

Kodály: Laudes Organi  
Music Group of Philadelphia  
Sean Deibler, Director

- |     |  |       |
|-----|--|-------|
| [1] | Zoltán Kodály: Matra Pictures                              | 10:17 |
|     | Béla Bartók: Four Slovak Folk Songs<br>(Peter Helm, piano) | 5:00  |
| [2] | Wedding Song from Poniky                                   |       |
| [3] | Song of the Hayharvesters from Hiadel                      |       |
| [4] | Dancing Song from Medzibrod                                |       |
| [5] | Dancing Song from Poniky                                   |       |
| [6] | Kodály: Laudes Organi                                      | 22:04 |
|     | (Norman MacKenzie, organ)                                  |       |

Producer and engineer: Bob Sellman  
Recorded March 20, 1981 at St. Peter's Church, New York City  
AAD

**DTR8102CD**

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*Matra Pictures* by **Zoltán Kodály** (1882-1967) is a virtuoso setting of Hungarian folk-songs found in the Matra mountains. The piece opens with a ballad about a shepherd named Vidroczi. We hear of his theft of Stephen Pinter's horse, Pinter's death bout with him, and finally his voice from the grave. From this point lovely songs flow one into the other, from touching love songs to the frantic nonsense songs which bring the piece to a joyful, energetic close.

Like Kodály, **Béla Bartók** (1881-1945) had a life-long interest in the folk song. Both men spent a significant amount of time visiting villages to collect the exquisite music they feared would die out of existence. They traveled not only to Hungarian towns, but to neighboring countries as well. Their belief that folk music truly expressed the deepest emotions of a people is reflected in its tremendous influence on their compositions. Bartók's very simple settings of these *Four Slovak Folk Songs* for chorus and piano are characteristic of his very lucid choral writing and delightfully surprising harmonic turns.

*Laudes Organi* is Kodály's final composition, completed in February, 1966. He subtitles it "Fantasia on a XIIIth century Sequence for Mixed Chorus and Organ". The text is a letter from a student in a medieval monastery describing his impressions upon hearing an organ for the first time. He is overwhelmed. He speaks of its ability to

create a multitude of sounds, from gentle beauty to regal passion. He writes that no other instrument is as well-suited to sing praises to God.

Kodály moves from simple four-part writing to large scale divisi richness. The beautiful organ interludes and accompaniment immediately reflect Kodály's thorough knowledge of counterpoint, and of the instrument itself. The work ends with a soaring Amen that is among the most beautiful music Kodály ever wrote!  
Sean Deibler

### The Music Group of Philadelphia

The Music Group of Philadelphia is an ensemble dedicated to performing great choral literature from all musical periods, with a particular emphasis on seldom performed a capella works. The ensemble is comprised of both professional and non-professional instrumentalists, vocalists, and conductors. The rich and various backgrounds of the performers allow for tremendous flexibility of repertory and performance. The recording is the first release by the group. A second recording titled *Madrigals and Chansons* (DTR8314) of The Music Group of Philadelphia is also available on the Direct-to-Tape label.

### Sean Deibler

Sean Deibler is a graduate of Susquehanna University with a degree in

clarinet and voice. He continued his studies at the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest, Hungary, where he studied chamber music with composer Gyorgy Kurtag and conducting with Istvan Parkai. After receiving a diploma from the Kodály Musical Training Institute, he joined the faculty where he became the first American to teach conducting, ear training, and choral literature. He is the choirmaster of the Haverford School Boychoir and a frequent lecturer and conductor throughout the United States and Europe.

### Norman Mackenzie

Norman Mackenzie began his musical training with concert pianist Maryan Filar, and later studied with organ virtuoso and composer Robert Elmore at the Philadelphia College for the Performing Arts, from which institution he received his Mus. B. In 1978 he studied organ and harpsichord at the International Summer Academy in Haarlem, Holland. He has three times been soloist with The Philadelphia Orchestra and was the youngest person ever to win the Mid-Atlantic Regional auditions of the American Guild of Organists. Mr. Mackenzie was also the Music Director of the Church of the Redeemer in Bryn Mawr, PA, Head of the Music Department and Choral Director at Rosemont College, and Associate Music Director of the Tenth Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia.

### About This Recording

This recording was made at a live concert performance given on March 20, 1981, at St. Peter's Church, New York City. We would like to express our thanks to the staff and members of St. Peter's Church for the opportunity to record in such an acoustically excellent location and for their general assistance.

Proceeds from the sale of this recording are helping support The Music Group of Philadelphia, a non-profit organization. If you would like further information about the concert schedule of The Music Group or would like to support them directly, write to The Music Group of Philadelphia, Le Chateau Suite 15-R, 222 West Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia PA 19103.

### Direct-to-Tape Recordings

This Direct-to-Tape Recording was mastered using two Schoeps microphones. No limiting, equalization, or compression was used during the mastering or manufacture of this recording.

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