



MUSIC FROM A HIGHER SPHERE



THE PREMIERE OF **GUSTAV MAHLER'S EIGHTH SYMPHONY**
– "THE SYMPHONY OF A THOUSAND" – IN THE
ORGAN / CHORAL VERSION BY ORGANIST **DAVID BRIGGS**

SOLOISTS WITH CHORUSES FROM
ORATORIO SOCIETY OF NEW YORK
THE MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC
CATHEDRAL OF SAINT JOHN THE DIVINE, NEW YORK

CONDUCTED BY **KENT TRITLE**

Pro
Organo

DOUBLE CD

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO

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MUSIC FROM A HIGHER SPHERE

Preliminary Facts on Gustav Mahler and his *Eighth Symphony*:

Gustav Mahler was born on 7 July 1860 at Kalischt, Bohemia, near the town of Humpolec, and died on 18 May 1911 in Vienna, Austria.

Mahler's *Eighth Symphony* began with sketches in 1906, with continued development through summer of 1907.

Text of Part One is based upon the hymn "*Veni, creator spiritus*." Text of Part Two is from the Second Part of Goethe's dramatic poem *Faust*, which was completed in 1832.

Mahler dedicated his *Eighth Symphony* "To my beloved wife, Alma Maria."

Its world premiere was given on 12 September 1910, in Hall One of the Munch Exhibition Grounds, with the composer conducting an orchestra specially convened for the occasion along with the Leipzig Riedelverein, Vienna Singverein, Munich Central School Children's Chorus, and eight vocal soloists.

Notes from organist David Briggs, creator of the organ-choral version of Mahler's *Eighth Symphony*:

"A symphony must be like the world. It must contain everything." It has long been an ambition to transcribe Mahler's Eighth. It follows on from my transcriptions of the Fifth (1998), Sixth (2006), Third (2009), and Second (2012). I hugely value the opportunity to give the world premiere of the new transcription at St. John the Divine — with its unique acoustic and stunning Skinner organ, and such voluminous choral resources. Making the transcription took the best part of nine months, and learning it rather more! Without doubt, Mahler included some of the most beautiful music he had ever written. For me it represents his never-ending quest for faith and completeness. The final apotheosis is completely overwhelming—even more so on the organ than the orchestra, in my humble opinion.

Although he didn't know it at the time, this was the last music Mahler was to ever conduct in Europe (at the premiere at the Neue Musik-Festhalle in Munich, in September 1910).

I have dedicated this performance to John Scott, my longtime friend and extremely distinguished Organist and Director of Music at Saint Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue, New York, who died extremely unexpectedly and prematurely in August of 2015. We miss him so much.

The final words of the Eighth Symphony sum things up much more eloquently than I ever could:

Chorus mysticus

Alles Vergängliche	<i>All that is transitory</i>
Ist nur ein Gleichnis;	<i>Is but an image;</i>
Das Unzulängliche,	<i>The inadequacy of earth</i>
Hier wird's Ereignis;	<i>Here finds fulfilment;</i>
Das Unbeschreibliche,	<i>The ineffable</i>
Hier ist's getan;	<i>Here is accomplished;</i>
Das Ewig-Weibliche	<i>The eternal feminine</i>
Zieht uns hinan.	<i>leads us up.</i>



Soloists

Mulier Samaritana
Sara Murphy, mezzo-soprano

Magna Peccatrix
Rachel Rosales, soprano

Una Poenitentium
Bryn Holdsworth, soprano

Mater Gloriosa
Jana McIntyre, soprano

Doctor Marianus
John Tiranno, tenor

Pater Ecstaticus
Tim Murray, baritone

Pater Profundus
Adam Lau, bass

Maria Aegyptiaca
Noragh Devlin, mezzo-soprano

Choruses

The Oratorio Society of New York
The Manhattan School of Music
Symphonic Chorus
The Manhattan School of Music
Women's Chorus
The Cathedral Chorists
of St. John the Divine

Organist: David Briggs
Conductor: Kent Tritle

TEXTS AND ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

ERSTER TEIL: HYMNUS

DISC 1
Index 1.1

Veni creator spiritus,
mentes tuorum visita;
imple superna gratia,
quae tu creasti pectora.

Qui Paraclitus diceris,
donum Dei altissimi,
fons vivus, ignis, caritas,
et spiritalis unctio.

DISC 1
Index 1.2

Infirma nostri corporis
virtute firmans perpeti;
accende lumen sensibus,
infunde amorem cordibus.

DISC 1
Index 1.3

Hostem repellas longius,
pacemque dones protinus;
ductore sic te praevio
vitemus omne pessimum.

Tu septiformis munere,
dexteræ paternæ digitus;

Per te sciamus da Patrem,
Noscamus [atque] Filium,
Te utriusque Spiritum
credamus omni tempore.

Da gaudiorum praemia,
da gratiarum munera;
dissolve litis vincula,
adstringe pacis foedera.

Pacemque dones protinus,
ductore te praevio
hostem repellas,
sic vitemus omne pessimum.

PART ONE: HYMNUS

*Come, Creator Spirit,
visit the minds of Your people,
fill with grace from on high
the hearts which Thou didst create.*

*Thou that art called Comforter,
gift from God most high,
living fount, fire, love
and unction of the spirit.*

*Endow our weak flesh
with perpetual strength,
kindle our senses with light,
pour Thy love into our hearts.*

*Drive the enemy far from us
grant us lasting peace,
so that, beneath Thy guidance,
we may avoid all ill.*

*Thou, sevenfold in gifts,
finger of the Father's right hand.*

*Give us to know Father
and Son through Thee,
and in Thee, Spirit emanating of both,
grant that we may always believe.*

*Give us joy,
grant us Thy peace,
smooth our quarrels,
preserve us in bonds of peace.*

*Grant peace forthwith,
under your guidance
drive away the enemy,
thus let us avoid all that is worst.*

DISC 1
Index 1.4

Gloria Patri Domino,
natoque, qui a mortuis
surrexit, ac Paraclito
in saeculorum saecula.

DISC 2
Index 1.1

ZWEITER TEIL: SCHLUSSZENE AUS GOETHE'S FAUST ZWEITER TEIL

*Bergschluchten, Wald, Fels,
Eino de: Heilige Anchoreten,
gebirgauf verteilt gelagert
zwischen Klüften*

DISC 2
Index 1.2

Chor und Echo

Waldung, sie schwankt heran,
Felsen, sie lasten dran,
Wurzeln, sie klammern an,
Stamm dicht an Stamm hinan.
Woge nach Woge spritzt,
Höhle, die tiefste, schützt.
Löwen, sie schleichen stumm,
Freundlich um uns herum,
Ehren geweihten Ort,
Heiligen Liebeshort.

Pater Ecstasticus (auf und abschwebend)

Ewiger Wonnebrand
Glühendes Lieband,
Siedender Schmerz der Brust,
Schäumende Gotteslust!
Pfeile, durchdringet mich,
Lanzen, bezwinget mich,
Keulen, zerschmettert mich,
Blitze, durchwettert mich!
Daß ja das Nichtige
Alles verflüchtige,
Glänze der Dauerstern,
Ewiger Liebe Kern!

*Glory be to the Father,
to His Son, who rose from the dead,
and to the Advocate and Comforter
for ever and ever.*

PART TWO: FINAL SCENE FROM PART II OF GOETHE'S FAUST

*Mountain Gorges, Forest, Cliff, Desert:
Holy Anchorites, scattered up the
mountainside, living in clefts
of the rocks*

Chorus and Echo

*Forest, that sways here,
Rocks that weigh down on it,
Roots that cling,
Trunks dense on trunks.
Wave sprays over wave,
The deepest cave shields us.
Lions that creep silently
Tame about us,
Honor the sacred place,
The holy shrine of love.*

Pater Ecstasticus (hovering up and down)

*Eternal burning brand,
Glowing bond of love,
Seething pain of the breast,
Foaming joy of God.
Arrows, pierce me,
Lances, subdue me,
Maces, beat me down,
Lightning thunder through me!
That now the worthless
Be cursed for ever
Shine forth the enduring star,
Eternal love's centre.*

Pater Profundus (*tiefe Region*)

Wie Felsenabgrund mir zu Füßen
Auf tiefem Abgrund lastend ruht,
Wie tausend Bäche strahlend fließen
Zum grausen Sturz des Schaums der Flut
Wie strack, mit eig'nem kräft'gen Triebe,
Der Stamm sich in die Lüfte trägt;
So ist es die allmächt'ge Liebe,
Die alles bildet, alles hegt.

Ist um mich her ein wildes Brausen,
Als wogte Wald und Felsenrund,
Und doch stürzt, liebevoll im Sausen,
Die Wasserfülle sich zum Schlund,
Berufen gleich das Tal zu wässern;
Der Blitz, der flammend niederschlug,
Die Atmosphäre zu verbessern,
Die Gift und Dunst im Busen trug;

Sind Liebesboten, sie verkünden,
Was ewig schaffend uns umwallt.
Mein Inn'res mög' es auch entzünden,
Wo sich der Geist, verworren, kalt,
Verquält in stumpfer Sinne Schranken,
Scharf angeschloss'nem Kettenschmerz.
O Gott! beschwichtige die Gedanken,
Erleuchte mein bedürftig Herz!

Engel (*schwebend in der höhern Atmosphäre,
austens Unsterbliches tragend*)

Gerettet ist das edle Glied
Der Geisterwelt vom Bösen:
Wer immer strebend sich bemüht,
Den können wir erlösen;

Und hat an ihm die Liebe gar
Von oben teilgenommen,
Begegnet ihm die sel'ge Schar
Mit herzlichem Willkommen.

Pater Profundus (*lower region*)

*As the rocky chasm at my feet
On the deep abyss weighs at rest,
As a thousand gleaming streams flow
To the terrible plunge of the flood's foam,
As with its own great strength
The trunk is born up into the air —
So is almighty love
That forms all, preserves all.*

*There is about me a wild rushing,
As if forest and rocky ground shook,
And yet there rose, in lovely sound,
The waters to the abyss,
Called as it were to water the valley;
The lightning that flaming struck
To clear the atmosphere,
Took the poison and vapor in its bosom —*

*They are Love's messengers, they attest to
The constant creation surrounding us.
My inner being it too must charm
Where the spirit, confused, cold,
Tormented in the limits of dull senses,
Feels the sharp pain of chains.
O God! Quiet my thoughts,
Bring light to my needy heart!*

Angels (*soaring in the higher atmosphere,
bearing the immortal part of Faust*)

*The noble limb is saved
Of the spirits' world from the wicked:
"Who ever-striving takes pains,
Him can we redeem."*

*And if love from above
Was shared by him,
The blessed host meet him
With heartfelt welcome.*

Chor Seliger Knaben

(*um die höchsten Gipfel kreisend*)

Hände verschlinget euch
Freudig zum Ringverein,
Regt euch und singe
Heil'ge Gefühle drein!

Göttlich belehret,
Dürft ihr vertrauen;
Den ihr verehret,
Werdet ihr schauen.

Die Jüngeren Engel

Jene Rosen, aus den Händen
Liebend-heiliger Büberinnen,
Halten uns den Sieg gewinnen
Und das hohe Werk vollenden,

Diesen Seelenschatz erbeuten.
Böse wichen, als wir streuten,
Teufel flohen, als wir trafen.
Statt gewohnter Höllenstrafen

Fühlten Liebesqual die Geister,
Selbst der alte Satans-Meister
War von spitzer Pein durchdrungen.
Jauchzet auf! Es ist gelungen.

Die Vollendeteren Engel

(*Chor mit Altsolo*)

Uns bleibt ein Erdenrest
Zu tragen peinlich,
Und wär' er von Asbest
Er ist nicht reinlich.

Wenn starke Geisteskraft
Die Elemente
An sich herangerafft,
Kein Engel trennte

Choir of Blessed Boys

(*circling around the highest summit*)

*Join your hands
Joyful in a ring,
Up and sing
Holy feelings!*

*Taught by God
You may trust;
The one whom you revere,
You shall see.*

The Younger Angels

*Those roses from the hands
Of loving holy penitents
Helped us to win victory,
To complete the holy work,*

*To take this soul's treasure as prize.
The evil drew back, as we strewed,
The Devil flew when we smote.
Instead of the wonted pangs of Hell*

*The spirits felt the torment of Love;
The old Satan himself
Was afflicted with sharp pain.
Rejoice! We have succeeded.*

The More Perfect Angels

(*Choir with alto solo*)

*There remains for us earthly residue
To bear with difficulty;
And were he of matter indestructible
He is not pure.*

*When the strong force of the Spirit
The elements
Has snatched up to itself,
No angel could part*

DISC 2

Index 1.3

Geeinte Zwenatur
Der innigen beiden;
Die ewige Liebe nur
Vermag's zu scheiden.

Die Jüngerer Engel

Ich spür' soeben,
Nebelnd um Felsenhö'h,
Ein Geisterleben.
Regend sich in der Näh'
Seliger Knaben,
Seh' ich bewegte Schar
Los von der Erde Druck,
Im Kreis gesellt,
Die sich erlaben
Am neuen Lenz und Schmuck
Der obern Welt.
Sei er zum Anbeginn,
Steigendem Vollgewinn
Diesen gesellt!

Die Selige Knaben

Freudig empfangen wir
Diesen im Puppenstand;
Also erlangen wir
Englisches Unterpand.
Löset die Flocken los,
Die ihn umgeben!
Schon ist er schön und groß
Von heiligem Leben.

Doctor Marianus

(in der höchsten, reinlichsten Zelle)

Hier ist die Aussicht frei,
Der Geist erhoben.
Dort ziehen Frauen vorbei,
Schwebend nach oben.

*The united double nature
Of both soul and body,
Eternal Love only
May divide them.*

The Younger Angels

*I feel now
In the mist and rocky heights
A Spirit life
Dwelling near.
Of blessed children
I see a throng.
Free from earth's pressure.
Gathered in a circle
They rejoice
In the new spring and beauty
Of the upper world.
Let him begin here
To win the fullness of life
As their companion!*

The Blessed Boys

*Joyfully we take
This man into the state of chrysalis;
So we receive
The angels' pledge.
Set loose the flakes of earth
That are about him!
Then he is fair and great
From holy life.*

Doctor Marianus

(in the highest, purest cell)

*Here the view is free,
The Spirit lifted up.
There pass women
Ascending above.*

Die Herrliche mittern
Im Sternenzranze,
Die Himmelskönigen,
Ich seh's am Glanze,
Höchste Herrscherin der Welt!
Lasse mich im blauen,
Ausgespannten Himmelszelt
Dein Geheimnis schauen!
Bill'ge, was des Mannes Brust
Ernst und zart bewegt
Und mit heil'ger Liebeslust
Dir entgegen trägt!
Unbezwinglich unser Mut,
Wenn du hehr gebietetst;
Plötzlich mildert sich die Glut,
Wenn du uns befriedest.

DISC 2
Index 1.4

Doctor Marianus und Chor

Jungfrau, rein im schönsten Sinne,
Mutter, Ehren würdig,
Uns erwählte Königin,
Göttern ebenbürtig.

Chor

Dir, der Unberührbaren,
Ist es nicht benommen,
Daß die leicht Verführbaren
Traulich zu dir kommen.

In die Schwachheit hingerafft,
Sind sie schwer zu retten;
Wer zerreißt aus eig'ner Kraft
Der Gelüste Ketten?
Wie entgleitet schnell der Fuß
Schiefe, glattem Boden!

Chor der Büsserinnen

(Una Poenitentium)

*The glorious one among them
In a crown of stars,
The Queen of Heaven
I see in splendor.
Highest Lady of the world!
Let me in the blue
Extended tract of Heaven
See your mystery.
Approve what in man's breast
Grave and tender moves
And with holy joy of Love
Brings him to meet you.
Our courage is unconquered
When you, sublime, command;
Anger suddenly wanes
When you give us peace.*

Doctor Marianus und Chorus

*Virgin, pure in fairest mind,
Mother, worthy of reverence,
Our chosen Queen,
Equal to God.*

Chorus

*To you, the immaculate,
It is not denied
That the easily seduced
May come to you in consolation.*

*In weakness gathered in
They are hard to save;
Who tears apart through his own strength
The chains of lust?
How quickly does the foot slide
On the sloping, smooth ground?*

Chorus of Penitent Women

(Una Poenitentium)

Du schwebst zu Höhen
Der ewigen Reiche,
Vernimmt das Flehen,
Du Gnadenreiche!
Du Ohnegleiche!

Magna Peccatrix (Luke VII, 36)

Bei der Liebe, die den Füßen
Deines gottverklärten Sohnes
Tränen ließ zum Balsam fließen,
Trotz des Pharisäer-Hohnes:
Beim Gefäße, das so reichlich
Tropfte Wohlgeruch hernieder:
Bei den Locken, die so weichlich
Trockneten die heil'gen Glieder –

Mulier Samaritana (John IV)

Bei dem Bronn, zu dem schon weiland
Abram ließ die Herde führen:
Bei dem Eimer, der dem Heiland
Kühl die Lippe durft' berühren:
Bei der reinen, reichen Quelle,
Die nun dorthier sich ergießet,
Überflüssig, ewig helle,
Rings durch alle Welten fließet –

Maria Aegyptica (Acta Sanctorum)

Bei dem hochgeweihten Orte,
Wo den Herrn man niederließ:
Bei dem Arm, der von der Pforte,
Warnend mich zurücke stieß,
Bei der vierzigjäh'gen Buße,
Der ich treu in Wüsten blieb:
Bei dem sel'gen Scheidegruße,
Den im Sand ich niederschrieb.

*You float up to the heights
Of the eternal kingdom;
Hear our pleading,
You, full of grace!
You, without peer!*

Magna Peccatrix (Luke VII, 36)

*By the love that at the feet
Of your Son, enlightened by God,
Let tears flow as balsam
In spite of the scorn of the Pharisees;
By the box that so richly
Dropped down fragrance;
By the locks that so gently
Dried the sacred limbs –*

Mulier Samaritana (John IV)

*By the well to which once
Abraham led the herds;
By the pitcher which coolly
Touched the Savior's lips;
By the pure, rich source
That now there gushes,
Overflowing, ever clear
Flows throughout the world –*

Maria Aegyptica (Acta Sanctorum)

*By the sacred place
Where the Lord was laid;
By the arm that from the entrance
Warning pushed me back;
By the forty-year penitence
That I truly spent in the desert;
By the holy words of parting
That in the sand I wrote.*

Zu Drei

Die du großen Sünderinnen
Deine Nähe nicht verweigerst,
Und ein büßendes Gewinnen
In die Ewigkeiten steigerst:
Gönn' auch dieser guten Seele,
Die sich einmal nur vergessen,
Die nicht ahnte, daß sie fehle
Dein Verzeihen angemessen!

Una Poenitentium

(sonst Gretchen genannt, sich anschmiegend)

Neige, neige,
Du Ohnegleiche,
Du Strahlenreiche,
Dein Antlitz gnadig meinem Glück!
Der früh Geliebte,
Nicht mehr Getrübte,
Er kommt zurück.

Die Selige Knaben

(in Kreisbewegung sich nähernd)

Er überwächst uns schon
An mächt'gen Gliedern,
Wird treuer Pflege Lohn
Reichlich erwidern.

Wir wurden früh entfernt
Von Lebechören;
Doch dieser hat gelernt,
Er wird uns lehren.

Una Poenitentium (Gretchen)

Vom edlen Geisterchor umgeben,
Wird sich der Neue kaum gewahr,
Er ahnet kaum das frische Leben,
So gleicht er schon der heil'gen Schar
Sieh, wie er jedem Erdenbande

All Three

*You who do not avert your gaze
From women who have sinned
Raise into eternity
The victory gained by repentance,
Grant also this poor soul –
Who only once forgot,
Who did not know that she erred –
Your forgiveness!*

Una Poenitentium

(formerly named Gretchen, drawing closer)

Turn, turn,
You, matchless one,
Rich in glory,
Your face in grace on my happiness!
The one I early loved,
No more troubled,
Comes back.

Blessed Children

(circling nearer)

He grows the greater
With his mighty limbs,
Will true redemption
Richly return.

We were early distanced
From the chorus of life;
Yet this man has learned,
He will teach us.

Una Poenitentium (Gretchen)

By the noble choir of spirits surrounded,
The newly born scarcely knows,
He scarcely divines fresh life,
So he becomes like the holy host.
See! How he from every bond of earth

Der alten Hülle sich entrafft,
Und aus ätherischem Gewande and,
Hervortritt erste Jugendkraft!
Vergönne mir, ihn zu belehren,
Noch blendet ihn der neue Tag!

Mater Gloriosa

Komm! Hebe dich zu höhern Sphären!
Wenn er dich ahnet, folgt er nach.

Doctor Marianus und Chor

(auf dem Angesicht anbetend)

Blicket auf zum Retterblick,
Alle reuig Zarten,
Euch zu sel'gem Glück
Dankend umzuarten!

Werde jeder bess're Sinn
Dir zum Dienst erbötig;
Jungfrau, Mutter, Königin,
Göttin, bleibe gnädig!

Chorus Mysticus

Alles Vergängliche
Ist nur ein Gleichnis;
Das Unzulängliche,
Hier wird's Ereignis;
Das Unbeschreibliche,
Hier ist's getan;
Das Ewig-Weibliche
Zieht uns hinan.

*Tears aside the old veil
And from the clothing of the ether
Comes forth his first youthful strength!
Grant me to teach him,
Still blinded by the new day.*

Mater Gloriosa

*Come, rise up to higher spheres!
If he is aware of you, he will follow.*

Doctor Marianus and Chorus

(prostrate in prayer)

*All you who repent,
Look up to the redeeming sight
That tries to bring you
To a blessed fate.*

*That every better sense
May serve you;
Virgin, Mother, Queen,
Goddess, be gracious to us!*

Chorus Mysticus

*All that is transitory
Is but an image;
The inadequacy of earth
Here finds fulfilment;
The ineffable
Here is accomplished;
The eternal feminine
Leads us up.*

A note from the audio producer:

If Mahler's *Eighth Symphony* had been a movie, it could certainly have been a Cecil B. DeMille production, because DeMille's films were often described as involving "a cast of thousands." Any performance of Mahler's *Eighth* combines a vast array of musical talents with soloists and hundreds of choristers, but more importantly, when all singers and instrumentalists are unified in their effort to convey the uplifting truths contained in the symphony's powerful texts, the performance of Mahler's *Eighth* becomes much more. When the music reaches that high spiritual plane, the performance becomes a glorious, musical communion. The spiritual climate is especially robust as these skilled soloists and choirs resound with the Cathedral's Great Organ in its vast and expansive acoustic, with this brilliant organ and choral version of Mahler's "Symphony of a Thousand" by David Briggs.

The pages of this CD booklet are too few to reproduce the individual names of more than 300 choristers, the generous concert patrons, as well as the extensive program notes on the symphony and the soloists' artist biographies. These details are found in the concert bulletin distributed at this April 7, 2016 performance, at which this recording was made. Concert brochure details may be viewed at the Pro Organo label website. Kindly direct your internet browser to:

<https://proorgano.com/mahler8> and access the **DETAILS** tab.

A video about this concert & CD production is found at: <https://vimeo.com/185720512>



ABOUT THE CHORUSES

THE MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC SYMPHONIC CHORUS

Symphonic Chorus membership is primarily made up of freshmen and sophomores at the Manhattan School of Music. The Symphonic Chorus has recently performed Haydn's *The Creation*, Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Schubert's *Mass in G*, Poulenc's *Gloria*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, the world premier of David Briggs' transcription for organ, chorus, and soloists of Mahler's *Second Symphony* and Mahler's *Symphony No. 8*, Bach's *B Minor Mass*, Mozart's *C Minor Mass*, Honegger's *Le Roi David*, Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloe* (with the New York Philharmonic) and Verdi's *Requiem*.

For information on the Choral Department and Graduate Degrees in Choral Conducting, please contact the Admissions Office of Manhattan School of Music.

THE MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC WOMEN'S CHORUS

The Women's Chorus was established in 2014 to explore the repertoire written and arranged for women's voices. The membership is made up of first-year undergraduates majoring in voice, piano, and composition. For their inaugural performance, they performed *Vier Gesänge, Op. 17* for women's voices, harp and horns by Johannes Brahms.

THE CATHEDRAL CHORISTERS OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE

Cathedral Choristers is an ensemble of 26 students drawn from the 5th-8th grade classes of the Cathedral School. The chorister program was founded when the Cathedral School opened its doors in 1901. These young musicians continue this proud tradition, participating in services at the Cathedral as well as taking part in exciting outside projects. In 2013 the Cathedral Choristers sang in Carnegie Hall for the Oratorio Society of New York's performance of Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* and the ensemble has traveled to London to sing services at St. Paul's Cathedral.

THE ORATORIO SOCIETY OF NEW YORK

Founded in 1873 by Leopold Damrosch, the Oratorio Society of New York is one of the city's oldest musical organizations. From its earliest days, the Society played an integral role in the musical life of the city, presenting its own concerts and performing at musically and historically significant events. It also created a fund to finance building a concert hall. When Andrew Carnegie became the Society's fifth president in 1888, he adopted the cause, enlisting fellow board member, architect William Tuthill, to design a "Music Hall" that would provide a suitable artistic home for the Society. In 1891, singing under Tchaikovsky's baton, the Society helped inaugurate the concert hall that came to be known as Carnegie Hall. It has performed there ever since.

On its 100th anniversary the Society was presented with the Handel Medallion, New York City's highest cultural award. It made its European debut in 1982 and has since performed in Europe, Asia, and Latin and South America. In March 2003, the Society received the UNESCO Commemorative Medal and the Cocos Island World Natural Heritage Site Award for its series of benefit concerts in Costa Rica.

In 1977, the Society inaugurated a solo competition to encourage the art of oratorio singing and to give young singers an opportunity to advance their careers. In 2006 it was renamed the Lyndon Woodside Oratorio-Solo Competition in honor of Dr. Woodside's dedication to the competition. International in scope, the competition attracts more than 100 singers each year. The Oratorio Society's Choral Scholars Program provides financial support and coaching experience to young professionals who work with the chorus on a weekly basis and its Education Program introduces teens to classical choral music through classroom presentations and complimentary tickets to Oratorio Society performances.

The Oratorio Society may be contacted through its website: www.osny.org or by writing to: The Oratorio Society of New York, 1440 Broadway, 23 Floor, New York, NY 10018.



The Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine is the Cathedral of the Episcopal Diocese of New York. It is chartered as a house of prayer for all people and a unifying center of intellectual light and leadership. People from many faiths and communities worship together in services held more than 30 times a week; the soup kitchen serves roughly 20,000 meals annually; social service outreach has an increasingly varied roster of programs; the distinguished Cathedral School prepares young students to be future leaders; Adults and Children in Trust, the renowned preschool, afterschool and summer program, offers diverse educational and nurturing experiences; the outstanding Textile Conservation Lab preserves world treasures; concerts, exhibitions, performances and civic gatherings allow conversation, celebration, reflection and remembrance.

THE GREAT ORGAN

The Great Organ of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City is one of the most significant instruments of the Æolian-Skinner Organ Company of Boston, Massachusetts, under the direction of G. Donald Harrison. Through a program of rebuilding from 1951 to 1954, the organ was a complete recasting of the earlier instrument installed in 1910 by the Ernest M. Skinner Company. That early Skinner instrument had quickly achieved a high reputation for its majestic tone quality, as well as the excellence of its mechanism. In the first third of 20th century America, a Skinner pipe organ was the measure by which many others were judged. Æolian-Skinner continued that reputation until its closing in 1972.

Progressive expansion of the Cathedral building through the 1930s by the construction of the Nave had by mid-century rendered the 1910 instrument inadequate for the now greatly enlarged interior space of the Cathedral. And, the original organ's tonal design, which achieved a grand effect in the smaller confines and acoustic of the original Great Choir and Crossing, now left it unable to cope with a much longer and vaster edifice, and a decidedly different acoustical environment.

Through careful experimentation, the Harrison-designed rebuilding expanded the number of pipes in the organ by nearly 50%, and redeveloped the instrument along American Classic lines – a style championed by Æolian-Skinner – that sought an organ that could perform with musical integrity the many schools of organ composition from Baroque to Romantic and Modern, as well as to

serve in its principal liturgical roles of leading congregational singing and accompanying choral literature. The resulting organ immediately achieved an international reputation as one of the landmark instruments of its time.

A tragic fire on 18 December 2001 deposited soot and smoke throughout the Cathedral, on its stone structure, on many priceless works of ecclesiastical art and in the organs. Painstaking cleaning and restoration of the Cathedral's interior and its contents followed, planned by a consulting committee of conservators, architects, and engineers was carried out by numerous artisans. The organ, choral and congregational singing in the Cathedral have benefited greatly from acoustical work done following post-fire cleaning and repair of the vaulted surfaces by sealing of the acoustical ceramic tile, originally used in the mid-century reconstruction of the Great Choir, and in the eastern-most double-bay of the Nave.

The Great Organ was restored by Quimby Pipe Organs, Inc., of Warrensburg, Missouri under the direction of Michael Quimby and Eric Johnson. Douglass Hunt, Cathedral Curator of Organs served as Consultant, and his shop in the Cathedral also performed some portions of the project, including restoration work during the 1990s, which was retained in the instrument.

The Great Organ of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine is considered by many one of the greatest masterpieces of Æolian-Skinner during the tenure of G. Donald Harrison, and one of the most important organs of the world.

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at The Cathedral of St. John the Divine

The Right Reverend Andrew ML Dietsche, Bishop of New York

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The Reverend Canon Patti Welch, Chaplain, The Cathedral School & Canon for Education

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Kent Tritle, Director of Cathedral Music

Raymond Nagem, Associate Organist

Malcolm J. Merriweather, Associate Choirmaster

Douglass Hunt, Organ Curator

Lisa Schubert, Vice President, Cathedral Programming & External Affairs

Madeline Healey, Music Administrator

at The Oratorio Society of New York

Richard A. Pace, Chairman & President

David Rosenmeyer, Associate Conductor

Anna Lenti, Assistant Conductor

at The Manhattan School of Music

Ronnie Oliver, Jr., Associate Conductor of Symphonic Chorus
and Conductor of Women's Chorus

DAVID BRIGGS, a world-renowned organist, is known for musical and virtuosic performances which excite and engage audiences of all ages. With an extensive repertoire spanning five centuries, he is known across the globe for his brilliant organ transcriptions of symphonic music by composers such as Mahler, Schubert, Tchaikovsky, Elgar, Bruckner, Ravel, and Bach. David also frequently performs improvisations to such classic silent films as *Phantom of the Opera*, *Hunchback of Notre Dame*, and *Jeanne d'Arc* among others. He teaches at the University of Cambridge (United Kingdom), frequently serves on international organ competition juries, and gives masterclasses at colleges and conservatories across the United States and in Europe. He is also a prolific composer and his works range from full-scale oratorios to works for solo instruments. He has recorded a DVD and 30 CDs, many of which include his own compositions and transcriptions. For more information, please visit:

david-briggs.org

KENT TRITLE is one of America's leading choral conductors. Called "the brightest star in New York's choral music world" by *The New York Times*, Tritle is in his sixth season as Director of Cathedral Music and Organist at New York's Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine. He is also Music Director of the Oratorio Society of New York and of Musica Sacra. He is Director of Choral Activities and Chair of the Organ Department at the Manhattan School of Music and on the graduate faculty of the Juilliard School. He serves as organist of the New York Philharmonic and the American Symphony Orchestra.

Tritle holds graduate and undergraduate degrees from the Juilliard School in organ performance and choral conducting. He has been featured on *ABC World News Tonight*, National Public Radio, and Minnesota Public Radio, as well as in *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. For more information, please visit: **kenttritle.com**