

O GREAT MYSTERY

THE MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY CHORUS
AND CHAMBER CHOIR PROUDLY PRESENT A
CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Featuring the Christmas Cantata by Daniel Pinkham



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3rd, 2021 AT 7:00 PM

CHURCH OF THE GESU

1145 W WISCONSIN AVE, MILWAUKEE, WI 53233

OPEN TO STUDENTS & THE PUBLIC

...Program...

Gaudete*Piae Cantiones*, 1582
MU Chorus

Ding Dong! Merrily on High.....16th c. French tune
MU Chorus

This Little Babe.....Benjamin Britten
Men's Choir

In Stiller Nacht.....Suabian Folksong
Women's Choir—Jacob Hollister, violin

Ave Maria.....Nathaniel Dett
MU Chorus—Mark Hengel, soloist

Lux Aurumque.....Eric Whitacre
MU Chorus

There is no rose of such virtue.....John Joubert

Hodie Christus Natus Est.....J.P. Sweelinck
Chamber Choir

O Come, All Ye Faithful *Adeste Fideles*.....Traditional Carol #439

Christmas Cantata.....Daniel Pinkham
MU Chorus

O GREAT MYSTERY

THE MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY CHORUS AND CHAMBER CHOIR PROUDLY PRESENT A CHRISTMAS CONCERT

...Program Notes...

Gaudete*Piae Cantiones*, 1582

MU Chorus

Gaudete is from the *Piae Cantiones ecclesiasticae et scholasticae veterum Episcoporum*—better known as, *Piae Cantiones* compiled in 1582. An alternative title could be Devout ecclesiastical and school songs of the old bishops. This treasury of Medieval Song and early Renaissance was composed/edited by Jaakko Finno (1540-1588) and published by Greifswald: Augustin Ferber, 1582 and re-published by London: Chiswick Press in 1910. **Gaudete** is number 24 of 74 songs; it is a dance-like free meter composition where the text, in Latin and English in this performance, deals with the birth of “Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ”. The refrain-verse form includes 6 verses. The refrain begins with a clear monophonic texture that repeats the same text, “Rejoice, Christ is born of the virgin, Mary” in a homophonic texture. Each verse is accompanied by exclamations of handbells. This arrangement was crafted by Robert J. Batastini.

Ding Dong! Merrily on High.....16th c. French tune

MU Chorus

Ding Dong! Merrily on High is a 16th century Christmas carol that is based on a secular dance tune called “*Branle de l’Official*” that was composed by a French cleric, Jehan Tabourot (1519-1593). The words to this evening’s performance were written by English composer George Ratcliffe Woodward (1848-1934) and was first published in *The Cambridge Carol-Book: Being Fifty-two Songs for Christmas, Easter, and Other Seasons*. The verses are in English, but the song is noted for the Latin Refrain of *Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!* Where the sung vowel sound “o” of the *Gloria* is fluidly sustained through a lengthy rising and falling melismatic melodic sequence extending the word to a 33-syllable long lyric!

This Little Babe.....Benjamin Britten

Men’s Choir

A Ceremony of Carols, Op, 28 by Benjamin Britten is an extended choral composition for Christmas that was written for three-part treble chorus, solo voices, and harp. It is structured into eleven movements where the text is taken from the English Galaxy of Shorter Poems, edited by Gerald Bullett mostly written in Middle English with some Latin and Early Modern English. It was composed in 1942. **This Little Babe** is the seventh movement in opus 28. The text is from Robert Southwell’s *Newe Heaven, Newe Warre* from 1595. This text differs with every other movement utilizing imagery of hell. It depicts a battle between the baby and Satan. The 4-phrase melody is presented initially in unison with all male voices. Each time the melody is heard it grows more complex as the use of canon and delayed entrances heighten the excitement until at last three distinct entrances can be heard. The concept of the battle between good and evil is conveyed with quick tempi, polyrhythms, overlapping segments between the voices and the fact that the song grows progressively louder over the duration of the movement. The music reaches its climatic moment with a key change and changing rhythm from the rest of the piece.

In Stiller Nacht.....Suabian Folksong

Women's Choir—Jacob Hollister, violin

In Stiller Nacht is a lovely Suabian folksong that, in this setting, was harmonized by Johannes Brahms. The arrangement and violin obbligato are by Wallingford Riegger. The metaphor of Christ as the bringer of light is presented in the text as this tender subject matter of the passing of the darkness of night into the light of dawn. Both verses are through-composed. Brahms arranges tight triadic harmonic structures for women's voices. The violin obbligato is an independent line that interacts with the melody and the harmonies creating a timeless stillness of night. Swabia is a historic region of southwest Germany that originally included parts of present-day France and Switzerland. It is a region now part of Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria. Many thanks to Dr. Sebastian Lofts for his assistance with German pronunciation.

Ave Maria.....Nathaniel Dett

MU Chorus—Mark Hengel, soloist

Robert Nathaniel Dett (1882-1943), of African descent, was the first composer to fuse Negro folk music with the European art music tradition in a sophisticated manner. He was raised in Niagara Falls, Ontario and later in New York. His *The Emancipation of Negro Music*, won an important literary prize at Harvard University in 1920. He was the first African American person to graduate from Oberlin College, with a double degree in piano and composition in 1908. **Ave Maria** is a beautiful, refined fusion of Negro folk music and European art music.

Lux Aurumque.....Eric Whitacre

MU Chorus

The title **Lux Aurumque** literally means Light and Gold in Latin. The text is from a version of a poem by Edward Esch and translated into Latin by Charles Anthony Silvestri. Whitacre used this piece for his first virtual choir in April, 2010. Whitacre's use of non-triadic chords is key to his unique sound. His chord structures reveal a closer spacing in higher registers emulating that of the harmonic series emphasizing consonant intervals that exhibit his music in a conventionally tonal realm. This piece begins and ends with a "breathing motive" of the progression I-V repeated three times. At measure 46 the voices resolve to the gorgeous final chord, a root position C# major triad.

There is no rose of such virtue.....John Joubert

Chamber Choir

John Pierre Herman Joubert was born on March 20, 1927 in Cape Town, South Africa and died January 7, 2019. He wrote over 160 works including symphonies, concertos, operas, and several Christmas carols. **There is no rose of such virtue** text originated in the 15th century Trinity Carol Roll (c.1420). The delicate choral writing presents the image of Mary as the rose that bares Jesus. The Middle English text includes 5 verses. Joubert uses only 4 of the 5 verses. Although the text is in English each verse ends with a statement in Latin: Alleluia, res miranda, pares forma, and transeamus.

Hodie Christus Natus Est.....J.P. Sweelinck

Chamber Choir

The text of **Hodie Christus Natus Est** is from the Gregorian Chant Antiphon to the Magnificat, sung on the vespers on Christmas Day. This setting by Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck is set for SSATB—soprano, soprano, alto, tenor, and bass. It was first published in 1619 in *Cantiones sacrae* number 13 and published a second time in 1980 in the Chester Book of Motets, Book 12, number 9. Sweelinck was born in Deventer, the Netherlands in 1562 and died 1621 in Amsterdam. He was organist and choral master at the oude Kerk in Amsterdam where we worked almost his entire life. His compositional style straddles the late Renaissance and early Baroque periods. This exciting Christmas motet has 4 major sections that all initiate with a tenor soloist singing the text, *Hodie, hodie*, Today, today followed by the choir singing a mixture of Renaissance polyphonic textures along with homophonic areas. The play on the word, Noe and Alleluia, is absolutely thrilling!

O Come, All Ye Faithful *Adeste Fideles*.....Traditional Carol #439

O Come, All Ye Faithful Adeste Fideles is a Christmas carol that was originally written in Latin. The authorship of the melody and words is inconclusive and includes John Francis Wade (1711-1786), John Reading (1645-1692), King John IV of Portugal (1604-1656) and perhaps some anonymous Cistercian monks. The original four verses of the hymn were added to totaling the current eight verses.

Christmas Cantata.....Daniel Pinkham

MU Chorus

Daniel Pinkham's **Christmas Cantata** is divided into three distinct movements, each with its own narrative. Pinkham uses a technique called painting to create images and layers of sound that portray the lyrics. The first movement begins with a question to the shepherds, "What have you seen? Tell us! Tell us!" The shepherds answer repeating over and over the rhythmic idea, "We have seen the birth and heard the angelic chorus giving praise. Alleluia!" The second movement uses the "*O magnum mysterium*" text, O Great Mystery realizing the wonder of the manger scene with Jesus Christ, the Son of God, lying next to cows, sheep, and goats. The second movement also praises the Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus. The melody of the second movement is based on the fundamental tone, D with a wondering melody that harkens to the melodic structures of Gregorian chant. Later in the movement, harmonies overlapping text by the various parts of the chorus create a mysterious quality of the great mystery of Christmas. The third movement begins from afar, as if angels are singing, "*Gloria in excelsis Deo!*" from outside our galaxy. Each time the three verses are interrupted with this Gloria, the sound appears to be closer and closer to earth until the final glorious arrive on our planet.



Marquette University Chorus and Chamber Choir

Soprano

Alyssa Beine S2
Alicia Anderson S1
Annmarie Buckley S1 *
Katie Darrah S1
Mary Fischer S2/A2
Ari Manta S2/A1
Grace Marchello S1
Natalie Murray S2
Grace Overstreet S2
Beth Schultz S2/A2 *
Tess Stumvoll S1 *
Margaret Weiner S1

Alto

Rachel Laliberte A1
Nayeli Mares A1 *
Isabelle Monroe A1
Lucila Radke A1
Izzy Rowe A1
Emma Sebo A1/S2 *
Amanda Smith A1
Olivia Stewart A1 *
Emily Udell A2
Sarah Woerner A2

Tenor

Johan Hummel T2 *
Benjamin Jackson T2
Ben Jennings T2/B1 *
Ian Thiesenhusen T1 *
Arik Zintel T1 *

Bass

Connor Farrell B1 *
Mark Hengel B2 *
Sam Robertson B2
Matthew Trecek B1

* Chamber Choir

Jenny Ai, accompanist Lucila Radke, Librarian

Executive Board

Emily Udell, President	Mark Hengel, Vice President
Grace Marchello, Treasurer	Matthew Trecek, External Communications
Alicia Anderson, Social Relations	Ben Jennings, Men's Properties
Emma Sebo & Annmarie Buckley, Women's Properties	
Rachel Laliberte, Historian	

Mark Konewko, PhD, Director

We are grateful to the pastor of the Church of Gesu, Rev. James Flaherty, S.J., Derrick Witherington, Director of Liturgy, Dean Rosko, Director of Music, and parish staff for allowing us to present this evening's concert. Thank you to Dr. Sebastian Lofts who assisted with the German pronunciation. Thank you to Dr. Erik Janners, Director of Music at Marquette University, for support and direction.