



THE CROSSING

D O N A L D N A L L Y — C O N D U C T O R

@ Christmas

In Concert at the Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill

Friday

December

21st

2007

8pm

THE CROSSING

Karen Blanchard	Micah Dinger	Lourin Plant
Steven Bradshaw	Ryan Fleming	Rebecca Siler
Maren Montalbano Brehm	Steven Gearhart	Erin Westmaas
Brian Ming Chu	Beth Guiton	Rebecca Whitlow
Colin Dill	Levi Hernandez	Shari Alise Wilson
Jeff Dinsmore	Chris Hodges	Steven Ziegler
	Robert Phillips	

Donald Nally, conductor

Mark Anderson, organ

John Grecia, rehearsal accompanist

visit our new website at www.crossingchoir.com

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are most grateful for the generosity of the congregation and staff of the Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill, Music Director Mark Anderson and Reverend Cindy Jarvis.

Jeff Dinsmore, Rodrigo Mattos, and all our friends at www.BeSeenCommunications.com who continue to take care of us by donating their marketing and graphic talents – thanks!

2

Special thanks to Maren Montalbano Brehm for scheduling/personnel, Rebecca Whitlow for finances, Susan Polack for funding research, Rob Phillips for logistics/stage management, Shari Wilson for our fabulous post-concert receptions, and to Beth and Hank Vandewater for generously ensuring those receptions are a success.

We're very grateful to the following for their financial contributions making this concert possible:

The Blanchard Family

Jodi Bohr

Nancy and William Brosius

Beryl Byles

Lindsey and Knud Christiansen

Lois and John Dinsmore

Gordon W. Lapp

Larry Passmore

Deb Siler

Kathy Taylor and John Spregel

Beth and Hank Vandewater

Vera and John Murray Wilson

...and the members of *The Crossing*

Join us in presenting more concerts like this by writing a check and giving it to a Crossing member this evening. Alternatively, you may donate online at www.crossingchoir.com.

Tonight's concert is being recorded by Paul Vazquez: www.digitalmissiononline.com 973-886-1862

The Crossing is a member of Chorus America. Visit www.chorusamerica.org

PROGRAM

i. child

What child is this (1995/2007) Andrew Gant
this a cappella arrangement written for The Crossing and sung tonight for the first time

ii. angels greet

Tremunt videntes angeli (2002)..... James MacMillan
The clouded heaven (1998)..... Judith Bingham

iii. on Marys lap

Star unto glory (2006) Don Michael Dicie
The Rose (1969) John Paynter
How far is it to Bethlehem (1996) Colin Mawby

iv. such mean estate

Hevene Quene (2006) Kerry Andrew
A Christmas Caroll (1954) Kenneth Leighton

INTERMISSION – 15 MINUTES

v. shepherds guard

O leave your sheep (1963) Leighton

vi. the silent Word

A nativity (1985)..... John Tavener
Et incarnatus est (2007) David Shapiro
written for The Crossing and sung tonight for the first time

vii. babe

I sing of a maiden (1936) Patrick Hadley
The Fayrfax Carol (1997)..... Thomas Adès

viii. Son

Lullay lullay little child (1990)..... Jonathan Varcoe
Wellcome, all wonders in one sight! (1999)..... Jonathan Dove

ix. King

What child is this (1971) arr. Ruggles

So, what child is this?

Each year when I program a concert like this, I find myself asking this question. Sifting through the thousands of pieces written, just in the last several years, to celebrate this child, I wonder why people want to sing another Christmas concert – why they want to come hear one? And, each year, for better or worse, I conclude that it's about the journey – or journeys; the story of the birth, the evolution of the church and its music telling the story, the story of our own lives, our own living through each year. We identify with this frail child whose power is unquestionable; we certainly live each day overcoming our own fragility. (I, for one, would love to wail anytime I'm feeling lonely or hungry!) It's exhausting, this life in which we eventually live ourselves to death. Each day requires rest, each week the same, as does each year. And, at the end of the year, we assess and re-set; we get together and re-live this Christmas journey through music, through the unspeakable emotions laid bare by art. It's a homecoming. (Perhaps this is why so many contemporary composers choose ancient texts for this season, as is the case in the introspective motet of David Shapiro we premiere this evening.) A homecoming in listening. And, in listening to the story – to recall the journey – we are reminded of all that has been and could be; all that we are and could become; all we've done and could do.

It's a simple journey, really – from the ear to the heart – and it probably does not answer the question 'what child is this?' We hope it will help define the question, or at least remind us of it as the journey continues into a new year. We're glad you're here to listen with us.

Donald
for The Crossing

i. *child*

What child is this

Andrew Gant (b. - 1963, England)

What Child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?
 This, this is Christ the King,
 Whom shepherds praise and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring Him praise,
Jesus the Son of Mary.

How comes He in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Yet have no fear, God's love is here,
His love all loves exceeding.
 Raise, raise your song on high
 As Mary sings a lullaby.
Praise, praise the Son of Man,
Jesus the Son of Mary.

Adapted from *The Manger Throne*, William Chatterton Dix (1837-1898)

5

ii. *angels greet*

Tremunt videntes angeli

James MacMillan (b. 1959, Scotland)

*Tremunt videntes angeli
versam vicem mortalium:
culpat caro, purgat caro,
regnat caro Verbum Dei.
Tu, Christe, nostrum gaudium
manens perenne praemium,
mundi regis qui fabricam,
mundana vincens gaudia.
lesu, tibi sit Gloria,
qui scandis ad caelestia,
cum Patre et almo Spiritu,
in sempiterna saecula. Amen.*

Angels tremble at the sight
of mortal man's lot overturned;
flesh condemns, flesh purifies,
the Word of God made flesh now reigns.
You, Christ, are our joy,
enduring, everlasting prize,
you rule the fabric of the world,
surpassing worldly joys.
Jesus, unto you be glory,
who to the heavens now ascend,
with the Father and the kindly Spirit,
for eternal ages. Amen.

from *Aeterne Rex altissime*, a 5th-c.
Ambrosian hymn, trans. Allan Hood

The clouded heaven

Judith Bingham (b. 1952, England)

Be with me Lord, and speed me on my way,
Thou who didst speed the way of the Wise men
By the leading of a star.

I could not lightly pass through the same gateways,
Sleep where they had slept, wake where they wak'd,
I was the Dreamer, they the Dream.

If Thy presence go not with me,
Let the stars come out, the clouded heaven.
Blot out O Lord as a thick cloud of night
Our transgressions, and bring us safely home again.

Lancelot Andrews (1555-1626)
and William Wordsworth (1770-1850 – indented text)

iii. on Mary's lap

Star unto glory

6 *Don Michael Dicie (b. 1941, Alabama)*

Star unto glory, star unto Mary,
Revealing the wonder she's known all along:
Christ is our Saviour, this tiny baby.
Mary's heart echoes the angel choir song.

Star unto glory, star unto Joseph,
Confirming the message the angel has brought:
Christ helpless infant, Joseph protect Him,
Father, carpenter, give care and thought.

Star unto glory, star unto shepherds,
Cold the wide fields where the message is told:
Be not you frightened, come to the Christ's birth;
Shepherds bring gifts of the field and the fold.

Star unto glory, star unto Wise Men,
Shining to far lands the message to give:
Come from a distance, come with your learning,
Worship this Christ child whose wisdom will live.

Star unto glory, star unto all men,
Lighting the way to the baby sublime.
Lead t'ward the manger where we can kneel,
For this newborn human is Christ the Divine.

S.R. Lee (contemp. Tennessee)

The Rose

John Paynter (b. 1931, England)

Of a rose singe we, misterium mirabile. (wonderful mystery)

This rose is red of colour bright,
Through whom our joye gan alight
Upon this Christesmasse night,
Claro David germine. (of the illustrious race of David)

Of this rose was Christ ybore,
To save mankind that was forlore,
And us alle from sinnes sore,
Prophetarum carmine. (by the word of the prophets)

This rose, of floweres she is flower;
She ne will fade for no shower;
To sinful men she sent succour,
Mira plenitudine. (in marvelous abundance)

This rose is so fair of hue;
In maid Mary that is so true
Yborne was lord of virtue,
Salvator sine crimine. (the Saviour without sin)

15th-c. English carol

How far is it to Bethlehem

Colin Mawby (b.1936, Ireland)

How far is it to Bethlehem?
Not very far.

Shall we find the stableroom
Lit by a star?

Can we see the little child,
Is he within?

If we lift the wooden latch
May we go in?

May we stroke the creatures there,
Ox, ass, or sheep?

May we peep like them and see
Jesus asleep?

If we touch his tiny hand
Will he awake?

Will he know we've come so far
Just for his sake?

Great kings have precious gifts,
And we have naught;

Little smiles and little tears
Are all we brought.

For all weary children
Mary must weep.

Here, on his bed of straw,
Sleep, children, sleep.

God in his mother's arms,
Babes in the byre,
Sleep, as they sleep who find
Their heart's desire.

Frances Alice Chesterton (1875-1938)

iv. such mean estate

Hevene Quene

Kerry Andrew (b. 1978, England)

*O virgo splendens;
Edi beo thu, hevene quene.
Thou asteye so the daiy rewe
The deleth from the deorke nicht.
Splendens hevene quene,
Of the sprong an leomme newe
That all this world haveth iliyt.
Mi swete levedi her me bene
And reu of mi if thy wille is;
O virgo splendens.*

*O splendid Virgin;
Blessed be you, queen of heaven,
You rose up like dark night.
From you sprang a new sunbeam
Which has lit all the world.
My sweet lady, hear my plea
And take pity on me if it be your will.*

13th-c. English hymn, trans. by the composer

A Christmas Caroll

Kenneth Leighton (1929-1988, England)

8

What sweeter music can we bring,
Than a carol, for to sing
The birth of this our heavenly King?
Awake the voice! Awake the string!
Heart, ear, and eye, and everything

Awake! the while the active finger
Runs division with the singer.
Dark and dull night, fly hence away,
And give the honor to this day,

That sees December turned to May.
If we may ask the reason, say;
The why, and wherefore all things here
Seem like the springtime of the year?

Why does the chilling Winter's morn
Smile, like a field beset with corn?
Or smell, like to a mead new-shorn,
Thus, on the sudden? Come and see

The cause, why things thus fragrant be:
'Tis He is born, whose quickening birth
Gives life and luster, public mirth,
To heaven, and the underearth.

We see Him come, and know Him ours,
Who, with His sunshine, and His showers,
Turns all the patient ground to flowers.

The darling of the world is come,
And fit it is, we find a room
To welcome Him. The nobler part
Of all the house here, is the heart,

Which we will give Him; and bequeath
This holly, and this ivy wreath,
To do Him honor; who's our King,
And Lord of all this reveling.

Robert Herrick (1591-1674)

v. *shepherds guard*

O leave your sheep

Leighton

O leave your sheep, your lambs that follow after,
O leave the brook, the pasture and the crook.
No longer weep,
turn weeping into laughter, O shepherds seek your
goal,
Your Lord, your Lord, who cometh to console.

You'll find him laid within a simple stable,
A babe newborn, in poverty forlorn,
In love array'd,
A love so deep, 'tis able to search the night for you,
'tis he, 'tis he, 'tis he the shepherd true.

O kings so great, a light is streaming o'er you,
More radiant far than diadem or star,
Forego your state,
A baby lies before you, whose wonder shall be told,
Bring myrrh, bring myrrh, bring
frankincense and gold.

Quittez pasteurs, Old French carol, trans. Alice Raleigh

vi. *the silent Word*

A nativity

John Tavener (b. 1944, England)

What woman hugs her infant there? Another star has shot her ear.
What made the drapery glisten so? Not a man, but Delacroix.

What made the ceiling waterproof? Landor's tarpaulin on the roof.
What brushes fly and moth aside? Irving and his plume of pride.

What hurries out the knave and dolt? Talma and his thunderbolt.
Why is the woman terror struck? Can there be mercy in that look?

W. B. Yeats (1865-1939, Ireland)

(Notes: *Delacroix*, French painter (1798-1863); *Landor*, English writer (1775-1864);
Irving, English actor (1838-1905); *Talma*, French tragic actor (1763-1826).)

Et incarnatus est

David Shapiro (b. 1969, Elizabeth, New Jersey)

*Et incarnatus est
de Spiritu Sancto;
ex Maria virgine,
et homo factus est.*

And became incarnate
by the Holy Spirit,
of the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.

from the Credo of the Mass

vii. *babe*

I sing of a maiden

Patrick Hadley (1899-1973, England)

I sing of a maiden
That is makeless (mateless)
King of all kings
To her son she ches. (chose)

He came all so still
Where His mother was,
As dew in April
That falleth on the grass.

He came all so still
To His mother's bow'r,
As dew in April
That falleth on the flow'r.

He came all so still
Where His mother lay,
As dew in April
That falleth on the spray.

Mother and maiden
Was never none but she;
Well may such a lady
God's mother be.

15th-c. English carol

The Fayrfax Carol

Thomas Adès (b. 1971, England)

'Ah, my dear Son', said Mary,
'Kiss Thy mother, Jesu,
With a laughing cheer.'

This endurs night
I saw a sight
All in my sleep:
Mary, that may,
She sang lullay,
And sore did weep.

To keep she sought
Full fast about
Her son from cold;
Joseph said, 'Wife,
My joy, my life,
Say what ye would.'

'Nothing, my spouse,
Is in this house
Unto my pay;
My Son, a King
that made all thing,
Lieth in hay.'

'My mother dear,
Amend your cheer,
And now be still;
Thus for to lie,
It is soothly
My Father's will.

Derision,
Great passion
Infinitely,
As it is found,
Many a wound
Suffer shall I.

On Calvary,
That is so high,
There shall I be,
Man to restore,
Nailed full sore
Upon a tree.'

Early Tudor carol

viii. Son

Lullay lullay little child

Jonathan Varcoe (contemp., England)

Lullay lullay little child, mine own dear food,
How shalt thou suffering be nailed on the rood.
So blessed be the time?

Lullay lullay little child, mine own dear smart,
How shalt thou suffering the sharp spear to thy heart?
So blessed be the time!

Lullay lullay little child, I sing all for thy sake,
Many on is the sharp show to thy body is shape
So blessed be the time!

Lullay lullay little child, fair happis thee befall,
How shalt thou suffering to drink ezyll and gall?
So blessed be the time!

Lullay lullay little child, I sing all beforon,
How shalt thou suffering the sharp garlong of thorn?
So blessed be the time!

Lullay lullay little child, why weepy thou so sore,
Thou are both in God and man, what wouldest thou
be more?
So blessed be the time?

Variation of a 15th-c. English carol

Wellcome, all wonders in one sight!

Jonathan Dove (b. 1959, England)

Wellcome, all Wonders in one sight!
Eternity shut in a span.
Summer in winter, day in night,
Heaven in earth, and God in man;
Great little One whose all-embracing birth
Lifts earth to heaven, stoops heaven to earth.

We saw Thee in Thy balmy nest,
Bright Dawn of our eternal day!
We saw Thine eyes break from Their East
And chase the trembling shades away.
We saw Thee; and we blessed the sight,
We saw Thee by Thine own sweet light.

To Thee, meek Majesty! soft King
Of simple graces and sweet loves.
Each of us his lamb will bring,
Each his pair of silver doves,
Till burnt at last in fire of Thy fair eyes,
Ourselves become our own best sacrifice.

*From A Hymn of the Nativity, sung by
shepherds, Richard Crashaw (1613-1649)*

12 ix. King

What child is this

arr. R. Brant Ruggles

What Child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?
Rf. This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading. Rf.

So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh,
Come peasant, king to own Him;
The King of kings salvation brings,
Let loving hearts enthrone Him. Rf.

from The Manger Throne, Dix