

# NYC MASTER CHORALE

Thea Kano, Artistic Director

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## NEW YORK CITY MASTER CHORALE

### PRESENTS NEW YORK CITY PREMIERE OF PAUL LEAVITT'S *REQUIEM*

*Chorale Celebrates Fifth Anniversary with Concert at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall*

NEW YORK, NY, March 7, 2011 — The New York City Master Chorale ([www.nycmasterchorale.org](http://www.nycmasterchorale.org)), under the direction of Artistic Director Dr. Thea Kano, will celebrate its fifth anniversary by performing contemporary composer Paul Leavitt's *Requiem* for the first time ever in New York City. The concert will take place on Friday, May 20th at 8:00 p.m. at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall at 1941 Broadway at 65th Street.

"We are extremely delighted to not only debut this beautiful piece of music to our New York audience, but also to celebrate our fifth year," says Dr. Kano. "The Chorale has grown and thrived, even during difficult economic times, bringing the beauty of music to thousands. We look forward to spreading that joy and message of optimism in the years to come."

*Requiem* has been praised by *The Washington Post's* Contributing Critic Cecelia Porter. In her review, Porter noted that "the *Requiem* successfully combines the sense of overwhelming grief and consolation that suffuse the requiems of Mozart, Verdi, Brahms and Fauré."

The Chorale will be joined by approximately 60 singers from Washington, DC including singers from Reformation Lutheran Church and the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, DC to perform Leavitt's *Requiem*. A full orchestra and several vocal soloists, including soprano Paige Cutrona, whom *The New York Times* has described as "passionate" and "vocally striking," mezzo-soprano Erica Joan Haman, tenor Douglas Benoit, and baritone Gregory Stuart, will be featured. The performance will also include an *a cappella* piece, *Ubi Caritas*, by Maurice Duruflé, as well as the composer's *Messe cum Jubilo*. A "talk back" session will be held immediately following the concert, where Leavitt and Dr. Kano will take to the stage to answer questions from the audience.

"It is an honor to have my work performed by such fine musicians and in Alice Tully Hall, one of the world's most highly respected concert venues," says Leavitt. "It is sure to be an experience I will never forget, and I hope it will be so for the performers and audience as well."

Dr. Kano conducted the successful world premiere of the *Requiem* in DC in the spring of 2009 with a festival chorus. This concert will conclude a series of performances by the Chorale that will bring Leavitt's musical work to Washington, DC and Paris, France during April 2011.

Tickets are priced at \$20 for students/seniors, \$30 for balcony/rear orchestra, \$45 for orchestra and \$60 for premium seating and are available through the Chorale's website at [www.nycmasterchorale.org](http://www.nycmasterchorale.org) or by calling the organization's box office at 917.326.1422. Tickets are also available at the door prior to the concerts, as space permits. Public transportation to Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall is readily accessible via the 1 train to 66th Street/Lincoln Center, or the A, B, C, D to 59th Street/Columbus Circle.

As part of its mission to share music with people of all income levels, the Chorale will donate tickets to *Requiem* to students from low-income schools that the Chorale has visited this season, as well as additional tickets to Fedcap Rehabilitative Services' community choir. During the 2010-2011 season, the Chorale is collaborating with a choir at Fedcap Rehabilitative Services, an organization that assists individuals with disabilities and barriers to employment join the

workforce. Throughout the year, Dr. Kano and Assistant Conductor Rasaan Bourke hold weekly workshops with the Fedcap choir.

***About Composer Paul Leavitt***

Paul Leavitt made his début as a concert pianist at 15 years old with the Albany Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Julius Hegyi. As a scholarship student he received a Master's Degree from the Juilliard School in New York and a Bachelor's Degree from SUNY Purchase. He was a laureate of the International Steinway Competition for Young Talents (1989) in Paris, France. A versatile musician and composer, Leavitt performs regularly in Europe and in the United States as a classical pianist, concert organist and choral conductor. He currently serves as the Director of Music and Arts at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation in Washington, DC.

***About Conductor Thea Kano***

Thea Kano is the founding artistic director and conductor of the New York City Master Chorale. She has prepared choruses for Zubin Mehta and the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra and has prepared the Chorale for performances with the Astoria Symphony and the Park Avenue Chamber Symphony. She holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Choral Conducting from the University of California, Los Angeles, where she studied with Donald Neuen and Paul Salamunovich.

***About New York City Master Chorale***

Founded in 2005, the New York City Master Chorale presents an annual concert series, performing at the Church of Saint Paul the Apostle, The Riverside Church and Alice Tully Hall in Lincoln Center. In addition, the Chorale has been invited to sing in many of New York City's most prestigious venues, including Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Avery Fisher Hall and Carnegie Hall. The Chorale is noted for its excellent performances of the entire range of the choral repertoire. The Chorale also provides education and outreach initiatives to New York City schools and community programs as an integral component of its mission.

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