



CECILLE

*C*HRISTMAS
A CAPPELLA

SONGS
FROM
AROUND
THE
WORLD

CHICAGO A CAPPELLA

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Total Time: (64:10)

***WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING**

Chicago a cappella

Jonathan Miller, Founder and Artistic Director
Patrick Sinozich, Music Director

Kathryn Kamp, soprano
Cari Plachy, soprano
Elizabeth Grizzell, mezzo-soprano
Susan Schober, mezzo-soprano

Harold Brock, tenor
Cary Lovett, tenor
Michael Boschert, baritone
Matthew Greenberg, baritone
Benjamin Rivera, bass

INTRODUCTION

The December holidays are an exquisite time of the year for choral music. We choral musicians seem to have virtually endless license to make music in December; there is always an audience, usually quite large and always appreciative. In Chicago, with hundreds of choral groups large and small, not even counting school and church choirs, one could probably attend a performance of holiday choral music from 2pm to 8pm every day in December, and perhaps one would be able to take in everything that was offered. In our urban area of 8 million people, there is that much going on.

In the midst of all this activity, it has been Chicago *a cappella's* aim to present a respite from the hubbub. We aim to create a little jewel of a concert, with these qualities: passionate, inventively programmed, flawlessly executed in performance, and sung in such a way that the words enter the hearts of everyone present and lodge there for a while.

This CD brings to you songs that have warmed our singers' and audiences' hearts for the past many years when we have done our holiday concerts. We have tended to focus on music from our own time, since so much glorious music is being created right now. Most of the songs on this album were written or arranged in the last twenty years, and some are as recent as 2007. From the sheer joy of "Who is the baby?" and "Il est Né, le Divin Enfant" to the poignant, wrenchingly beautiful "Lo Yisa Goy" and "The Christ-child's Lullaby," we bring you a celebration of the human capacity for wonder and tenderness. This music is our ministry in the broadest sense, the fulfillment of our mission to use our resources as a professional vocal ensemble in the service of the best music we can find, to bring it to life for you and for all of our audiences. If you have personal favorites that you identify after getting to know this album, please send us a note or an e-mail and let us know; it is always so good to know how our music is having an impact.

This album is dedicated to Bill Flowers, who at the time of this CD's completion is finishing a distinguished term of service as president of Chicago *a cappella's* board of directors. Everyone who knows Bill knows it's all about the music and the people for him, and we could not have a better or more dedicated champion. Thank you, Bill, from all of us at Chicago *a cappella*.

— Jonathan Miller

NOTES ON THE MUSIC

☐ Christian Onyeji: *Amuwor'ayi otu nwa*

This song is an expression of pure joy. Its Nigerian composer, Christian Onyeji, is also a pianist, choreographer, and conductor. He is Senior Lecturer at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka Enugu State, where he researches African music and composes Nigerian art music.

With a text from Isaiah, this piece, in the Igbo language, was designed to fit the needs of modern Nigerian church worship. With elements of dance, polyrhythm, and texture typical of the Igbo sub-area, the piece has a driving and jubilant quality. The music is called a "Native Air," a genre popular among Nigerian art-music lovers. After several refrains and short verses, the texture adds solo voices with which it builds to a glorious, multi-layered ending.

*O n'ihì n'amuwor'ayi otu nwa.
Otu nwa nwoke ka e nyewor'ayi.
Chinekenke bau dike.
Nnanke bau nna mgbe nile.*

For unto us a child is born,
unto us a child is given;
and the government shall be upon his
shoulder;
and his name shall be called Wonderful,
Counselor,
The mighty God, the Everlasting Father,
the Prince of Peace.

② **Wayland Rogers: *What Sweeter Music***

Wayland Rogers, a singer, conductor, and teacher as well as a composer, was born December 26, 1941, in Kentucky and trained at the University of Kentucky, Wichita State University, Northwestern University, The Salzburg Mozarteum, and in London. As a singer, he received a 1986 Grammy nomination for Best Chamber Music recording with the Chicago Symphony Winds. He trained as a conductor with Margaret Hillis. For 15 years he was Artistic Director/Conductor of The Camerata Singers of Lake Forest, Illinois. He is currently Music Director at North Shore Unitarian Church in Deerfield, Illinois, and a faculty member at North Park University in Chicago.

Rogers dedicated the score for “What Sweeter Music” to Chicago *a cappella*, which gave this beautiful work its world premiere at the ensemble’s first Christmas concert in 1994. The original (and slightly longer) poem by Robert Herrick — once sung to King Charles I of England at Whitehall in a musical setting by Henry Lawes — expresses true wonder at the birth of the baby and moves through a remarkable number of ways at declaiming joy — exuberant, tender, majestic, and quiet. Rogers’s music follows the mood of the song in sensitive fashion, taking the listener on a journey in tone to match that in verse.

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!
[The] ear, and eye, and everything.

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:
We see Him come, and know Him ours,

Who, with His sunshine, and His showers,
Turns all the patient ground to flowers.
The Savior [orig: darling] of the world is come,
And fit it is, [to] find a room
To welcome Him.

What sweeter music can we bring ...

The noblest [orig: 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.

What sweeter music . . .

Robert Herrick (1591–1674)

③ **arr. J. David Moore: *Il est Né, le Divin Enfant***

This popular French carol has found a lively setting in the hands of J. David Moore, a St. Paul-based musician who makes his living as a choral conductor, singer, composer, arranger, and music copyist. He holds degrees in conducting and composition from Florida State University and the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. Moore has also done many settings for *Dare to Breathe*, the Twin Cities-based vocal ensemble he founded. While living in Cincinnati, he founded the Village Waytes, the vocal ensemble for which he created this arrangement.

*Il est né, le divin enfant,
Jouez hautbois, résonnez musettes!
Il est né le divin enfant,
Chantons tous son avènement!*

*Une étable est son logement
Un peu de paille est sa couchette.
Une étable est son logement
Pour un dieu quel abaissement!*

*Un bel ange est venu disant:
"Que votre âme bonheur s'apprette."
un bel ange est venu disant:
"Le Sauveur est né maintenant!"*

*Partez, Ô rois de l'Orient!
Venez vous unir à nos fêtes!
Partez, Ô rois de l'Orient!
Venez adorez cet enfant!*

*Ô Jésus! Ô Roi tout-puissant!
Tout petit enfant que vous êtes!
Ô Jésus! Ô Roi tout-puissant!
Reignez sur nous entièrement!*

He is born the divine child,
play the oboe, sound the bagpipes!
He is born the divine child,
let us all sing of his coming!

A stable is his lodging,
a little straw is his crib.
A stable is his lodging
such abasement for a god!

A beautiful angel appeared and spoke:
"dress your soul in happiness,"
A beautiful angel appeared and spoke:
"The savior is born today!"

Depart, O great kings of the East!
together, come to our celebration!
Depart, O great kings of the East!
come adore this child!

O Jesus! O Almighty King!
although you are a small child,
O Jesus! O Almighty King!
Reign over us completely!

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4 arr. Eleanor Daley: *The Huron Carol*

The earliest Canadian carol on record, *The Huron Carol* is now known and sung all over Canada. Its original words were in the Huron language, with a tune borrowed from 16th-century French Canada. The carol in Huron was known from about 1643 as *Jesus Ahatonhia*. This choral version comes from the renowned Toronto-based composer Eleanor Daley. She regularly composes music for her church choirs and also writes and arranges secular music. Her music is sung around the globe, and she has been honored nationally in Canada.

'Twas in the moon of wintertime when all the birds had fled
That mighty Gitchi Manitou sent angel choirs instead.
Before their light the stars grew dim
And wandr'ing hunters heard the hymn:
Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born, In excelsis Gloria.

Within a lodge of broken bark the tender Babe was found
A ragged robe of rabbit skin enwrapped His beauty round
But as the hunter braves drew nigh, the angel's song rang loud and high:
Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born, In excelsis Gloria.

O children of the forest free, O Sons of Manitou,
The Holy Child of Earth and Heaven is born today for you;
Come kneel before the radiant Boy who brings you beauty, peace and joy:
Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born, In excelsis Gloria.

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5 **John Jacob Niles** (arr. Steve Pilkington): *I Wonder as I Wander*

This much-loved tune is partly traditional and partly composed. The “original” melody for this carol was pieced together by John Jacob Niles from three lines he cajoled out of a young girl in 1933, in Murphy, North Carolina (the mountainous far west of the state, in the Appalachians). Niles paid Annie Morgan twenty-five cents per performance; after eight tries, he notes, “I had only three lines of verse, a garbled fragment of melodic material — and a magnificent idea.” He fleshed out the melody and wrote additional verses, first recording the song in 1938 on a 78-rpm disc for RCA Red Seal. The melody has found an exquisite home in this *a cappella* choral setting by Steve Pilkington, associate professor and chair of several departments at the acclaimed Westminster Choir College (Rider University) in Princeton, New Jersey.

I wonder as I wander out under the sky,
How Jesus the Savior did come for to die.
For poor ord’n’ry people like you and like I...
I wonder as I wander out under the sky.

When Mary birthed Jesus ‘twas in a cow’s stall,
With wise men and farmers and shepherds and all.
But high from God’s heaven a star’s light did fall,
And the promise of ages it then did recall.

If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing,
A star in the sky, or a bird on the wing,
Or all of God’s angels in heav’n for to sing,
He surely could have had it, ‘cause he was the King.

John Jacob Niles. Used by permission of G. Schirmer, Inc.
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6 **Stephen Paulus: *Splendid Jewel***

Composer Stephen Paulus has been hailed as “a bright, fluent inventor with a ready lyric gift.” (*The New Yorker*) His prolific output of more than 350 works covers many genres, including music for orchestra, chorus, chamber ensembles, solo voice, keyboard, and opera. In addition to his stature as a composer of opera and works for solo voice, Paulus enjoys renown as one of the foremost present-day American composers of choral music. His choral works have been performed and recorded by some of the most distinguished choirs in the United States including the New York Concert Singers, Dale Warland Singers, Los Angeles Master Chorale, Robert Shaw Festival Singers, New Music Group of Philadelphia, Master Chorale of Washington DC, Vocal Arts Ensemble of Cincinnati, Mormon Tabernacle Choir, and dozens of other professional, community, church, and college choirs. He is one of the most frequently recorded contemporary composers, with over fifty recordings of his music.

Splendid Jewel was commissioned by The Rose Ensemble, a professional choral group from the Twin Cities specializing in early music. The text is a medieval prayer taken from the *Laudi spirituali*, a collection of Italian-language prayers collected in Florence during the fourteenth century, whose immediacy captured the hearts of the Catholic faithful. The refrain “Hail, hail, devout Virgin” recurs several times, acting as a structural musical marker around which more florid, lyrical sections are woven. In a truly brilliant gesture at the end, Paulus repeats this idea one last time in the men’s voices, while the women’s voices create an ethereal tapestry of sound at a much slower rhythm; the result is an almost visually palpable sense of heavenly bliss, concluding with a grounded D-major chord that shimmers with overtones.

Hail, hail, devout virgin,
Splendid jewel, Maria!
Now sing we with great delight
Of our perfect love,
Who prays for us to Christ
Who is our light and way.

Hail, hail, devout virgin,
Splendid jewel, Maria!
All you whose minds are in heaven,
Now sing sweetly,
Rightly presenting this gift
To Christ and the Virgin Mary.

Hail, hail, devout virgin.
High and glorious lady,
Mother of the most merciful Jesus,
You are the rose of heaven
Than which there is none more beautiful.

Hail, hail, devout virgin,
Splendid jewel, Maria!

Translated from *Laudi spirituali* (14th century Italian)

☐ **Stacy Garrop: *Lo Yisa Goy*** (*commissioned by Chicago a cappella*)

A composer creating music of great expressive power and masterful technical control, Stacy Garrop has received several awards, commissions, and grants, including the 2006/2007 Detroit Symphony Orchestra’s Elaine Lebenbom Memorial Award, the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble’s 2006/2007 Harvey Gaul Composition Competition, the 2005 Raymond and Beverly Sackler Music Composition Prize, 2005 and 2001 Barlow Endowment commissions, and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s 1999–2000 First Hearing Composition Competition. *Chicago a cappella* commissioned two works from Stacy Garrop in 2007: a rollicking *Hava Nagila* setting for its concert called “Days of Awe and Rejoicing: Hidden Gems of Jewish Music,” as well as this more somber work, *Lo Yisa Goy*, for its “Holidays a cappella” performances.

The composer writes:

Lo Yisa Goy is a prayer for peace. I remember singing this song as a young child in Hebrew school and synagogue, in the context (at least in my congregation) of praying for the state of Israel. I think we’re at a particular point in which people in a lot of different nations could use such a prayer. For this reason, you’ll hear the words in both Hebrew and English. In my research of previous versions of the melody, I discovered three variants for the tune, all of which I have incorporated into my piece.

There is a lovely, unexpected (and perhaps intentional) reference to Handel’s *Messiah* at the very end of this piece, with the final line of English text being identical to the last line of Handel’s chorus “And the glory of the Lord.” For those who have sung *Messiah*, it can be a remarkable, even moving experience to hear the same text set in such a different way.

Lo yisa goy el goy cherev, (Nation shall not lift up sword against nation)
Lo yilm’du od milchama. (Neither shall they learn war any more.)

And they shall beat their swords into plowshares
And their spears into pruning-hooks;
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war any more.
But they shall sit every man under his vine and fig tree,
And none shall make them afraid;
For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

Micah 4:3-4

⑧ **Rosephanye Powell: *Who is the baby?***

Dr. Rosephanye Powell serves as Associate Professor of Voice at Auburn University (Auburn, Alabama). Dr. Powell began her tenure at Philander Smith College in 1993, after receiving her Doctor of Music in vocal performance degree at Florida State University. She earned her Master of Music degree in vocal performance and pedagogy from Westminster Choir College and a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Alabama State University. Her choral music is in demand worldwide.

The composer calls this piece a “Christmas song in the style of the spiritual with the gospel ‘special,’” referring to the gospel-style “break” halfway through the piece where the texture clears and the different voice parts re-enter one at a time, creating layers of sound and syncopated enthusiasm. Although neither the form nor the text are traditional, the result is truly energetic and effective, as the audience reception to concert performances of this piece have borne out.

Who is the baby born in a manger?
Jesus, Jesus, the Holy One.
Who is the baby born in a manger?
Jesus, Jesus, the Son of God.

Angels from heaven sing of his glory.
Jesus, Jesus, the Holy One.
Angels from heaven sing of his glory.
Jesus, Jesus, the Son of God.

Come see the Christ child let us adore him
Hallelujah! Praise to the King.
Who is the baby born in the manger?
Jesus, Jesus, Emmanuel.

Come, let us worship Him.
Worship Him, let’s worship Him.

Who is the baby born in a manger? ...

O come, let us sing praise,
Sing praise to the baby,
Come, let’s praise the baby,
Born in Bethlehem.

O come let us sing,
O come let us praise,
O come let us sing and praise the Holy One,
Born in Bethlehem!

Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

O come let us sing,
O come let us shout,
O come let us sing and praise the Holy One,
Oh yes,
Born in Bethlehem!

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9 **Gwyneth Walker: *The Christ-child's Lullaby***

Gwyneth Walker (b. 1947) is a graduate of Brown University and the Hartt School of Music. A former faculty member of the Oberlin College Conservatory, she resigned from academic employment in 1982 to pursue a career as a full-time composer. She is a proud resident of Vermont, where she lives on a dairy farm in Braintree. She is the recipient of the Year 2000 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Vermont Arts Council. Walker's catalog includes over 130 commissioned works for orchestra, band, chorus, and chamber ensembles. The year 2007 was filled with anniversary celebrations around the country in honor of the composer's 60th birthday.

The Christ-child's Lullaby is a work of unusual beauty, reflecting the composer's desire to incorporate dramatic elements into choral music. The basic tune, a Hebridean folksong, is a haunting Mixolydian melody (with the flatted 7th scale degree). Walker keeps the harmonies grounded in this Celtic-sounding space for the first part of the piece, but takes a stunning turn toward Lydian (C-major with an F#) during an extended "Alleluia" section. The texture later includes soft hand-tapping by the choir, several solo lines, and an ingenious, semi-free tapering off toward the end, leaving the initial soloist to close the piece alone, just as a parent will be singing into silence when the baby is finally asleep.

My love, my dear, my darling thou,
my treasure new, my gladness thou,
my comely beauteous babe-son thou,
unworthy I to tend to thee.
Alleluia.

O dear the eye that softly looks,
O dear the heart that fondly loves,
Tho' but a tender babe thou art,
the graces all grow up with thee.
Alleluia.

White sun of hope and light art thou,
of love the eye and heart art thou,
Tho' but a tender babe, I bow
in heav'nly rapture unto thee.
Alleluia.

Hosanna to the Son of David!
My King, my Lord, and my Savior.
Great my joy to be song-lulling thee.
I the nurse of the King of Greatness!
I the mother of the God of Glory!
Am not I the one to be envied?

My love, my dear, my darling thou,
my treasure new, my gladness thou,
my comely beauteous babe-son thou,
unworthy I to tend to thee.

Traditional Hebridean. Used by permission of
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10 **arr. Jerry J. Troxell: *O Come, O Come Emmanuel***

The opening movement of a set of three *Yuletide Carols*, this is a haunting, hopeful setting of the familiar "Emmanuel" tune by the late Jerry Troxell (1936–1998), a composer whose activities centered in St. Louis, Chicago, and Springfield, Illinois. Troxell's acknowledged masterpiece is *Prayers of Steel*, a setting of the Carl Sandburg poem, which Chicago *a cappella* recorded on its *Electric* CD. For this carol, Troxell makes very slight rhythmic shifts of the familiar tune, all in keeping with the text's sense of anticipation.

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Day-spring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

Medieval Latin lyric, translation by John Mason Neale (1851)

arr. Ian Humphris: *Noël nouvelet*

This traditional French carol-about-a-carol (a “noël” is a Christmas song or carol) has been delicately arranged by Ian Humphris, conductor of the National Westminster Choir in England. Humphris is a versatile composer and arranger. He became well known as the conductor of the famous singing group, the Linden Singers, appearing regularly on television and radio. As a member of the male quintet, the Baccholian Singers of London, he has given recitals in the USA, Australia, New Zealand, Russia, Poland, and many European and Scandinavian countries. Ian has written over 200 choral and orchestral arrangements, many published and recorded. For 20 years, he presented television and radio programs for schools on BBC and ITV, introducing and writing music for “Music Time” on BBC TV and “Music Workshop” and “Music Makers” on radio.

*Noël nouvelet, Noël chantons ici.
Dévotes gens, crions à Dieu merci.
Chantons Noël pour le Roi nouvelet,
Noël nouvelet, Noël chantons ici.*

*D'un oiselet après le chant ouis
Qui, aux pasteurs, disait: “Partez ici
En Bethléem trouvez l'agnelet.”
Noël nouvelet, Noël chantons ici.*

*En Bethléem Marie et Joseph vis,
L'Ane et le boeuf, L'Enfant couchée parmi.
La creche était au lieu d'un bercelet.
Noël nouvelet, Noël chantons ici.*

*L'étoile y vis, qui la nuit éclaircit,
Qui, d'Orient dont elle était sortie.
En Bethléem les trois rois conduisait.
Noël nouvelet, Noël chantons ici.*

*L'un portait d'or, l'autre le myrrh aussi.
L'autre l'encens qui faisait bon senti.
Du Paradis semblait le jardinet.
Noël nouvelet, Noël chantons ici.*

Let us sing a new Noël (carol) here.
Devoted people, cry out in thanks to God.
Let us sing a new Noël for the new King;
Let us sing a new Noël here.

Listen to the song of a little bird
who said to the shepherds: “Leave here;
in Bethlehem you will find the little Lamb.”
Let us sing a new Noël here.

In Bethlehem stayed Mary and Joseph;
The Infant lay down among the ass and ox.
The manger was in place of a little cradle.
Let us sing a new Noël here.

See here the star, which lit up the sky,
which from the East was standing out.
The three kings led themselves to Bethlehem.
Let us sing a new Noël here.

One carried gold, another myrrh;
the other incense, which made good scent.
The little garden seemed [to be] from paradise.
Let us sing a new Noël here.

Translation by Jonathan Miller

12 Richard Proulx: *Prayer of the Venerable Bede*

A composer whose stamp on musical life in Chicago is unmistakable, Richard Proulx has had a distinguished career as a composer, arranger, conductor, colleague, and driving force for first-quality liturgical music in America. The 1994 BENE award from *Modern Liturgy* magazine singled him out as “the most significant liturgical composer of the last 20 years.” His more than 300 compositions in all genres of high-church sacred music are a reflection of his tireless and successful work to raise the standards of liturgical music in the United States.

Having served congregations in the greater Seattle area, Proulx attained national attention as the director of music at Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago, where he served for fifteen years starting in 1979. While there, he created a cathedral music program of national prominence. Upon his retirement from that position, he founded the Cathedral Singers, a professional choral ensemble with a large catalog of sacred-music recordings to its credit. Chicago *a cappella* honored Richard Proulx with its tribute award at the ensemble’s 2007 Gala, with the composer present.

This meditation sets a text found on the wall of Galilee Chapel in England’s Durham Cathedral, one of the most magnificent and distinctive churches in the world. The words are attributed to the Venerable Bede, probably known best as the author of the *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, which he completed in AD 731. The harmonic language here is spare yet striking. It is amazing what a little half-step can do in a piece of music: after an opening that evokes the Dorian mode (D minor with a B-flat), the unusual alto solo departs ever so slightly by singing mostly B-naturals. This tiny departure somehow strongly suggests the dawning of the morning light, raising the ear’s awareness in a remarkable way.

<i>Christus est stella matutina, Qui nocte saeculi transacta lucem vitae, Sanctus promittit, et pandit aeternum.</i>	Christ is the morning star, Who when the night of this world is past, He gives to his saints the promise of the light of life, And opens everlasting day.
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Bede (673-735)

Translation by Richard Proulx. Reprinted by permission of GIA Publications, Inc. ©1982

13 Per Nørgård: *En stjerne er sat*

This remarkable piece of musical storytelling is the creation of Per Nørgård (b. 1932), the most influential Danish composer of the late twentieth century. Nørgård left his faculty position at the Copenhagen Conservatory to found an important center for experimental composition at the university in Aarhus, Denmark’s second-largest city. This piece comes from Nørgård’s 1992 publication *Korbogen* (“The choir book”); it is a new *a cappella* setting of a section from an earlier Christmas oratorio.

The action begins in the part of the story where the angel tells the shepherds not to be afraid, and to go to Bethlehem, where they will find Jesus in the manger. In addition to familiar words from scripture, Danish poet Bent Nørgård has added several stanzas of his own lyrics. These new words, in the voices of the shepherds and the wise men, lend to the whole experience a rather colloquial, informal feel, while still retaining an immediate intimacy and a sense of heartfelt wonder. The song’s consistent triple meter gives the piece a sense of steady walking toward Bethlehem, leading up to an unexpected spoken outburst from one of the wise men.

Engel:
*Frygt ikke: thi se, jeg forkynder eder en
stor glæde,
Som skal være for hele folket.
Thi eder i dag en frelser født i Davids by.
Dette skal være jeret tegn:
I skal finde et barn svøbt og liggende i
en krybbe,
ære være Gud i det højeste!
Og fred på jorden i mennesker, der har
hans velbehag.*

Hyrder:
*En stjerne er sat en gravmørk nat.
Den skinner på jorden og havet,*

Angel:
Fear not; for see, I foretell [to] you a great
joy,
which shall be for all people.
For [to] you today a savior is born in Da-
vid’s village.
This shall be for you a sign:
you shall find a child swaddled and lying
in a manger;
Glory be to God in the highest!
And peace on earth to men of good will.

Shepherds:
A star is set in the grave-dark night.
It shines on the earth and the sea;

*bringer os bud om den lysets Gud
Som har skænket os livet som gave.*

*Den stjerne går ind i sjæl og sind,
og tænder en flammende kerte.
Håb om et sted fyldt af salig fred
for vort bankende, søgende hjerte.*

*Vort liv rinder ud, vor tid er kort
snart bæres vi gennem den fjerne
gravmørke nat, og vor kurs bliver sat
mod det eviges strålende stjerne.*

1. Vise Mand:
*Hvad er vel al vor visdom værd?
Vi søgte en konge – og fandt et barn!*

Hyrder:
*Mod det eviges lysende stjerne.
Stjernen som tændtes af Herren i nat.*

It brings us tidings of the radiant God
Who has granted us the gift of life.

The star goes into the soul and mind,
And sparks a blazing vision:
Hope of a place filled with blessed peace
For our beating, searching hearts.

Our life runs out, our day is short;
Soon we are carried through the distant
Grave-dark night, and our course is set
Toward the eternal, radiant star.

1st Wise Man:
Now what good is all our wisdom?
We sought a king, and found a child!

Shepherds:
Toward the eternal, shining star:
The star that was sent from God in the
night.

Luke 2:10-14 with additional text by Bent Nørgård.
Translation by Jonathan Miller

[14] Carol Barnett: *Hodie*

Composer and flutist Carol Barnett is a graduate of the University of Minnesota where she studied with Dominick Argento, Paul Fetler and Bernhard Weiser. The Women's Philharmonic, Dale Warland Singers, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, Westminster Abbey Choir, Ankor Children's Choir of Jerusalem, Israel, Nebraska Children's Chorus, and Gregg Smith Singers are among the ensembles that have performed her works. In 1991, she was a fellow at the Camargo Foundation in Cassis, France, and in 1999, she was awarded a travel grant from the Inter-University Research Committee on Cyprus.

Composer in residence with the Dale Warland Singers from 1992 to 2001, she is currently a studio artist and adjunct lecturer at Augsburg College in Minneapolis.

The well-known text is from the Magnificat antiphon at Second Vespers on Christmas Day, a chant used by Britten to open his familiar *A Ceremony of Carols*. Barnett notes that her piece has been influenced by the music of Rachmaninoff and Poulenc, especially the final movement of Poulenc's *Four Motets (pour le temps de Noël)*. Holst's influence is also evident in the textural groupings of women vs. men.

*Hodie Christus natus est:
Hodie Salvator apparuit;
Hodie in terra canunt Angeli,
laetantur Archangeli:
Hodie exsultant justi dicentes:
Gloria in excelsis Deo, alleluia.*

Today Christ was born:
Today the Savior appeared;
Today the angels sing on earth,
the archangels sing praises:
Today the just exult, saying:
Gloria to God in the highest, alleluia.

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15 Enrico Oweggi: *Nyathi Onyuol*

This is a spiritual in the Luo language from the Nyanza province in western Kenya. The Luo are the second-largest and second-wealthiest tribe in Kenya. They traditionally live on the shores of Lake Victoria, which they consider sacred. Many of Kenya's scientists and doctors come from the Luo tribe, which places a high value on education. This piece has been made famous by Muungano, the national choir of Kenya, founded by Boniface Mganga as an ecumenical, pan-Christian, multi-ethnic choir with singers from all of the tribes and linguistic traditions of his country. "Muungano" means "unity" in Kiswahili; the choir's songs, like many contemporary African arts, fuse traditional and neo-traditional African tunes with exuberant and intense quasi-Western harmonic style. Staying true to our own traditions, Chicago *a cappella* features a vocal percussionist covering the drum part.

*Isaya ne okoro k'owacho niya
"Kuomwa nyathi onyuol."*

*Nyathi ma wuoyi, no luongo Hono,
Jabura, Nyasaye ma Jateko, Wuonwa,
Emmanuel.*

*Chieng'o nogo piny neolil piny neo kuwe,
Sulwe ne rieny, Nyathi n'o nyuol.
Kanyana n'oting'o Maria, yawa, kodhiyoe
piny mar*

*Daudi kwargi kanyana n'oting'o
Maria yawa Maria ne pek Yesu Jawar
Kar nindo n'otamo Maria yudo
Bethlehem ne opon'g ting ma pek
Josef chwore n'o manyo ot tone ot otamo
Kuom hawi Josef n'onoyis kund dhok
Gotieno nogo muoch neoyako Maria.*

Repeat: *Isaya ne okoro . . .*

Free translation:

Isaiah prophesied and said:
"Unto us a child is born!"

He shall be called wonderful, counsellor,
the mighty God, our father Emmanuel!

On that day
it was dark and silent.
There was no place
in Bethlehem for
Mary and Joseph.
By chance
they were shown
a shed, and that night
Mary gave birth
to the child.

Isaiah prophesied . . .

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16 Chaim Parchi (arr. Joshua Jacobson): *Aleih Neiri*

Chaim Parchi was born in 1947 in Yemen and is primarily a visual artist, a skill in which he is self-taught. In the summer of 1979, Parchi brought his family to Massachusetts to continue his graduate studies at Boston University. He became Music Director of the Solomon Schechter Day School and began performing and recording Israeli and ethnic Jewish music for the public. Parchi relocated to Boca Raton, Florida, in 1995, and taught music and art at Broward Jewish High School, B'nai Torah High School, and Hillel Community Day School. He writes: "I see Judaism as a coat of many colors. . . . We need to look at the fabrics that unite us and all the threads within. Through our diverse music and art we can make a Coat that will keep the Jewish spirit alive and come to [an] understanding of all our people."

Aleih Neiri is a Chanukah tune composed and recorded by Parchi himself. The overall feel and sound of that recording have been adapted into a choral arrangement by the renowned scholar and conductor Joshua Jacobson, founder of the Zamir Chorale of Boston. Jacobson has added some lovely harmonic touches of his own while keeping the heartfelt nature of the solo line intact.

Solo:
*Aleih neiri, aleih ha-neir,
Ha-eir chadri, chadri ha-eir,
Aleih neiri, aleih u-z'rach,
L'-yeled kat, l'na-ar rach.*

*Aleih neiri, aleih ha-neir,
Ha-eir chadri, chadri ha-eir,
Ha-yom li-chag gil es'-mach,
Aleih neiri, aleih u-z'rach.*

Solo:
Rise up, my light, rise up and shine;
My candles, glow with light divine.
See my menorah shining in the night,
For all the children basking in its light.

Rise up, my light, rise up and shine;
My candles, glow with light divine.
On Chanukah we celebrate and sing;
Our prayers rise, our melodies take wing.

Tutti:

*Aleih neiri, aleih ha-neir,
Ha-eir chadri, chadri ha-eir,
Aleih neiri, aleih maher,
Al rov nisim saper, saper.*

Solo:

*Aleih neiri, aleih ha-neir,
Ha-eir chadri, chadri ha-eir,
Al Ma-ca-bi b'-oz nil'cham,
Geireish oyeiv ga-al ha-am.*

Chaim Parchi. Reprinted by permission of Transcontinental Music Publications © 1990 All rights reserved.

Tutti:

Rise up, my light, rise up and shine;
My candles, glow with light divine.
While candles burn, come tell us the tale
Of God's great wonders in Eretz Yisrael
[the land of Israel].

Solo:

Rise up, my light, rise up and shine;
My candles, glow with light divine.
Come hear the story of Judah Maccabee,
The mighty hero who set our people free.

Translation by Joshua Jacobson. Reprinted by permission of Transcontinental Music Publications ©1990 All rights reserved.

arr. James Clemens (after James S. Pierpont): ***Jingle a cappella***

A perhaps too-familiar tune takes a brilliant new guise in the hands of composer James Clemens, a skillful writer and arranger who recently moved from the Chicago area to Virginia. This arrangement was written for Chicago *a cappella*. In addition to giving Pierpont's tune a jazz-inflected harmonic setting, Clemens takes an innovative turn in the "legit" direction. The middle section is a wild fugue in 7/8 time, based on J. S. Bach's Fuga 23, BWV 868, from *The Well-Tempered Klavier*, Volume 1.

Howard Helvey: *O Lux Beatissima*

In addition to serving as Organist/Choirmaster of Calvary Episcopal Church in Cincinnati, Howard Helvey (b. 1968) maintains a national and international presence as a concert pianist, conductor, composer, arranger, and speaker. Known particularly for his published choral music, Mr. Helvey has had his work featured on recordings and national network television broadcasts (including PBS), in such distinguished concert venues as New York's Carnegie Hall, the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., and numerous locations throughout Europe and Asia. Drawn particularly to folk-based melodies and ancient hymn tunes, Mr. Helvey often incorporates them into his own writing. In 2002, he received a John Ness Beck Foundation Award for his distinguished contribution to sacred choral music.

O Lux Beatissima is an extraordinary work, recalling influences of Howells and Vaughan Williams with an astonishing economy of means. The text is a stanza from the medieval sequence "Veni, Sancte Spiritus" ("Come, Holy Spirit"), penned around the year 1200 for Whitsunday (Pentecost) and attributed to Stephan Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury. Its themes of light, blessing, and grace make it fitting for the Nativity holiday as well as Pentecost.

*O lux beatissima,
Reple cordis intima
Tuorum fidelium.*

*Sine tuo numine,
Nihil est in homine,
Nihil est innocium.*

O Light most Blessed,
Fill the inmost heart
Of all thy faithful.

Without your grace,
There is nothing in us,
Nothing that is not harmful.

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PUBLISHERS

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- Clemens, James: *Jingle a cappella* ©2003 James E. Clemens based on *Jingle Bells* by James S. Pierpont
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ABOUT CHICAGO A CAPPELLA

Chicago *a cappella* (www.chicagoacappella.org) is a classical vocal ensemble that moves the heart and spirit with fun, innovative concerts. Chicago *a cappella* has been acclaimed as “a jewel in the crown of Chicago’s musical life” (*The American Organist*) and praised for its “clarity, well-balanced tone, and deep emotional involvement” (*Washington Post*). The performers are among the Chicago area’s most accomplished choral singers and soloists. The ensemble sings repertoire spanning from the ninth to the twenty-first centuries and is an ardent champion of music by today’s living composers, including works it has commissioned from Chen Yi, Tania León, Ezequiel Viñao, Stacy Garrop, and Rollo Dilworth.

Founded in 1993 by Jonathan Miller, Chicago *a cappella* produces an extensive annual concert series in the Chicago area. The ensemble has made dozens of guest appearances in the Chicago area and tour appearances in 11 U.S. states and Mexico. The group has been featured on national radio broadcasts and has made numerous Chicago radio and television appearances.

This CD joins the group’s acclaimed debut on the Cedille label, *Shall I Compare Thee: Choral Songs on Shakespeare Texts*. The ensemble’s CDs for other labels include two early-music recordings, a collection of spirituals, a live recording of holiday music, and *Eclectic*, a collection of new choral works, familiar favorites, and vocal jazz.

ALSO BY CHICAGO A CAPPELLA FOR CEDILLE RECORDS



Shall I Compare Thee? Choral Songs on Shakespeare Texts

Cedille Records CDR 90000 085

“More fun than human beings should be allowed, the most addictive CD to come my way in a long time is *Shall I Compare Thee? Choral Songs on Shakespeare Texts* on the Cedille label. Some of the pieces are familiar from previous Shakespeare compilations — Jaako Mäntyjärvi’s *Four Shakespeare Songs*, with its magnificent ‘Come away, come away, death;’ a selection of Matthew Harris’s *Shakespeare’s Songs* from which you would never in a million years guess that he was a student of Carter and Babbitt; Nils Lindberg’s *Shall I Compare Thee?* But, most of the material is new — to me, at least — and none of it has ever been sung this well on CD. The Chicago *a capella* is some kind of magic blend of the great old jazz group, the Hi-Los, with a little Double Six of Paris and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir thrown in. I challenge anyone who listens to the first cut — *Summer Sonnet* by Kevin Olson, a composer and pianist at Elmhurst College near Chicago — to stop humming it for a week.” — **Sequenza21.com**



Chicago a cappella

Front (left to right):

**Benjamin Rivera
Elizabeth Grizzell
Susan Schober
Jonathan Miller
Patrick Sinozich**

Middle:

**Cary Lovett
Harold Brock
Matthew Greenberg**

Rear:

**Kathryn Kamp
Michael Boschert
Cari Plachy**

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