

*Joan Reinthaler is a choral musician, conductor, and sometime music critic in Washington DC. She collaborated with Wayne on preparing the chorus for **The Judas Tree** in 1967. Here she recounts her first meeting with him in the winter of 1962-63,*

I was in town to audition for the job conducting the Camerata chorus and must have arrived in town without the music I wanted to rehearse (no idea why). Anyhow, I settled on Byrd's "Non Vos Relinquam Orphanos" and someone, maybe Cynthia Hoover, suggested I drive over to the cathedral and see if I could find Wayne Dirksen and maybe borrow the music from the cathedral.

I drove over and finding him was no trouble at all. He was easily the largest man anywhere in the vicinity with a voice to match. I introduced myself, told him what I there for and asked if he could lend me 18 copies of the Byrd "Non Vos Relinquam Orphanos" for mixed voices.

He looked at me as if I had dropped from outer space and said "The what???" – "by who?" – voice rising in incredulity. I repeated myself and he repeated the "What? who?" act and I translated "I Will not Leave You Comfortless". "Oh" he said with feigned relief. "That Byrd".

It took me a while to figure out that he was putting on a show for me, but I left with the 18 copies in hand and I enormously enjoyed every contact I had working with him from then on.

Another time I had reviewed something at the cathedral and stated a wish that the cathedral would invest in a shell so that something other than mush could make it beyond the third or fourth rows, particularly since ticket prices were so high.

I got a lot of grief from the powers that be (or were) there. How could I think of screening and desecrating the magnificent altar with a shell?, etc. I mentioned this to Wayne and he said, "Yeah – and they installed TV lights for the greater glory of God and CBS".