

# STAR IN THE EAST



**A CHICAGO CHAMBER  
CHOIR CHRISTMAS**

CHRISTOPHER WINDLE  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



THE MISSION OF THE CHICAGO CHAMBER CHOIR  
IS TO CREATE EXPERIENCES THAT ENGAGE OUR COMMUNITY  
IN HIGH-QUALITY CHORAL ART.

OUR VISION IS TO BE CHICAGO'S PREEMINENT  
AVOCATIONAL CHORAL ENSEMBLE THROUGH DIVERSE AND  
INNOVATIVE PROGRAMMING, EXCELLENCE IN ARTISTRY,  
AND COMMUNITY ENRICHMENT.

CHICAGO CHAMBER CHOIR

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What a strange concert season it has been. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to limit our ability to gather for rehearsals and concerts. What we thought would be a short few months in March has become a longer period of time than any of us originally imagined.

And yet, the Chicago Chamber Choir has continued to perform, support each other, and connect as a community. The choir has taken a remarkable leap of faith as we have continued to gather over Zoom for rehearsal. We have led the way in virtual choral programming and will continue to use choral art to connect us all – even when we are physically apart.

As the holidays approach, the necessary isolation and separation of this pandemic has become more painful and challenging. We are not able to gather with our friends and family in person, nor are we able to share meals with all those we love and cherish.

We offer *Star in the East* as a source of comfort, light, and warmth during this holiday season. Though we cannot gather for our traditional Christmas concerts, this album includes our favorite holiday performances from the past three years. Each performance has been selected to build a uniquely CCC concert program, taking us all on a journey through isolation to joy and warmth.

We hope that you enjoy this album and that you might send a few copies as gifts to loved ones near and far. We look forward to seeing you at our coming virtual programming, and cannot wait to sing for you in person soon!

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'C. Windle', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**CHRISTOPHER WINDLE**  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

## TRACKS

- 01 **Christ the Apple Tree** — Stanford Scriven
- 02 **Hodie Christus natus est** — Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck
- 03 **Star in the East** — from *The Southern Harmony*
- 04 **O Magnum Mysterium** — Tomás Luis de Victoria
- 05 **Bogoróditse Djévo** — Arvo Pärt
- First Snow** — Bo Holten
- 06 **Mvt 1. First Snow**
- 07 **Mvt 2. Hermit Peak**
- 08 **Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming** — Michael Praetorius & Jan Sandström
- 09 **O Radiant Dawn** — James MacMillan
- 10 **I wonder as I wander** — John Jacob Niles, arr. John Rutter
- 11 **The Fruit of Silence** — Pēteris Vasks
- 12 **In Dulci Jubilo** — Robert Lucas Pearsall
- 13 **My Lord Has Come** — Will Todd
- 14 **Alleluia** — Algirdas Martinaitis
- 15 **Christmas Spiritual Medley** — traditional spirituals, arr. Joseph Jennings

# PROGRAMME NOTES

I love watching the seasons change as December and the holidays approach. The changing leaves are followed by the first frost, and soon after, the first snow. These changes outdoors herald the arrival of Advent and then Christmas. The warmth, anticipation, and joy that permeate this time of year are inexorably linked to our experience of the changing seasons. What would a warm fire be, without the cold and wind outside? And yet, this season – the 2020 holiday season – is marked by loneliness and isolation for so many.

As we celebrate a holiday season like no other, we continue to revel in the joy of the warm fire and the love of family and friends, as we wait, hope, and seek something new.

Stanford Scriven's introspective setting of *Christ the Appletree* begins our journey. We begin in stillness, resting from our "former toil."

...

Before long, we break out in exuberant joy with Sweelinck's *Hodie Christus natus est* – singing finally "Glory to God in the highest!"

...

The traditional hymn from *The Southern Harmony* – "Star in the East" – looks ahead with hope and expectation. This anthem, the namesake of this album, is full of unbridled excitement and expectation.

...

Victoria's serene *O Magnum Mysterium* follows. This beloved gem of Renaissance polyphony offers a moment of peace and clarity. Yet, even here, a lilting triple section appears two-thirds of the way through, as the joy of the season breaks through.

...

The exuberance we find peeking through Victoria's motet is fully revealed in Arvo Pärt's *Bogoróditse Djévo*. This short work bursts forth from seemingly nowhere. The energy does not fade, but it is over before we know it.

...

*First Snow* acknowledges the dual nature of this season. This first movement revels in the falling snow, using a melodic line sung in canon to paint this serene picture. In the second movement we encounter the cold, desolate "Hermit Peak" – unyielding and isolated, a feeling we can all relate to in 2020.

...

Yet, no sooner than our arrival at the Hermit Peak, light breaks forth and "shines on those who dwell in darkness." MacMillan's *O Radiant Dawn* is a reminder that the hope and joy of the season will always bring warmth and beauty.

...

The gentle beauty of *I wonder as I wander* follows, leaving us with another moment of serenity.



Vasks's *The Fruit of Silence* continues this calm with the gentle, undulating piano brought to life by Talar Khosdeghian. And yet asks us all to consider how we might move in the world with joy and warmth, giving of ourselves in service to others.

...

The rollicking arrangement of *In Dulci Jubilo* by Pearsall announces the triumph of the season. It is followed immediately by *My Lord Has Come*, welcoming the season fully.

...

*Alleluia* is a mediation on our joy and excitement.

...

The *Christmas Spiritual Medley* closes our album and includes the spirituals "Rise Up Shepherd and Follow," "Behold that Star," "Sweet Little Jesus Boy," "What Month Was Jesus Born In," "Children Go Where I Send Thee," and "Go Tell it on the Mountain." We conclude with a call to go out into the world.

STAR IN THE EAST



# TEXTS

01

## **Christ the Appletree**

Stanford Scriven (b. 1988)

The tree of life my soul hath seen,  
laden with fruit and always green;  
the trees of nature fruitless be,  
compar'd with Christ the appletree.

This beauty doth all things excel,  
by faith I know, but ne'er can tell  
the glory which I now can see,  
in Jesus Christ the appletree.

For happiness I long have sought,  
and pleasure dearly I have bought;  
I miss'd of all, but now I see  
'tis found in Christ the appletree.

This fruit doth make my soul to thrive,  
it keeps my dying faith alive;  
which makes my soul in haste to be  
with Jesus Christ the appletree.

I'm weary'd with my former toil,  
here I will sit and rest awhile;  
under the shadow I will be,  
of Jesus Christ the appletree.

*attrib. Rev. Richard Hutchins (c.1700-1800)*



# 02

## Hodie Christus natus est

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562–1621)

**Hodie Christus natus est:**  
**Hodie Salvator apparuit:**  
**Hodie in terra canunt Angeli,**  
**laetantur Archangeli**  
**Hodie exsultant justi, dicentes:**  
**Gloria in excelsis Deo.**  
**Alleluia.**

Today Christ is born:  
Today the Savior appeared:  
Today on Earth the Angels sing,  
Archangels rejoice:  
Today the righteous rejoice, saying:  
Glory to God in the highest.  
Alleluia.

*Magnificat Antiphon for Vespers on  
Christmas Day trans. Allen Simon.*

# 03

## Star In the East

from *The Southern Harmony*

Hail the blest morn, see the great mediator  
Down from the regions of glory descend.  
Shepherds, go worship the babe in the manger,  
Lo! for his guard the bright angels attend.

*Refrain:*

Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,  
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thy aid.  
Star in the east, our horizon adorning,  
Guide where our infant redeemer was laid.

Cold on his cradle the dew drops are shining,  
Low lies his bed, with the beasts of the stall.  
Angels adore him, in slumber reclining,  
Wise men and shepherds before him do fall.

*Refrain*

Say, shall we yield him, in costly devotion,  
Odors of Eden and offerings divine,  
Gems from the mountain and pearls from the ocean,  
Myrrh from the forest and gold from the mine?

*Refrain*

Vainly we offer each ample oblation,  
Vainly with gifts we his favor secure;  
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,  
Nearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

*Refrain*

*Reginald Heber, 1783-1826*

# 04

## **O Magnum Mysterium**

Tomás Luis de Victoria (c. 1548–1611)

O magnum mysterium,  
et admirabile sacramentum,  
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum,  
iacentem in praesepio!  
Beata Virgo, cujus viscera  
meruerunt portare  
Dominum Iesum Christum.  
Alleluia!

O great mystery,  
and wonderful sacrament,  
that animals should see the new-born Lord,  
lying in a manger!  
Blessed is the Virgin whose womb  
was worthy to bear  
our Saviour, Jesus Christ.  
Alleluia!

*Responsorial from the Matins for Christmas*

# 05

## **Bogoróditse Djévo**

Arvo Pärt (b. 1935)

Bogoroditse Devo, raduisya,  
Blagodatnaya Mariye,  
Gospod s Toboyu.  
Blagoslovenna Ty v zhenakh,  
i blagosloven plod chreva Tvoyego,  
yako Spasa rodila esi dush nashikh.

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos,  
Mary full of grace,  
the Lord is with Thee.  
Blessed art Thou among women,  
and blessed is the fruit of Thy womb,  
for Thou hast borne the Savior of our souls.

*Luke 1:28, 42*

06-07

## First Snow (Fyrsti snjor)

Bo Holten (b. 1948)

06

### Fyrsti snjor

You lucid, lustrous, tender snow,  
who paint the landscape all one shade,  
the living, dead, ugly, fair,  
you colour all things equal – white.

You fled your mother's warm arms,  
into the air as blue mist:  
turned home again one blizzard night,  
so pure, but grim and cold.

07

### Fjallið Einbúi

Hermit soars so far above the low  
that heather rags stare at him stunned  
and the copsewood is giddy climbing so high  
and crag blossoms lose their foothold.

Though the squall must biting blast his peak  
so naked, he nowhere yields.

He stands like the holy image of health  
and honesty, axed in granite.

*Stephan G. Stephansson (1853–1927)*

*trans. Kristjana Gunnars (© Red Deer College Press Ltd).*

08

## Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Michael Praetorius (1571–1621)  
& Jan Sändstrom (b. 1954)

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming  
from tender stem hath sprung!  
Of Jesse's lineage coming,  
as men of old have sung.  
It came, a flower bright,  
amid the cold of winter,  
when half spent was the night.

*16th century German carol, trans. Theodore Baker*

09

## O Radiant Dawn

James MacMillan (b. 1959)

O radiant dawn, splendour of eternal Light,  
Sun of Justice: come, shine on those who dwell  
in darkness and the shadow of death.  
Isaiah had prophesied, 'The people who walked  
in darkness have seen a great light; upon those  
who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone'.  
Amen.

*Antiphon for 21 December*

10

## I wonder as I wander

John Jacob Niles (1892–1980),  
arr. John Rutter

I wonder as I wander out under the sky,  
How Jesus the Saviour did come for to die.  
For poor ornery people like you and like I:  
I wonder as I wander, out under the sky.

When Mary birthed Jesus, 'twas in a cow's stall,  
With wise men and farmers and shepherds and all.  
But high from God's heaven a star's light did fall,  
And the promise of ages it then did recall.

If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing:  
A star in the sky, or a bird on the wing;  
Or all of God's angels in heav'n to sing,  
He surely could have had it, 'cause he was the King!

*Appalachian Carol*

11

## The Fruit of Silence

Pēteris Vasks (b. 1946)

Talar Khosdeghian, piano

The fruit of silence is prayer, the fruit of prayer is faith, the fruit of faith is love, the fruit of love is service and the fruit of service is peace.

*Mother Teresa (1910-1997)*

12

## In dulci jubilo

Bo Holten (b. 1948)

In dulci jubilo  
Let us our homage shew  
Our heart's joy reclineth  
In praesepio,  
And like a bright star shineth  
Matris in gremio.  
Alpha es et O!

O Jesu, parvule,  
My heart is sore for Thee!  
Hear me, I beseech Thee,  
O puer optime,  
My prayer let it reach Thee,  
O princeps gloriae.  
Trahe me post te!

O Patris caritas!  
O Nati lenitas!  
Deep were we stainèd  
Per nostra crimina;  
But Thou hast for us gainèd  
Coelorum gaudia.  
O that we were there!

Ubi sunt gaudia  
If that they be not there?  
There are angels singing  
Nova cantica  
There the bells are ringing  
In regis curia.  
O that we were there!

In sweetest jubilation

In a manger

On his mother's lap.  
Thou art Alpha and Omega!

O tiny Jesus,

O best of boys,

O prince of glory.  
Draw me after Thee!

O love of the Father!  
O gentleness of the Son!

Through our sins;

The joy of heaven.

Where are joys

New songs

In the king's court.

*14th-century German-Latin carol  
trans. Robert Lucas Pearsall*

13

## **My Lord Has Come**

Will Todd (b. 1970)

Shepherds, called by angels, called by love and angels;  
No place for them but a stable.  
My Lord has come.

Sages, searching for stars, searching for love in heaven;  
No place for them but a stable.  
My Lord has come.

His love will hold me, his love will cherish me, love will cradle me.

Lead me, lead me to see him, sages and shepherds and angels;  
No place for me but a stable.  
My Lord has come.

*Will Todd (b. 1970)*

14

## **Alleluia**

Algirdas Martinaitis (b. 1950)



# 15

## Christmas Spiritual Medley

traditional spirituals, arr. Joseph Jennings  
Carl Alexander, countertenor

There's a star in the east on Christmas morn.  
Rise up shepherd and follow.

It'll lead to the place where the Savior's born.  
Rise up shepherd and follow.

Leave your sheep and leave your lambs.  
Rise up shepherd and follow.

Leave your ewes and leave your rams.  
Rise up shepherd and follow.

There was no room found in the inn.  
It is the star of Bethlehem.

For Him who was born free from sin.  
It is the star of Bethlehem.

Behold that star up yonder.  
It is the star of Bethlehem.

Sweet little Jesus boy.  
They made you be born in a manger.

Sweet little holy child.  
Didn't know who you was.

It was poor little Jesus.  
Born on a Christmas.  
Laid in a manger.  
I ask you wasn't that a pity and a shame.

What month was my Jesus born in?  
Last month of the year!

Now was it January?  
No! No!

February?  
No! No!

March, April, May?  
No! No!

June, July, August, September, October, November,  
But the Twenty-fifth day of December,  
Well, the last month of the year.

Children go where I send thee.  
How shall I send thee?

One for the little bitty baby,  
Born of the Virgin Mary,  
Wrapped in swaddlin' clothin'  
Layin' in a manger.  
Born in Bethlehem.

Go, tell it on the mountain.  
Over the hills, and ev'rywhere,  
Go, tell it on the mountain,  
That Jesus Christ is born.



# ARTISTS

Dec. 2017:

*Seek*

- 01 **Christ the Apple Tree**
- 04 **O Magnum Mysterium**
- 08 **Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming**
- 12 **In Dulci Jubilo**
- 13 **My Lord Has Come**
- 14 **Alleluia**

**SOPRANO:** Marion Amling, Paula Castaños<sup>+</sup>, Jamie Christian<sup>+</sup>, Nikki Gamble, Lauren Haines, Amy Keipert\*, Genevieve Klein, Cate Schmittle, Erin Setchell, Erika Brown Thomas, Erin Thor

**ALTO:** Monica Blacconeri<sup>+</sup>, Amy Butterer, Megan Drucek, Alicia Fuller\*, Margaret Jungels, Katie Koll, Dominique Martin, Maureen McPherson<sup>+</sup>, Rachel Murray, Liz Powers, Kelsey Schauer<sup>^</sup>, Andrea Shoffstall

**TENOR:** Frank Blackman, Cameron Carrara, Lee Cravens, Eddie Cuevas Jr.<sup>+</sup>, Robert Duggan, Caleb Faille\*\*<sup>+</sup>, Tim Koll, William Meek, Jack Rutter

**BASS:** Conor Broaders<sup>+</sup>, James Cahill, Bill Fortune\*, Daniel Hammond, John Jung, John Ley, Jeremy Murray, Ryan Paroline, Ben Roth, Trent Stewart, Justin Tuffy

<sup>+</sup> solo ensemble in *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*

<sup>^</sup> soloist for *Alleluia*

Dec. 2018:

*First Snow*

- 02 **Hodie Christus natus est**
- 03 **Star in the East**
- 05 **Bogoróditse Djévo**
- 06/7 **First Snow**
- 09 **O Radiant Dawn**
- 10 **I wonder as I wander**

**SOPRANO:** Marion Amling, Erica Beall, Paula Castaños<sup>+</sup>, Jamie Christian, Nikki Gamble, Amy Keipert\*, Genevieve Klein, Kari Nelson, Kathleen Schiffer, Cate Schmittle, Erin Thor

**ALTO:** Monica Blacconeri, Amy Butterer, Megan Drucek, Alicia Fuller, Dominique Martin, Cate Mascari, Maureen McPherson, Rachel Murray\*, Liz Powers, Veronica Raufer, Melissa Rose, Kelsey Schauer

**TENOR:** Frank Blackman, Cameron Carrara\*, Alex Concordia, Lee Cravens, Eddie Cuevas Jr., Robert Duggan, Brian Lee, Cliff McReynolds, William Meek, William Pearse, Jack Rutter, Casey Williams

**BASS:** Dan Acheson, Zach Bird, James Cahill, Bill Fortune\*, Joshua Green, Daniel Hammond, Nathaniel Hendrix, John Jung, Jeremy Murray, Ryan Paroline, Ben Roth, Trent Stewart, Justin Tuffy

<sup>+</sup> soloist for *I wonder as I wander*

Dec. 2019:

*Ring Out, Wild Bells*

**Feat. Carl Alexander, countertenor, & Talar Khosdeghian, piano**

11 **The Fruit of Silence**

15 **Christmas Spiritual Medley**

**SOPRANO:** Marion Amling, Erica Beall, Paula Castaños<sup>+</sup>, Nikki Gamble, Amy Keipert\*, Genevieve Klein, Kari Nelson<sup>+</sup>, Jamie Prather, Caroline Prescott, Kathleen Schiffer, Cate Schmittle, Erin Thor<sup>+</sup>

**ALTO:** Monica Blacconeri, Amy Butterer, Megan Drueck, Cindy Hodakoski, Robyn Lustbader<sup>+</sup>, Dominique Martin, Cate Mascari\*, Maureen McPherson, Danielle Pacelli, Liz Powers, Laurel Proctor, Arleigh Truesdale

**TENOR:** Cameron Carrara\*, Lee Cravens, Eddie Cuevas Jr., Robert Duggan, Jim McGuire, William Meek, Nathan Metzger, William Pearse, Jordan Rudman, Jack Rutter, Casey Williams

**BASS:** Dan Acheson, Zach Bird, James Cahill, Bill Fortune, Daniel Hammond, Nathaniel Hendrix\*, Kingsley Householder, John Jung, Ryan Paroline, Ben Roth, Trent Stewart, Justin Tuffy

<sup>+</sup> soloists for *Christmas Spiritual Medley*

\*Section Leader

**TALAR  
KHOSDEGHIAN**

Pianist Talar Khosdeghian is an active collaborator and educator in the Chicago area. She holds a Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance and a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature from Northwestern University. In addition to working as an accompanist at New Trier High School, Talar is also the Music Director of CHAI Collaborative Ensemble and the accompanist for Youth Chorus of the North Shore. She maintains a private studio and concertizes on a regular basis in and around Chicago. She has performed as both a soloist and a collaborator in festivals around the world, which works quite well, since she has a love of travel and will take any opportunity to hop on a plane and go somewhere new. When she isn't at the piano, she sings with Coriolis, a classical a cappella group based in Evanston; she also enjoys painting, running, swimming, and the great outdoors.

**CARL  
ALEXANDER**

Hailed by The Harlem World as “exceptional...[with] a beautiful and powerful voice,” Carl Alexander is a budding American countertenor known for his captivating performances which incorporate contemporary literature and gems of the past.

A graduate of Morehouse College, he was featured frequently as a soloist with the Morehouse College Glee Club and as a member of the Morehouse Quartet. He received his Master's degree in Voice and Opera Performance from Northwestern University, and is studying with W. Stephen Smith.

Alexander looks forward to performances this season of Durufle's Requiem, Talbot's Pathway of Miracles and holiday features with the Chicago Chamber Choir and Champaign - Urbana Symphony Orchestra.



## OUR TEAM

### ARTISTIC + ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

**Christopher Windle** / *Artistic Director*

**Amy Keipert** / *Associate Conductor*

**Talar Khosdeghian** / *Principal Accompanist*

**Ronia Holmes** / *General Manager*

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**Carl Alexander** / *Photography*

**Zachary Bird** / *Graphic Artist*

**Gary Cobb** / *Remastering, ARS Recording Studios*

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**Robyn Lustbader** / *Social Media Assistant*

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