are included in an all-Mathias digital recording, one of

nearly thirty released in recent years by Gloria Dei Cantores through the Orleans-based Paraclete Press.

Saturday's gala concert will be preceded by a dinner at 6:15 p.m. (with hors d'oeuvres at 5:45).

A RESPITE FROM ROCK?

Elizabeth Patterson, music director of *Gloriae Dei Cantores*, sees that choir's concerts of classical and contemporary sacred works drawing people of all ages. The choir, from the Community of Jesus in Orleans, Massachusetts, has toured in 23 countries and travels the United States with the Boston Pops for its wildly popular annual Christmas tour. Patterson believes classical sacred music offers a welcome respite from the chaos of pop culture.

Patterson observes that both Gregorian chant and Bach appeal to younger generations. "I think they find in it a peace and freedom from the aggression present in the music of rock, while not necessarily believing what they hear in the text," Patterson says. "They experience the spiritual depth that is present and that touches their sense of isolation."

Patterson's concern for the audience is evident: "We sing because we wish to be a help and a blessing, to see a lot of the music that is being lost saved, and to bring a gift to people—for that span of time, to give them hope."

Soli Deo Gloria in West Chicago, Illinois—which takes its name from the Latin phrase Bach inscribed in his manuscripts, meaning "To God alone the glory"—shares that concern for both lost people and lost music.

The organization's mission is to "promote, enhance, and preserve classical sacred music." Under the musical direction of conductor John Nelson, the group sponsors recordings of traditional and contemporary sacred music, commissions new classical sacred compositions at a time when the genre appears stagnant, and sponsors performances of classical masterworks in countries where they might not otherwise be heard. For example, one project translated Brahms' *German Requiem* into Chinese and sponsored performances with

several national orchestras and choruses in China. The group plans to do the same in Spanish in Costa Rica next year.

Although classical music ensembles in the United States must work harder to attract audiences these days, the big choral works remain extremely popular.

This season's concert schedules of major U.S. orchestras are loaded with great sacred works, including:

- The New York Philharmonic: Mendelssohn's *St. Paul*, with the American Boychoir and the Westminster Symphonic Choir, and Brahms's *German Requiem* with the American Boychoir and New York Choral Artists.
- The Boston Symphony and the Tanglewood Festival Chorus: Beethoven's

I heard it said, "If I had not been a Christian already, this would have made me one."

Missa Solemnis and Bach's *Mass in B Minor*.

- The Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus: Verdi's *Requiem* and Bach's *St. John Passion*.
- The San Francisco Symphony and Chorus: Handel's *Messiah* and Haydn's *The Creation*.

"For symphony orchestras, choral performance is the exception," notes conductor Stephen Alltop, who performs with the Chicago Symphony and other orchestras as a harpsichordist and organist. "The reason so many symphonies have gone to the trouble of forming liaisons with existing choirs or forming their own chorus is to perform these great works. These events are considered highlights of the season by the organizations and the audiences."

Alltop, recently appointed music director of the Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra, plans to form a chorus to sing with the orchestra. "This is the epitome of Western music," he says of classical sacred works. "The public there

must have the chance to hear it."

In December, Alltop will conduct the 199th and 200th performances of Handel's *Messiah* by the Apollo Chorus of Chicago, which has drawn crowds since it began annual performances in 1879. As a member of the music faculty at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, Alltop sees evidence that the love of classical sacred music is shared by the next generation: "Students coming into Northwestern—not just music majors—are enthusiastic about the opportunity to do major sacred works. Simply to say we're going to do Haydn's *Creation*, as we will do this year, tends to generate excitement."

David Beavan, choir manager for The English Concert, has seen audiences deeply moved by classical sacred music. "The most extraordinary quality of the music and its spirituality inescapably touches the vast majority of our audiences, whether subconsciously or consciously," he says. "With the *Bach Mass in B Minor* several years ago, you had the sense—almost tangible—of audiences responding to something they couldn't quite control or fully understand."

After a performance of *St. Matthew Passion* this year in Munich, one audience member wrote, "Around me I saw people moved to tears . . . breathless. I heard it said, 'If I had not been a Christian already, this would have made me one.'" ☺

Boston Pops concert was a bit too kind to guest performers

By **BILL RICE**
Gazette Reporter

ALBANY — Normally there is no such thing as being too kind to your guests, but the Keith Lockhart-led Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra allotted too much time to its guest performers in a "Holiday Pops Concert" at the Pepsi Arena on Tuesday night.

The orchestra did its thing very nicely in segments on its own and in segments with the Cape Cod-based chorus, *Gloriae Dei Cantores*.

The other guests were multi-talented vocalist/composer/pianist/guitarist Rob Mathes, who was heard in the first and second half of the concert, and comic Dom DeLuise, who appeared in the second half.

DeLuise, unfortunately, seemed ill-prepared.

He told some rambling Christmas stories and clowned a bit with the chorus, the orchestra and with two children who

REVIEW

came on stage to give him a scarf, but none of it was very funny.

He also attempted to narrate "Twas the Night Before Christmas," and that was a mess.

DeLuise had no sense of the rhythm of the words and he twice had to stop when he got out of sync.

Mathes, who reminds one of Elton John when he sings at the piano, brought a rock touch to the concert with his own "Christmas is Coming," a poignant song with orchestra and chorus accompaniment.

He then picked up a guitar and performed his own up-tempo arrangement of "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen," with orchestra and bongos.

That would have been enough, but Mathes was back on the second half with an over-amplified and heavy-handed arrangement of "Deck the Halls."

He then went on much too long with a song of his own titled "William the Angel" which added little in the way of holiday cheer to the program.

Highlights from the orchestra/chorus segments were the first half and second half openers, "A Christmas Flourish" and "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" and a set of Appalachian Christmas songs titled "Songs from the Hill Folk." Best in the latter set were "I Wonder As I Wander," sung beautifully by a soprano soloist, and "Kentucky Wassail," a barn dance kind of toe tapper.

The orchestra also performed "Waltz of the Flowers" from Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker," "Tomorrow Is My Dancing Day" and Don Sebesky's "Joy!"

The well attended concert, co-sponsored by Proctor's Theatre in Schenectady and WMHT, had regular seating plus cabaret table seating similar to that available during the orchestra's concerts in Boston.



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Worcester Telegram & Gazette - New England Newspaper of the Year

Pops were tops

Sunday, December 10, 2000

By Richard Duckett
TELEGRAM & GAZETTE REVIEWER

Music Review

WORCESTER-- It could be argued that the holiday season in Worcester does not really get under way until the arrival of the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra for its annual seasonal concert at the Worcester Centrum Centre.

But there will be no argument from any quarter about the high quality of yesterday's performance. Under the baton of the energetic Keith Lockhart, the Boston Pops put on a professional, polished and thoroughly pleasing show that appeared to delight the approximately 12,000 people in attendance.

You know pretty much what you're going to get from a Boston Pops holiday concert: Usually a couple of serious seasonal pieces in the first half of the program, along with some singing from the guest chorus. A guest artist will sing some Christmastime numbers. And then the mood (not that it's ever been dark) will lighten a good deal in the second half, culminating with a singalong at the end.

Lockhart and the orchestra did not reinvent the wheel in that regard at the Centrum. And there was no need to when the orchestra sounded as crisp and cohesive as it did yesterday. All the musical selections were performed with precision, and the playing complemented arrangements that even imbued something as simple as "Jingle Bells" with a certain musical depth. And yet Lockhart and company

did not overdo things. It's good to be able to sit back and know right from the start that you can relax -- this is the Boston Pops, and they do know what they're doing.

Still, a couple of minor twists and variants for this concert included some renditions that had more of a jazzier feel than normal, and the fact that more time than usual was given to this year's vocal guest artist, Rob Mathes.

The concert began with an aptly named piece called "A Christmas Flourish." The beautiful voices of the Gloriam Dei Cantores chorus of Orleans blended perfectly with the orchestra through selections such as "Angels We Have Heard on High." The music is familiar enough, but it came across with a real feeling to it.

Speaking of feeling, Mathes sang one of his own compositions, "Christmas Is Coming," during his first appearance with the orchestra. "Christmas is coming, I can hardly wait," went the first line, and the earnestness in Mathes' voice was such that you certainly believed him.

He put on an interesting performance, including a soulful sounding rendition of "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen." The only time he threatened to be a distraction, however, was when he sang another of his compositions -- "William the Angel." A well-meaning piece, it also came across as labored.

Just about perfect, on the other hand, was the ongoing relationship between the orchestra and Gloriam Dei, and highlights included a haunting rendition of "I Wonder As I Wander."

Dr. Val W. Slayton, chief medical officer of the Fallon Community Healthcare Plan, was this year's guest narrator for Clement C. Moore's "A Visit From St. Nicholas," and gave just the sort of performance the role prescribes.

Santa also made an appearance. Just before the singalong he told Lockhart that Rudolph has been voted off the sleigh team. Rudolph is demanding a recount, Santa said, by hoof.

After three encores the Centrum audience had voted with their hands. The result? They want the Boston Pops back next holiday season.

The Boston Globe

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2000

Devoted to the Gloria

The first thing one notices about the Gloria Dei Cantores personnel roster is the unusual number of names preceded by "Sr." and "Br." And a quality of devotion, committedness, and sincerity does indeed give this chorus an identity, a tone of voice that's markedly different from others.

This would, of course, all go for naught without a first-class choral director in charge, and that is definitely what the chorus has in the person of Elizabeth C. Patterson. Throughout, you sensed that she knew each individual voice as if it were the back of her hand. The results turned out to be both practical and beautiful. Everybody seemed to be operating from strength as she had them arrayed from piece to piece. When an objective, somewhat abstract tone was wanted, as in the two Gregorian chants ("Jubilate Deo" and "De Profundis"), this was forthcoming. In contrast, Bach's "Jesu, Meine Freude" motet came alive with the kind of inflection you find in the best Lieder singing. If the group's German was persuasive, so was its Hebrew. Schoenberg's late "De Profundis," surely a piece not to be undertaken lightly, drew from the singers an ease and naturalness that went far beyond technical proficiency.

RICHARD BUELL

NEW HAMPSHIRE WEEKEND



CHRISTMAS at POPS



*Saturday in Durham,
featuring
Conductor Keith Lockhart,
Olympian Jenny Thompson,
the Gloriam Dei Cantores
and more. Page C3*

The Union Leader

**THURSDAY
through MONDAY,
DEC. 21-25, 2000**



Boston Pops Orchestra brings holidays to Durham

And Kensington's Steve Colby will be making sure the sound is first-rate in Whittemore Center

By GIL BLISS
Union Leader Correspondent

BACK IN 1973, when the Boston Pops Orchestra held its first series of Christmas concerts in Symphony Hall, the building's world-class acoustics needed little tweaking to provide a wonderful experience for the patrons.

Now in the 21st century, conductor Keith Lockhart and the Boston Pops Christmas show travel the country, playing anywhere from legitimate concert halls to, well, hockey rinks.

The audiences which attend have heard digital quality music on their stereos or watched the annual Pops Christmas broadcast on television and they expect the same good sound in their local venues.

That's where people like Steve Colby come in.

Colby, a resident of Kensington, is one of fewer than two dozen people worldwide who can "apply technology developed for rock and roll or theater to classical music."

Colby will be plying his trade Saturday when Lockhart and the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra present holiday shows at 2 and 8 p.m. at the Whittemore Center Arena on the campus of the University of New Hampshire in Durham. It's a venue, which despite being home ice for UNH hockey, ranks in the top 10 percent of arenas from an acoustic standpoint, he said.

It's much more of a challenge for Colby to take his knowledge to places like the Tacoma Dome in Washington State, where he supervises a sound system that sends those

Washingtonians home feeling like they're emerging from Symphony Hall, which is acknowledged to be one of the three top concert halls in the world.

Also performing at the Saturday concerts will be the Gloriae Dei Cantores Choir, a world-class ensemble acclaimed for its performances of sacred choral music, noted performer and arranger Rob Mathes with David Mann, saxophone, Alfred Bousanna, bass, and Terry Cruz, drums, and Miss New Hampshire, Lauren Janssen Meehan, of Nashua, who will lead a Christmas for Children sing-along featuring such favorites as "Jingle Bells," "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer," "The Chipmunk Song," "Holly Jolly Christmas," "Deck the Halls," "Frosty the Snowman" and "Wah You a Merry Christmas."

A highlight of the evening show will be the reading of Clement Moore's famous "A Visit From St. Nicholas" by eight-time Olympic swimming gold medalist Jenny Thompson of Dover. The poem, also known as "Twas the Night Before Christmas," will be read in the matinee concert by Dr. Robert E. Houston Jr., professor emeritus of physics.

Other highlights of the concert will be performances of "Waltz of the Flowers" from "The Nutcracker," "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen," "Joy to the World," "Christmas Time Is Here" from "A Charlie Brown Christmas" and "Angels We Have Heard on High."

The choir is joining the orchestra for the fifth year as the Pops makes its sixth consecutive appearance at the arena.

And making sure it all sounds just right is Colby, who is special in his field, no doubt in part because of his own musical background, as his chaperone playing in high school was good enough to gain him admission to the prestigious New England Conservatory in the early '70s.

"Audience expectations have been raised," said Colby, 46. "The advent of the compact disc is the worst thing that could have happened. It really raised the benchmark."

It was at the New England Conservatory that he began to stray from making music to producing the sound as he worked in the school's recording studio and found he had a talent for the work.

"The bug really hit me," he recalled, and that bug soon found him doing sound work



ELIZABETH PATTERSON, left, conducts the Gloriae Dei Cantores Choir which will be appearing at holiday concerts featuring Keith Lockhart and the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra Saturday at the Whittemore Center Arena in Durham.



for Boston Symphony concerts and broadcasts of Tanglewood, then to TV and radio work for WJHL in Boston, eventually becoming chief audio technician for Evening At Pops.

Now he's likely to be found anywhere across the globe, running his company Evening Audio Consultants from the horse farm he owns with his wife in Kensington.

Colby sells expertise from his small office rather than expensive, state-of-the-art equipment.

When he first started touring with the Pops, local promoters were responsible for providing both equipment and crew. Colby would "come in at 2 p.m. and have to make it happen with what was available."

During this holiday season alone, the Pops will perform 87 concerts at Symphony Hall in addition to a North American tour just concluded and additional concerts throughout New England.

Luckily for the audiences, Colby will be on hand for almost all of them.

He said concert venues generally fall into three categories: legitimate concert halls built for music, multipurpose facilities, which "need sound reinforcement," and arenas, "which were not constructed with performance in mind."

Making a hockey arena sound good was much more of a challenge until 1988, when the Pops started carrying its own equipment, both sound

and lighting, around to the shows.

Prior to that, "we were like the world's biggest bar band — new gear every night."

That provided lots of challenges, including not being able to have a sound check because of the size of orchestra and chorus.

In those days, he'd spend lots of time on the phone, gathering information on the venue and planning a sound system tailored for that environment. "Eighty percent of the work was preproduction, but now with our own equipment, many of the variables have been taken out."

Still, it's what many would

POPS, Page C15



MISS NEW HAMPSHIRE

POPS

(Continued From Page C2)

consider a logistical nightmare, with "every microphone and mike stand labeled" for a specific use.

For each venue, "it's a matter of maximizing strengths and minimizing weaknesses."

Lockhart and the musical planners also make plans to overcome possible technical deficiencies.

"Soft music is not conducive to that environment," Colby said. "As the visual impact is not great over two hours, the music is generally loud and fast — dynamically exciting."

Add guest artists, as the Pops frequently does, and things get more complicated.

At the recent television taping for next year's broadcast, Colby had to arrange sound for the orchestra, guest artist Shawn Colvin and Irish musi-

cal legends The Chieftains.

Conditions may be more predictable nowadays, but Colby works as hard as ever.

"I'm usually there by 8 a.m., 12 hours before the first downbeat," he said. The sound system is usually elevated and aimed at the audience, with the desired effect being to evenly cover the room with sound, "sort of like mowing a lawn," Colby said.

At the Whittemore Center, the seating is shallow and therefore easier to effectively cover, he said.

Luckily, he likes Christmas music a great deal, "even though it takes until May to get it out of my head."

Guest artists the Gloriae Dei Cantores (members to the Glory of God) have toured 23 countries in Europe, Asia, and North America, sing in 18 languages, and have received extensive critical acclaim for their performances of sacred choral music of all styles from the 11th through 20th centuries. Gloriae Dei Cantores is one of the few choirs to be praised for its expert renditions of Gregorian chant.

The choir, conducted by Elizabeth Patterson, is based on Cape Cod and consists of 40

men and women, aged 18 to 60, who come from a wide variety of occupations, denominations and musical backgrounds.

Performer Rob Mathes has worked as arranger for a host of superstars including Luciano Pavarotti, The Three Tenors, Celine Dion and Eric Clapton. His special, "Christmas Is Coming: Rob Mathes and Very Special Friends" has aired on PBS.

Tickets are available in all

sections, though only single tickets remain in the VIP sections. They are priced at \$40.50, \$31.50 and \$21.50 for the matinee and \$50, \$37 and \$27 for the evening performance. Tickets are on sale at all Ticketmaster outlets and the Whittemore Center Arena box office. For more information, call 866-7300.

Noted choir joins Boston Pops tonight

LUCKY CLARK

Music in review

Tonight, Dec. 22, the Boston Pops will be performing a Christmas show at the Cumberland County Civic Center. They will be joined by the world-class choir from Orleans, Cape Cod, Mass.: Gloriam Dei Cantores (Singers to the Glory of God). They have toured Europe, Asia and North America on a mission to glorify God and to share a vision of hope and inspiration.

In doing so, the choir has touched thousands of lives around the world. They were invited to open the 900th anniversary celebration of St. Mark's Basilica in Venice, Italy and were featured on the soundtrack of the powerful movie, "Lorenzo's Oil," they rehearse daily, sing in 16 languages and are skilled in sacred choral music of all historical periods and styles from the 11th to the 20th century.

They also have 24 digital recordings out at this time (for more information one can contact Paraclete Press, P.O. Box 1568, Orleans, MA 02653, telephone: 508-255-4685 or

800-451-5006 or e-mail: order@paraclete-press.com) including a double-CD of J.S. Bach entitled "Peace Be With You" and a spectacular Christmas CD: "Sing Noel."

In a recent telephone interview with conductor Elizabeth C. Patterson, she was told of Pops director Keith Lockhart's glowing praise of her choir...she was more than happy to reciprocate.

"Well, he's a very generous man, too...he really is—he's a delight to work with!"

Now, what will be Gloriam Dei Cantores' contribution to the performance tonight?

"Well, we do two of the big opening choruses and we back the solo singer Rob Mathes with what he's doing; and then we sing an a cappella piece in the second half and two other numbers there, and sort of

take the supporting role for the audience in the sing-a-long. And," Patterson enthused, "the Boston Pops has got a new one this year which is really a lot of fun. They went back and got some of the carols that most of us — my age or perhaps a little younger — would have learned when they were young: like 'Frosty the Snowman' and 'Alvin the Chipmunk'...so it's a lot of fun!"

For the past few years, Gloriam Dei Cantores has been part of the Boston Pops Christmas U.S. tour. Lockhart and crew will travel over to the West Coast and use choirs based in that region, then they will hook up with GDC in the Midwest area and points east of there.

"We usually fly out and meet them in Chicago and then go from there across the rest of the country. It works well for us," Patterson added, "because here at home we do our Christmas things right around (the) first week (of December) and then go over to Chicago to tour with them."

TELEGRAM & GAZETTE

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2000



WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

50 CENT

ENTERTAINMENT

Pops
were
topsHoliday show
delights 12,000By Richard Duckett
TELEGRAM & GAZETTE REVIEWER

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Lockhart and the orchestra did not reinvent the wheel in that regard at the Centrum. And there was no need to when the orchestra sounded as crisp and



T&G Staff/DAN GOULD

Keith Lockhart conducts the Boston Pops in concert at the Centrum yesterday.

Music Review

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Still, a couple of minor twists and variants for this concert included some renditions that had more of a jazzier feel than normal, and the fact that more time than usual was given to this

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Dr. Val W. Slayton, chief medical officer of the Fallon Community Healthcare Plan, was this year's guest narrator for Clement C. Moore's "A Visit From St. Nicholas."

Famed choir to join Boston Pops concert

By **GEORGE LENKER**

Staff writer

From the 900th anniversary celebration of St. Mark's Basilica in Venice to the film soundtrack of "Lorenzo's Oil," the Gloriam Dei Cantores has proven its sound spans time, space and media forms. And they do it in 18 languages.

Now for one night only, local music patrons can experience the spiritual textures of the choir's tonal tapestry as they perform this Saturday with the Boston Pops. The show starts at 8 p.m. at the Springfield Civic Center.

This will mark the choir's fifth year with the Boston Pops' holiday tour. Besides these high-profile tours with the Pops, the Gloriam Dei Cantores (which means "singers to the glory of God") has toured all around the globe, covering 23 countries. The group has consistently garnered critical kudos for its performances of sacred choral music.

Based on Cape Cod, the choir draws its rich sound from the voices of 40 men and women, whose ages range from 18 to 60. They perform a wide variety of music covering the 11th through 20th centuries. They have been

guided by the hand of critically acclaimed conductor Elizabeth Patterson since 1988.

The choir will join the Boston Pops for eight of the performance's 13 selections. The evening begins with "A Christmas Flourish" and features the traditional holiday tunes "Joy to the World" and "Angels We Have Heard On High."

They also will perform "Christmas is Coming" and will close out the first set with "Songs from the Hill Folk," a collection of holiday folk tunes. The first set also includes the time-honored "Waltz of the Flowers" from Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker."

After intermission, the choir gets the second set off to a rousing start by joining the Pops on "We Wish You a Merry Christmas." The choir then performs an a cappella piece "Du Ciel a Terre" ("From Heaven to Earth") - a selection of French carols.

The orchestra closes out the evening with a musical rendition of "Twas the Night Before Christmas" and "Santa Claus is Coming to Town." The choir rejoins the Pops for the finale, a sing-along titled "Christmas Is for Children."