



NYC **MASTER
CHORALE**

DAVID J. RECCA
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

What Sweeter Music

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19, 3 PM
SAINT IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH

552 WEST END AVE, NEW YORK, NY
NYCMasterChorale.org

NYC Cultural
Affairs

PROGRAM

NYC MASTER CHORALE

Jacob Clemens non Papa Magi venit ab oriente
(1515-1555/56)

Francis Poulenc Un soir de neige, FP 126
(1899-1963)

Josef Rheinberger Mass in E flat major, op. 109
(1839-1901) “Cantus Missæ”

Richard Rodney Bennett Five Carols
(1936-2012) What Sweeter Music

What Sweeter Music

Saint Ignatius of Antioch Episcopal Church
Sunday, December 19, 2021 at 3pm

New York City Master Chorale
David J. Recca, Artistic Director

*No intermission. Today's program will
be recorded. Please silence all devices.*

MESSAGE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

I would like to welcome you this afternoon to the New York City Master Chorale's presentation of *What Sweeter Music*, a sincere and warm-hearted look into what makes this time of year both joyous, and at times, challenging. It has been a rather long journey to get to this point, and in the age of Covid-19, we are deeply grateful to be able to sing together once again in person and for a public audience. Things which might have been taken for granted before, now seem like great treasures.

The program begins with an exquisite motet by the 16th-century Flemish composer, Jacob Clemens non Papa. This is renaissance counterpoint at its finest. Every line is perfectly balanced, with a weightless and pristine beauty permeating the overall texture. The scene is set for the wise men as they seek *Rex Judaeorum*, a star in the east having lit the way.

The next piece, *Un soir de neige* by Francis Poulenc, paints a very different picture. Written during the Nazi occupation of France, this setting of poems by Paul Éluard contains many hidden references: wolves as German soldiers, and winter itself as the enemy. "The tracks of a cruel pursuit ... The most magnificent wolf and always/The last survivor who threatens/The irresistible force of death." It is an incredibly atmospheric work, with all the sophisticated and other-worldly harmonic progressions for which the composer is so famous. I can't help but hear snow under foot from the very first notes to the last.

Then you will hear the 19th-century German Romantic masterpiece, *Cantus Missae*, by Josef Rheinberger. Scored for double chorus, the work's many memorable melodies are seamlessly passed between both halves of the ensemble amidst rich and luscious chord progressions. It often presents an exuberant wall of sound, and yet somehow it remains ever prayerful.

The program closes with a set of works by noted film composer and jazz pianist, Richard Rodney Bennett. Knighted in 1998, this English musician is probably most famous for his film scores featured in *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1967), *Murder on the Orient Express* (1974), and *Four Weddings and a Funeral* (1994). We have been delighted to sing his *Five Carols* these last months. Each seem thoroughly modern and yet sound ancient. The writing is refined with hints of jazz harmony at every turn. His *What Sweeter Music* is truly one of the most tender settings of this text I have ever come across.

I am delighted to share with you my very first concert as Artistic Director of NYCMC, and I hope you find something refreshing in these extraordinary works of music and poetry. Thank you so much for joining us.



David J. Recca
Artistic Director

NEW YORK CITY MASTER CHORALE

Mission and History

The mission of the New York City Master Chorale is to connect people through choral music by presenting high-quality concerts inspired by the distinct energy, diversity, and talent of New York City.

Founded in 2005 by Dr. Thea Kano, the Chorale seeks to engage and inspire audiences of all ages, backgrounds, and musical experience by performing a challenging repertoire of traditional and contemporary works and to share our music with the New York community through our outreach and education programs. The New York City Master Chorale has performed at distinguished venues throughout the city, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, and St. Patrick's Cathedral, among others. Additionally, the Chorale has appeared in historic venues across Europe, making its European debut in April 2011 at Église Saint-Sulpice, Paris, France, and appearing most recently at the Basilica Santa Maria Novella, Florence, Italy, in July, 2017. In September 2011, NYCMC was recognized as a semi-finalist for the Community Chorus Division of the American Prize in Choral Performance in recognition of the quality of a recorded performance. For more information, please visit www.nycmasterchorale.org.

The New York City Master Chorale is an organization based on the unceded homeland of the Lenape people. We ask you to join us in acknowledging the Lenape community, their elders both past and present, as well as future generations.

As an organization committed to connecting people through choral music, deriving inspiration and building community from NYC's unique energy, diversity, and talent, we recognize the history and ongoing legacies of Indigenous exclusion and erasure, and commit to ongoing work to learn more about and support Indigenous communities.

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ABOUT THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



DAVID J. RECCA

David J. Recca is currently a lecturer at the Conservatory of Music of Purchase College, SUNY. There he directs the Purchase Chorus and Purchase Chamber Singers, he is a regular guest conductor of the Purchase Symphony Orchestra, and he teaches a variety of undergraduate courses including music history, music theory, ear training, and conducting. He is also the newly appointed Artistic Director of the New York City Master

Chorale; the Artistic Director of the Southern Connecticut Camerata, a Norwalk-based early music ensemble celebrating its 64th season; and the Assistant Music Director of the New Amsterdam Singers, a fixture in Manhattan's choral scene which has been championing new works by living composers for over 50 seasons.

He has served as assistant conductor to Mercury Opera Rochester, principal assistant conductor to the Yale Camerata, and artistic director to Madrigalia Via, whose performances were hailed as "sinfully blissful" by the Wall Street Journal. He has prepared choirs for conductors such as Helmuth Rilling, David Hill, Masaaki Suzuki, Simon Carrington, Erwin Ortner, and Sir Gilbert Levine.

He holds a Doctorate of Musical Arts degree in Choral Conducting from the Yale School of Music, a Master of Music degree in Choral Conducting from the Eastman School of Music, and a Performer's Certificate in Vocal Coaching and a Bachelor of Music degree in Composition from Purchase College.

NEW YORK CITY MASTER CHORALE

SINGERS

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Daniel Bonthius *	Netania Steiner
Spencer Brill	Lewis Teel
Dan Cake	Nora Thomson
Craig Chu	Anna Trzcinski
James Clay	Emily Tumbleson
Joanna Curtis	Shaina Vencel
Amy Dannenmueller	Ziggy Farrow Walker
Elizabeth De Deus	Kieran Walters
Emma Dickson *	Sara E. Yood
Heather Foster	<i>*Indicates section leader</i>
Tere Preciado Hassman	
Julie M. Heller	
Molly Hensrud	
Lee Ilan	
Laura King	
Katherine Kita	
Aurèlea Kunkel	
Esther Lee	
James Stephen Longo	
Gabriella Magnani	
Lisa Martin	
Jasmine Mendoza	
Charley Mills	
Faith Williams Muschong	
Micah Payson-Lewis *	
Bradley Reeder	
Carrie Salmon *	
Mark Salzwedel	

TEXTS

Magi venit ab oriente

Jacob Clemens non Papa (pub. 1559)

Magi veniunt ab oriente Ierosolimam
quaerentes et dicentes:
Ubi est qui natus est Rex Iudaeorum
cujus stellam vidimus?
Vidimus stellam eius in oriente,
et venimus cum muneribus adorare
Dominum.

The wise men came from the East to Jerusalem
asking questions and saying:
Where is he that is born King of the Jews,
whose star we have seen?
We have seen that star in the East,
and we have come with gifts to worship
the Lord.

Un soir de neige

Francis Poulenc (pub. 1944)

1. Le Feu

De grandes cuillers de neige
Ramassent nos pieds glacés
Et d'une dure parole
Nous heurtons l'hiver têtu

Chaque arbre a sa place en l'air
Chaque roc son poids sur terre
Chaque ruisseau son eau vive
Nous n'avons pas de feu.

2. Un Loup

La bonne neige le ciel noir
Les branches mortes la détresse
De la forêt pleine de pièges
Honte à la bête pourchassée
La fuite en flèche dans le cœur
Les traces d'une proie atroce
Hardi au loup et c'est toujours
Le plus beau loup et c'est toujours
Le dernier vivant que menace
La masse absolue de la mort.

The Fire

Great scoops of snow
Pick up our icy feet
And with a harsh word
We confront stubborn winter

Each tree has its place in the air
Each rock its weight on the earth
Each brook its rushing water
We ourselves have no fire.

A Wolf

The pristine snow, the black sky
The dead branches, the distress
Of the forest full of snares
Shame on the hunted beast
Whose flight is like an arrow in the heart
The tracks of a cruel pursuit
Strength to the wolf, always
The most magnificent wolf and always
The last survivor who threatens
The irresistible force of death.

TEXTS (CONT.)

3. Derniers Instants

Bois meurtri bois perdu d'un voyage
en hiver
Navire où la neige prend pied
Bois d'asile bois mort où sans espoir
je rêve
De la mer aux miroirs crevés

Un grand moment d'eau froide a saisi les
noyés
La foule de mon corps en souffre
Je m'affaiblis je me disperse
J'avoue ma vie j'avoue ma mort
J'avoue autrui.

4. Du Dehors

La nuit le froid la solitude
On m'enferma soigneusement
Mais les branches cherchaient leur voie
dans la prison dans la prison
Autour de moi l'herbe trouva le ciel
On verrouilla le ciel
Ma prison s'écroula
Le froid vivant le froid brûlant m'eut bien
en main.

Last Moments

Woods ruined, woods robbed by the
ravages of winter
Vessel where the snow amasses
Sheltering woods, dead woods, where
without hope I dream
Of a sea made of shattered mirrors

A surge of cold water seized the drowning
victims
The whole of my body suffering
I grow feeble, I am undone
I face my life, I face my death
I face everything.

From Outside

The night, the cold, the loneliness
They shut me in tightly
But the branches sought their way into my
prison
Around me the grass found the sky
The sky was locked up
My prison crumbled
The living, burning cold had me in its
clutches.

Paul Éluard (1895-1952)

TEXTS (CONT.)

Mass in E flat major, op. 109 “Cantus Missæ”

Josef Rheinberger (pub. 1878)

1. Kyrie

Kyrie eleison,
Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison.

Lord, have mercy,
Christ, have mercy,
Lord, have mercy.

2. Gloria

Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis.
Laudamus te. Benedicimus te.
Adoramus te. Glorificamus te.
Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam
gloriam tuam.
Domine Deus, Rex cœlestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens.
Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe.
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
suscipe deprecationem nostram.
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,
miserere nobis.
Quoniam tu solus sanctus.
Tu solus Dominus.
Tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe.
Cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria
Dei Patris.
Amen.

Glory to God in the highest.
And on earth peace to men of goodwill.
We praise you. We bless you.
We adore you. We glorify you.
We give you thanks because of your great
glory.
Lord God, King of heaven,
God the Father almighty.
Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son.
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father.
You who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.
You who takes away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.
Who sits at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.
For you alone are holy.
You alone are Lord.
You alone are the most high, Jesus Christ.
With the Holy Spirit in the glory of
God the Father.
Amen.

3. Credo

Credo in unum Deum.
Patrem omnipotentem, factorem cœli et
terra, visibilium omnium, et invisibilium.
Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum,
Filiū Dei unigenitum.
Et ex Patre natum ante omnia sæcula.
Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine,
Deum verum de Deo vero.
Genitum, non factum, consubstantialem
Patri: per quem omnia facta sunt.
Qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram
salutem descendit de cœlis.

I believe in one God.
Father omnipotent, maker of heaven and earth,
and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only begotten Son of God.
Born of the Father before all worlds.
God of God, Light of Light,
true God of true God.
Begotten, not made, of one substance with the
Father, through whom all things were made.
Who for us humans, and for our salvation
descended from heaven.

TEXTS (CONT.)

Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex
Maria Virgine: Et homo factus
est.
Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio
Pilato: passus, et sepultus est.
Et resurrexit tertia die,
secundum scripturas.
Et ascendit in cœlum:
sedet ad dexteram Patris.
Et interum venturus est cum gloria,
iudicare vivos et mortuos,
cujus regni non erit finis.
Et in Spiritum Sanctum Dominum, et
vivificantem, qui ex Patre Filioque
procedit.
Qui cum Patre, et Filio simul adoratur
et conglorificatur, qui locutus est per
Prophetas.
Et unam, sanctam, catholicam, et
apostolicam.
Amen.

4. Sanctus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt cœli et terra gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.

5. Benedictus

Benedictus qui venit in nomine
Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.

6. Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi:
miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi:
miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi:
dona nobis pacem.

And was made flesh by the Holy Spirit
through the Virgin Mary: and was
made human.
Was crucified also for us under Pontius
Pilate, suffered and was buried.
And he arose on the third day,
according to the scriptures.
And ascended into heaven:
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And he will come again in glory,
to judge the living and the dead,
of his kingdom there will be no end.
And in the Holy Spirit, Lord, and giver of
life, who proceeds from the Father and
the Son.
Who together with the Father and the Son
is adored and glorified who spoke
through the Prophets.
And in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic
church.
Amen.

Holy, Holy, Holy,
Lord God of Hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of
the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of
the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of
the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of
the world, grant us peace.

TEXTS (CONT.)

Five Carols

Richard Rodney Bennett (pub. 1967)

1. There is no rose

There is no rose of such virtue
As is the Rose that bare Jesu. *Alleluia.*
For in this rose containèd was
Heaven and earth in little space. *Res miranda.* ["Wonderful thing."
By that rose we may well see
There be one God in Persons three. *Pares forma.* ["Equal in form."
The angels sungen the shepherds to:
Gloria in excelsis deo. *Gaudeamus.* ["Let us rejoice."
Then leave we all this worldly mirth,
and follow we this joyful birth. *Transeamus.* ["Let us follow."]

2. Out of your sleep

Out of your sleep arise and wake,
For God mankind now hath ytake.
All of a maid without any make:
Of all women she beareth the bell.
And through a maide fair and wise,
Now man is made of full great price:
Now angels knelen to man's service,
An at this time all this befell.
Now man is brighter than the sun:
Now man in heav'n on high shall won:
Blessed be God this game is begun
And his mother the Empress of hell.
That ever was thrall now is he free:
That ever was small now great is she:
Now shall God deem be thee and me
Unto this bliss if we do well.
Now man he may to heaven wend:
Now heav'n and earth to him they bend.
He that was foe now is our friend.
This is no nay that I you tell.
Now blessed Brother grant us grace,
At doomes day to see the face,
And in thy court to have a place,
That we may there sing thee nowell.

TEXTS (CONT.)

3. That younge child

That younge child when it gan weep
With song she lulled him asleep.
That was so sweet a melody,
It passed alle minstrelsy.
The nightingale sang also,
His song is hoarse and nought thereto.
Who attended to her song
and leaveth the first, then doth he wrong.

4. Sweet was the song

Sweet was the song the Virgin sang,
When she to Bethlem Juda came,
And was delivered of a son that blessed Jesus hath to name.
Lulla, lulla, lullaby.

“Sweet babe,” sang she, “my son, and eke a saviour born,
Who hast vouchsafed from on high to visit us that were forlorn:
Lalula, lalula, lalulaby.

“Sweet babe,” sang she,
And rocked him sweetly on her knee.

5. Susanni

A little child is yborn, Eia, susanni.
And he sprang out of Jesse's thorn, Alleluya.
To save us all that were forlorn.

Now Jesus is the childe's name. Eia, susanni.
And mary mild she is his dame, Alleluya.
And so our sorrow's turned to game.

It fell upon the high midnight. Eia, susanni.
The stars they shone both fair and bright. Alleluya.
The angels sang with all their might.

Three Kings there came with their presents, Eia, susanni.
Of gold and myrrh and frankincense, Alleluya.
As clerkès sing in their sequence.

Now sit we down upon our knee. Eia, susanni
And pray we to the Trinity, Alleluya.
Our help and succour for to be.

TEXTS (CONT.)

What Sweeter Music

Richard Rodney Bennett (pub. 1968)

What sweeter music can we bring
Than a carol, for to sing
The birth of this our heavenly King?
Awake the voice! Awake the string!
We see him come, and know him ours,
Who, with his sunshine and his showers,
Turns all the patient ground to flowers.

Dark and dull night, fly hence away,
And give the honour to this day
That sees December turned to May.
If we may ask the reason, say:
We see him come, and know him ours,
Who, with his sunshine and his showers,
Turns all the patient ground to flowers.

The darling of the world is come,
And fit it is, we find a room
To welcome him. The nobler part
Of all the house here, is the heart:
We see him come, and know him ours,
Who, with his sunshine and his showers,
Turns all the patient ground to flowers.

Which we will give him, and bequeath
This holly and this ivy wreath,
To do him honour who's our king,
And Lord of all this revelling.
We see him come, and know him ours,
Who, with his sunshine and his showers,
Turns all the patient ground to flowers.

What sweeter music can we bring
Than a carol, for to sing
The birth of this our heavenly King?

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