

CHICAGO CHORALE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Contact: Megan Balderston
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CHICAGO CHORALE PRESENTS 2011-2012 SEASON

Founded by Artistic Director Bruce Tammen in 2001, Chicago Chorale has gained a reputation for sensitive, thought-provoking performances of great music throughout the city. Chicago Chorale's 11th season features three concert programs that juxtapose contemplative, *a cappella* music with kinetic orchestral fervor: Northern Light, a program showcasing the choral traditions of Scandinavian and Baltic countries; Beethoven's iconic *Missa Solemnis*, in a collaboration with Symphony of Oak Park and River Forest at Chicago's Symphony Center; and Louis Vierne's gorgeous *Messe Solennelle*, featuring organist Thomas Weisflog on Rockefeller Memorial Chapel's magnificent organ.

Chicago Chorale's pre-concert speaker series, supported by Harper Court Arts Council, will feature well-known Chicago radio personality Carl Grapentine, and the Dean of Rockefeller Chapel, Elizabeth Davenport. For more information, visit chicagochorale.org.

NORTHERN LIGHT

This program showcases the sophisticated, technically-demanding choral traditions of the Scandinavian and Baltic countries. Composed in the last 100 years, this music is characterized by sharp contrasts between a basic neo-romantic harmonic language, and surprising dissonance; between complex, driving rhythms, and passages that seem to hang motionless in the air; between idiomatic reflection of bleak, dark, northern winter, and a yearning for the warmth of spring. The program includes Edvard Grieg's final major work, *Four Hymns*, with baritone soloist Michael Cavalieri; music of Knut Nystedt, including his most famous motet, *O crux*; celebrated Estonians Arvo Pärt and Urmas Sisask; Swedes Nils Lindberg, Otto Olsson, and Jan Sandström; and Finnish composer Einojuhani Rautavaara, whose *Vigilia* Chorale performed and recorded in December, 2010.

Chorale will utilize all the sonic possibility and variety of its two venues to present these musical contrasts, and to engage listeners in the superb quality and the magical sound of this supremely important genre in contemporary choral music. A pre-concert lecture will be presented one hour prior to the concert at each venue.

TWO PERFORMANCES:

Friday, November 18, 8:00 pm
Hyde Park Union Church, 5600 S. Woodlawn Avenue

Saturday, November 19, 8:00 pm
St. Vincent DePaul Parish, 1010 W. Webster Avenue

Tickets and venue information are available at chicagochorale.org, or by calling Brown Paper Tickets at 800-838-3006.

continued

BRUCE TAMMEN, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

1100 East 55th Street • Chicago, Illinois 60615 • 773.306.6195 • info@chicagochorale.org • www.chicagochorale.org

Chicago Chorale is a non profit 501(c)(3) organization.

BEETHOVEN *MISSA SOLEMNIS*

First performed in 1824, *Missa Solemnis* is often viewed as Beethoven's response to J.S. Bach's *Mass in B Minor*, a work Beethoven in fact never heard, but of which he was intensely aware. Composed at the same time as his *Ninth Symphony*, the *Missa* shares the *Symphony's* position at the final peak of Beethoven's compositional powers—his mastery allowed him to strive for expression beyond anything heard before it. This is powerful, transcendently beautiful music for orchestra, chorus and soloists. Chicago Chorale returns to Symphony Center for this work, collaborating with Symphony of Oak Park and River Forest, and featuring soloists Marcy Stonikas, Tracy Watson, Kurt Hansen, and Peter Van De Graaff.

A pre-concert lecture will be presented by Carl Grapentine, host of WFMT's Morning Program, one hour prior to the concert.

Monday, March 5, 7:30 pm
Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan Avenue

Tickets are available by phoning the Symphony Center box office, 312-294-3000, after January 1, 2012. Season subscribers will receive a 20% discount.

VOICES ALOFT

The centerpiece of the May concert is Louis Vierne's *Messe Solennelle*, for choir and organ, composed in 1899. The greatest organist of his time, Vierne played and composed for the great Parisian organs of St. Sulpice and Notre Dame; his *Messe Solennelle* is one of the grandest compositions of the Golden Age of French organ composition. No organ in Chicago is more suited to this repertoire than the recently restored E.M. Skinner organ in The University of Chicago's Rockefeller Memorial Chapel; nor is any organist more suited to perform the work with Chorale than the Chapel organist, Thomas Weisflog. A heartfelt and sincere work, it also explores all the sonic fireworks of which the instrument and the choir are capable, entirely filling the Chapel with sound.

This concert will also feature two magisterially beautiful *a cappella* works: J.S. Bach's double choir motet, *Komm, Jesu, komm*, and Arnold Schoenberg's *Friede auf Erden*, showcasing the extraordinary acoustic properties of the chapel's lofts.

A pre-concert lecture will be presented by Elizabeth Davenport, Dean of Rockefeller Chapel, one hour prior to the concert.

Sunday, May 13, 3:00 pm
Rockefeller Memorial Chapel, 5850 S. Woodlawn Avenue

Tickets and venue information are available at chicagochorale.org, or by calling Brown Paper Tickets at 800-838-3006.

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NON-SUBSCRIPTION EVENT

Solemn Vespers for Advent

At the Monastery of the Holy Cross, this service features a small ensemble, Members of Chicago Chorale, performing motets by Lasso, Palestrina and Victoria, in the liturgical context for which they were composed. This performance is free, no tickets are required.

Sunday, December 4, 5:00 pm

Monastery of the Holy Cross, 3111 S. Aberdeen Street

SEASON MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Chicago Chorale offers Season Membership Subscriptions, which provide several benefits:

- A 25% discounted price of \$50 for the Northern Light and Voices Aloft concerts
- Special reserved seating for both concerts
- A 20% discount for your choice of seating for the March *Missa Solemnis* concert at Symphony Center (ticket prices range from \$15 through \$65)
- A 10% discount on all Chicago Chorale CDs and other merchandise

Season Memberships can be ordered at chicagochorale.org, or by calling Chicago Chorale at 773-306-6195.

ABOUT CHICAGO CHORALE

Over the last ten years, Chicago Chorale has gained a reputation for sensitive, thought-provoking performances of great music throughout the city. Led by Artistic Director Bruce Tammen, the 60-voice ensemble performs repertoire from the sixteenth century to the present day, from well-loved choral works to overlooked masterpieces—but always music that stimulates and engages its singers and audiences. Past performances include appearances with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Symphony of Oak Park and River Forest, and the Baroque Band. Chorale has appeared numerous times on “Live from WFMT” with host Kerry Frumkin and has recorded five CDs.

ABOUT BRUCE TAMMEN

Chicago Chorale Artistic Director Bruce Tammen holds degrees from Luther College, Northwestern University, and the University of Chicago. He has taught voice and directed choirs at Luther College, the University of Chicago, and the University of Virginia. Tammen studied extensively in France with Dalton Baldwin and Gerard Souzay, as well as several years with Max Van Egmond at Oberlin’s Baroque performance Institute. He has performed several seasons under Helmuth Rilling at the Oregon Bach Festival and with the Robert Shaw Choral Institute in Souillac, France. Tammen is baritone soloist on the Telarc/Shaw CDs *Appear and Inspire* and *Liebeslieder Waltzes*.

ABOUT THE SYMPHONY OF OAK PARK & RIVER FOREST

The **Symphony of Oak Park & River Forest**, founded in 1931, is one of the oldest continuing community symphony orchestras in the United States, and celebrated its 75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Season in 2005-2006. Jay Kenneth Friedman, principal trombone with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, has been Music Director since 1995. The Illinois Council of Orchestras has recognized the Symphony of Oak Park & River Forest with awards in 1998 (Programming of the Year), 1999 (Special Events of the Year), 2000 (Conductor of the Year), 2002 (Outstanding Community Relations), and 2004 (General Manager of the Year) (Orchestra of the Year). The orchestra consists of approximately 100 musicians from the Chicago metropolitan area. Over 85% are non-professional and volunteer their time and joy in making music.

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CHICAGO CHORALE 2010-11 SEASON AT A GLANCE

Subscription Series

Northern Light

Works by Grieg, Nystedt, Pärt, Sisask, Lindberg, Olsson, Sandström, and Rautavaara

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Beethoven *Missa Solemnis*

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Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan Avenue

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Voices Aloft

Featuring Vierne's *Messe Solennelle* and works by Bach and Schoenberg

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