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Coro Allegro Presents “Magnificat,” Sunday, November 13, 2016, at 3pm at Harvard University’s Sanders Theatre, Cambridge, MA

October 28, 2016 (Boston, MA) — [Coro Allegro](#) and Artistic Director David Hodgkins are proud to launch Coro Allegro’s 25th season as Boston’s acclaimed classical chorus for members, friends, and allies of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community with “[Magnificat](#),” Sunday, November 13, 2016 at 3pm at Sanders Theatre, 45 Quincy Street, Cambridge, MA.

Concert Description

Coro Allegro’s 25th anniversary season of celebrations begins with joyously radiant and grand choral settings by Johann Sebastian Bach that bookend deeply cathartic works by Samuel Barber and Christoph Willibald Gluck, plus folk songs by Zoltán Kodály to mark the 60th anniversary of the Hungarian uprising of 1956.

The concert features a performance of Magnificat, Bach’s exquisite jewel of an oratorio. The grace and festive grandeur of the Magnificat’s choral and orchestral movements set off the colorful miniatures of its arias, while imaginative orchestration and adept word painting highlight the emotional and descriptive nuances of the text throughout. Coro Allegro will be joined by a chamber orchestra and four of Boston’s finest, most expressive Baroque soloists: soprano Teresa Wakim, alto Clare McNamara, tenor Jason McStoots, and bass Thomas Jones.

The eight intertwining lines of Bach’s double-choir motet, *Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied* sing, lilt and dance with rejoicing, as all who have breath give praise to the Lord. As Artistic Director David Hodgkins notes, “Bach’s motets somehow manage to be both grand and intimate at the same time, giving the performer and listener alike an inspirational and completely satisfying musical experience.”

Agnus Dei, Barber’s adaptation for a cappella chorus of his *Adagio for Strings*, loses little in the transference from bow to breath, becoming perhaps even more transcendent as human voices soar upwards, cry out for mercy and murmur prayers that that never resolve but come to rest in peace.

Kodály’s *Norwegian Girls*, *Too Late*, and *The Peacock*, sung in the original

Hungarian, are marvels of musical storytelling. Today, as so many are forced to flee from conflict and repression in their homelands, Kodály's folk songs, although firmly rooted in the Hungarian experience, offer a beautifully humane reminder of the suffering and hope of people everywhere.

As part of their 25th anniversary season, Coro Allegro shines a spotlight on the consummate musicians with whom they have partnered along the way. This concert features Kristina Nilsson, violinist, performing *Melodie* from Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, in gratitude for all the exemplary musicians she has assembled and led as Concertmaster of Coro Allegro's Orchestra.

Ticket Information

Tickets to "Magnificat" are (A) \$65, (B) \$45, and (C) \$25, with 20% off for seniors and students, and a student special ticket at \$15.

Tickets can be purchased online at coroallegro.org or by calling 617-236-4011.

Concert Details

Title: Coro Allegro presents "Magnificat"

Date: Sunday, March 13, 2016 at 3pm

Location: Sanders Theatre, Harvard University, 45 Quincy Street, Cambridge

Repertoire:

Johann Sebastian Bach, *Magnificat*, BWV 243 (1733)

Teresa Wakim, soprano

Clare McNamara, alto

Jason McStoots, tenor

Thomas Jones, bass

Johann Sebastian Bach, *Singet dem Herrn ein neues Leid*, BWV 225 (1727)

Samuel Barber, *Agnus Dei* (1967)

Zoltán Kodály, *Hungarian Songs*

Norvég leányok (Norwegian Girls) (1940)

Akik mindig elkésnek (Too Late) (1934)

Fölszállott a páva (The Peacock) (1939)

Christoph Willibald Gluck, *Melodie* from *Orfeo ed Euridice* (1762)

Kristina Nilsson, violinist

Artist Profiles:

David Hodgkins, Coro Allegro Artistic Director

Artistic Director David Hodgkins has delighted audiences in the greater Boston area for over 20 years with "creative programs, sung with enthusiasm and tonal beauty" (Ed Tapper, *Bay Windows*). Mr. Hodgkins is the Artistic Director of Coro Allegro in Boston, which *Boston Globe* critic Michael Manning deemed "one of Boston's most accomplished choruses," Artistic Director of The New England Classical Singers in Andover, Director of Music at The Commonwealth School in Boston, advanced conducting instructor at the Kodály Music Institute, and serves on the advisory boards of The Boston City Singers and the UMass/Amherst Music Department.

Mr. Hodgkins has performed with Coro Allegro at the ACDA and GALA music festivals, served as guest conductor with Chorus Pro Musica, Masterworks Chorale, and Emmanuel Music, and has made numerous festival appearances as guest conductor and clinician. His ensembles have collaborated with the Boston Celebrity Series, Boston Cecilia, Handel and Haydn Society, Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra, The New England String Ensemble, and the Boston Landmarks Orchestra.

Mr. Hodgkins has conducted numerous world and Boston premiere performances of works ranging from Marianne Martinez to Arvo Pärt. Mr. Hodgkins with Coro Allegro received the 2012 Chorus America Alice Parker/ASCAP Award for their collaborative premiere performance of Kareem Roustom's oratorio *Son of Man*, with The United Parish Church of Brookline and Music Director Susan DeSelms, a work commissioned by United Parish. That same year, Mr. Hodgkins with Coro Allegro released the critically acclaimed CDs *Awakenings* and *In Paradisum* on the Navona label, which feature contemporary composers Robert Stern, Ronald Perera, and Patricia Van Ness and soloists Sanford Sylvan and Ruth Cunningham.

Mr. Hodgkins has been featured in Choral Director Magazine, The Voice of Chorus America, UMass Amherst Magazine, and Haverhill Life. He has served as producer for three award-winning CDs by La Donna Musicale, Laury Gutiérrez, Artistic Director, *In the Style of...* for Terry Everson, trumpet, and Shiela Kibbe, piano on Albany Records, and a CD of trumpet concerti for the Boston University Wind Ensemble and Terry Everson, directed by David Martins.

Mr. Hodgkins received his Bachelor of Music in voice, piano, and harpsichord from UMass/Amherst, a Masters in Choral Conducting from Temple University, and fellowships in choral and orchestral conducting at the Aspen and Sandpoint music festivals. His mentors include Wayne Abercrombie, Fiora Contino, Alan Harler, James Roth, Gunther Schuller, and Paul Vermel. Mr. Hodgkins has

served on the faculties of the New England Conservatory, UMass/Amherst, Temple University, and Clark University.

Teresa Wakim, Soprano

With “a gorgeous, profoundly expressive instrument,” and as “a bejeweled lyric soprano with an exquisite top register,” American soprano Teresa Wakim is perhaps best known as “a perfect early music voice.” Upon completion of her studies at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and Boston University’s College of Fine Arts, Wakim was soon named a Lorraine Hunt Lieberon Fellow at Emmanuel Music in Boston, and won First Prize in the International Soloist Competition for Early Music in Brunnenthal, Austria. The last several seasons have seen her make solo debuts at Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center, Boston Symphony Hall, Grand Théâtre de Provence, Severance Hall in Cleveland, Walt Disney Concert Hall in LA, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, and the Opéra Royal at Versailles.

Ms. Wakim has appeared with many of the nation’s premier orchestras. She has sung Bach’s Wedding Cantata *Weichet nur betrübte Schatten* and Mendelssohn’s *Hear My Prayer* with The Cleveland Orchestra, Handel’s *Messiah* with the Charlotte, Tucson, Alabama and San Antonio Symphonies, and Bach’s *Missa Brevis* with the San Francisco Symphony. In addition, Wakim’s affinity for the Baroque has brought her much success as a frequent soloist with many of the world’s best period instrument ensembles, including the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, Wiener Akademie, the Handel & Haydn Society, and the Boston Early Music Festival.

She has portrayed and recorded multiple operas from Monteverdi to Mozart, specializing in operas of the French Baroque with the Boston Early Music Festival, and sang the roles of Flore, Aréthuse, and Daphne on their 2015 GRAMMY-Winning Best Opera Recording of Charpentier’s *La Descente d’Orphée aux Enfers* and *La Couronne de Fleurs*. She can also be heard on numerous recordings with the Handel & Haydn Society, Boston Early Music Festival, Musik Ekklesia, and Seraphic Fire.

Clare McNamara, Mezzo-Soprano

Praised for her “lushly evocative mezzo” and “attentive and precise” musicianship, Clare McNamara is a soloist and ensemble musician with a passion for early and new music. Her affiliations include Lorelei Ensemble, Skylark Vocal Ensemble, Handel & Haydn Society, Cut Circle, and several other prestigious vocal ensembles with which she sings throughout the United States

and abroad. In recent seasons, Clare been featured in several Lorelei concerts in the Boston area, has appeared on the group's first two commercial recordings, and has participated in Lorelei's professional residencies at Pittsburg State University and Mt. Holyoke College. Clare is in her second season as an active member of the performing roster of the prestigious Handel & Haydn Society in Boston. Clare has also performed with Skylark Vocal Ensemble as a soloist in a series of successful concerts blending Poulenc's notoriously difficult and rarely-performed cantata "Figure Humaine" with American Civil War songs, in addition to recording the group's second album, "Crossing Over."

Solo engagements from past seasons include a critically-acclaimed Jordan Hall debut with Boston Cecilia in J.S. Bach's *Mass in B Minor*, and featured alto for both Heinrich Schütz's *Musikalische Exequien* with Newton Choral Society and for Boston Cecilia's winter concert "The Miraculous Rose." On the baroque opera stage, Clare has sung Antippo in Telemann's *Der Geduldige*, Socrates with Amherst Early Music Festival, and Athamas in John Eccles' *Semele* with Harvard Early Music Society, among others. In the recording studio, Clare most recently provided solo vocals for "On the Nature of Things," commissioned by the internationally-recognized modern dance troupe Pilobolus Dance Theatre from composers Michelle DiBucci and Ed Bilous. Clare earned her Masters of Music in Early Music (Vocal Performance) from Longy School of Music and her Bachelor of Arts in Music from Princeton University. She currently resides in Boston.

Jason McStoots, Tenor

Grammy-nominated, award-winning, and critically acclaimed, Jason McStoots is a tenor soloist performing music of all eras but specializing in early music. As comfortable singing Mozart, Bach or Britten as he is singing renaissance polyphony or medieval chant, McStoots is a versatile artist moving easily between styles and genres. While an experienced concert soloist, he is no stranger to the stage, making some of his most acclaimed performances in opera and musical theater where he is prized as an integrated singing actor. A sought after ensemble artist for his musicality and sensitivity, he is a core member of the up-and-coming renaissance vocal ensemble, Blue Heron, and works frequently in this chamber music milieu with the acclaimed NYC ensemble TENET. His career also includes his private voice studio at Brandeis University and his burgeoning side career as a stage director.

He garnered critical accolades with his recent performances with the Cleveland based ensemble, Les Délices. The Cleveland Plain Dealer described his singing as "exquisite" and saying that he "easily filled the room with a sound both rich and dulcet, commanding ears with what one suspected was one-tenth of his

potential.” He has appeared with such groups as Boston Lyric Opera, Pacific MusicWorks, Boston Camerata, Handel Choir of Baltimore, New Haven Symphony, Tragicomedia, and the Tanglewood Music Center. His renaissance ensemble credits also include his work with Ensemble Origo, under the direction of Eric Rice. In addition he has been featured on the Grammy-nominated recording of Lully's *Pysché* and on the newly released discs of works of Charpentier and John Blow with the Boston Early Music Festival on the CPO label. Described by critics as “a gifted young tenor with wonderful comedic talents” and as having an “alluring tenor voice” and “bright, clear and fully-fledged tenor sonority,” Jason McStoots has performed around the world and the US.

Thomas Jones, Bass

Baritone Thomas Jones has appeared with orchestras, opera companies, choral ensembles and on recital series throughout North America, Europe and the West Indies. Richard Buell of *The Boston Globe* calls the vocal and stage presence of Thomas Jones “irresistible.” Anthony Tommasini of *The New York Times* proclaims that Mr. Jones sings “with plush sounds and musical vigor.”

Solo engagements include Santa Fe Symphony, The Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, San Francisco's Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Boston's Handel & Haydn Society, The Apollo Chorus of Chicago, The San Francisco City Chorus and Orchestra, The Vancouver Chamber Choir and The Canadian Broadcast Orchestra, The Phoenix Bach Choir, The Phoenix Chamber Orchestra, New York's St. Cecilia Orchestra, Baltimore Choral Arts Society, The Pacific Chorale and The Pacific Symphony in Southern California, The Louisville Bach Society at The Kentucky Center for the Performing Arts, The Masterworks Chorus and Orchestra of Washington, DC, The Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic Orchestra, The Bucks County Choral Society and The Philadelphia Festive Arts Orchestra under conductor Robert Page. Festival appearances include Saratoga Performing Arts Center, Berkshire Choral Festival, The Shenandoah Valley Bach Festival, Great Waters Music Festival and Monadnock Music. Opera companies include Boston Lyric Opera, The Harrisburg Opera Company of Pennsylvania and Opera New England.

In the Boston area, appearances include The Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra, Boston Civic Orchestra, The Back Bay Chorale, Coro Allegro, The Worcester Symphony, The Nashua Symphony, The Masterworks Chorale, and Cape Cod Symphony. Mr. Jones has appeared with well over 150 choruses throughout the US, appearing under the baton of notable maestros such as Christopher Hogwood, Nicholas McGegan, Thomas Dunn, John Alexander, Jon Washburn, Daniel Beckwith, Joel Revzen, Robert Page, John Oliver, Tom Hall, Gerald

Mack, Jung-Ho Pak, and Stephen Simon. In the summer of 2000, Mr. Jones sang a concert tour of Denmark, Sweden and Norway, including performances at Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen.

Kristina Nilsson, Violin

Concertmaster and violinist Kristina Nilsson has played regularly in the first violin sections of the Boston Pops Esplanade and Boston Ballet orchestras for over 20 years. She has appeared as a soloist with both the Esplanade Orchestra (under John Williams) and the Boston Ballet (in Vaughan-Williams' *Lark Ascending*), and with the National Symphony Orchestra, the Newton, Brookline, Brockton, and Quincy Symphony Orchestras, Boston Lawyers' Orchestra, and the Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra, of which she is a co-founder. She has co-soloed for Pro Arte with both Joseph Silverstein (former Concertmaster of the Boston Symphony) and artistic advisor/violinist Arturo Delmoni, with whom she premiered a work by Leonard Ciampa for Two Violins and Orchestra. Holding the position of Concertmaster with the Newton Symphony, Brockton Symphony, and the orchestras of Chorus Pro Musica, MIT Chorus, and Coro Allegro, she has also served in that capacity with Harvard Chamber Orchestra, Harvard Collegium, and Harvard-Radcliffe Chorus. As a member of the American Schubert Institute String Quartet and of the Lavazza Chamber Ensemble, Ms. Nilsson has performed numerous chamber music works in the New England area, including the Boston premiere of Schubert's *Conzertstucke* for violin and orchestra with Pro Arte. She served as concertmaster for Pro Arte and the Back Bay Chorale for a recording of Robert Kyr's *The Passion According to Four Evangelists* (New Albion Records). Kristina Nilsson holds a B.A. summa cum laude from Connecticut College, an M.M. from New England Conservatory, and J.D. cum laude from New England School of Law.

About Coro Allegro

Founded in 1990-1991, Coro Allegro is Boston's acclaimed chorus for members, friends, and allies of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community. Coro Allegro strengthens and enriches the lives of its members and the greater Boston community through its performances of outstanding classical choral repertoire and recordings. Coro Allegro is dedicated to its mission to provide broad audiences access to choral music, perform works by diverse composers, serve as a model of a successful LGBT community group through artistic excellence and visibility, and create an affirming, welcoming, and supportive environment for its membership.

In addition to its Boston-area subscription series, Coro Allegro reaches national and international audiences through broadcasts on WGBH "Classical Performances," and performances at the International LGBTQ GALA Choruses Festivals, and the Eastern Division Convention of the American Choral Directors Association. In 2015, Coro Allegro was chosen to perform Arvo Pärt's *Te Deum* at the prestigious Chorus America Conference in Boston.

In 2008, Coro Allegro established the Daniel Pinkham Award in memory of the late Boston composer and conductor. The award is given annually in recognition of outstanding contributions to classical music and the LGBT community.

An advocate of contemporary music, Coro Allegro was the recipient of the 2012 Chorus America/ASCAP Alice Parker Award for programming recently composed music that expands its mission and challenges its audiences in new ways.

With Artistic Director David Hodgkins, Coro Allegro has released four critically acclaimed commercial recordings: *In Paradisum* and *Awakenings* on the Navona Records label, as well as *In the Clearing* and *somewhere i have never traveled*. Gramophone magazine noted of *Awakenings*: "These are deeply affecting pieces and meaningful additions to the choral repertoire. ... The Boston-based Coro Allegro, led by David Hodgkins, performs each score with fine balance and interplay."

Coro Allegro is supported in part by the Boston Cultural Council and the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

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For more information, electronic images, and interviews, please contact: Yoshi Campbell at 978-239-4131 or press@coroallegro.org