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Coro Allegro Presents “Reflections of Mercy” Sunday Nov. 24, 2013

[November 5, 2013] (Boston, MA) — [Coro Allegro](#), Boston’s acclaimed classical chorus for members, friends, and allies of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community, and Artistic Director David Hodgkins present “Reflections of Mercy” at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 24, at Church of the Covenant, 67 Newbury Street in Boston’s Back Bay.

Concert Description

Suffused with works of intense spirituality, the program includes four settings of *Ave Maria*, one of the central and most repeated prayers of Christianity, that span a millennium: 10th century (anonymous), 16th (Tomás Luis de Victoria), 19th (Anton Bruckner), and 21st (Kevin Memley, a young composer living in California). The text of *Ave Maria* combines the angel Gabriel’s greeting to Mary at the Annunciation from the Gospel of Luke: “Hail Mary, full of grace” with a plea from the congregation for mercy and intercession.

Arvo Pärt is an Estonian composer who writes in a self-invented style that is heavily influenced by medieval chant and is partly a reaction to the complexities of mainstream “modern” music. His *Berliner Messe* (1990) is a prime example of the composer’s unique minimalist sound. It is music that induces and rewards a contemplative mindset among its listeners.

With the final two works on the program, Coro celebrates the landmark birthdays in 2013 of two prominent 20th-century’s gay composers: Benjamin Britten (100) and John Corigliano (75). Britten’s “*Cantata Misericordium*,” a setting of the parable of the Good Samaritan, is regarded by many as an epilogue to his pacifist “War Requiem” as it was premiered only nine months afterwards. The piece vividly recounts the dramatic Biblical story. David Kravitz and Stefan Reed are featured soloists as the Traveler and the Samaritan.

John Corigliano first encountered Dylan Thomas’s poem “Fern Hill” at the age of 19, and set this wistful recollection of youth to music at 23. Coro’s performance of this early work by Corigliano, which perfectly captures the joyous (and regretful) mood of the Thomas poem, features Krista River as soloist.

Ticket Information

Tickets to Reflections of Mercy are now available and may be purchased online at www.CoroAllegro.org or by calling 617-236-4011.

Concert Details

“Reflection of Mercy”

November 24, 2013, 3:00pm at Church of the Covenant, Boston

David Hodgkins, conductor
Krista River, mezzo-soprano
Stefan Reed, tenor
David Kravitz, baritone

Benjamin Britten: *Cantata Misericordium*
Arvo Pärt: *Berliner Messe*
John Corigliano: *Fern Hill*
Anonymous: *Ave Maria*
Tomás Luis de Victoria: *Ave Maria*
Kevin Memley: *Ave Maria*

DAVID HODGKINS

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.” He is also Artistic Director of The New England Classical Singers in Andover, Director of Music at The Commonwealth School in Boston, and teaches advanced conducting at the Kodály Music Institute in Boston.

Mr. Hodgkins has conducted groups at the ACDA and GALA music festivals, performed as guest conductor with Chorus Pro Musica, Masterworks Chorale, and Emmanuel Music, and made numerous festival appearances as guest conductor and conducting 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.

A champion of contemporary music, Mr. Hodgkins has conducted numerous world and Boston premiere performances of works ranging from Marianne Martinez to Arvo Pärt. In 2012, Mr. Hodgkins and Coro Allegro received the Chorus America Alice Parker/ASCAP Award for their collaborative performance with The United Parish Church of Brookline and Music Director Susan DeSelms of Kareem Roustom’s oratorio *Son of Man*, a work commissioned by United Parish.

In 2012, Mr. Hodgkins and Coro Allegro released the critically acclaimed CD’s *Awakenings* and *In Paradisum* on the Navona label, which feature local composers Robert Stern, Ronald Perera, and Patricia Van Ness and soloists Sanford Sylvan and Ruth Cunningham. Gramophone

Magazine noted of *Awakenings* that “Coro Allegro, led by David Hodgkins, performs each score with fine balance and interplay.”

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, a CD of 20th-century sonatas for Terry Everson, trumpet, and Shiela Kibbe, piano on Albany Records, and a CD of works for trumpet and wind ensemble featuring Terry Everson and the Boston University Wind ensemble, directed by David Martins. Mr. Hodgkins currently serves on the advisory boards of The Boston City Singers and the UMass/Amherst Music Department.

David Hodgkins received his Bachelor of Music degree in voice, piano and harpsichord from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, a Master of Music in choral conducting from Temple University in Philadelphia, and fellowships in choral and orchestral conducting at both the Aspen and Sandpoint music festivals. His mentors include Wayne Abercrombie, Fiora Contino, Alan Harler, James Roth, Gunther Schuller, and Paul Vermeil. In addition to his teaching at The Commonwealth School, Mr. Hodgkins has been on the faculties of the New England Conservatory, UMass/Amherst, Temple University, and Clark University.

ABOUT CORO ALLEGRO

Founded in 1990, Coro Allegro is a chorus for members, friends, and allies of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities that strengthens and enriches the lives of its members and the greater Boston community through its performances of outstanding classical choral repertoire and recordings. It is dedicated to its mission to provide broad audiences access to choral music and perform works by diverse composers. It serves as a model of a successful and valued LGBT community group through artistic excellence and visibility, and it creates an affirming, welcoming, and supportive environment for its membership. An advocate of contemporary music, Coro Allegro was the recipient of the 2012 Chorus America/ASCAP Alice Parker Award for exposing its audience to brand new works. 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*.

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

For more information, electronic images, and interviews, please contact:
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