

KENT TRITLE SPRING SEASON 2018:

American History, New York History Take Center Stage in New Works, in Programs at Carnegie Hall and the Cathedral of St. John the Divine

Organ Recital of French Music at St. John the Divine Is Immediately Followed by Saint-Saëns “Organ Symphony” with Antonio Pappano and the New York Philharmonic



Photo by Jennifer Taylor

In the spring of 2018, “choral conducting superstar” (Time Out New York) Kent Tritle leads **two programs featuring world premieres of works with American themes that are resonating especially strongly today**: with the Oratorio Society of New York, *Sanctuary Road*, an oratorio about the Underground Railroad with music by Paul Moravec and text by Mark Campbell (commissioned by the OSNY) based upon the accounts of William Still, as well as Behzad Ranjbaran’s *We Are One* (commissioned by the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra) on May 7; and a program at the Cathedral Choir of St. John the Divine celebrating the immigrant history of New York in collaboration with early/world music group Rose of the Compass that includes the world premiere of a commissioned work by Robert Sirota, text by Reverend Victoria Sirota, on April 9.

***Come down, rain./Come down hard.
Come down fast./Come down Noah’s Ark heavy.
Double the darkness of this night.***

***That I might slip away,/Like a shadow,
And get to the boat/That will take me up North
To liberty,/To my own life.***

-Excerpt from text for *Sanctuary Road* based on the writings of William Still

Kent also fulfills his role as **organ virtuoso and New York Philharmonic member** in February when he performs his annual recital on the magnificent instrument of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine (Feb. 6), and is soloist in the Saint-Saëns "Organ Symphony" in three performances with the New York Philharmonic led by Antonio Pappano (Feb. 8, 9, 10).

Two chamber choral programs in March showcase what Opera News last season praised as "Tritle's dedicated and profoundly musical direction": a program of Kodály, Stravinsky, and Pärt's *Miserere* with the Cathedral Choir of St. John the Divine (March 20), and "Light of Light," a sonic tour de force of music spanning a thousand years of music ranging from Gregorian chant to Morton Lauridsen, with Musica Sacra (March 6).

In addition, he leads Carissimi's *Jephte* (Feb. 20) and Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang* (March 22) with ensembles and soloists from the **Manhattan School of Music**.

Kent Tritle is Director of Cathedral Music and Organist at New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine, the largest cathedral in the world; Music Director of the Oratorio Society of New York, the acclaimed 200-voice volunteer chorus; and Music Director of Musica Sacra, New York's longest continuously performing professional chorus. In addition, he 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 also the organist of the New York Philharmonic and the American Symphony Orchestral, and Chair of the Organ Department of the Manhattan School of Music.

A full chronological schedule of the season's events follows below.

Great Music in a Great Space at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine

The *Great Music in a Great Space* series features the acclaimed Cathedral Choir, both showcased and featured:

- **Pärt, Stravinsky, Kodály** – Arvo Pärt's *Miserere* (1989/1992) for five vocal soloists and choir, winds, brass, electric guitars, percussion, and organ, setting text from Psalm 51 with interpolation of the *Dies irae*, is, in Kent's words, "a piece practically tailor-made for this cathedral – it utilizes spare but intense harmonies along with perfectly-timed rests to fill the space in a unique and mystical way." This rarely-performed piece is joined on the program by three a cappella pieces by Stravinsky – *Bogoroditse Dyevo (Ave Maria)*, *Otche nash' (Our Father)*, Anthem: *The Dove Descending Breaks the Air* – as well as Kodály's *Laudes Organi* for choir and organ (Tuesday, March 20, 2018)

- **Celebration of New York immigrants with Rose of the Compass, world premiere of commission by Robert Sirota** – Completed in 1918, each of the Cathedral's seven Chapels of the Tongues (which encircle the High Altar) is dedicated to an immigrant group, among the many that have made New York City the capital of the world: those from Spain, Italy, France, the British Isles, Germany, Scandinavia, and the Eastern Orthodox population of Europe and Asia. Preceded by a tour of the chapels, this program, the seventh collaborative program with early/world music ensemble Rose of the Compass (oud, kanun, recorder, harp, and percussion) mirrors the chapel tour with music from these communities: choral music of Rachmaninoff, Persichetti, Rebecca Clarke, Tarik O'Regan, F. Melius Christiansen, and Jean Berger, and the world premiere of a commissioned work by Robert Sirota, with libretto by Victoria Sirota, written for the Cathedral Choir and Rose of the Compass celebrating the melting pot of humanity. (*Monday, April 9, 2018*)

Oratorio Society of New York at Carnegie Hall

The 145th season of the Oratorio Society of New York, the city's standard for grand choral performance, is Kent Tritle's 13th as its music director. The chorus's final program of the season sees the world premieres of two works at Carnegie Hall, the OSNY's home since 1891.

- **World premieres: *Sanctuary Road* (OSNY commission) with music by Paul Moravec and text by Mark Campbell, and Ranjbaran's *We Are One*** – The Oratorio Society's spring concert features the world premiere performances of two works. *Sanctuary Road*, an oratorio with music by Paul Moravec and text by Mark Campbell (collaborators on the opera *The Shining*), is an OSNY commission, based upon the accounts of William Still, a conductor on the Underground Railroad, of the slaves he helped liberate. The performance will feature soloists **Laquita Mitchell**, soprano; **Raehann Bryce-Davis**, mezzo-soprano; **Joshua Blue**, tenor (the 2017 first-place winner of the OSNY's Lyndon Woodside Oratorio-Solo Competition); **Malcolm Merriweather**, baritone; and **Dashon Burton**, bass (the 2012 first-place winner of the OSNY's Lyndon Woodside Oratorio-Solo Competition).

Mark Campbell says, "Writing an oratorio is the best way to honor the bravery of the people involved in this crucial chapter in American history," and Paul Moravec said, "I am thrilled to be collaborating again with Kent and the incomparable OSNY – as well as with the preternaturally gifted Mark Campbell. This work is the latest in a series of my American oratorios including *The Blizzard Voices*, which Kent and OSNY brought to life so magnificently in 2013." Complementing *Sanctuary Road* is Behzad Ranjbaran's *We Are One* for chorus and orchestra, a work commissioned by the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., which also receives its world premiere performance on the program. The composer says, "The text is drawn from different time periods and different cultures, from an ancient Hebrew hymn to the 19th century Spanish text, reflecting on the human desire for respect, love, tolerance, and peace." (*Monday, May 7, 2018*)

Musica Sacra

The 2017-18 season of the acclaimed professional chorus is Kent Tritle's 11th as its music director. In addition to presenting its annual three-concert series, Musica Sacra has in recent

years also been featured with such major New York institutions as the New York Philharmonic, New York City Ballet, and Orchestra of St. Luke's.

- **Light of Light: Music of Lassus, Lauridsen, with Gregorian Chant** – The totality of this program is a sonic tour de force of music spanning a thousand years. The propers, or segments, of the Gregorian Mass for Quasi modo Sunday (the second Sunday of Easter), alternate with those of Orlando Lassus's mass setting *Missa Super Osceletur Me*. This walk back into the Franco-Flemish Renaissance includes Josquin Des Prez's extraordinary *Ave Maria*, Lassus' motet *Surgens Jesus*, the optimistic American voices of Morton Lauridsen and Kevin Oldham, and a final processional to the Easter chant *Victimae paschali laudes* round out the experience. (Tuesday, March 6, 2017, at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine)

Manhattan School of Music

As Director of Choral Activities at the Manhattan School of Music, Kent supervises the conservatory's choral ensembles – Chamber Choir, Women's Chorus, and Symphonic Chorus – along with Dr. Ronnie Oliver, Associate Director of Choral Activities. With MSM currently offering the pre-eminent program for choral conductors in New York, graduate students currently number two in the doctoral program and two in the master's program. In recent years, Kent has been preparing the ensembles for performances with and at major New York institutions, which have included the New York Philharmonic (Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé* led by Vladimir Jurowski and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony led by Alan Gilbert) and the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, and headlined performances of David Lang's *Little Match Girl Passion* and Tan Dun's *Water Passion* after St. Matthew at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

In the 2017-18 season, MSM renews its historic relationship with Riverside Church. Sharing the podium with Dr. Oliver and graduate students on two programs at Riverside, Kent conducts choral masterworks by Carissimi and Mendelssohn, and also leads the Chamber Choir at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine:

- **Victoria, Charpentier, Carissimi's Jephthe** – In this Renaissance and early Baroque program, Kent leads the MSM Chamber Choir in Carissimi's oratorio *Jephthe*. Two doctoral students lead the remainder of the program; Jie Yi conducts Tomás Luis de Victoria's motet *O quam gloriosum* and his *Missa O quam gloriosum*; and Bryan Zaros conducts Charpentier's oratorio-style motet *Le Reniement de Saint Pierre*, H. 424; and (Tuesday, February 20, 2018, at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine)
- **Mendelssohn's Lobgesang, Mozart**– Kent leads the MSM Symphonic Chorus and Symphony in a performance of Mendelssohn's "symphony-cantata" *Lobgesang (Hymn of Praise)* on a program that also includes the Chamber Choir performing Mozart and Mendelssohn selections led by Dr. Ronnie Oliver. (Thursday, March 22, 2018, at Riverside Church)

Organ Performances

In October, Kent returned to perform at the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, where he was Music Director from 1989 to 2011 (this season marks the 25th anniversary of that church's Mander

organ, the creation, design, and installation of which Kent oversaw 1991-1993). In February, he performs his annual recital on the Great Organ of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, an all-French program, and immediately follows it with performances as the featured soloist in a French favorite, the Saint-Saëns "Organ Symphony," with the New York Philharmonic.

- **Cathedral of St. John the Divine** – Kent's annual recital on the Great Organ of St. John the Divine is an all-French program of works by Marchand, Couperin, de Grigny, Guilmant, and Alain (see complete program below). (*Tuesday, February 6, 2018*)
- **Saint-Saëns with the New York Philharmonic** – Kent is the soloist in three performances of the "Organ Symphony" of Saint-Saëns conducted by Anthony Pappano. (*February 8, 9, 10, 2018, at David Geffen Hall, Lincoln Center*)

Summer Choral Institutes 2018: Mostly Modern Festival, Amherst Early Music

- Kent is featured in the inaugural **Mostly Modern Festival and Institute**, an event founded by composer Robert Paterson and violinist Victoria Paterson celebrating the music of our time. In addition to being on the institute faculty, he conducts concert performances of Paterson's *Walt's America* for soprano, baritone, chorus, and orchestra; and *A New Earth* for narrator, chorus, and orchestra. (*June 4-18, 2018, at Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY*)
- Kent leads his fourth week-long choral workshop at the **Amherst Early Music Festival**, the largest early music festival in the U.S., this year focusing on Machaut's *Messe de Notre Dame*. The workshop concludes with a performance. (*July 8-14, 2018, at Connecticut College, New London, CT*)

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; Music Director of the Oratorio Society of New York, the acclaimed 200-voice avocational chorus; and Music Director of Musica Sacra, the longest continuously performing professional chorus in New York City. In addition, Kent is Director of Choral Activities and at the Manhattan School of Music and is a member of the graduate faculty of The Juilliard School. An acclaimed organ virtuoso, he is also the organist of the New York Philharmonic and the American Symphony Orchestra, and Chair – this season on leave – of the Organ Department of the Manhattan School of Music.

Kent Tritle's discography of recordings on the Telarc, AMDG, Epiphany, Gothic, VAI and MSR Classics labels include the 2016 performance of Mahler's Symphony No. 8, David Briggs's organ-choral version, which received a rave review in *The American Organist*, and *Eternal Reflections: Choral Music of Robert Paterson* with Musica Sacra, about which Gramophone said, "As shaped by Music Director Kent Tritle, the myriad hues, lyricism and nobility in Paterson's music emerge in all their splendour." Other releases, including his 2013 recording of Juraj Filas' Requiem, *Oratio Spei* dedicated to the victims of 9/11, with the Prague Symphony Orchestra and the Kühn Choir; *Messages to Myself*, an acclaimed recording with Musica Sacra of five new works; and two releases with the Choir of St. Ignatius Loyola, *Cool of the Day* –

an a cappella program of music ranging from Gregorian chant, Palestrina, and spirituals to Strauss's *Deutsche Motette* – and Ginastera's *The Lamentations of Jeremiah* with Schnittke's Concerto for Choir, have been praised by Gramophone, the American Record Guide, and The Choral Journal.

Kent Tritle founded the *Sacred Music in a Sacred Space* concert series at New York's Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, and led it to great acclaim from 1989 to 2011. From 1996 to 2004, he was Music Director of New York's The Dessoff Choirs. Kent hosted "The Choral Mix with Kent Tritle" on New York's WQXR, a weekly program devoted to the vibrant world of choral music, from 2010 to 2014.

www.kenttritle.com

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KENT TRITLE SPRING 2018

Tuesday, February 6, 2018, at 7:30 pm

[Great Music in a Great Space](#) at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York, NY

KENT TRITLE, organ

MARCHAND *Grand Dialogue*

DE GRIGNY *Recit de Tierce en taille*

COUPERIN *Convent Mass: Offertoire*

ALAIN *Le Jardin Suspendu*

ALAIN *Litanies*

GUILMANT *Sonata No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 80*

February 8, 9, 10, 2018

David Geffen Hall, Lincoln Center, New York, NY

[NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC](#)

Antonio Pappano, conductor

Leif Ove-Andsnes, piano

Kent Tritle, organ

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*

BRITTEN *Piano Concerto*

SAINT-SAËNS *Symphony No. 3, "Organ"*

Sunday, February 11, 2018, at 4:30 pm

Neighborhood Music School, New Haven, CT

[NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF SINGING](#) – MASTER CLASS WITH KENT TRITLE

Focus on oratorio repertoire

Tuesday, February 20, 2018, at 7:30 pm
Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York, NY
[MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC](#)

Manhattan School of Music Chamber Choir
Kent Tritle, conductor*
Jie Yi, conductor
Brian Zaros, conductor

VICTORIA *O quam gloriosum*
VICTORIA *Missa O quam gloriosum*
CHARPENTIER *Le Reniement de Saint Pierre*, H. 424
CARISSIMI *Jephte**

Tuesday, March 6, 2018, 7:30 pm
Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York, NY
[MUSICA SACRA](#)

Kent Tritle, conductor

Light of Light: Music of Lassus, Lauridsen, with Gregorian Chant

LASSUS *Motet, Missa super Osculetur me, and Surgens Jesus*
JOSQUIN *Ave Maria*
LAURIDSEN *O nata lux*
OLDHAM *My Lord, thou art in every breath I take*
Gregorian Mass for Quasi modo Sunday
Victimae paschali laudes

Tuesday, March 20, 2018, at 7:30 pm
[Great Music in a Great Space](#) at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York, NY
CATHEDRAL CHOIR OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE

Kent Tritle, conductor
Amber Evans, soprano
Daniel Moody, countertenor
Marc Day, tenor
Michael Steinberger, tenor
Matt Boehler, bass
Raymond Nagem, organ

STRAVINSKY *Bogoroditse Dyevo (Ave Maria)*
STRAVINSKY *Otche nash' (Our Father)*
STRAVINSKY *Anthem: The Dove Descending Breaks the Air*
KODÁLY *Laudes Organi* for choir and organ
PÄRT *Miserere*

Thursday, March 22, 2018, at 7:30 pm

Riverside Church, New York, NY

[MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC](#)

Manhattan School of Music Chamber Choir
Manhattan School of Music Symphonic Chorus
Manhattan School of Music Symphony
Kent Tritle, conductor*
Ronnie Oliver, conductor

MENDELSSOHN *Lobgesang (Hymn of Praise)**

MOZART Kyrie in D Minor

MENDELSSOHN *Wie der Hirsch schreit*

Monday, April 9, 2018, at 7:30 pm

[Great Music in a Great Space](#) at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York, NY

CATHEDRAL CHOIR OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE

ROSE OF THE COMPASS

Kent Tritle, conductor

An international spectrum of works celebrating the history of immigration in New York, ranging from folk music of Ireland and the Baltic region to choral music of Rachmaninoff, Persichetti, Rebecca Clarke, Tarik O'Regan, F. Melius Christiansen, and Jean Berger, culminating in the world premiere for these combined ensembles by Robert Sirota with libretto by Victoria Sirota.

Monday, May 7, 2018, at 8:00 pm

Carnegie Hall, New York, NY

[ORATORIO SOCIETY OF NEW YORK](#)

Kent Tritle, conductor
Laquita Mitchell, soprano
Raehann Bryce-Davis, mezzo-soprano
Joshua Blue, tenor
Malcolm Merriweather, baritone
Dashon Burton, bass

MORAVEC/CAMPBELL *Sanctuary Road* (World premiere, OSNY commission)

RANJBARAN *We Are One* (World premiere)

June 4-18, 2018

Arthur Zankel Music Center at Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY

[MOSTLY MODERN FESTIVAL](#)

July 8-14, 2018

Connecticut College, New London, CT

[AMHERST EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL](#)

January 24, 2018