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**New York City Master Chorale celebrates the holiday season
with a performance of the Bach *Magnificat* and John Rutter's *Gloria***

NEW YORK, November 8, 2011 – On Friday, December 9, under the direction of Artistic Director Thea Kano, the New York City Master Chorale (www.nycmasterchorale.org) will kick off its sixth season with a holiday concert entitled *Magnificat*. The Chorale will perform J.S. Bach's *Magnificat* and John Rutter's *Gloria*, accompanied by strings, woodwinds, brass, percussion and organ at New York City's Church of St. Mary the Virgin. The performance will also include a set of popular Christmas carols arranged by Robert Shaw.

"We are looking forward to singing Bach for the first time in the Chorale's history," says Dr. Kano. "The vivid writing of the *Magnificat* is a perfect complement to Rutter's uplifting *Gloria* and a wonderful celebration of the holiday season."

The performance features the Church of St. Mary the Virgin's Music Director and resident organist James Kennerley on the Church's magnificent Aeolian-Skinner organ, as well as a group of outstanding vocal soloists, including four members of the New York City Master Chorale: soprano Paige Cutrona, mezzo-soprano Nancy Strohmeier, tenor Douglas R. Benoit and baritone Skip Teel. The New York City Master Chorale will be joined by countertenor and 2009 – 2010 Fulbright Scholar in the Arts Augustine Mercante for this performance.

**Magnificat
The New York City Master Chorale**

Soprano Paige Cutrona
Mezzo-Soprano Nancy Strohmeier
Countertenor Augustine Mercante
Tenor Douglas R. Benoit
Baritone Skip Teel
Organist James Kennerley

WHEN: Friday, December 9, 2011 at 8:00pm

WHERE: The Church of St. Mary the Virgin (145 West 46th Street), between Sixth Avenue and Seventh Avenue, accessible by via the 1, 2, 3, 7, N, Q, R, and S trains to 42nd Street/Times Square or the B, D, F, and M trains to Rockefeller Center.

TICKETS: \$20 for students/seniors and \$30 for general seating. Tickets may be purchased online at nycmasterchorale.org or by calling the New York City Master Chorale Box Office at 917.326.1422. Tickets are also available at the door prior to the concert, as space permits.

About Conductor Thea Kano

Thea Kano is the founding artistic director and conductor of the New York City Master Chorale. Dr. Kano is known for her expressiveness and dynamic conducting and her Chorale has been praised for its balance and richness in tone. She has prepared choruses for Zubin Mehta and the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra and has prepared the New York City Master Chorale for performances with the Astoria Symphony and the Park Avenue Chamber Symphony. Dr. Kano's ensembles have performed at the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Disney Hall, Église Saint-Sulpice (Paris), and on the National Mall for the 2008 inaugural ceremonies. 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 consists of 60 trained musicians from the greater New York City area who seek to broaden public interest in fine choral music by performing a full range of musical styles at the highest level of quality. The Chorale presents an annual concert series at the venues throughout New York City, including the Church of Saint Paul the Apostle, The Riverside Church and Alice Tully Hall, 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 made its European debut at Église Saint-Sulpice in Paris, France in 2011. The Chorale is noted for its excellent performances of the entire range of the choral repertoire. As an integral component of its mission, the Chorale also provides education and outreach initiatives to New York City schools and community organizations.

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