



For Immediate Release
Contact: Kathy Bowers
970-586-5193

Singers and musicians needed for Oratorio Society's Christmas concert

The Oratorio Society of Estes Park welcomes singers and musicians who enjoy performing choral masterworks and major symphonic works as the Society begins rehearsals Sept. 15 and 16 for its annual Christmas concert.

New singers with clear voices and good pitch are welcome, especially tenors and sopranos. Call Jackie Reed at 970-586-1022.

The orchestra needs all strings, plus one oboe, one bass clarinet, two trombones, one tuba, and one English horn. Call Lynette Johnson at 970-586-2192.

Chorus rehearsals are on Sunday nights from 6:00pm to 8:00pm beginning Sept. 15th at Shepherd of the Mountains Lutheran Church, 2000 Ptarmigan Trail.

The orchestra rehearsals are on Monday nights from 7:00pm to 9:00pm in rooms 202-3 in the Town Hall, beginning Sept. 16th. Please bring your own music stands.

The Christmas concert Dec. 6th and 7th will feature Benjamin Britten's *Saint Nicholas*, a cantata for chorus and orchestra. "*Saint Nicholas* tells the story of – (wait for it) – Saint Nicholas," says Music Director Kathy Bowers. "Saint Nicholas Day happens to be Dec. 6 – the date of our concert. This also is the 100th anniversary of Benjamin Britten's birthday. He was born on St. Cecilia Day, Nov. 22, 1913. It's a cantata for strings, lots of percussion instruments, piano duet, and it even has a couple of congregational, or audience, participatory hymns in it that I think people will recognize. They're not Christmas carols, but they're imminently recognizable. It tells the story of St. Nick, the *real* St. Nicholas, and some of the miracles he performed."

In the second half of the concert, the Oratorio orchestra will perform dances from *The Nutcracker* by Tchaikovsky. "That will be of great interest to lots of people who are used to going to see the ballet and miss that during the holiday season," said Bowers.

The ballet's first complete performance in the U.S. was on Dec. 24, 1944 by the San Francisco Ballet. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_City_Ballet The New York City Ballet gave its first annual performance of George Balanchine's staging of *The Nutcracker* in 1954. Performing the complete ballet at Christmas became a tradition that eventually spread to the rest of the country. Some have labeled *The Nutcracker* the most popular ballet in the world. Walt Disney even featured some of it in his classic cartoon *Fantasia*.

The Oratorio Society begins rehearsals on both pieces Sept. 15 and 16. Come sing, come play, come join in the fun of celebrating the Christmas season with great music. For more information go online at www.osep.info.

###Submitted by:

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