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David Conte

*Music for
Chorus and Organ*

Christ Church Schola Cantorum, Rochester, NY
Stephen Kennedy
conductor

David Higgs
organ

Kathleen Bride
harp

Rochester Philharmonic Brass

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MUSIC for CHORUS and ORGAN

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Douglas Prosser and Wesley Nance, trumpet

Mark Kellogg and Mark Salatino, trombone

1	<i>Ave Maria</i>	2:15
2	<i>O magnum mysterium</i>	2:58
3	<i>The Snow Lay on the Ground</i>	5:15
4	<i>Meditation on "Silent Night" for Solo Organ</i> <i>Two Hymns in Honor of the Blessed Virgin</i>	4:13
5	<i>O Salutaris Hostia</i>	2:41
6	<i>Tantum ergo</i>	2:03
7	<i>Nunc dimittis</i>	4:08
8	<i>Hosanna</i>	4:34
9	<i>Recollection (Soliloquy II) for Solo Organ</i>	7:01
10	<i>Prayer of Saint Theresa</i>	3:19
11	<i>Psalm 121</i>	4:10
12	<i>Valediction</i>	4:04
13	<i>Antiphon for Brass Quartet and Organ</i>	4:58
14	<i>Soliloquy for Solo Organ</i>	3:48

Total CD Time: 54:01

Notes by the Composer

Though I began composing choral music while I was still in high school, my interest in composing liturgical music for chorus and for chorus and organ found real focus in 1988 when I met David Higgs. Through David I met many wonderful organists and church musicians, including Stephen Kennedy, and most of the commissioners of the works presented on this recording. David and Stephen have given me indispensable guidance and inspiration in my continuing work as a composer of sacred choral music and organ music, and I am deeply grateful to them.

1 *Ave Maria* was commissioned in January, 1991 by Chanticleer, Joseph Jennings, music director. The work, based on a single melodic idea sung at the opening by the sopranos, modulates through many keys before arriving at the "Amens" in B major. *Ave Maria* is dedicated to my mother Nancy.

Ave Maria, gratia plena,
Dominus tecum,
Benedicta tu in mulieribus.
et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus.
Sancta Maria, Mater Dei,
ora pro nobis peccatoribus,
nunc et in hora mortis nostrae.
Amen.

*Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with you;
blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death.
Amen.*

2 *O magnum mysterium* was commissioned in 2001 by the San Francisco Choral Artists, Magen Solomon, conductor. Like the *Ave Maria*, this piece is modal with extended chromatic harmonies, to suggest the mystery of the virgin birth. The work begins in G-sharp phrygian mode, and moves through many tonalities before arriving at the majestic E major "Alleluias" at the end. Victoria's great *O magnum mysterium* was a model for this work.

O magnum mysterium,
et admirabile sacramentum,
ut animalia viderunt Dominum natum,
jacentem in præsepio.

O beata Virgo, cujus viscera meruerunt
portare Dominum Jesum Christum.

Alleluia.

—Responsory IV, Matins for Christmas Day

O great mystery,
and wondrous sacrament,
that mere animals witnessed our Lord's birth,
lying in a manger bed.

O blessed Virgin, whose womb was chosen
to carry our Lord Jesus Christ.

Alleluia.

[3] *The Snow Lay on the Ground for Chorus, Harp and Organ* was commissioned in 2004 by the Donald Sinclair Sutherland Music Ministries Endowment Fund for Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church, Bethesda MD, Sue Dickson, Director of Music. The nineteenth-century text is of unknown origin. This setting is in a lilting compound meter, with the harp providing gentle fanfares suggesting the birth of the Savior. Each of the four verses is set for a different choral texture: four-part chorus; women alone; men alone; and unison chorus. The Latin refrains between each verse are set a cappella. *The Snow Lay on the Ground* exists also in versions for SSAA and TTBB.

The snow lay on the ground, The stars shone bright,
When Christ our Lord was born On Christmas night.
Venite adoremus Dominum.

'Twas Mary, daughter pure Of holy Anne, That brought into this world The God made man.
She laid Him in a stall At Bethlehem; The ass and oxen shared The roof with them.
Venite adoremus Dominum.

Saint Joseph, too, was by To tend the Child; To guard him, and protect His mother mild;
The angels hovered round, And sung this song, *Venite adoremus Dominum.*

And thus that manger poor Became a throne; For He Whom Mary bore Was God the Son.
O come, then, let us join The heav'nly host, To praise the Father, Son, And Holy Ghost.
Venite adoremus Dominum.

[4] *Meditation on Silent Night* is an arrangement for solo organ of a choral arrangement of the famous carol originally composed for the San Francisco Symphony Chorus in 1990. My setting takes the melody of the original, but harmonizes it in a completely different tonality, meant to suggest the quiet mystery and awe of the night of the Savior's birth. This version is dedicated to organist Charles Rus.

[5] & [6] *Two Hymns in Honor of the Blessed Sacrament* were commissioned in 2005 by the Church of the Advent of Christ the King, San Francisco, Paul Ellison, conductor, in celebration of Mr. Ellison's fifteen years of service to the Church. The quiet strength and steadfastness of Christ's sacrifice in *O Salutaris Hostia* is expressed in the first verse with the sopranos and tenors in a duet in parallel 10ths, supported by a gently pulsating pedal in the altos and basses. This texture is inverted in the second verse; the altos and basses in a duet of 6ths, accompanied by the sopranos and tenors on pedal tones. A four-part integrated texture is achieved in the "Amens." A tone of veneration is expressed in the *Tantum ergo* through a hymn-like texture in D dorian, enriched with borrowed triads.

O Salutaris Hostia,
Quae caeli pandis ostium,
Bella robur hostilia,
Da robur, fer auxilium.

Uni trinoque Domino
Sit sempiterna gloria,
Qui vitam sine termino
Nobis donet in patria.
Amen.

Tantum ergo sacramentum
Veneremur cernui;
Et antiquum documentum

O Saving Victim, open wide
The gate of heaven to man below,
Our foes press on from every side:
Thine aid supply, thy strength bestow.

All praise and thanks to thee ascend
For evermore, blest One in Three;
O grant us life that shall not end
In our true native land with thee.
Amen.

Therefore we before him bending
This great Sacrament revere;
Types and shadows have their ending,

Novo cedat ritui;
Præstet fides supplementum
Sensuum defectui.

Genitori genitoque
Laus et jubilatio,
Salus, honor virtus quoque
Sit et benedictio;
Procedenti ab utroque
Compar sit laudatio.
Amen.

—St. Thomas of Aquinas (c. 1225-1274)

*For the newer rite is here;
Faith our outward sense befriending,
Makes our inward vision clear.*

*Glory let us give and blessing
To the Father and the Son,
Honor, thanks and praise addressing,
While eternal ages run;
Ever too his love confessing
Who from both with both is One.
Amen.*

[7] *Nunc dimittis* (Now let thy servant depart in peace) was commissioned in 2002 by the Episcopal Church in Almaden, San José, California, Margaret Kvamme, Music Director, and Matthew Dirst, organist, in celebration of the ministry of the Reverend and Mrs. Nolan Redman. Simeon's joy at seeing the Savior is expressed at first with music of a moderate, stately character, leading to a section of quietly rhythmic imitative entries over a tonic pedal with the text "Glory be to the father..." and rising to a climax on the "Amen."

*Now let thy servant depart in peace, O Lord, according to thy word.
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared
Before the face of all peoples, To be a light to lighten the Gentiles,
And to be the glory of thy people Israel.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, And to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, Is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen*

[8] *Hosanna* was written in 1978, shortly after my return from my three years' study in Paris with Nadia Boulanger. It was composed for my high school choir, the Lakewood (Ohio) High School Symphonic Choir, B. Neil Davis, conductor. I arranged the

work for Women's Voices for the Cornell University Women's Chorus in 1982. The work is based on a flexible, chant-like melody in quintuple meter which is subtly varied and transformed throughout. The *Hosanna* text is traditionally set in an extroverted manner; this setting is more meditative, as if aware of the sacrifice to come.

Hosanna in excelsis.	<i>Hosanna in the highest.</i>
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.	<i>Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.</i>
Hosanna in excelsis.	<i>Hosanna in the highest.</i>

[9] *Recollection* (Soliloquy No. 2) was commissioned for St. Bartholomew's Church in New York City by Jennifer Tye. The premiere was given by organist William Trafka on New Year's Eve, 1999. Like *Soliloquy*, the work is written in a simple, gently declamatory style. The work is in a loose *Rondo* form, rising to a climax before the final statement of the main idea.

[10] *Prayer of St. Theresa* was commissioned by the Evergreen Church Music Conference, Colorado, in the summer of 1995, and was premiered by participants of the conference at Saint John's Episcopal Cathedral, Denver, CO, conducted by Richard Webster. The author of the text is St. Theresa of Avila, the fourteenth-century Spanish Carmelite nun, mystic and writer, who wrote this prayer on a bookmark which was found after her death. The prayer was translated by the American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Marked *Moderately slow, with great calm*, a gently pulsating ostinato in the organ pedal supports descending open sonorities in the highest register of the organ to create a sense of spaciousness and timelessness, of immovable and unwavering faith.

Let nothing disturb thee, Nothing affright thee;
All things are passing; God never changeth;
Patient endurance attaineth to all things;
Who God possesseth in nothing is wanting;
Alone God sufficeth.

—St. Theresa of Avila; tr. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

[11] *Psalm 121* was commissioned in 1992 by the Walnut Creek (CA) Presbyterian Church, Stewart Scharch, organist and conductor. *Psalm 121* is one of the "Psalms of Ascent," which were sung by the pilgrims as they went up to Jerusalem for the great annual feasts. This setting expresses a confident, quietly joyous tone through the use of the sunny tonality of A-major, set in compound meter, and an *Andante* tempo. The work journeys through many keys before settling where it began, but with a somewhat unresolved cadence, suggesting the vastness of the final words: "and even for evermore."

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.
My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.
He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.
Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.
The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.
The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.
The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.
The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in
from this time forth, and even for evermore.

[12] *Valediction* was commissioned in 1990 by the First Unitarian Church, Oakland, CA, Eric Howe, conductor. The work was written after a summer spent in England as a Vaughan Williams fellow to study his manuscripts at the British Museum, and thus it has a consciously English character. The text is a sonnet by Sir Philip Sydney (1554-1586) which instructs Christians to give up earthly treasures for heavenly ones. Like *The Snow Lay on the Ground*, each verse is set in a different choral texture; women's voices alone, men's voices alone; *divisi* women's voices, and finally full chorus in unison.

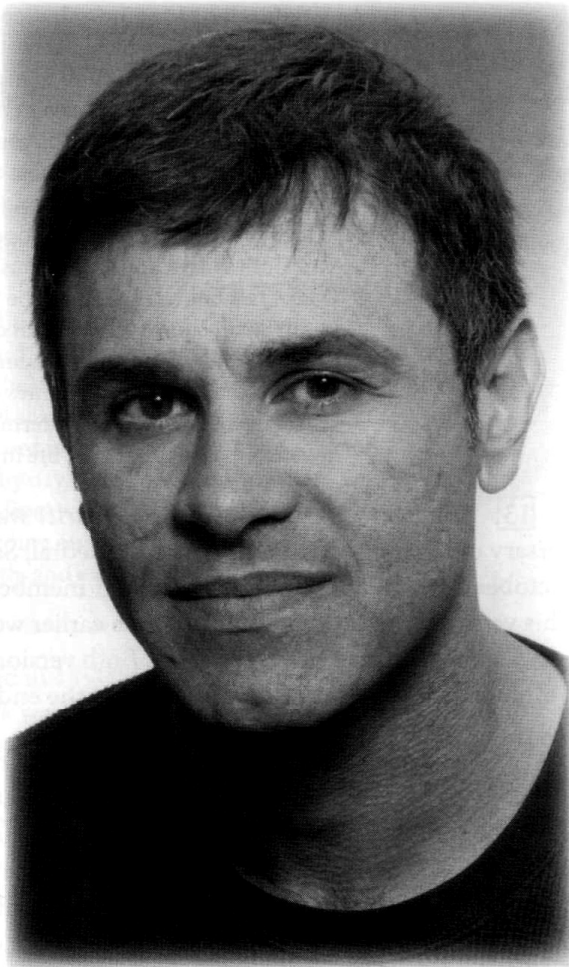
Splendidis longum valedico nugis

Leave me, O love which reachest but to dust ;
And thou, my mind, aspire to higher things ;
Grow rich in that which never taketh rust,
Whatever fades but fading pleasure brings.
Draw in thy beams, and humble all thy might
To that sweet yoke where lasting freedoms be ;
Which breaks the clouds and opens forth the light,
That doth both shine and give us sight to see.
O take fast hold; let that light be thy guide
In this small course which birth draws out to death,
And think how evil becometh him to slide,
Who seeketh heav'n, and comes of heav'nly breath.
Then farewell, world ; thy uttermost I see ;
Eternal Love, maintain thy life in me.

[13] *Antiphon for Organ and Brass Quartet* was commissioned for the 25th anniversary of the consecration of Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, and was premiered on October 19th, 1989 by David Higgs and members of the San Francisco Symphony. This version is a transcription of a much earlier work for unaccompanied double chorus, *Cantate Domino*, written in 1975. Both versions are modeled upon the antiphonal polychoral style of San Marco in Venice at the end of the 16th century.

[12] *Soliloquy* was commissioned in honor of organ builder Walter Holtkamp's retirement and was premiered by Michael Farris at the Cleveland Museum of Art on September 30th, 1996. The work is cast in a simple ABA form. The principal idea is an angular, lyrical melody, at once both proud and shy, first stated in the solo flute and accompanied by a gently pulsating ostinato. The central section becomes more animated and rises to a declamatory climax. The character of the opening music returns in the final section.

DAVID CONTE (b. 1955) is currently Professor of Composition and Conductor of the Conservatory Chorus at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. His close relationships with his teacher Nadia Boulanger and with her first American student of renown, Aaron Copland, informed and inform his striving as a creative artist committed to works that reflect the qualities of craftsmanship and harmonic sensibility which Boulanger taught and which Copland embodied. He has received commissions from Chanticleer, the San Francisco Symphony Chorus, the Dayton, Oakland and Stockton Symphonies, the American Guild of Organists, Sonoma City Opera and the Gerbode Foundation. Conte has composed five operas: *The Dreamers*; *The Gift of the Magi*; *Firebird Motel*; and *America Tropical*; (these last two commissioned by San Francisco theater company Thick Descrip-



tion, for whom Conte has been Composer-In-Residence since 1991); and *Famous*, based on the book *Famous for 15 Minutes - My Years with Andy Warhol* by Ultra Violet. He is also the composer of a musical, *The Passion of Rita St. James*, produced at the SF Conservatory in 2003. *The Gift of the Magi* has been produced by the Asheville Lyric Opera, Winnipeg Opera, Muddy River Opera Company, Greenburg American Opera, and Opera South. He has also composed songs for singers Barbara Bonney, Thomas Hampson and Phyllis Bryn-Julson. His work is represented on many commercial CD recordings. A Fulbright Scholar with Nadia Boulanger in Paris, a Ralph Vaughan Williams Fellow and an Aspen Music Festival Conducting Fellow, Conte earned his Bachelor's degree from Bowling Green State University, where he studied with Ruth Inglefield and Wallace DePue, and his Master's and Doctoral degrees from Cornell University where he studied with Karel Husa, Robert Palmer, Steven Stucky and Thomas Sokol. In 1982, Conte worked with Aaron Copland preparing a study of the composer's sketches. He has taught at Cornell University, Keuka College, Colgate University and Interlochen. With composer Todd Boekelheide, Conte co-wrote the film score for the documentary *Ballets Russes*, shown at the Sundance and Toronto Film Festivals in 2005, (now available on DVD), and composed the music for the PBS documentary, *Orozco: Man of Fire* in 2006, shown on the "American Masters Series" in the fall of 2007. His composition *The Nine Muses* was commissioned by the American Choral Director's Association for their National Convention and was premiered on March 8th, 2007, in Miami.



One of America's leading concert organists, David Higgs is also Chair of the Organ Department at the Eastman School of Music. He performs extensively throughout the United States and abroad, and has inaugurated many important new instruments including St. Stephan's Cathedral, Vienna; the Meyerson Symphony Center, Dallas; and the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola in New York City. His performances with numerous ensembles have included the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Orpheus Ensemble, Chanticleer, and the Empire Brass. Since his 1987 debut with the San Francisco Symphony, he has played many Christmas concerts to capacity audiences at San Francisco's Davies Symphony Hall, and in recent years, he has continued this tradition at the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles.

Mr. Higgs performs, teaches, and adjudicates at festivals and competitions throughout the world, including the International Organ Festivals of Calgary, Alberta; Dublin, Ireland; Odense, Denmark; Redlands and San Anselmo, California; and the Gilmore International Keyboard Festival. In England he has appeared several times at the Oundle International Festival and Organ Academy, the St. Albans International Festival and Competition, and the Cambridge Summer Festival. His performances for colleagues include national, regional and pedagogy conventions of the American Guild of Organists, as well as national conventions of the American Pipe Organ Builders Association, the American Institute of Organbuilders, the Westfield Center, and the Organ Historical Society; and in London, the Annual Congress of the Incorporated Association of Organists, and the International Congress of Organists.

A native of New York City, Mr. Higgs held his first position as a church organist at age ten; as a teenager, he performed classical music as well as rock, gospel, and soul music. He earned the Bachelor and Master of Music degrees at the Manhattan School of Music, and the Performer's Certificate from the Eastman School of Music. His teachers have included Claire Coci, Peter

Hurford, Russell Saunders, and Frederick Swann. In New York City, he was Director of Music and Organist at Park Avenue Christian Church, and later Associate Organist of the Riverside Church, where he also conducted the Riverside Choral Society. After moving to San Francisco in 1986, he became Director of Music and Organist at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Berkeley, Director of Church Music Studies at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley, and Organist/Choir Director at Temple Emanu-El in San Francisco.

In addition to his significant performing career, Mr. Higgs has distinguished himself as a pedagogue. He was appointed to the faculty of the Manhattan School of Music upon graduation from that institution, and has been a member of the faculty of the Eastman School of Music since 1992. His students have won prizes in prestigious international competitions, and hold important positions in leading academic and religious institutions.

Mr. Higgs has recorded for the Delos, Pro Organo, Arsisi, Loft, and Gothic labels.



STEPHEN KENNEDY is Director of Music and Organist at Christ Church, Rochester, NY, Instructor of Sacred Music at the Eastman School of Music, Director of Chapel Music and Instructor in Liturgical Music at Bexley Hall Episcopal Seminary, Instructor of Organ for Eastman's Community Education Division and Instructor of Piano at Nazareth College.

Stephen founded the Office of Compline at Christ Church in 1997 and is also the founder and director of the celebrated Christ Church Schola Cantorum, a group that specializes in the performance of early sacred choral music and chant, contemporary music, and choral improvisation.

Stephen has collaborated with celebrated organists Edoardo Belotti, Hans Davidsson, David Higgs, William Porter, and Todd Wilson in re-creating and developing historical as well as contemporary liturgical music performances. He has also served as director of music and advisor for Diocesan Conventions of the Episcopal Church, and special liturgies for Colgate Rochester Divinity School.

Stephen Kennedy has appeared in many venues as organ soloist in programs of standard repertoire as well as recitals consisting solely of improvisations. He has been a performer and lecturer for local and regional events of the American Guild of Organists, and has given workshops on choral music, chant and improvisation in the U. S. and abroad. He composes choral, instrumental, and chamber music. As a collaborative musician, he recently composed music for choreographer Jamey Leverett and the Rochester City Ballet.

KATHLEEN BRIDE is Professor of Harp at the Eastman School of Music, a position she has held since 1969. Bride has appeared as recitalist in London, the Netherlands, in addition to appearances in major cities across the U.S., and as soloist with the Juilliard Ensemble of Contemporary Music and composer Luciano Berio. She has recorded contemporary chamber music on the Phillips and RCA Victor labels. Bride is a member of the visiting faculty of the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, U.K., and has conducted master classes throughout the U.S. and Britain. Prior to her appointment at Eastman, she was chair of the harp department at Manhattan School of Music. She is a graduate of Marywood College (PA), and The Juilliard School.

DOUGLAS PROSSER has been Principal Trumpet of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra since 1995. He is also a member of the trumpet and chamber music faculty at the Eastman School of Music. Before coming to Rochester, Prosser performed as Principal Trumpet with the Barcelona Symphony Orchestra in Spain. He has also performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Hamilton Philharmonic. **WESLEY NANCE** has distinguished himself as a trumpet performer, composer, and arranger. Originally from southern California, he has been a member of the Rochester Philharmonic trumpet section since 1986. Nance also serves on the faculty of the Eastman Community Music School and the Charles Finney School. **MARK KELLOGG** enjoys the dual position of Principal Trombone of the Rochester Philharmonic and Associate Professor of Trombone, Euphonium and Chamber Music at the Eastman School of Music. Throughout his career he has embraced many performing roles from jazz soloist to chamber musician to orchestral performer. **MARK SALATINO** has performed at prestigious music festivals throughout the United States and Japan, including Tanglewood, Spoleto, and the Pacific Music Festival. Currently a trombonist in the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, he previously held positions in the Florida West Coast Symphony and the New World Symphony.

CHRIST CHURCH SCHOLA CANTORUM
Rochester, New York
Stephen Kennedy, conductor

The Christ Church Schola Cantorum of Rochester, New York, was founded by Stephen Kennedy in order to provide a service to the community in which art and liturgy would be seamlessly interwoven. Since its inception in 1997, the Schola has performed the Office of Compline under Kennedy's direction every Sunday evening from October through April. Specializing in music of the Baroque and Renaissance, the ensemble has been featured in various festivals and concert series, including the annual Eastman Rochester Organ Initiative Festival and the Rochester Early Music Festival. The ensemble is also devoted to new music, and it has commissioned, premiered and recorded works by a growing list of composers. Its debut album on Gothic Records in 2004 has been described as "a joy to listen to . . . wonderfully balanced with perfect pacing," and has garnered considerable critical acclaim. The Schola comprises Rochester-area musicians and Eastman School of Music faculty and students, all who volunteer their time and talent.

Soprano	Alto	Tenor	Bass
Marrie Burgess	Mark Edwards	Scott Perkins	Nathaniel Adam
Laura Dunbar	Lars Gjerde	Timothy Pyper	Mark Ballard
Elena Mullins	Lisa Jadwin	Michael Unger	John Buffett
Erica Schuller	Stephen Kennedy	Zachary Wadsworth	Ted Christopher
Amy Steinberg		Zachary Wilder	Christopher Huebner
			Lee Wright
			Jordan Wilson

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