



The Cathedral
Church of **Saint John**
the Divine

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RELEASE

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**CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE PRESENTS ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT
FEATURING OTTORINO RESPIGHI'S *LAUD TO THE NATIVITY***

Combined Cathedral Choirs, Soloists, and Orchestra Perform Festive Holiday Music



Photo: Cathedral Archives

New York (November 19, 2013) – The Cathedral of St. John the Divine will present the annual *Cathedral Christmas Concert*, centered upon **Ottorino Respighi's** *Lauda per la Natività del Signore* (*Laud to the Nativity*), on **Saturday, December 14 at 7:00 p.m. at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, 1047 Amsterdam Avenue (at 112th Street), Manhattan**. The Cathedral Choirs will join forces under the leadership of **Kent Tritle**, Director of Cathedral Music and one of America's leading choral conductors, and **Malcolm Merriweather**, Choral Associate at the Cathedral.

The repertoire for this year's concert is exciting and varied. Respighi's beloved *Laud to the Nativity*, the centerpiece of the evening, is a cantata depicting Christ's birth, based on a pastoral text by 13th-century Franciscan friar Jacopone da Todi. The work is scored for soprano, mezzo-soprano, and tenor soloists, mixed chorus, and a chamber ensemble of woodwinds and piano 4-hands. Respighi was an acknowledged master at blending contemporary sensibilities, such as the lush orchestration of Debussy-like impressionism, with the formal rigors of ancient forms like Gregorian chant. *Laud to the Nativity*



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finds the composer at the height of his craft, evoking a mix of old and new forms, with a score that is simultaneously immediate and charming, distant and haunting.

The concert will also feature Renaissance motets sung by the Cathedral Choir, and Christmas carols sung by the choirs and the audience, accompanied by the Cathedral Orchestra and The Great Organ. The combined adult choirs will also sing the anthems, “What sweeter music,” by John Rutter, and “Quem pastores laudavere,” by James Bassi. The Cathedral Choristers will perform, “Rejoice Greatly” from Handel’s *Messiah*.

Featured soloists include **Nacole Palmer**, soprano (Angel), **Katie Geissinger**, mezzo-soprano (Mary) and **Marc Day**, tenor (Joseph).

The *Cathedral Christmas Concert* is part of the *Great Music in a Great Space* series of public concerts at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, inspired by world musical traditions and the Cathedral’s 100-year history of diverse and exhilarating musical events.

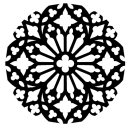
Tickets are \$50 (general admission) and \$75 (preferred seating).

About Kent Tritle

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, he is Director of Cathedral Music and Organist at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. The 2012-13 season marks sixth season as Music Director of Musica Sacra, the longest continuously performing professional chorus in New York; and his eighth season as Music Director of the Oratorio Society of New York, the acclaimed 200-voice volunteer chorus. In addition, Kent is Director of Choral Activities at the Manhattan School of Music and is a member of the graduate faculty of The Juilliard School. He is the host of the weekly radio show "The Choral Mix with Kent Tritle," a weekly hour-long radio program on New York's Classical 105.9 WQXR and www.wqxr.org devoted to the vibrant genre of choral music and the breadth of activity in the choral community. An acclaimed organ virtuoso, he is also the organist of the New York Philharmonic and the American Symphony Orchestra.

About The Cathedral

The Cathedral of St. 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 25,000 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—such is the joyfully busy life of this beloved and venerated Cathedral.



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The Cathedral is open 7 days a week from 7:00AM – 6:00 PM. There is a suggested admission of \$10.00 per person. Please visit stjohndivine.org for more information and a schedule of public programs.

Program

O come, all ye faithful Arr. David Willcocks (b. 1919)

Verbum caro factum est Hans Leo Hassler (1564-1612)

Ne timeas Maria Tomas Luis de Victoria (1548-1611)

O magnum mysterium Tomas Luis de Victoria

Hodie Christus natus est Jan Sweelink (1562-1621)

Hark! the herald angels sing Arr. David Willcocks

What sweeter music John Rutter (b. 1945)

Quem pastores laudavere James Bassi (b. 1961)

The first noel Trad. English Carol

Rejoice Greatly George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)
From *Messiah*

Silent Night Melody: Franz Xaver Gruber (1787-1863)
Harm: Carl H. Reinecke (1824-1910)

Lauda per la Natività del Signore Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936)
(*Laud to the Nativity*), for soloists,
chorus & ensemble, P. 166

Soloists

Nacole Palmer, soprano (Angel)
Katie Geissinger, mezzo-soprano (Mary)
Marc Day, tenor (Joseph)

Joy to the world George Frideric Handel,
arr. Lowell Mason (1792-1872)
descant: Kent Tritle (b. 1960)