

BENNETT: MOSC really shines

By Ronald Bennett Special to the Odessa American | Posted: Friday, March 11, 2016 6:30 am

Saturday, March 5, 2016, will go down in the annals of the MOSC history as an important milestone. On this date the director, Gary Lewis, led the performers in a magnificent performance of the Mozart Requiem in D minor, K 626.

The Mozart-sized orchestra accompanied a 165 voice chorus comprised of the MOSC Chorale, Gregory M. Pysh, director, the Odessa College Choir, David Corman, director, and the UTPB University Choir, Cory Alexander, director.

It would have to rank as one of the most beautiful sounds I have heard on the Wagner Noel Performing Arts Center auditorium stage.

The program opened with the Mozart Symphony No. 29 in A Major, K. 201. Written when he was only 18 it was a work of graceful formality. The Allegro moderato, Andante and Menuetto movements were all meticulously correct but in the concluding Allegro con spirito movement it reminded me of any smart alec teenager just showing off.

It was a perfect “curtain raiser” for the next work.

The Requiem is a mass to be used in funerals its name is taken from the first word of the text “Requiem aeternam don eis, Domine” (Grant them eternal rest, O Lord.)

This was the composition on which Mozart was working at the time of his death. His student Franz Xaver Sussmayr completed the work.

The Requiem is a musically and emotionally challenging piece. It requires tremendous attention to details and moves from declamatory passages to intricate fugues.

Therefore I would like to fast forward to the lobby where the performers were exiting the hall following the concert.



Ronald Bennett new mug

Bennett is an Odessa music teacher, composer and fine arts critic for the Odessa American.

There was spreading across the face of each performer a smile of relieved satisfaction. They knew they had performed this piece on which they had worked so hard with the utmost success. The synergy created by that many orchestra and choral performers filled the lobby with an almost electric tingle.

The four soloists Jennifer Bird-Arvidsson, soprano, Abigail Nims, mezzo-soprano, Karl Dent, tenor and Curtis Streetman, bass sang their solos flawlessly and when combined into quartets blended evenly .

The choral sound was one of unified blend and combined with the orchestra filled the hall with an emanating beauty.

I was reminded of a passage from the ordinary mass: “ Nunc dimmitis “ which is based on the scriptural story of Simeon, when holding the baby Jesus, the Messiah, in his arms says that now he is ready to leave.

Now since I have heard this concert I could, like Simeon, leave knowing I had beheld great beauty.

But not just yet.