

NYC MASTER CHORALE

Thea Kano, Artistic Director

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NEW YORK CITY MASTER CHORALE

PRESENTS EUROPEAN PREMIERE OF PAUL LEAVITT'S *REQUIEM* IN FRANCE

Chorale Collaborates with District 1660 of Rotary International in Paris

Performance to Benefit Clean Water Initiative

NEW YORK, March 7, 2011 — The New York City Master Chorale (www.nycmasterchorale.org), under the direction of Artistic Director Dr. Thea Kano, will collaborate with District 1660 of Rotary International, Paris, France to produce the European premiere of Paul Leavitt's *Requiem*. The performance will take place on Friday, April 29th, at 7:30 p.m. at Saint-Sulpice Church in Paris, and is organized with support from the City Hall of the 6th District of Paris. Concert proceeds will benefit the Rotary's initiative to bring sanitized, potable water to people in developing countries.

"The Chorale is thrilled to introduce this beautiful piece of music to France," says Dr. Kano. "We are deeply appreciative of the support that we have received from District 1660 of Rotary International for the performance and are pleased to present this concert to benefit its philanthropic work."

Approximately 60 singers from Washington, DC will join the Chorale in Paris to perform Leavitt's *Requiem*. They will be accompanied by a full orchestra and several featured vocal soloists, including soprano Paige Cutrona, whom *The New York Times* has described as "passionate" and "vocally striking," mezzo-soprano Erica Joan Haman, tenor Douglas Benoit, and baritone Gregory Stuart. The evening will also feature an *a cappella* piece, *Ubi Caritas*, by Maurice Duruflé, followed by the composer's *Messe cum Jubilo*, also accompanied by full orchestra.

"It is indeed an honor and a privilege to have my work performed by this fine group of gifted, expertly trained singers in such a unique space," says Leavitt. "It is sure to be an experience I will never forget, and I hope it will be so for the performers and audience as well."

Requiem has been praised by *The Washington Post's* Contributing Critic Cecelia Porter. In her review, Porter noted that "the *Requiem* successfully combines the sense of overwhelming grief and consolation that suffuse the requiems of Mozart, Verdi, Brahms and Fauré."

"As soon as I met Thea Kano and Paul Leavitt, I immediately recognized the potential for a collaboration with Rotary International in favor of the Franco-American friendship and connection with Paris," says Jean Ozonder, president of District 1660 of Rotary International. "The *Requiem* is an exquisite work. I am pleased that the performance will help Rotary in our goal of delivering fresh, clean water to those in desperate need."

Tickets are priced at 35 Euro, and 25 Euro for students and seniors, and are available through www.fnac.com or through the Chorale's website at www.nycmasterchorale.org. In addition, tickets will be available at the door the evening of the concert, as space permits.

About Composer Paul Leavitt

Paul Leavitt made his début as a concert pianist at 15 years old with the Albany Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Julius Hegyi. As a scholarship student he received a Master's Degree from the Juilliard School in New York and a Bachelor's Degree from SUNY Purchase. He was a laureate of the International Steinway Competition for Young Talents (1989) in Paris,

France. A versatile musician and composer, Leavitt performs regularly in Europe and in the United States as a classical pianist, concert organist and choral conductor. He currently serves as the Director of Music and Arts at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation in Washington, DC.

About Conductor Thea Kano

Thea Kano is the founding artistic director and conductor of the New York City Master Chorale. She has prepared choruses for Zubin Mehta and the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra and has prepared the Chorale for performances with the Astoria Symphony and the Park Avenue Chamber Symphony. She holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Choral Conducting from the University of California, Los Angeles, where she studied with Donald Neuen and Paul Salamunovich.

About New York City Master Chorale

Founded in 2005, the New York City Master Chorale presents an annual concert series, performing at the Church of Saint Paul the Apostle, The Riverside Church and Alice Tully Hall in Lincoln Center. In addition, the Chorale has been invited to sing in many of New York City's most prestigious venues, including Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Avery Fisher Hall and Carnegie Hall. The Chorale is noted for its excellent performances of the entire range of the choral repertoire. The Chorale also provides education and outreach initiatives to New York City schools and community programs as an integral component of its mission.

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