

NYC MASTER CHORALE

Thea Kano, Artistic Director

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW YORK CITY MASTER CHORALE

TO PERFORM LOCAL COMPOSER PAUL LEAVITT'S *REQUIEM* IN DC

Chorale Joins the Festival Choir and Orchestra of Reformation Lutheran Church

For Special Performances

WASHINGTON, DC, March 7, 2011 — The New York City Master Chorale (www.nycmasterchorale.org), under the direction of Artistic Director Dr. Thea Kano, will join the Festival Choir and Orchestra of the Lutheran Church of the Reformation to perform Washington, DC-based contemporary composer Paul Leavitt's *Requiem*. The performances will take place on two consecutive days -- Saturday, April 16th at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, April 17th at 3:00 p.m. -- at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation at 212 East Capitol Street, NE.

Dr. Kano conducted the successful world premiere of the work in Washington in the spring of 2009 with a festival chorus. *The Washington Post's* Contributing Critic Cecelia Porter praised the work, noting that "the *Requiem* successfully combines the sense of overwhelming grief and consolation that suffuse the requiems of Mozart, Verdi, Brahms and Fauré." These concerts will be the second and third performances ever of Leavitt's composition and will kick-off a series of

concerts by the Chorale that will bring Leavitt's musical work to Paris, France and New York, NY this spring.

"It seemed ideal to begin the concert series in DC at the church for which Leavitt is the director of music and in the city in which he resides," says Dr. Kano. "The response was tremendous and we look forward to again sharing this beautiful piece of music with audiences here in Washington."

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*. They will be accompanied by a full orchestra and several featured 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. The performances will also feature an *a cappella* piece, *Ubi Caritas*, by Maurice Duruflé, as well as the composer's *Messe cum Jubilo*.

"I'm very honored by the enthusiastic response to my work and equally delighted that it is being performed by such fine musicians," says Leavitt. "Having it performed again at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation, where it premiered, means a lot to me, as does the church's ongoing support in bringing this work to life."

Tickets are priced at \$35 for general admission and \$20 for students and seniors and are available through the Chorale's website at 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 the Lutheran Church of the Reformation is readily accessible via the Capitol South or Union Station Metro stops.

About Composer Paul Leavitt

Paul Leavitt made his debut 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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