

KENT TRITLE

Biography

Kent Tritle is one of America's leading choral conductors. Called "the brightest star in New York's choral music world" by The New York Times, he is Director of Cathedral Music and Organist at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. In addition, the 2011-2012 season marks his fifth season as Music Director of Musica Sacra, the longest continuously performing professional chorus in New York City, and seventh season as Music Director of the Oratorio Society of New York, the acclaimed 200-voice volunteer chorus. *Sacred Music in a Sacred Space*, the acclaimed concert series founded by Tritle in 1989, is now entering its 23rd season at New York's Church of St. Ignatius Loyola; he leads his final concerts on that series in 2011-2012.

In addition, Kent is Director of Choral Activities at the Manhattan School of Music and is a member of the graduate faculty of The Juilliard School. An acclaimed organ virtuoso, he is the organist of the New York Philharmonic and the American Symphony Orchestra. And he is the host of "The Choral Mix with Kent Tritle," a weekly hour-long radio program on New York's Classical 105.9 WQXR and www.wqxr.org devoted to the vibrant genre of choral music and the breadth of activity in the choral community.

Highlights of Kent Tritle's 2011-2012 season include his first concerts with the Cathedral Choir of the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine; world and U.S. premiere performances of works by Czech composer Juraj Filas: the U.S. premiere of his 2002 Requiem dedicated to the victims of terrorism, with the Choir & Orchestra of St. Ignatius Loyola, and the world premiere of *Song of Solomon* with the Oratorio Society of New York; participation in the Carnegie Hall 120th anniversary with Musica Sacra and the Oratorio Society; the world premiere of Stephen Paulus's one-act opera *The Shoemaker* with the forces of the Manhattan School of Music; and a performance of Mozart's arrangement of Handel's *Messiah* with the Oratorio Society of New York.

Recent concerts with Musica Sacra have included a program of new works by Daniel Brewbaker, Christopher Theofanidis, and Behzad Ranjbaran, and others in their world or New York premiere performances (which will be released as a CD this season), Mozart's Mass in C Minor at Carnegie Hall, a program of works by Arvo Pärt and Morton Feldman for a WNYC *New Sounds Live* concert; Bach's Mass in B Minor and *St. John Passion*, and the ensemble's annual performances of Handel's *Messiah* at Carnegie Hall.

As Music Director of the Oratorio Society of New York, Kent has recently conducted the venerable New York ensemble in repertoire such as Paul Moravec's *Songs of Love and War*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, and the Fauré Requiem in addition to leading the Society's annual *Messiah* performances at Carnegie Hall. In 2008, the Oratorio Society joined the Juilliard Orchestra in a performance of Bernstein's Symphony No. 3, "Kaddish," conducted by Alan Gilbert, part of the *Bernstein: The Best of all Possible Worlds* festival sponsored by the New York Philharmonic and Carnegie Hall.

As part of his work as Director of Choral Activities at the Manhattan School of Music, Kent Tritle recently led student forces in performances of Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem*; Mozart's Requiem and Schubert's Mass in G. Kent Tritle is also renowned as a master clinician giving workshops on conducting and repertoire. In July 2011 he was a featured conductor at the Berkshire Choral Festival, where he led a performance of Monteverdi's Vespers of 1610.

"The Choral Mix with Kent Tritle," which launched in December 2010, is an hour-long program on Classical 105.9 WQXR and www.wqxr.org devoted to the vibrant genre of choral music and the breadth of activity in the choral community. Airing on Sundays at 7:00 AM, with an encore broadcast at 11:00 PM, each program explores a different aspect of the choral scene in New York and beyond through a lively mix of exclusive live concert and commercial recordings, providing a significant locus for choral music and its community.

In more than 150 concerts presented by the *Sacred Music in a Sacred Space* series from 1989 to 2011, Kent Tritle conducted the Choir and Orchestra of St. Ignatius Loyola in a broad repertoire of sacred works, from Renaissance masses and oratorio masterworks to premieres by notable living composers, earning praise for building the choir and the concert series into one of the highlights of the New York concert scene.

From 1996 to 2004, Mr. Tritle was Music Director of the Emmy-nominated Dessooff Choirs, winners of the ASCAP/Chorus America award for adventurous programming of contemporary music. Under his direction the Dessooff Choirs performed with the Cleveland Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, and Czech Philharmonic, as well as a nationally telecast *Live from Lincoln Center* concert of Mozart's Requiem.

Mr. Tritle has prepared choruses for conductors Philippe Entremont, Christoph von Dohnányi, Leonard Slatkin, Michael Tilson Thomas, Robert Spano, Gerard Schwarz, Vladimir Spivakov, Nicholas McGegan, Leon Botstein, and Dennis Russell Davies. Among the soloists with whom he has collaborated are singers Renée Fleming, Jessye Norman, Hei-Kyung Hong, Marilyn Horne, Susanne Mentzer, Susan Graham, and Sherrill Milnes; cellist Yo-Yo Ma; pianist André Previn; and actor Tony Randall.

As an organ recitalist, Kent Tritle performs regularly in Europe and across the United States; recital venues have included the Leipzig Gewandhaus, the Zurich Tonhalle, the Church of St. Sulpice in Paris, Dresden's Hofkirche, King's College at Cambridge, and Westminster Abbey. With the Philharmonic he has performed Saint-Saëns's *Organ Symphony* conducted by Andrew Davis, and recorded Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, Britten's *War Requiem* and Henze's Symphony No. 9, all conducted by Kurt Masur, as well as the Grammy-nominated *Sweeney Todd* conducted by Andrew Litton. Mr. Tritle has appeared often as a guest organist with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. He is featured on the DVDs *The Organistas* and *Creating the Stradivarius of Organs*.

Kent Tritle has made more than a dozen recordings on the Telarc, AMDG, Epiphany, Gothic, VAI and MSR Classics labels. His most recent CDs with the Choir of St. Ignatius Loyola, Ginastera's *The Lamentations of Jeremiah* and Schnittke's Concerto for Choir; and *Wondrous Love*, music from 1,000 years of sacred repertoire, have been praised by Gramophone, the

American Record Guide, and The Choral Journal. Upcoming releases in 2011-2012 are *Cool of the Day*, the Choir of St. Ignatius Loyola performing an a cappella program of music ranging from Gregorian chant and Palestrina to Strauss's *Deutsche Motette* and music by Eric Whitacre; and *Messages to Myself*: Musica Sacra performing an a cappella program of five new works, which were presented in their world premiere (Daniel Brewbaker's *Mother, Father*, a setting of e.e. cummings text; and Michael Gilbertson's *Three Madrigals after Dowland*), and New York premiere (Zachary Patten's *Magnificat*, Behzad Ranjbaran's *We Are One*, and Christopher Theofanidis's *Messages to Myself*) performances.

Mr. Tritle holds graduate and undergraduate degrees from The Juilliard School in organ performance and choral conducting and has been on the Juilliard faculty since 1996, currently directing a graduate practicum on oratorio in collaboration with the school's Vocal Arts Department, and teaching choral conducting. He has been featured on *ABC World News Tonight*, National Public Radio, and Minnesota Public Radio, as well as in The New York Times.

For more information, sound clips, and updated concert information, visit www.kenttritle.com.

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