



2022-23 Hal & Jeanette Segerstrom
Family Foundation Classical Series

CATHEDRALS OF SOUND

Thursday, June 15 @ 8 p.m.

Friday, June 16 @ 8 p.m.

Saturday, June 17 @ 8 p.m

Carl St.Clair, conductor

Robert Istad, Pacific Chorale artistic director,
conductor

Elissa Johnston, soprano

Christopher Maltman, baritone
Pacific Chorale

Pacific Symphony

The world premiere performances and commissioning of Sir James MacMillan's *Fiat Lux* were made possible by a generous grant from Howard and Roberta Ahmanson, Fieldstead and Company and the National Endowment for the Arts.



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**This concert is being recorded for broadcast on
August 13, 2023 on Classical California KUSC.**

*Performance at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall & Lobby*

PROGRAM

ALLEGRI

Miserere mei, Deus
Pacific Chorale
Robert Istad, conductor

STRAUSS

Death and Transfiguration, Op. 24

-INTERMISSION-

JAMES MACMILLAN

Fiat Lux

World Premiere

I - In the Beginning

II - Chorus

III - Litany of Light

IV - Light of the World

V - Hymn: Cathedral of Light

Elissa Johnston

Christopher Maltman

Pacific Chorale

ABOUT THE CONDUCTOR



Robert Istad, a GRAMMY® Award-winning conductor who “fashions fluent and sumptuous readings” (*Voice of OC*) with his “phenomenal” artistry (*Los Angeles Times*), was appointed Pacific Chorale’s Artistic Director in 2017. Under his leadership, the

chorus continues to expand its reputation for excellence for delivering fresh, thought-provoking interpretations of beloved masterworks, rarely performed gems, and newly commissioned pieces. His artistic impact can be heard on two recent recordings featuring Pacific Chorale, including the 2020 GRAMMY® Award-winning Mahler’s Eighth Symphony with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Gustavo Dudamel on Deutsche Grammophon (2021), for which he prepared the chorus. It won Best Choral Performance and also garnered a GRAMMY® nomination for Best Engineered Album, Classical. Additionally, Istad conducted the Pacific Chorale’s recording *All Things Common: The Music of Tarik O’Regan* released on Yarlung Records (2020).

Istad has prepared choruses for such renowned conductors as Esa-Pekka Salonen, John Williams, John Mauceri, Keith Lockhart, Nicholas McGegan, Vasily Sinaisky, Sir Andrew Davis, Bramwell Tovey, Carl St.Clair, Eugene Kohn, Giancarlo Guerrero, Marin Alsop, George Fenton, and Robert Moody. He regularly conducts and collaborates with Pacific Symphony, Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra, Sony Classical Records, Yarlung

Records, Berkshire Choral International, and Long Beach Symphony Orchestra. An esteemed educator, Istad is Professor of Music and Director of Choral Studies at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF), where he was recognized as CSUF's 2016 Outstanding Professor of the Year. He conducts the University Singers and manages a large graduate conducting program in addition to teaching courses on conducting and performance practice. Istad, who is on the Executive Board of Directors of Chorus America and serves as Dean of Chorus America's Conducting Academy, is in demand as guest conductor, lecturer, and clinician.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Recently cited by the *Chicago Tribune* for the "exquisite beauty, sensitivity and precision" of her singing, soprano Elissa Johnston enjoys performing repertoire ranging from Bach, Handel, and Mozart to Messiaen, Carter, Ung, and Lachenmann.

This season, Johnston will appear with the Long Beach Symphony in Mozart's *Requiem* under conductor Robert Istad, with the Los Angeles Master Chorale in Stravinsky's *Les Noces*, and in recital with Le Salon de Musiques in songs of Samuel Barber. She will also be a part of the new Peter Sellars staging of the *Lagrime di San Pietro* by Orlando di Lasso with the Los Angeles Master Chorale. She also sang Barber's *Knoxville, Summer of 1915* with Orchestra Santa Monica under conductor Allen Gross.

Johnston returned to the chamber music series Le Salon de la Musiques to sing Strauss' *Four Last Songs* with pianist Robert Thies, and appeared as soloist with the Los Angeles Master Chorale in performances of Handel's *Alexander's Feast*, under conductor Grant Gershon. Last summer, she performed in the West Coast premiere of Elliott Carter's *What Are Years* under conductor Jeff von der Schmidt at Southwest Chamber Music's L.A. International New Music Festival at Walt Disney Hall's REDCAT theater. With Southwest Chamber Music, she has also performed the world premiere of *Some Things Do Not Move* by Ann LeBaron, Unsuk Chin's *Akrostichon Wortspiel*, Ravel's *Trois Poemes de St phane Mallarm*, as well as the world premiere of Chinary Ung's *Aura*, also under conductor Jeff von der Schmidt.

Johnston has sung Messiaen's epic song cycle *Harawi* with pianist Vicki Ray at both Jacaranda Music and Pianospheres, and will return to Pianospheres with Ray this season for the world premiere of Vicki Ray's song cycle "The Elements." Johnston has recorded Chinary Ung's *Aura* with Southwest Chamber Music and toured with the ensemble in Vietnam and Cambodia, and can

be heard on dozens of film soundtracks. She is featured in Danny Elfman's *Serenada Schizophrana*, which was released on the Sony Classical label.



Christopher Maltman read biochemistry at Warwick University before studying singing at the Royal Academy of Music. He is a world-

renowned Don Giovanni and has sung the role at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; the Salzburg Festival; the Deutsche Staatsoper, Berlin; Bayerische

Staatsoper, Munich; Oper Köln; Dutch National Opera; the Theatre du Capitole de Toulouse, the Ravinia Festival, San Sebastian Festival, the Edinburgh International Festival, Mostly Mozart New York, and in Beijing. He also starred in Kaspar Holten's film, *Juan*. Now, increasingly in demand for Verdi roles, he has sung *Posa/Don Carlo*, Simon Boccanegra/*Falstaff*, Conte di Luna/*Il Trovatore*, Guy de Montfort/*Les Vêpres siciliennes*, and most recently, Don Carlo di Vargas/*La forza del destino* at the Royal Opera House and Oper Frankfurt, and *Rigoletto* in Vienna, Berlin, and Frankfurt. He will soon add to his repertoire the title role of *Falstaff*.

A favorite at the Royal Opera House, his roles have included Papageno/*Die Zauberflöte*, Guglielmo/*Così fan tutte*, Forester/*The Cunning Little Vixen*, Marcello/*La Bohème*, Ramiro/*L'Heure Espagnole*, Lescaut/*Manon Lescaut* and Conte di Luna/*Il Trovatore* and Enrico/*Lucia di Lammermoor*. At the Glyndebourne Festival, he has sung Papageno/*Die Zauberflöte*, Figaro/*Le Nozze di Figaro*, and Sid/*Albert Herring*. A regular guest at the Bayerische Staatsoper, he has sung Tarquinius/*The Rape of Lucretia*, Alfonso/*Così*, Marcello, Vitellozzo Tamare/*Die Gezeichneten*, and Albert/*Werther*. Following his debut at the Wiener Staatsoper in 2011 as Šiškov/*From the House of the Dead*, he has returned to sing *Eugene Onegin*, Figaro/*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Prospero/*The Tempest*, Mandryka/*Arabella*, and Ford/*Falstaff*.

Elsewhere in Europe, he has sung Il Conte/*Le Nozze* at the Opéra National de Paris and in Zurich; Figaro/*Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at the Deutsche Staatsoper, Berlin; Marcello/*La Bohème* at the Liceu, Barcelona; Oreste/*Iphigénie en Tauride* at the Salzburg Easter Festival, Wozzeck at Netherlands Opera and the title role of Birtwistle's *Gawain* at the Salzburg Festival, where he recently returned in the 2018-19 season to great success for *Oedipe*. An acclaimed Billy Budd, he has sung the role at the Welsh National Opera and in Turin, Seattle, Munich, and Frankfurt.

In the U.S., he has appeared at the Metropolitan Opera, New York as Rossini's Figaro, Papageno, Harlekin/*Ariadne auf Naxos* and Silvio/*I Pagliacci*, Lescaut, Alfonso, and as Mark Rutland in Nico Muhly's *Marnie*; in San Francisco as

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Papageno; in Seattle as Guglielmo; in San Diego as Figaro, Laurent/*Therese Raquin* by Tobias Picker, in Los Angeles as Beaumarchais/*The Ghost of Versailles* (2017 Best Opera GRAMMY® Award), as Alfo/*Cavalleria rusticana*, and as Tonio/*Pagliacci* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Gustavo Dudamel.

His concert engagements have included the Chicago Symphony Orchestra/James Conlon at the Ravinia Festival, Cleveland Orchestra/Franz Welser-Möst, Philharmonia Orchestra/Christoph von Dohnanyi, BBC Symphony Orchestra/John Adams, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment/Sir Roger Norrington, London Symphony Orchestra/Sir Simon Rattle, Tadaaki Otaka, Valery Gergiev and Sir Colin Davis, Concentus Musicus Wien/Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Orchestra Filarmonica della Scala/Daniel Harding, Dresden Staatskapelle/Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Boston Symphony/James Conlon and Sir Colin Davis, Los Angeles Philharmonic/ Esa-Pekka Salonen, and the New York Philharmonic/Kurt Masur.

The 2019-20 season included appearances as Rigoletto at the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin and Opera Frankfurt, a role debut as Jochanaan in a new production of *Salome* also at Oper Frankfurt, *Ford/Falstaff* at Hamburgische Staatsoper, and gala concerts with Anna Netrebko and Yusif Eyvazov.

Having won the Lieder Prize at the Cardiff Singer of the World competition early in his career, he remains a committed recitalist and has appeared at the Vienna Konzerthaus; Amsterdam Concertgebouw; Salzburg Mozarteum; Alte Oper in Frankfurt; Philharmonie in Cologne, La Scala, Milan; in New York at both Carnegie Hall and at the Lincoln Center; and at the Aldeburgh, Edinburgh, Cheltenham, and the Schwarzenberg Schubertiade Festivals. He is a regular guest at London's Wigmore Hall.

ABOUT PACIFIC CHORALE

The GRAMMY® Award-winning Pacific Chorale, an Orange County “treasure” with a “fresh viewpoint” that “can sing anything you put in front of it, with polish, poise and tonal splendor” (*Orange County Register*) has “risen to national prominence” (*Los Angeles Times*) since its inception in 1968. Hailed for delivering “thrilling entertainment” (*Voice of OC*), the resident choir at Segerstrom Center for the Arts is noted for its artistic innovation and commitment to expanding the choral repertoire. It has given the world, U.S., and West Coast premieres of more than 35 works, including numerous commissions, by such lauded composers as John Adams, Jake Heggie, James Hopkins, David Lang, Morten Lauridsen, Tarik O'Regan, Karen Thomas, Frank Ticheli, András Gábor Virág, and Eric Whitacre. Among other artistic highlights, Pacific Chorale's *The Wayfaring Project*, a stunning original concert film conceived and conducted by Robert Istad and produced during the pandemic, was picked up by PBS SoCal and KCET and will be streamed through Dec. 1, 2024 on pbsocal.org, kcet.org and the PBS app, reaching audiences across the Southland and around the globe.

In addition to presenting its own concert series each season, Pacific Chorale enjoys a long-standing partnership with Pacific Symphony, with whom the choir made its highly anticipated Carnegie Hall debut in 2018. The chorus also regularly appears with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, with which it won the 2022 GRAMMY® Award for Best Choral Performance as well as a GRAMMY® nomination for Best Engineered Album, Classical, for its contribution to the live classical recording of *Mahler: Symphony No. 8, 'Symphony of A Thousand,'* conducted

by Gustavo Dudamel, featuring Leah Crocetto, Mihoko Fujimura, Ryan McKinny, Erin Morley, Tamara Mumford, Simon O'Neill, Morris Robinson, and Tamara Wilson; Los Angeles Philharmonic; Los Angeles Children's Chorus, Los Angeles Master Chorale, National Children's Chorus, and Pacific Chorale. The choir has performed with such leading orchestras as the Boston Symphony, National Symphony, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, San Diego Symphony, and Musica Angelica, among others.

Pacific Chorale has garnered international acclaim as well, having toured extensively to more than 19 countries in Europe, South America, and Asia, and through collaborations with the London Symphony, Munich Symphony, L'Orchestre Lamoureux, and L'Orchestre de St-Louis-en-Île of Paris, National Orchestra of Belgium, China National Symphony, Hong Kong Sinfonietta, Estonian National Symphony, and Orquesta Sinfonica Nacional of Argentina, among others.

Deeply committed to making choral music accessible to people of all ages, the organization, which has a discography of 14 self-produced recordings and an extensive collection of exceptional free digital offerings, places a significant emphasis on choral music education, providing after-school vocal programs for elementary school students, a choral summer camp for high school students, and an annual community-wide singing event at Segerstrom Center for the Arts. **PacificChorale.org**

Pacific Chorale

Robert Istad • Artistic Director & Conductor

Phillip N. and Mary A. Lyons Artistic Director Chair

Kibsaim Escarcega • Assistant Conductor

Andrew Brown • President & CEO

SOPRANO

Rebecca Hasquet*
Section Leader
Lauren Adaska*
Alexandria Burdick*
Andria Nuñez Cabrera
Chelsea Chaves*
Katy Compton*
Karla V. Delgado
Ayanna Delk-Lewis*
Sophia Do
Diana Farrell*
Saousan Jarjour
Barbara Kingsbury
Rita Major Memorial Chair
Susan M. Lindley
Rose Lodewick
Anne McClintic
Maria Cristina Navarro*
Hien Nguyen
Deborah Pasarow
Jessica Pettygrove
Libby Quam
Elizabeth Sanders
Sarah Sweerman
Rosaleigh Taylor
Rachel Van Skike
Ruthanne Walker Rice
Linda Wells Sholik
Anne Williams
Victoria Wu

ALTO

Jane Hyun-Jung Shim*
Section Leader
Emily Border*
Anna Caplan
Kathryn Cobb-Woll
Denean R. Dyson*
Harriet Edwards
Jacline Evered
I-Chin Betty Feinblatt*
Marilyn Forsstrom
Mary Galloway
Kathryn D. Gibson
Erin Girard
Kathleen
Thomsen Gremillion*
Sandy Grim
Brandon Harris
Anne Henley
Allison Hieger
Eleen Hsu-Wentlandt*
Bonita Jaros
Michele M. Mulidor
Pat Newton
Kathleen Preston
Bonnie Pridonoff
Suzanne Rahn
Lauren Shafer
Stephanie Shepson*
Sammy Yonjai Sohn
Emily Weinberg*

TENOR

Nicholas Preston*
*Section Leader, Roger W.
Johnson Memorial Chair*
Jephte Acosta
Mike Andrews
Michael Ben-Yehuda
Chris Buttars
Craig Davis
Marius Evangelista
David Evered
Jason Francisco*
Alan Garcia*
Vincent Hans
Dan Haub
Steven M. Hoffman
Brian P. Katz
Craig S. Kistler
Christopher Lindley
Zachary Lindquist*
Benjamin Lopez
David López Alemán
Ricardo Martinez*
Gerald McMillan
David Melendez*
Jesse Newby
Carl Porter
Singers Memorial Chair
Rohan Ramanan
Sammy Salvador*
Jeff Wang
W. Faulkner White
Yngwie Slassh Zamarippa*

BASS

Ryan Thomas Antal*
*Section Leader, Ron Gray
Legacy Chair*
Kyle Boshardy
Robert David Breton
James Brown
Michael Fagerstedt*
Louis Ferland
Karl Forsstrom
Singers Memorial Chair
Carlos Franquez
Larry Gates
Tom Henley
Jens Hurty*
Jared Daniel Jones*
Matthew Kellaway*
Jonathan Krauss
Tom Mena
Martin Minnich
Kenneth Moore
Fernando Muñoz*
Jason Pano*
Seth Peelle
Ryan Ratcliff
George Reiss
Antone Rodich
Malek Sammour*
Haocheng Sun

* *Allegri Miserere mei, Deus* performer

PROGRAM NOTES

Gregorio Allegri

Miserere mei, Deus

Born: 1582 in Rome, Italy

Died: 1652 in Rome, Italy

Composed: Approximately 1638 for the Sistine Chapel and was likely performed during Holy Week

Most recent Pacific Symphony performance: This is a Pacific Symphony premiere

Instrumentation: Pacific Chorale

Estimated duration: Approximately 6 minutes

Gregorio Allegri had a full life and career in the Roman Catholic church as a priest, choral singer, and composer. Yet he is known for a single work that is as haunting as it is brief: his *Miserere mei, Deus*, a setting of Psalm 51 (Vulgate Psalm 50) that has inspired and fascinated listeners for almost four centuries.

Born in Rome circa 1582, Allegri was educated for his religious vocation from an early age, first as a boy chorister at the church of San Luigi dei Francesi, then as a composer at the cathedral of Fermo in the Marche region of Italy. He continued to sing while composing prolifically, producing two volumes of concertos for five voices, two volumes of motets for six voices, five masses, and much more. His diligence and productivity won the approval of Pope Urban VIII, and he was brought to the Vatican in 1629 to assume a coveted appointment in the contralto section of the Sistine Chapel choir.

Composed in a style known as *falsobordone* combining two choirs in alternation—one singing in a pure line rooted in plainsong chant, the other singing an austere ornamented line—the *Miserere* conveys the essence of late Renaissance beauty and piety, echoing with suggestions of Gabrieli and Palestrina. It has been a staple of Holy Week observances at the Vatican since it was composed circa 1638. And over the years, a mystique has grown up around it that has given its beauty the savor of forbidden fruit—most particularly a lone high C sung by a single chorister in some performing editions.

The mystique arose because Pope Urban VIII was supposedly so taken with the *Miserere* that he forbade copies to be made or transported outside the Vatican on pain of excommunication—until, supposedly, the 14-year-old Mozart heard it on his 1770 tour of Italy and transcribed it from memory later. His transcription was thought to be the basis of a performing edition of Charles Burney that spurred other performing editions in England. As for that storied high C—a moment that thrills many choral enthusiasts—it is the result of a transcription error, a “trucker’s gear change” that transposed the second half of a verse up from G minor to C minor, creating a dramatic musical climax that Allegri himself never heard.

There’s no convincing evidence of the papal



prohibition, the Mozart transcription, or the “authenticity” of any one of a number of later, ornamented versions of this beautiful *Miserere*. But scholar and conductor Ben Byram-Wigfield, who has produced authoritative performing editions of the *Miserere*, takes a pragmatic view of them all. “Although rumours of the work’s inauthenticity abound,” he writes, “very few people have heard the work performed differently [than spurious popular editions], and even fewer will be so bold as to suggest exactly what a replacement should be. That having been said, many people will prefer the ‘Top C’ version, and not care whether it is authentic or not.”

Richard Strauss

Death and Transfiguration

Born: 1864 in Munich, Germany

Died: 1949 in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany

Composed: 1888-1889

Premiered: June 21, 1890, in Eisenach, Germany, with Strauss conducting.

Most recent Pacific Symphony performance: May 6, 1999 in Segerstrom Hall with Carl St.Clair conducting



Instrumentation: three flutes, three oboes including English horn, three clarinets including bass clarinet, three bassoons including contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, one tuba, timpani, percussion, two harps, and strings

Estimated duration: Approximately 23 minutes

Richard Strauss ended his career as a composer of operas and art songs, and that is how most musicologists categorize him. But he began his career as a pianist, conductor, and composer of tone poems like *Death and Transfiguration* that demonstrated his supreme mastery of orchestral color and post-Wagnerian harmonics. Wagner, who had died only five years before Strauss began composing *Death and Transfiguration*, was one of Strauss’ chief influences even though his father, himself a famous musician, had walled Wagner’s music off from his son’s professional education.

Before he turned to opera, Strauss’ most significant compositions were his dazzling tone poems. They are symphonic in scope and call for large, virtuosic orchestras, but rely on Strauss’ gift for narrative line and dramatic specificity rather than the strict architecture of the symphony. He was still in his mid-20s when he composed *Death and Transfiguration* (mainly in 1888). And though it was a self-consciously and ambitiously profound musical utterance—and an odd subject for so young an artist—it succeeds on its own terms. This was no overreach, but rather a thoughtful work by a young composer who

PROGRAM NOTES

was cultivating his own greatness at a time when late Romanticism was transitioning to Modernism. Six decades later, in his old age, Strauss remarked that dying was just as he had described it in *Death and Transfiguration*.

Death and Transfiguration began Strauss' run of deeply philosophical tone poems that grapple with serious, abstract ideas by way of narrative. Strauss turned to a friend, the poet Alexander Ritter, to depict the work's story line in words; basically, it traces the thoughts of a dying artist (one way or another, Strauss generally placed his own life at the center of his tone poems) as he reconsiders the significant events of his life. These span the playful innocence of childhood, the bloom of romance, the struggles and achievements of maturity, the confrontation with mortality, and transfiguration in the face of death. In his own commentary, Strauss noted that, "it occurred to me to present in the form of a tone poem the dying hours of a man who had striven towards the highest idealistic aims, maybe indeed those of an artist."

A precis of the tone poem's narrative line sounds awfully grim, but the music is gripping; it glows with the light of remembrance, and ends in a blaze of glory. First, in a slow, frail introduction, we hear the moribund artist's weakness and irregular respiration; then come recollections that bring a smile to his face and to ours. Youthful vigor and a variety of experiences return to mind, and eventually the pain of mortal illness gives rise to transfiguration. The effect has been described as cinematic, and it certainly bears comparison to films such as Ingmar Bergman's *Wild Strawberries*. It is also interesting to consider how Strauss' youthful ease with this subject matter contrasts with the struggles of his friend and colleague Gustav Mahler, who confronted the same subject in his symphonies.

Strauss composed *Death and Transfiguration* with a view toward the future of classical music as an art form as well as the future of the human soul after life on earth. So was he a Romantic or a Modernist? Both. To his contemporary listeners, Strauss represented a new generation. His harmonies were complex and challenging, and his orchestrations made unprecedented demands. He lived almost to the midpoint of the 20th Century. Yet, he was born into the Romantic tradition and was schooled in its ways. Many of his compositions have gained popularity and a place in the standard repertory. Though they were once condemned as too modern and noisy, we can now relax and enjoy them for their narrative vividness, rich harmonies and imaginative orchestral effects. Strauss has taught us how to hear them.

Sir James MacMillan

Fiat Lux World Premiere

Composed by: Sir James MacMillan.

Libretto by Dana Gioia

Born: July 16 1959 in Kilwinning, Scotland

Composed: 2019-20

Commissioned through a generous grant from Howard and Roberta Ahmanson

Premiered: This is a World Premiere by Pacific Symphony

Instrumentation: three flutes including piccolo, three oboes including English horn, three clarinets including bass clarinet, three bassoons including contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, one tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, celesta, organ, and strings and solo soprano; solo baritone, and mixed chorus

Estimated duration: Approximately 30 minutes

Sir James MacMillan is acknowledged as the pre-eminent Scottish composer of his generation. (Judith Weir was born in Cambridge, England to Scottish parents.) Educated at Edinburgh University and at Durham University, where he took doctoral studies in composition with John Casken, MacMillan was a lecturer at Manchester University before returning to Scotland, settling in Glasgow.

MacMillan first attracted attention with the acclaimed BBC Proms premiere of *The Confession of Isobel Gowdie* (1990). His percussion concerto *Veni, Veni Emmanuel* (1992) has received over 500 performances worldwide by orchestras including London Symphony Orchestra, New York and Los Angeles Philharmonics, and the Cleveland Orchestra. Other major works include the cantata *Seven Last Words from the Cross* (1993), *Quickening* (1998) for soloists, children's choir, mixed choir and orchestra, the operas *Inès de Castro* (2001) *The Sacrifice* (2005-06), *St John Passion* (2007), *St. Luke Passion* (2013), and *Symphony No.5: 'Le grand Inconnu'* (2018).

MacMillan's premieres have garnered rapturous praise in the U.K. and elsewhere. A critic in Scotland's *Herald* newspaper observed, "How do we characterise the phenomenal concert given on Saturday night by the BBC SSO, with a string of premieres, all conducted by the man [MacMillan] himself? The night featured music that was beguiling, intriguing, poignant, hilarious, electrifyingly exciting, challenging and...comprehensively revelatory."



Michael Clive is a cultural reporter living in the Litchfield Hills of Connecticut. He is program annotator for Pacific Symphony and has written numerous articles for magazines and newspapers in the U.S. and U.K. and hundreds of program notes for orchestras and opera companies. Operahound.com

Fiat Lux

Text by Dana Gioia

I. IN THE BEGINNING (Double Chant: Call and Response)

Baritone

In principio ...
creavit Deus ...
caelum et terram ...
terra autem erat inanis et vacua ...
et tenebrae ...
errant super faciem abyssi.
Dixitque Deus ...

(Together)

And God said ...

II. CHORUS (Canon or Fugue)

Fiat Lux.
Et facta est lux.

III. LITANY OF LIGHT

Soprano

Praise be to light—
Of all God's gifts the first,
The word spoken
From which the world was made.

Chorus

Let there be light,
In each morning's new splendor,
In the signature of stars.

Let there be light,
In the white blaze of noon,
In the quiet phases of the moon.

Let there be light,
In the radiance of August sky,
In the bright globe of the human eye.

Let there be light,
In the rushing wind that came,
Swift with its pentecostal flame.

Let there be light,
In the gathered prayer of a joyful choir,
In the silent psalm of a shining spire.

Let there be light.

Soprano

In the beginning ...
God created ...
heaven and earth ...
and the earth was without form and void ...
and darkness ...
was on the face of the deep.
And God said ...

And God said ...

IV. CLOSING VERSES

Baritone

You are the light of the world.
A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

Soprano

Let your light so shine before men
that they see your good works,

Together

And glorify your father who is in heaven.

IV. HYMN: CATHEDRAL OF LIGHT

Soprano

Upon this rock,
Our cross and spire
built in a land
of quake and fire.

Fragile as glass,
bright as the air,
the angled walls
folded in prayer.

Under the sun
of western skies,
we re-enact
the sacrifice.

Bread of the earth,
fruit of the vine,
the tortured flesh
revealed divine.

The ancient words
fill this new space,
redeeming us
with unearned grace.

Rededicate
this crystal spire
built in a land
of quake and fire.

Amen.