

CALIFORNIA 

# FREEMASON

Spring 2006



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A THINKING ARTIST

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VOLUME 55  
APRIL 1, 2006  
NUMBER 2

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## 10 cover story

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who was the foremost composer of his era, incorporated Masonic themes into many of his works. In this issue dedication to Freemasonry and music, the California Freemason explores how this “thinking artist” became an active Mason in late 18th century Vienna and the important role that Freemasonry played in his life and his music.

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**CALIFORNIA FREEMASON**

(USPS 083-940) is published quarterly by the Publishing Board and is the only official publication of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of California, 1111 California St., San Francisco, CA 94108-2284.

Publication Office – Publication offices at the Grand Lodge Offices, 1111 California Street, San Francisco, CA 94108-2284. Periodicals Postage Paid at San Francisco, CA and at additional mailing offices.

Postmaster – Send address changes to California Freemason, 1111 California Street, San Francisco, CA 94108-2284.

Publication Dates – Publication dates are the first day of December, March, June, and September.

Subscriptions – CALIFORNIA FREEMASON is mailed to every member of this Masonic jurisdiction without additional charge. Others are invited to subscribe for \$2.00 a year or \$2.75 outside of the United States.

Permission to reprint – Permission to reprint original articles in CALIFORNIA FREEMASON is granted to all recognized Masonic publications with credit to the author and this publication.

Phone: 800/831-8170 or 415/776-7000;  
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### 5 in California

The Grand Lodge pays tribute to former Grand Organist Joseph von Geczy, an eminent classical composer who passed away in January.



### 15 masonic education

Mozart's immortal “The Magic Flute” is often described as “incomprehensible” - unless you know the Masonic symbolism behind it.



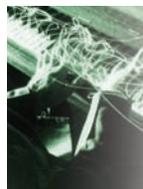
### 6 lodge spotlight

Three San Diego lodges expand their musical repertoire to include classical, rock and reggae. Find out more about how a music teacher is enhancing the ritual.



### 16 around the world

A Michigan-based folk musician adds a new flavor to “Masonic Music” with songs about the craft, its members and its values.



### 8 masonic education

Join John Cooper as he reflects on the meaning of harmony in music - and in Masonry - as notes blend separate entities to build a new entity.



### 19 masonic homes

The Masonic Homes continue to explore options for providing quality senior housing to meet the needs of our fraternal family. Read about the ongoing progress.

## *Solemn Strikes the Funeral Chimes, Stars and Stripes Forever, White Christmas*



Irving Berlin, member of  
Munn Lodge No. 190 in  
New York City

Masons' familiarity with the first portion of the above title is as great as most Americans' recognition of the latter parts. Each is attributable to Masons.

The poetic phrases commencing with "Solemn strikes the funeral chime/ Notes of our departing time" were written by Brother David Vinton and published in 1816 in Massachusetts in a volume entitled "The Masonic Minstrel." The music itself was composed by Brother Ignaz Joseph Pleyel, who was listed in 1784 as a Fellowcraft Mason in the records of a lodge in Eberau, Hungary. It is a hymn from his "4th Quartet, op. 7" published in 1791.

"The March King," Brother and Shiner John Philip Sousa (1854–1932), wrote "The Stars and Stripes Forever" in 1896. Brother Sousa began his musical study around the age of six and his father enlisted him in the Marines at age 13 after he attempted to run away to join a circus band. In 1880 he became the leader of the U.S. Marine Band and in 1892 formed his own band. Among his many memorable compositions were "Semper Fideles," the "Washington Post" march, "Nobles of the Mystic Shrine," and the "Thunderers."

"White Christmas," "God Bless America," "Alexander's Ragtime Band," "Oh! How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning," and many other songs were written by Brother Israel Isidore Baline, also known as Irving Berlin. He was born in Russia in 1888 and moved to New York at the age of four. Brother Berlin was made a Mason at Munn Lodge No. 190, New York City, and was active in the Scottish Rite and Shrine. He donated all royalties from "God Bless America" to the Boy Scouts. Brother Berlin died on September 22, 1989, at 101 years of age, leaving a memorable legacy of musical enjoyment.

Country music legend, Brother Mel Tillis, was born in Tampa, Florida, in 1932. Famous for his stuttering until he began to sing, he wrote over 1,000 songs and recorded over 60 albums, and appeared in such movies as "Cannonball Run" with Burt Reynolds and "Every Which Way But Loose" with Clint Eastwood. Brother Tillis was coroneted as a 33° Mason in 1998.

The phrase "Jimmy Crack Corn and I Don't Care" was sung by Brother Burl Ives, born June 14, 1909. He learned his first ballads from his pipe-smoking grandmother and went on to sing "Big Rock Candy Mountain" and "Blue Tail Fly." He became a DeMolay on December 5, 1927, and a Mason in California, subsequently joining the Scottish Rite Bodies of Santa Barbara in 1977. His wife Dorothy had a Scottish Rite Grand Cross emblem engraved on his monument in 1995.

Brother Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's (1756–1791) music is replete with Masonic references. He was raised to the degree of Master Mason on April 22, 1785.

Then there were Brothers George M. Cohan, George Gershwin, Roy Rogers, Gene Autry, and Grand Ole Opry members Charlie Walker (who served as Master of Hendersonville Lodge No. 359 in Tennessee), Roy Acuff, Roy Clark, and Charlie Louvin, just to name a few.

Masonry has attracted men of diverse talent, from musicians to presidents to lawyers to delivery truck drivers to engineers and electricians—all finding their way and sense of purpose in Masonry. ✦

**Melvyn B. Stein**  
Deputy Grand Master

By Melvin H. Nahin, PGM

Joseph von Geczy, 1944-2006, Former Grand Organist

# AND THE BAND PLAYED ON

“Say it with music, beautiful music. Say it with a beautiful song.” Music has long been a source of expression for peoples of every generation and from every area of the world. Whether it is “the classics,” “pop,” “rock and roll,” or “rap,” musical stars travel the world to great adulation and applause.

So it is that when one of our “greats” departs this mortal world, a loss is felt, not only by those near and dear to him, but by those who have learned to appreciate his ability, his performance, and his personality. So it is at this writing, lying to rest not too long ago, with one of our distinguished California Masons, Joseph von Geczy. His artistic style, his knowledge of music, and his genius at composition made our Brother Joseph a very distinguished member of our Grand Lodge.

He was born in 1944 and reared in Hungary and could read music before he could read words, starting to play piano at the age of four, and at the age of nineteen becoming the youngest Hungarian composer to complete a film score. As a lead guitarist at the age of 16, he formed one of the first rock-and-roll bands in Hungary and won several awards at the national pop festival. While

attending university and studying economics, he once played for our own Brother Louis Armstrong. So noted was his group that they were invited to make an international trip, which eventually took them to Canada, where they created a great following and excitement in the rock-and-roll idiom. When the group went back to Hungary, Joseph decided that he liked North America, the freedom for musicians, and the diverse but free people that he found in the Dominion of Canada, and so he remained there.

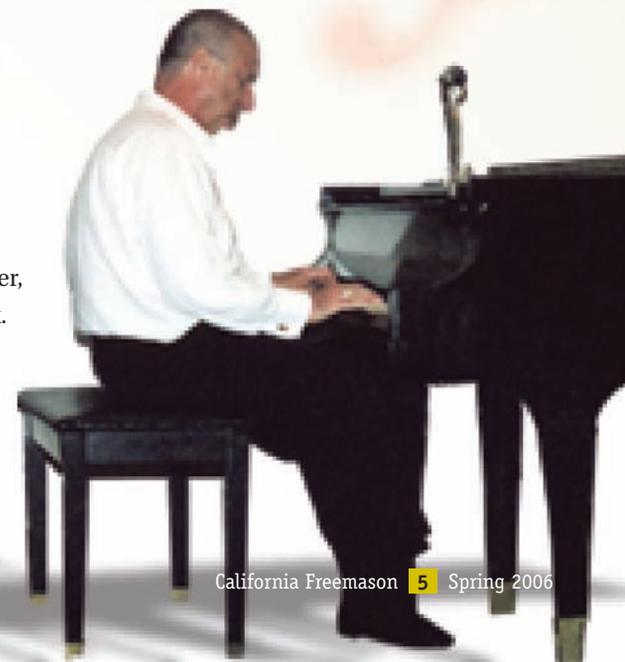
In Canada, he worked for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation for about ten years as a composer, arranger, and music director. He later crossed the border to the United States, where he performed in fine hotels for many years in Los Angeles and San Francisco.

He received his Masonic degrees in Silver Trowel Lodge No. 415 in 1989 and served as Master in 1995 and as Assistant Grand Organist under Grand Masters Gresham, Wordlow, and Nahin, and as Grand Organist under Grand Masters Decker, Whitaker, Holsinger, and Kirkpatrick.

On January 1, 2006, Joseph von Geczy lost a long battle with pancreatic cancer. His death is a

great loss to those of us in Grand Lodge who were privileged to know him. His classical composition “Victory” is a masterpiece which lives on in CD form and will long remain in our hearts.

We know that he is at peace and that “there shall be no more pain, neither suffering, nor sorrow.” As we are taught in the Holy Scriptures, David wrote in the Psalms, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou are with me; Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me ...” And indeed, there is no doubt in my mind that that’s where Joseph is now and that his beautiful melodies are a source of joy for those who have gone before us and to great applause and ovation. Rest in peace, dear Joseph, rest in peace. ✧





By Terry Mendez

# *Bach*, **Beatles**, and Bob Marley

## How several San Diego lodges use music to enhance the ritual

“When I first became organist for my lodge, I played as though I was accompanying a silent movie,” says Patrick Meagher, organist for three (soon to be four) San Diego lodges. “Continuous background music that makes smooth transitions to fit the ritual segments adds great atmosphere and enhances the experience.”

Since becoming organist for S.W. Hackett Lodge No. 574 five years ago, Meagher, a musician and piano teacher, has introduced music that plays a greater role in creating mood for a variety of lodge ceremonies. He enjoys creating Masonic compositions that integrate scales used in ancient rituals with traditional music and contemporary artists. Jim Achenbach, Master of S.W. Hackett Lodge, says that Meagher will adapt and perform contemporary music, such as Led Zeppelin, “in such a way that it sounds like it was composed 200 years ago for church use.”

Meagher likes to use the traditional work of older Masonic composers in new ways, such as playing a Bach fugue the first time a candidate is received at the door.

“I call it the three Bs of lodge music ... Bach, Beatles, and Bob Marley,” he says. “By bringing more and varied music into the lodges, we’re resurrecting something I feel is important. In the past, music played a bigger role within the lodge. Today, music is a big part of men’s lives. Music can take pieces from the past, updated for modern use, so that they are still valuable but relevant to our lives today.”

Achenbach says mixing works of modern artists and classical composers creates a musical tapestry that greatly enhances the atmosphere of the

lodge. Inspired by an old book with music for Masonry, including how to sing odes, Achenbach says his lodge is now working on ways to add singing during degrees and other rituals.

“Periodically we try something different, such as using a guitar or trumpet for various ceremonies. A Herb Alpert piece was played on the trumpet for my recent installation,” says Achenbach. “We are slowly introducing more instruments and including music in new ways. One of the first compliments we receive from visitors is about the music.”

Visitors from both John D. Spreckels No. 657 and Point Loma No. 620 liked the enhanced atmosphere created by music so much that they asked Meagher to be their organist. And he recently accepted the same invitation from a fourth San Diego lodge.

Howard Freelove, junior warden at John D. Spreckels Lodge and new organist for Chula Vista Lodge No. 626, calls it music for the 21st century.

“Patrick is my mentor,” says Freelove. “I’m bringing the same type of music enrichment to the Chula Vista Lodge. Appropriate music adds overall color and feeling. For instance, Patrick will play a piece so that it sounds like a sojourner out in the desert looking for an oasis. The key is selecting a piece all of us can relate to and adapting it to the organ for a specific Masonic use.”

Freelove says that using music throughout rituals, rather than just at the beginning, enhances the total experience by making them more impressive, interesting, and memorable. He also feels music can aid a candidate’s ability to remember.

“Music touches us spiritually and emotionally,” Meagher points out. “It engages us in the activity of the moment and with each other. The response from degree candidates has been overwhelmingly positive.” ❖

By John L. Cooper III, Grand Secretary

# LET HARMONY PREVAIL

*When the organist of a Masonic lodge in California is installed, the installing officer gives him the following charge:*

*“The Lyre is the Jewel of your office, and as it is an emblem of music, it should continually remind us that as harmony is essential in the liberal art and science which it symbolizes, so should harmony continue to be the strength and support of all societies, especially of ours. Let harmony prevail!”*

This charge is peculiar in that it is framed in the context of a prayer. The meaning of the charge in plain English is that as harmony is a dominant theme in music, so should harmony be the dominant theme in a Masonic lodge. The encyclopedia defines harmony as follows:

“Harmony is the use and study of pitch simultaneity and chords, actual or implied, in music. It is sometimes referred to as the ‘vertical’ aspect of music, with melody being the ‘horizontal’ aspect.”

The phrase “pitch simultaneity” may seem like an arcane and difficult phrase, but it is not really so difficult to understand when we take a look at its meaning in the encyclopedia:

“Simultaneity is the property of two events happening at the same time in at least one reference frame.”

What all this means is that harmony is the blending of separate entities into a new entity, without having destroyed the component parts. A musical chord is an example. A chord is

three or more notes of different pitches sounding at the same time, and which are perceived by the listener as one musical experience. The image thus created for us of “harmony” is one in which multiple notes or sounds are so played that they seem to be one sound, even though made up of several.

There is a very definite Masonic teaching here. A lodge of Master Masons consists, according to our ritual, of “three or more” Master Masons. A master’s lodge is—or ought to be—a blending of three or more individual Masons who together produce a simultaneous expression of Masonry without having surrendered the individuality of each of those who comprise the lodge. A Masonic lodge is not the suppression of all viewpoints in favor of one. It is the bringing together of diverse viewpoints into one harmonious arrangement in which the beauty of Masonry is expressed. As one note in music by itself does not have the power and beauty of a musical chord, so one Mason alone

does not have the power and beauty of Masonry as expressed through his lodge. A Mason can be a Mason in solitude, but the power and beauty of Masonry are much less in solitude than in the harmonious expression of Masonry in the lodge.

Of course, some Masons, and some lodges, have missed this important Masonic teaching. Some Masons come to lodge to make their viewpoints prevail over all others. Some Masons stay away from lodge because they are unable to make their viewpoints prevail over all others. And both groups of Masons miss the point. Masonry is the harmony of all our viewpoints displayed only when we come together as Masons. When we understand this, we get a glimpse as to why, at the opening of every Masonic lodge, we are told that “harmony is the strength and support of all societies—especially of ours.” Of all people in the world, Masons should understand this best. In the words of our Installation Ceremony, “Let harmony prevail! ✧



**MO**

# Mozart

## A THINKING ARTIST

By Roderick Kettlewell

**W**olfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) is universally regarded as the most naturally gifted composer and musician to emerge from Western civilization. What is known, but little understood, is that he was an enthusiastic Freemason in Vienna, during perhaps the most interesting and significant decade in the city's history. What is even less well known is the profound effect that his involvement with the craft had on his music and outlook on the world. This involvement contributed greatly to his lasting reputation and legacy.

In late 1784 Mozart was recommended for membership in the “Beneficence” (“Zur Wohltätigkeit”) Lodge and was made an Apprentice on December 14, 1784. At his induction he was introduced thus:

.....  
“Favorite of a guardian angel, friend of the sweetest muse, chosen by benevolent Nature to move our hearts through rare magical powers, and to pour consolation and comfort into our souls. You shall be embraced by all the warm feelings of mankind, which you so wonderfully express through your fingers, through which stream all the magnificent work of your ardent imagination!”  
.....

I believe they recognized the talents of whom they had welcomed into their fraternity!

He was moved to Fellowcraft and raised to Master Mason early in 1785. The ceremonies took place in the same building, under the auspices of the sister Lodge, “True Concord” (“Zur wahren Eintracht”), which he later visited on many occasions. He was actively involved in the lodge from the beginning and wrote many works specifically for the lodge meetings and degree ceremonies. However, some context for his involvement needs to be explored.

Wolfgang was born into a family where music was a way of life. His father, Leopold Mozart, was a skilled professional musician, having gained some success as a widely known author of a violin method book. Also, Leopold had a modestly secure job in Salzburg, the provincial center of a small, independent state. Wolfgang's remarkable early musical progress allowed his father to exploit him and his older sister “Nannerl,” and to exhibit their precocious talents all over Europe, especially because it would greatly increase the family income. This materialistic focus

on the family's economic welfare was balanced against an extensive education by his father, in many branches of knowledge—a form of “home schooling,” which still allowed for an intense specialization in the knowledge and skills needed to be a successful musician. This broad education and extensive travel exposed young Wolfgang to many experiences, people, and ideas throughout a Europe grappling with the world-changing ideas of the later Enlightenment, notably in Paris and London, but also in Mannheim.

He grappled with subjects concerning the individual's role in society, mankind's relationship to Nature (popularized by Rousseau), and the role of the philosophical concepts of "Truth, Love, Beauty, and Virtue" in the lives of ordinary characters.

As Wolfgang worked to establish his youthful musical career as a performer and composer, he initially crafted works designed to improve his chances for career advancement and lucrative employment in the services of some wealthy noble family. His early efforts include works for entertainment and display of his prodigious talent. These works include light-spirited divertimentos, serenades, dances, and short pieces for his church employers. His first attempts at opera allowed him the opportunity to develop his innate dramatic sensibility and show the musical world his great potential.

Wolfgang's musical talent would have taken him far on the basis of this foundation of well-crafted, pleasant, and beautiful music. However, the most interesting and important aspect of Mozart's development as a composer is the gradual change that occurred as his extremely fertile imagination interacted with the world-changing ideas of his age. Significantly, it is in the genre of opera that we can trace the development of a "thinking artist" ("denkende Künstler"), by his choice of stories, themes, and texts, and sensitive musical treatment of them. Starting with his first mature opera, "La finta giardiniera," his choice of subjects was in keeping with the issues and lively

discourse of the late 18th century.

He grappled with subjects concerning the individual's role in society, mankind's relationship to Nature (popularized by Rousseau), and the role of the philosophical concepts of "Truth, Love, Beauty, and Virtue" in the lives of ordinary characters. Many of the bourgeois Enlightenment ideas coming out of England and France challenged the prevailing authorities. These ideas questioned the validity of Absolutist monarchies, Church hierarchies, and doctrinal belief, and emphasized education for the advancing middle classes, rational and scientific scrutiny of nature, human behavior, and mankind's place in the world.

Freemasonry, closely linked to the ideals of the Enlightenment, had spread into Europe from England in the 1720s. The first official lodge in Vienna was in 1742 and was "tolerated" during the reign of Empress Maria Theresa (as her husband was a Freemason). The craft was only allowed to flourish in Vienna after Joseph II started his reign as emperor in 1780. He had been discreetly educated in Paris by many of the most prominent "philosophes," and as he started his reign, he was also clearly dedicated to the ideals of the Enlightenment. He immediately introduced reforms that opened up

Viennese society. Joseph introduced press freedoms and, importantly, relaxed the censorship on banned books, allowing the free flow of ideas into a previously repressive society. Religious freedoms were allowed—a revolutionary move, as earlier in the century intolerance was the norm. Citizens were equal under the law, and also there was a deliberate move to curb the power of the aristocracy. Freemasons were prominent officials in his government and were in the front line of his reform of church and state.

It is highly likely that Mozart had youthful personal contacts with Freemasons. He composed a song, "O heiliges Band," in the mid 1770s, as a "Hymn of Praise for Festivities at the St. John Lodge," and the music for a quasi-Masonic play, "Thamos, König in Ägypten," in 1773. Mozart had met, among others, Grimm and Diderot in Paris (leaders of the French Encyclopedists) and Otto von Gemmingen in Mannheim, a known member of the Order of the Illuminati. It was Gemmingen who proposed Mozart for membership in his lodge, almost four years after Mozart had arrived in Vienna.

Mozart's arrival in Vienna in 1781, where he remained for the rest of his life, commenced with an introduction to all the important establishment figures in the Viennese Enlightenment, as well as prominent Masons. Immediately he was invited to attend the salon of Countess Thun, where he met Joseph von Sonnenfels, Ignaz von Born (leader of "True Concord" Lodge and the leading "rationalist scientist"), Count Dietrichstein (a known "Rosicrucian"), Prince Lichnowsky

(later Beethoven's patron), and Baron van Swieten (who introduced Mozart to the glories of Bach and Handel). This led to frequent meetings at the homes of these important thinkers.

These meetings were characterized by lively discussion, readings, and, of course, music provided by Mozart. He was extremely social and relished the exchange of ideas. After he joined the lodge, he attended many Table Lodges and had numerous opportunities to experiment,

Mozart can also be portrayed rather as a "thinking artist," who explored noble ideas and lofty spiritual states, expressed in a sublime sequence of musical works that represent some of the finest achievements of Western civilization.

improvise, and develop his ideas with his brothers and further incorporate the implications into his compositions. The texts and music of his mature operas are filled with themes dealing with important issues of his time. The musical treatment always shows a careful and detailed understanding of the subtleties and deeper meaning of the drama.

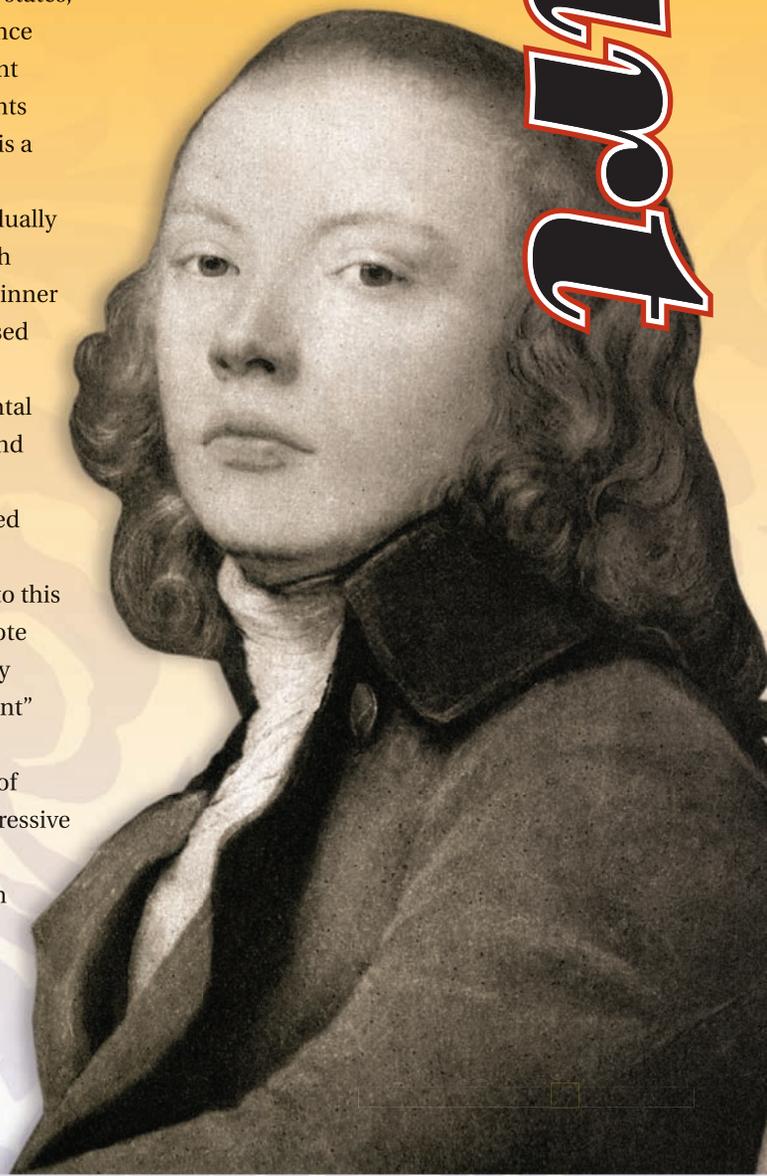
What is vital to realize is the role that his involvement in Freemasonry played in his development as a man, a thinker, and an artist. What direction would his music have taken otherwise? Some of his lodge brothers were fellow musicians, but most were scientists and civic leaders who were also deeply engaged in the ideas and movements of the age. Far from being simply the giggly, idiot-savant visited by God-given inspiration denied lesser talents, as portrayed in the hugely successful (but fanciful) movie "Amadeus," Mozart can also be portrayed rather as a "thinking artist," who explored noble ideas and lofty spiritual states, expressed in a sublime sequence of musical works that represent some of the finest achievements of Western civilization. There is a reason for such achievement!

Mozart's compositions gradually shifted towards works of depth and substance, written out of inner necessity, rather than composed to external directives. His introduction to the contrapuntal glories of the music of Bach and Handel, at the home of Baron van Swieten (who also included Haydn and Beethoven in his musical salons), contributed to this depth and seriousness. To quote Nicholas Till's wonderful study "Mozart and the Enlightenment" (W.W. Norton, 1993):

"For Mozart, the discovery of contrapuntal music as an expressive vehicle, rather than a dutiful tradition, in the hands of Bach and Handel was a revelation. ... Contrapuntal music may

have carried symbolic significance for Mozart ... (his) use of counterpoint, the superabundance of individual melodic themes precludes their submergence and loss of identity within a despotic polyphonic texture; counterpoint becomes analogous to the interrelationship of free and equal individuals in society."

Till also says, "Mozart increasingly came to value the paradoxical freedom afforded him by his complete mastery of formal constraints"—a product of rationalism—and "For along with its formal mastery, Mozart's music has



# Mozart

# Mozart

sensuousness quite its own that distinguishes it from Haydn and Beethoven. There is nothing emotionally abstract about Mozart's music; for all its formal perfection, it communicates with a physical expressiveness that reunites the world of form and order with the sensual world of human feeling. ... The ideal in Mozart's music is not achieved by the subjection of the material and the sensual to the rational and the formal, but by their seamless integration." It is the wonder of his genius that he took all these influences and ideas from his environment and integrated them with the most amazing creativity to produce work of such richness and beauty.

Another important contribution to this development that must be mentioned is his Catholic belief. His lodge, "Beneficence," was associated with a "Catholic Enlightenment," which is a seeming contradiction in terms. It served as a center for the Muratorian Catholic reforms that Joseph himself instigated. It is also a subject of some complexity that both Mozart's lodge and "True Concord" Lodge were also closely associated with the Order of the Illuminati, as well as Rosicrucian elements. Joseph retreated from his support of the Masonic lodges and issued a restrictive decree, late in 1785, which led to the

reduction of the number of Viennese lodges, and was aimed at controlling the contradictory and possibly subversive elements that he perceived might threaten the stability of the state. It is significant that Mozart remained a member of the craft until his death in 1791, despite the defection of many, in particular, Born, Sonnenfels, and Gemmingen, who had originally brought him into the inner circle.

So, despite the rationalist influences surrounding Mozart (especially Born), the presence of the numinous is crucial to an understanding of Mozart's art. Mozart did not accept the secularization that was prevalent in rationalist Enlightenment thinking. He wanted to convey in his music some form of transcendence, which he found in his faith and in the eclectic spiritual influences of the lodge. His opera "The Magic Flute" certainly has been much discussed as his most overtly Masonic public composition, but it is its flights of transcendent beauty and spiritual expression, amid the simple popular forms of the Viennese theatre, that are its most salient features. He did not distinguish between sacred and secular spiritual aspirations in his life and work but sought to integrate inner and outer realities. His musical works were an expression of inner life,

regardless of their outward form. One of his last Masonic works, designated for use in lodge, starts:

"You who revere the Creator of the boundless universe, call Him Jehovah or God, call him Fu, or Brahma. Hark! Hark to the words of the Almighty's trumpet call! Ringing out through earth, moon, sun, its sound is everlasting."

This suggests a more eclectic spiritual understanding, which he evokes in his music. His carefully chosen texts are filled with the ideas that can be found in Masonic teaching and reveal his spiritual yearnings. The music, whether with words (and he was essentially a lyrical composer) or purely instrumental, always adheres to his ideals.

I believe he was especially nurtured by his intimate network of Masonic experiences, and consciously and subliminally expresses this through his music. It would be well to acknowledge this important and real part of his legacy.

At his Masonic funeral oration, it was said that "through his music Mozart himself lifts our aspirations to a higher goal." It is this transcendence, formal perfection, and excruciating beauty that has led us to still celebrate his genius, 250 years after his birth. ✧

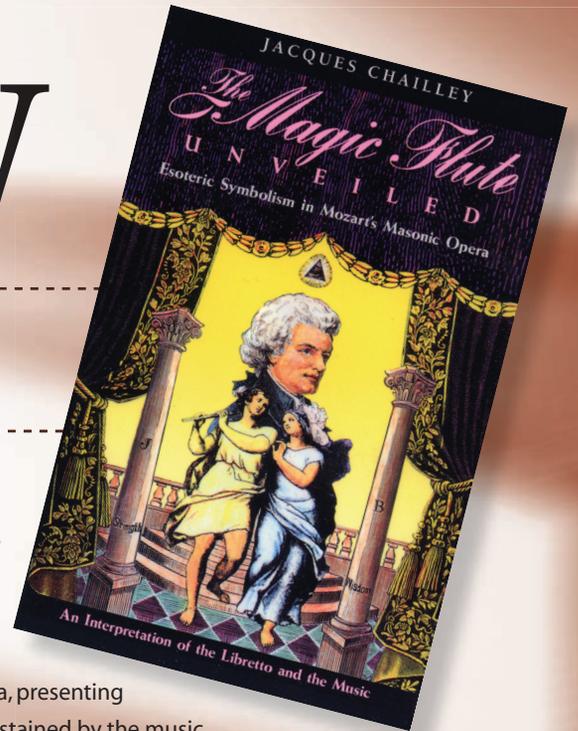
# Book Review

## The Magic Flute Unveiled: Esoteric Symbolism in Mozart's Masonic Opera

Jacques Chailley  
Inner Traditions  
International, Ltd.  
ISBN: 089281358X  
Copyright 1971  
(Soft cover, 336 pages)

Solving one of music history's most elusive mysteries, Jacques Chailley sets out to disprove the enduring myth that *The Magic Flute* suffers from an incomprehensible libretto. He establishes the social, historical, and religious context of Mozart's brilliant final opera, presenting compelling evidence that the entire libretto, sustained by the music, was fashioned according to Masonic ritual. Chailley, a professor of music history at the Sorbonne and author of *40,000 Years of Music*, reveals the coherence of the opera and the hidden significance of its characters and situations. He relates each of these elements to the esoteric tradition from which they emanate and to Mozart's own involvement with the Masonic brotherhood.

In addition to its detailed and constructive scholarship, this book is alive with atmosphere of eighteenth-century Vienna and its sages, royal personages, and scoundrels, who supply many fascinating sidelights on politics, music, literature, religion, and Freemasonry. Under Chailley's perceptive eye, *The Magic Flute* emerges as a rigorously constructed theater piece in which Mozart's superb music and the libretto by Emanuel Schikaneder (and others) fulfill and illuminate each other. ✧



By Richard J. Berman

# Songs of Broth

**W**hen it comes to the symbols of Freemasonry, most of us think of the square and compass, trowel, or apron, all of which represent the tools used by the stonemasons and builders in the ancient world. For Michigan-based musician Dan Hall, however, the tool of choice for spreading the word of Freemasonry is decidedly more contemporary: a six-string guitar.

Hall might not be a household name, but he has established a solid reputation in folk-music circles as a composer and singer. "I started singing in a choir when I was nine years old, and when I was 12, I got my first guitar," he says. As a teenager he started to play in the musical group that performed during Sunday Mass at Holy Redeemer Catholic Church in Burton, near his hometown of Flint, and eventually became the ensemble's musical director. In 1977, when he was only 19 years old, he was hired to be the director of music at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Owasso, Michigan.

In 1983, Hall joined the Army as a chaplain's assistant, which gave him the opportunity to work in an ecclesiastical setting while continuing to play his music. He quickly gained a following among his fellow troops, and was selected to perform in the prestigious Army Soldier Show. After leaving the service four years later, he moved back to Flint, where he took another job as a church musical director. "I've always been drawn to

# erhood

religious music,” he explains. “Writing and performing songs has always been a deeply spiritual activity for me, and I loved working in churches.”

Hall continued to perform in Michigan, and in 1992 he wrote the song “1937” to commemorate the 1937 Sit-Down Strike, a pivotal event in the history of the American labor movement. The song earned widespread praise and bolstered his reputation outside of church circles. During this time, he also began to write songs about shipping disasters on the Great Lakes; this resulted in the recording of two CDs, “1,000 Ft. Keel” and “It’s Quiet Where They Sleep.” One of his maritime songs was used in the soundtrack of an Emmy Award-winning documentary about two freighters that were lost during a storm in 1913.

Despite his growing interest in songs about shipwrecks, the most important development in Hall’s creative life came when he started writing about Freemasonry. “In 1993 I recorded a song called ‘Ballad of Brothers,’” Hall recalls. “It was about the Battle of Gettysburg during the Civil War, and it tells the true story of two soldiers—one Union and one Confederate—meeting on the battlefield and forming an instant bond. I didn’t know very much

about Freemasonry, but the more that I read the more I was attracted to its values. The fact that two enemies could find a common bond amid all of the bloodshed was a very powerful concept to me.”

“Ballad of Brothers” turned out to be the first step in Hall’s involvement with the craft. In April 1996, Hall joined Fellowship Lodge #490 in Flint, and only a few months later he traveled to Alexandria, Virginia,

**“It was a very powerful connection for me, and it was an incredible honor to be able to pay tribute to a man who was not only the father of our country, but also a major figure in the history of American Masonry.”**

where he sang at an observance commemorating the 200th anniversary of the death of George Washington. “It was a very powerful connection for me, and it was an incredible honor to be able to pay tribute to a man who was not only the father of our country, but also a major figure in the history of American Masonry.”

A decade after being raised as a Master Mason, Hall continues to write songs about Masonic topics. One of his early efforts, “Sisters of the Star,” was a tribute to the charitable work done by the Order of the Eastern Star. Other

compositions include “Noble Thing to Do,” which praises the various Shrine organizations, including the Shriners hospitals. Hall has compiled more than 20 songs about Masonry into two CDs, “Unbroken Circle” and “Songs of Freemasonry,” which are available online at [www.danhall.com](http://www.danhall.com).

Despite his accomplishments on stage and in the recording studio, one of Hall’s most inspiring recordings, “A Celebration of Dedication,” doesn’t

feature any of his own original compositions. For more than 15 years, he has worked with local school groups to help children express themselves through music. To date, Hall has worked with more than 75,000 elementary-school students and has helped them compose more than 500 original songs. “Kids have so many wonderful ideas, and I try to guide them through the process of coming up with lyrics that relate to their lives. There probably isn’t a topic that we haven’t explored,” Hall says with a laugh. “A Celebration of Dedication,”

# Masonic Musicians



Perhaps the best-known Masonic musician of all time was the Austrian composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. In fact, in 1784 he became a member of the same lodge as the great Franz Josef Haydn (with whom he played in several ensembles), and he dedicated a set of string quartets to the elder composer, who in many ways served as the young Mozart's mentor. His final opera, *Die Zauberflöte* ("The Magic Flute")—with a libretto written by fellow Mason Emanuel Schikaneder—includes numerous references to the craft.



Other composers who were Freemasons included Johann Christian Bach (Lodge of Nine Muses No. 235, London), Sir William S. Gilbert (Lodge St. Machar No. 54, Aberdeen, Scotland), and Franz Liszt (Lodge Zur Einigkeit, Frankfurt). Gilbert's musical partner, Sir Arthur Sullivan, served as Grand Organist of the United Grand Lodge of England. Belgian inventor Adolphe Sax (the inventor of the saxophone) was a brother in Loge Les Vrais Amis de L'Union, and Finnish composer Jean Sibelius belonged to Suomi Lodge No. 1 in Helsinki.



American musicians in a variety of genres have also been represented in Masonic ranks. Cowboy singer Tex Ritter was a member of Metropolitan Lodge No. 646, country music legend Roy Acuff was a member of East Nashville Lodge No. 560, and "The March King" John Philip Sousa belonged to Hiram Lodge No. 10 in the nation's capital. George M. Cohan—composer of American standards such as "Give My Regards to Broadway," "You're a Grand Old Flag" and "Over There"—belonged to Pacific Lodge No. 223 here in California. Irving Berlin—a composer with whom Cohan is often compared—was a member of Munn Lodge No. 190 in New York City. Other important American composers and performers who were Freemasons included Burl Ives, Jerome Kern, Kris Kristofferson, and Roy Rogers. Eddie Cantor, Al Jolson, and Harpo Marx were all members of Masonic lodges in New York.



Many of the major figures in the history of jazz have also been Masons. Louis Armstrong (Montgomery Lodge No. 18 PHA in New York), Nat "King" Cole (Thomas Waller Lodge No. 49 in Los Angeles), Count Basie (Wisdom Lodge No. 102 in Chicago), Duke Ellington (Social Lodge No. 1 in Washington, DC) and W.C. Handy (Hiram Lodge No. 4 in New York) were all members of Masonic lodges.



**"It was a very powerful connection for me, and it was an incredible honor to be able to pay tribute to a man who was not only the father of our country, but also a major figure in the history of American Masonry."**

which was released on CD in 2005, seems to bear this out. "There are songs about baseball, Australia, the environment, and even a trip to the zoo. If the students can think of it, they can turn it into a song."

Despite his busy recording and touring schedule, in 2005 Hall made the decision to return to his Christian musical roots by becoming Director of Music Ministries at The Cross In The Woods, a Catholic shrine in Indian River, Michigan. Although the shrine is best known for having one of the largest crucifixes in the world (the sculpture of the crucified Christ weighs seven tons and is 28 feet tall), it is also home to a vibrant community of worshipers. A major part of Hall's job is to lead the band that plays at Mass every Sunday.

It can be difficult to describe what a musician sounds like without referring to other performers. While many artists might bristle at being compared to their better-known peers, Dan Hall is quite open about some of the performers who have influenced him throughout his career. Because of his

focus on maritime themes, Hall is often compared to two Canadian singers, Stan Rogers, who died in a fire aboard an Air Canada jetliner in 1983, and balladeer Gordon Lightfoot.

Of course, the best way to judge Hall's music is to hear it, and Masons might find the CD "Unbroken Circle" to be a good place to start. "It contains seven original songs featuring lyrics by David O. Norris, the Past Master of our Lodge, that I set to music," says Hall. "I also recorded 'The Funeral Ode,' an 18th-century song commonly used in the Masonic Third Degree. There are two versions of each song—one with words and one instrumental. Our goal was to create music that could be performed in Masonic lodges across the country by the brothers themselves. Singing together as a group is a wonderful way to strengthen the bonds between Masons, and can be a rousing way to start or conclude a lodge meeting. The words that David wrote are unbelievably profound and really capture the essence of what being a Freemason is all about." ✦



# Masonic Senior Living Communities

Deborah E. Stebbins

*As you read in the last issue of this publication, the Masonic Homes of California are exploring the possibility of creating new Masonic senior living communities on our Union City and Covina campuses. Recently, someone asked why we were rushing into such important plans. I want to clarify that far from rushing into this, we are at this point in the development only after four years of deliberate and thoughtful research and planning.*

We are now beginning to discuss this publicly, because it is only now that we have completed the necessary feasibility studies to begin an informed discussion with the larger membership. We've spent four years understanding the emerging needs of our membership and defining how to best steward the financial resources entrusted to our care.

To understand the needs of the membership, we conducted surveys and focus groups and researched state and federal trends and resources available to seniors in California. Then in December 2005, over 355 of our constituents joined us for one of nine informational sessions on the proposed new communities. The responses from attendees were consistent with what we heard from the



“from these sessions and our intensive demographic research and analysis, we have concluded that we could expect to fill these communities if only 2.3% of interested and qualified members decide to move in.”

membership for the past four years: They remain in need of affordable retirement services in California and would prefer to live in a Masonic-sponsored community. The membership has confirmed that there is a “hole in the social safety net”

for middle-income seniors.

Our planning and research have led us to believe that the proposed new Masonic senior living communities will allow us to be of service to more of our members in need, better utilize our land and infrastructure and create a new revenue stream to fund our charitable mission.

**Results of Informational Sessions**

In December 2005, we held nine informational sessions in various locations throughout Northern and Southern California to discuss the concept of new Masonic Senior Living Communities. I was gratified to see that 355 senior members of our fraternal family joined us

at these sessions. I first want to thank all these participants for their willingness to share their time and thoughts with us. By so doing, they have ensured that whatever we do in the future will reflect the vision, needs and desires of our membership.

We asked each of these participants to complete an extensive exit survey, which helped detail their interests, preferences and concerns. We are using this feedback to help guide our planning on unit size, available amenities and services and other important features of the proposed communities.

Most importantly, they also expressed great interest and need for such new communities and their preference for

As part of the planning process, it was necessary to fix an appropriate name for these potential communities. We were searching for names that embodied our Masonic values and suggested the beautiful settings of our communities

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Masonic-sponsored retirement services. In fact, from these sessions and our intensive demographic research and analysis, we have concluded that we could expect to fill these communities if only 2.3% of interested and qualified members decide to move in.

### Next Steps

After carefully studying the financials of the proposed projects and hearing positive feedback from the membership, in February the Board made the unanimous decision to proceed to the next level of planning and feasibility studies for these communities. This stage of the development will last until late 2006. During this period, we will be focusing on achieving key milestones, which include receiving appropriate land use entitlements and necessary state and federal approval to expand our services. Most importantly, we are going to embark on a major informational effort with the fraternity and begin to collect \$1,000 priority deposits from those interested in residence. This activity will be critical in the Board's decision to continue with the projects.



ACACIA CREEK

MASONIC SENIOR LIVING AT UNION CITY



ACACIA CREEK

MASONIC SENIOR LIVING AT COVINA

As part of the planning process, it was necessary to fix an appropriate name for these potential communities. We were searching for names that embodied our Masonic values and suggested the beautiful settings of our communities. After much discussion, the Board decided upon the names Acacia Creek, Masonic Senior Living at Union City, and Acacia Creek, Masonic Senior Living at Covina.

The descriptive phrase "Acacia Creek" was used in both names for several reasons. First, it referenced our Masonic values. Second, by using the phrase in both names, it helps create a "brand"—when members hear "Acacia Creek" they will know that the same fine quality of services and accommodations are found at both communities, even though they are situated in separate locations. Third, they felt it was appropriate because the acacia grows wild throughout the state of California. And fourth, the phrase "Acacia Creek" has a smooth, pleasing quality to the ear.

### Interested in learning more?

As always, our primary concern is responding to the membership's needs and desires and making the best and highest use of the resources entrusted to our care. We can do this best by hearing directly from the membership. If you or your lodge are interested in hearing a more detailed presentation about these proposed new communities, please contact us at [seniorhousing@mhcuc.org](mailto:seniorhousing@mhcuc.org) or 888/553-7555. Also, stay tuned for more information regarding informational sessions planned for your area. We look forward to meeting with you!



# NEWS YOU CAN USE



### MASONIC HOMES WEBSITE ▶

Visit [www.masonichome.org](http://www.masonichome.org) to read about the latest developments in the Homes, initiate an application, download recent mailings, and learn all about the programs and services we provide.



### MASONIC SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITIES ▶

The Masonic Homes of California are committed to responsible change and to setting the standard for exceptional senior living. To support this vision, we're exploring new Masonic Senior Living Communities for our brethren and their families. If you are interested in learning more, please contact us at **888/553-7555** or [seniorhousing@mhcuc.org](mailto:seniorhousing@mhcuc.org).



### MASONIC OUTREACH SERVICES (MOS) ▶

We know that many of our constituents prefer to live out their lives in their own homes or home communities. Yet many need help coping with the challenges and issues associated with aging. In response, the Masonic Homes of California have expanded the Masonic Outreach Services (MOS) program to better meet the needs of our elderly constituents who wish to remain in their own home or community.

Our goal is to provide our fraternal family members access to the services and resources they need to stay healthy and safe in their own homes or in retirement facilities in their home communities.

Our services include:

- Ongoing financial and care support for those with demonstrated need
- Interim financial and care support for those on the waiting list for the Masonic Homes of California
- Information and referrals to community-based senior providers across California

For more information on MOS, please contact us at: **888/466-3642 (888/HOME MHC)** or [intake@mhcuc.org](mailto:intake@mhcuc.org).

### CHILDREN'S SERVICES ▶

For information on our children's program or to find out how to sponsor a child in need, please contact:

Masonic Home for Children  
1650 Old Badillo Street  
Covina, CA 91722  
626/251-2226  
[mespinoza@mhccov.org](mailto:mespinoza@mhccov.org)



### COMMUNICATIONS ▶

The Masonic Homes have speakers available to come to your lodge or function to speak about the services available through the Homes and other issues related to aging. For more information, please contact the communications office at **510/675-1245** or [communications@mhcuc.org](mailto:communications@mhcuc.org). We look forward to hearing from you!





Meet Anthony W. Fox  
Musician  
Mason since 2005

## *Faces of Masonry*

For Tony Fox, Masonry gives him an opportunity to connect with historic figures and mentors. “I truly feel connected for the first time with our founding Fathers like George Washington, and one of every musician’s heroes, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.” Tony is currently serving as Marshal of Southern California Lodge No. 529 in Playa del Rey.

Masonry allows him the opportunity to share important events with close friends. “Being raised by my dear friend Worshipful Danny Witherspoon,” he says is one of his most memorable experiences as a Mason. Tony

remains a Mason because, “it complements my faith, family and work life better than anything I know.”

Tony, 55, lives in Playa del Rey with his wife, Nolcha, and has two sons, Joseph, and Matthew. He is the Associate Director of the USC Trojan Marching Band and teaches Music Theory.

# Has Your Interest Income Been Less Than You Hoped?

**Looking for a way to increase your income, while also doing something good for someone else? If so, Look No Further!**

The Masonic Grand Lodge Office of Philanthropy is pleased to introduce Charitable Gift Annuities to the California Masonic community. Gift annuities are among the oldest types of charity. Among the benefits you can expect:

- Guaranteed Payments for Life (Partially Tax Free)
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- The Satisfaction of Supporting the Masonic Homes of California or the California Masonic Foundation with a charitable gift.
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70	6.5 %	70	5.9 %
75	7.1 %	75	6.3 %
80	8.0 %	80	6.9 %
85	9.5 %	85	7.9 %

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San Francisco, CA 94108  
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