

Crescendo Holiday Concerts: Carols for the Earth

Festive Old and New Holiday Music with an earth-conscious message

Crescendo's recent sold-out 20th anniversary concerts were described as "Memorable events that created an amazing sense of wonder!" by the press. The Crescendo Chorus, its soloists, and instrumentalists present two concerts with a timeless message for this holiday season: peace, not from heaven, but on earth. Crescendo will celebrate in the music of *our* nativity, and of *our* home here on earth, at two historic churches in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

Ranging from the Renaissance to modern compositions, and spanning both Christian and Jewish traditions, the music will inspire our quest for earth-stewardship, perhaps our best hope for shelter as the cold comes upon us. Our earth holds our faith and peace in its air and water, its hills and valleys. That's why it's our best comfort as the days darken.

To that end, Crescendo will feature traditional Christmas carols reimagined by Australian musician, lyricist, and writer Sophia Green. Her words call for earth-consciousness, harmonizing familiar melodies with our connections both to one another and to nature. A meditative "Earth Song" by the award-winning contemporary California composer Frank Ticheli offers ethereal harmonies and encouraging lyrics for our birthplace: this earth. Contemporary English and Irish Carol settings by Oliver Barton and Tim Porter are reminiscent of beloved old tunes yet also incorporate modern harmonies, following in the footsteps of Morten Lauridsen and Arvo Pärt. A set of choral arrangements of Jewish holiday music brings alive familiar words and folk tunes celebrating the light of Hanukkah, all expertly crafted by Elliot Z. Levine, an American composer and founding member of the acclaimed Western Wind Ensemble. And to complete our holiday celebration, Crescendo, an Early Music ensemble, will present festive motets by William Byrd, Thomas Tallis, Salomone Rossi, and a chamber sonata by Moravian-English virtuoso Godfrey Finger.

The performers are: the Crescendo Chorus and Soloists, Chris Belluscio, trumpet, and Tricia van Oers, recorder, all directed by Crescendo's Founding Artistic Director Christine Gevert from the organ. The performances take place on Saturday, December 16, 2023 at 4 pm at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Stockbridge, MA and on Sunday, December 17, 2023 at 4 pm - Trinity Church, Lakeville, CT (parking through Dugway Rd. entrance). A brief reception with the performers will be offered after the concerts. Please visit Crescendo's website: www.crescendomusic.org for online ticket purchases, more details, and other season concerts, or call 860.435.4866. A limited number of tickets will be sold at the door 45 minutes before each performance.

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