

HANDEL'S MESSIAH

ROCKEFELLER CHAPEL CHOIR
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO MOTET CHOIR
AND THE ROCKEFELLER CHAPEL ORCHESTRA

CONDUCTED BY JAMES KALLEMBACH

SUNDAY DECEMBER 4, 2022

ROCKEFELLER CHAPEL

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL MESSIAH

AN ORATORIO | HWV 56

Kimberly Jones

SOPRANO

Misty Bermudez

ALTO

Patrick Conklin

TENOR

Kenneth Overton

BASS

Rockefeller Chapel Choir

University of Chicago Motet Choir

DIRECTED BY

James Kallembach

The performance will last approximately two hours, with a fifteen-minute intermission after Part 1.

Cameras and recording equipment are not allowed while the performance is occurring.
Please turn off all electronic devices. Thank you!

This performance is made possible in part through the generous support of
the Doris Taub Fund for Choral Music.



PROGRAM

PART I

- 1 **Sinfonia**
- 2 **Recitative for tenor** Comfort ye
- 3 **Aria for tenor** Every valley shall be exalted
- 4 **Chorus** And the glory of the Lord
- 5 **Recitative for bass** Thus saith the Lord
- 6 **Aria for alto** But who may abide?
- 7 **Chorus** And he shall purify
- 8 **Recitative for alto** Behold, a virgin shall conceive
- 9 **Aria for alto and chorus** O thou that tellest
- 10 **Recitative for bass** For behold, darkness shall cover the earth
- 11 **Aria for bass** The people that walked in darkness
- 12 **Chorus** For unto us a child is born
- 13 **Pifa (pastoral symphony)**
- 14 **Recitative for soprano** There were shepherds abiding in the field
- 15 **Recitative for soprano** And the angel said unto them
- 16 **Recitative for soprano** And suddenly there was with the angel
- 17 **Chorus** Glory to God
- 18 **Aria for soprano** Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion
- 19 **Recitative for alto** Then shall the eyes of the blind
- 20 **Aria for alto and soprano** He shall feed his flock like a shepherd
- 21 **Chorus** His yoke is easy

INTERMISSION



PART II

- 24 **Chorus** Surely he hath borne our griefs
- 25 **Chorus** And with his stripes we are healed
- 26 **Chorus** All we like sheep have gone astray
- 29 **Recitative for tenor** Thy rebuke hath broken his heart
- 30 **Arioso for tenor** Behold and see if there be any sorrow
- 31 **Recitative for tenor** He was cut off out of the land of the living
- 32 **Aria for tenor** But thou didst not leave his soul in hell
- 38 **Aria for alto** How beautiful are the feet
- 44 **Chorus** Hallelujah

PART III

- 45 **Aria for soprano** I know that my redeemer liveth
- 46 **Chorus** Since by man came death
- 47 **Recitative for bass** Behold, I tell you a mystery
- 48 **Aria for bass** The trumpet shall sound
- 53 **Chorus** Worthy is the lamb that was slain

PROGRAM NOTES



Royal absolutists had free reign over populations evermore identified with nation-states; the clergy pontificated about God and the heavens, all while they ruled over land and man; Newton pointed to the most mundane of forces, while Galileo showed us the stars and, amid all the confusion, Descartes put into doubt the very concept of selfhood; the exuberant, the outlandish, and the bizarre gained free reign in the arts, putting into question our very notion of beauty. This was the Baroque, an effervescent period in European history between 1600 and 1750.

Our featured composer of the evening is, of course, associated with the Baroque. Born in Germany in 1685, **George Frideric Handel** was a cosmopolitan composer, musically influenced by the several European countries which he got to know throughout his life. In one of his many travels, Handel's compositional prowess grabbed the attention of the Prince of Tuscany. After several meetups, the prince told Handel "That there needed nothing but a journey to Italy [for you to reconcile] to the style and taste

which prevailed there," following up with an invitation. The composer, however, refused, resolving instead "to go to Italy on his own bottom, as soon as he could make a purse for that occasion." Indeed, Handel reached Italy in 1707, where he soon began composing for the cardinals of Rome and other wealthy patrons. His stay in Italy led him to refine and consolidate the Italian elements in his music, which he would carry with him as he moved to London.

The introduction of Italian-style opera to the London scene, just five years prior to Handel's arrival, must have served to reinforce the maturing composer's decision to settle there. However, Italian operas produced in London had all been arrangements of earlier works or, in other instances, pasticcios—that is, music made up of other works, or even loose adaptations of existing works. It would be up to Handel to compose the first opera designed specifically for a London audience, and the result was *Rinaldo*, which held a good fifteen performances throughout the 1710–11 season.

Rinaldo brought even more success to

Handel. As a result, in 1717 the composer became the house composer at the stately home in Cannons for the first Duke of Chandos. Handel later joined the Royal Academy of Music, founded that very same year by a group looking to produce opera. He remained with the company until the very end, in 1734, before company problems led to its dissolution. With the termination of the company, the composer then turned his full attention to his work for the new Covent Garden Theatre in London where he premiered nothing less than thirteen oratorios and seven operas, working until the final years of his life.

It is however during an interval from his work for the Covent Garden that Handel composed *Messiah*, his most famous oratorio. The work premiered in Dublin in 1742 garnering positive reviews and receiving a public rehearsal and two performances for the benefit of three charities. The oratorio's narrative, prepared by librettist Charles Jennens, depicts Christ through the lens of the Hebrew prophets of the Old Testament, portraying the text as a prophecy that

revealed Jesus as the true Messiah. But Dublin's reviews would not be duplicated on Handel's return. Once in London, Handel received a mixed response, drawing objections from critics for bringing Scripture into the theatre house. One of the more adamant critics, of the daily *The Spectator*, even went as far as asking whether an oratorio "is an Act of Religion [and] if it is, [...] if the Playhouse is a fit Temple to perform it in." Handel's piece and Jennens's libretto were, of course, being put into question. But it was there that lied the virtuosity of their work: by taking a broader and more metaphorical approach to the sacred text, the artists were able to produce a rich narrative which could reach the bourgeois theatre stages of London through metaphor, even if under criticism.

But for as much as *Messiah* may have been criticized on secular stages, the piece flourished in sacred settings. Just one year after its premiere, the public "Foundling Hospital" was founded with a chapel as part of its complex. Handel saw the chapel's potential as a performance venue that was free from secular associations and wrote *Foundling Hospital Anthem* in its honor. The piece brought together works from his other compositions, and *Hallelujah* was chosen from *Messiah*. The piece was a success, and the following year Handel returned to conduct another benefit concert, this time performing his *Messiah* in full. From that point on, *Messiah* was performed every year at the hospital, and Handel attended every performance until his death in 1759. As a final act of generosity, Handel left a copy of the score to the hospital's administrators, allowing the institution to continue to stage the oratorio even after his death.

—Patrick Murphy

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

It is hard to imagine a work that has had such a consistent and powerful performance history as Handel's *Messiah*. Parts and score left to the Foundling Hospital orphanage in north London are a testament to the work's enduring success. When Handel programmed it as a benefit for the orphanage, it was such a crowd-pleasing—and financial—success that it was performed every subsequent year until the composer's death in 1759, with the composer conducting or in attendance. Following the advent of the choral society and similar institutions in the nineteenth century, annual performances of *Messiah* have continued to infuse the world with emotional and material capital to this day. If one is looking for the proof of the power of art—its exponential creation and recreation of energy far beyond the sum of its parts, so to speak—one need look no further. Handel would crack a wry grin at the combination of commercial and artistic successes of one of his most beloved masterworks.

In addition to the raw musical energy interspersed with enduring lyrical passages, the fact that the story of the Gospels had to be told indirectly due to religious censorship is key to its success. What emerges from these particular biblical quotes is a much more general tale, *the* tale, in fact, of human suffering being transcended; and, in being able to look beyond human suffering, a universal triumph of good over evil is revealed. It is this ultimate triumph of good over evil to which we, as humans, bear both a responsibility and a witness in our own lifetimes.

—James Kallembach



TEXTS

PART I

- 1 Sinfonia**
- 2 Recitative for tenor** **Comfort ye**
Comfort ye, my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplish'd, that her iniquity is pardoned. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness; prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
- 3 Aria for tenor** **Every valley shall be exalted**
Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill made low; the crooked straight, and the rough places plain.
- 4 Chorus** **And the glory of the Lord**
And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.
- 5 Recitative for bass** **Thus saith the Lord**
Thus saith the Lord, the Lord of Hosts: Yet once a little while and I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all nations; and the desire of all nations shall come. The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.
- 6 Aria for alto** **But who may abide?**
But who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire.
- 7 Chorus** **And he shall purify**
And he shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.
- 8 Recitative for alto** **Behold, a virgin shall conceive**
Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel, God with us.
- 9 Aria for alto and chorus** **O thou that tellest**
O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain. O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, behold your God! O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.
- 10 Recitative for bass** **For behold, darkness shall cover the earth**
For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.
- 11 Aria for bass** **The people that walked in darkness**
The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.
- 12 Chorus** **For unto us a child is born**
For unto us a child is born, unto us a son 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.
- 13 Pifa (pastoral symphony)**
- 14 Recitative for soprano** **There were shepherds abiding in the field**
There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid.
- 15 Recitative for soprano** **And the angel said unto them**
And the angel said unto them: Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a saviour, which is Christ the Lord.
- 16 Recitative for soprano** **And suddenly there was with the angel**
And suddenly there was with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying:
- 17 Chorus** **Glorify to God**
Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will towards men.
- 18 Aria for soprano** **Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion**
Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is the righteous saviour, and he shall speak peace unto the heathen.
- 19 Recitative for alto** **Then shall the eyes of the blind**
Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.
- 20 Aria for alto and soprano** **He shall feed his flock like a shepherd**
He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; and he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young. Come unto him, all ye that labour, come unto him that are heavy laden, and he will give you rest. Take his yoke upon you, and learn of him, for he is meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.
- 21 Chorus** **His yoke is easy**
His yoke is easy, and his burden is light.

INTERMISSION



PART II

- 24 **Chorus** Surely he hath borne our griefs
Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows! He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him.
- 25 **Chorus** And with his stripes we are healed
And with his stripes we are healed.
- 26 **Chorus** All we like sheep have gone astray
All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.
- 29 **Recitative for tenor** Thy rebuke hath broken his heart
Thy rebuke hath broken his heart; he is full of heaviness. He looked for some to have pity on him, but there was no man, neither found he any to comfort him.
- 30 **Arioso for tenor** Behold and see if there be any sorrow
Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto his sorrow.
- 31 **Recitative for tenor** He was cut off out of the land of the living
He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgressions of thy people was he stricken.
- 32 **Aria for tenor** But thou didst not leave his soul in hell
But thou didst not leave his soul in hell; nor didst thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption.
- 38 **Aria for alto** How beautiful are the feet
How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.
- 44 **Chorus** Hallelujah
Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. King of kings, and Lord of lords. Hallelujah!

PART III

- 45 **Aria for soprano** I know that my redeemer liveth
I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. For now is Christ risen from the dead, the firstfruits of them that sleep.
- 46 **Chorus** Since by man came death
Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.
- 47 **Recitative for bass** Behold, I tell you a mystery
Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.
- 48 **Aria for bass** The trumpet shall sound
The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.
- 53 **Chorus** Worthy is the lamb that was slain
Worthy is the lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Blessing and honour, glory and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. Amen.



SOLOISTS



Soprano **Kimberly Eileen Jones** is an alum of the Ryan Opera Center with the prestigious Lyric Opera of Chicago.

Kimberly performed as Clara in Houston Grand Opera's production of *Porgy and Bess*, which graced the stages of La Scala in Milan, the Bastille in Paris, and the Bunkamura in Tokyo. For her portrayal of Clara, she was nominated for Best Supporting Actress by the NAACP Awards.

She received rave reviews as the Composer in Mozart's *Jewel Box* with the Chicago Opera Theater, as well as Mahler's Second Symphony with the Madison Symphony. Miss Jones was selected to appear with the Orchestra della Toscana in Florence, La Spezia and Piombino. She was one of four opera center artists showcased at the Chatelet in Paris, France.

Kimberly has recently received the 3arts grant, George London grant, Sullivan grant, and a Licia Albanese Encouragement grant. She received three grants from the MacAllister Awards competition, and was awarded the Richard Gold Career Grant from the Lyric Opera of Chicago. She is a Union League Civic and Arts Foundation (now Luminarts) prize winner.

She was showcased in engagements that included *Carmina Burana* with the Chicago Sinfonietta, and Beethoven *Mass in C* with the DePaul Community Chorus. Kimberly sang the roles of Tibrino/Amore in the Haymarket Opera production of *L'Oroneta*, and Galatea in *Acis and Galatea*. Last summer she portrayed Angelica in an operatic video of Handel's *Orlando*.

Miss Jones is on the voice faculty at Roosevelt University and DePaul University.



Highly sought after as a soloist, chamber artist, and educator, mezzo-soprano and conductor **Misty Leah Bermudez** has been praised for her "standout" performances and for the "dark sweetness" of her voice (*South Florida Classical Review, Palm Beach Post*).

A versatile vocalist, Ms. Bermudez has an active career as a concert soloist, chamber artist, and operatic actress. Solo concert engagements have included performances with Opera Naples, San Antonio Symphony, The New World Symphony, The Back Bay Chorale in Boston, Tucson Symphony Orchestra, and Illuminarts in Miami. She has been featured in works such as Duruflé's *Requiem*, Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *Mass in B Minor*, Mozart's *Requiem*, and Bach's *St. John Passion*, as well as operatic offerings throughout South Florida, including operas by Mozart, Purcell, and Gounod. As a chamber artist, Ms. Bermudez has sung with the Grammy-winning ensemble *Conspirare*, the Oregon Bach Festival, and the Santa Fe Desert Chorale. A founding member of *Seraphic Fire*, Miami's professional chamber ensemble, she has performed, recorded, and toured extensively with the ensemble and appears on both its Grammy-nominated albums.

Ms. Bermudez is on the Humanities and Music faculty of Miami Dade College, Kendall Campus, where she also serves as the Classical Voice Area Coordinator. Ms. Bermudez conducts the campus select choir, the MDC Kendall Chamber Singers, and actively recruits for the Performing Arts and Industries Department by developing strong relationships with area high school arts programs. In May 2018, Ms. Bermudez became the first female Artistic Director of the Civic Chorale of Greater Miami in its 48-year history.



Tenor **Patrick Conklin** hails from Collins, Ohio where he spent his early years singing with the Oberlin Choristers, with whom he had many opportunities to sing with groups such as the Cleveland Opera, and Apollo's Fire Baroque Orchestra.

Patrick received his Bachelor's degree from Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio. During his time at Bowling Green, he performed several leading roles such as Hyllus in George Frideric Handel's *Hercules*, Basilio in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, and Camille, Count de Rosillion in Franz Lehar's *The Merry Widow*.

Patrick is now pursuing his Master's degree at Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music, where he has performed the roles of Scaramuccio in Richard Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and Count Almaviva in Giacomo Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*. Patrick has also performed the role of Tamino in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* as a Young Artist at Opera Steamboat. Recently, Patrick performed the role of St. Nicolas in Benjamin Britten's *St. Nicolas* cantata. In his free time Patrick enjoys hanging out with his wife and cats, woodworking, and cooking.



Kenneth Overton is lauded for blending his opulent baritone with magnetic, varied portrayals that seemingly “emanate from deep within body and soul.” Kenneth's symphonious baritone voice has sent him around the globe, making him one of the most sought-after opera singers of his generation. Kenneth is a 2020 Grammy award winner for Best Choral Performance in the title role of Richard Danielpour's *The Passion of Yeshua* with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus, conducted by JoAnn Falletta.

This season, Overton will lead in the Welsh National Opera's new work *Migrations*, as well as in *Porgy and Bess* as Porgy, co-produced by Opera Carolina and North Carolina Opera. In addition to this production of Handel's *Messiah*, engagements will include a concert staging of *Porgy and Bess* with the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra in Hamburg, the African American Music Festival at Pennsylvania State University, and concerts with the Howland Chamber Music Circle and Spartanburg Philharmonic.

Last season's operatic engagements included Kenneth's Metropolitan Opera debut in the fall of 2021 as Lawyer Frazier in *Porgy and Bess*, a reprisal of the role of Ralph Abernathy in *I Dream* with Opera Carolina and Charlottesville Opera, the Homecoming Soldier in Zach Redler's *The Falling and The Rising* with Opera Carolina, Germont in *La Traviata* for Fort Worth Opera, and Boston Lyric Opera's production of Terence Blanchard's *Champion*.

SINGERS

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO MOTET CHOIR

SOPRANO

Madeleine Demers
Elizabeth Foster
Hayley Mirabile
Alexandria Porter
Catherine Redmayne
Isabel Schmitz
Sara Thomas

ALTO

Melia Allan
Jahnavi Muppurala
Phoebe Price
Ev Sun
Alessandra Tufiño
Zijin Xiao

TENOR

Nick Emerton
Nico Emmanuel-Henderson
Benjamin Jaffer
Pietro Juvara
Johnathan Ray

BASS

Arjun Chandra-Mohanty
Richard Davis
Guilherme Galhardo
Adam Jensen
Maxwell Jones
Caleb Olumofin
Joshua Sulkin
Aatman Vakil
Abraham West

ROCKEFELLER CHAPEL CHOIR

SOPRANO

Bethany Battafarano*
Corinna Christman
Claire Jones
Rory O'Hollaren †
Helena Ratte
Grace Theodoly

ALTO

Agneska Bloch
Hannah Clague
Nellie Conboy
Leslie Halverson
Maira Harden
Sasha Maskoff
Lauren Randolph*
Amelia Snoblin
Victoria Xie

TENOR

Charles Daston
Marc de Fontnouvelle
Matthew Dean*
Harry Fosbinder-Elkins
Andrew Kunze
Keith Murphy*
Daniel Pinto †
William Zimmermann

BASS

John Burroughs †
Joren Husic
Cristian Molina
Ian Morris*
Sam Pavlekovsky
Sam Thorpe
Lijia Xie †

* Artist in Residence | † Choral Scholar

James Kallembach

DIRECTOR

Thomas Weisflog

ACCOMPANIST FOR ROCKEFELLER CHAPEL CHOIR

ORCHESTRA

The Orchestra is drawn from Chicago's best Baroque soloists, many of them members of the Haymarket Opera Orchestra and Metropolis Baroque Chamber Orchestra, using modern-day instruments for this performance.

FIRST VIOLIN

Jeri-Lou Zike *concertmaster*

Wendy Benner

Ann Duggan

Jaime Gorgojo

SECOND VIOLIN

Martin Davids *principal*

Emi Tanabe

Lori Ashikawa

VIOLA

Rebecca Swan *principal*

Bruno Silva

CELLO

Craig Trompeter *principal*

Henry Chen

BASS

Jerry Fuller *principal*

OBOE

Deb Stevenson *principal*

Erica Anderson

BASSOON

Jonathan Saylor *principal*

TRUMPET

Ryan Berndt *principal*

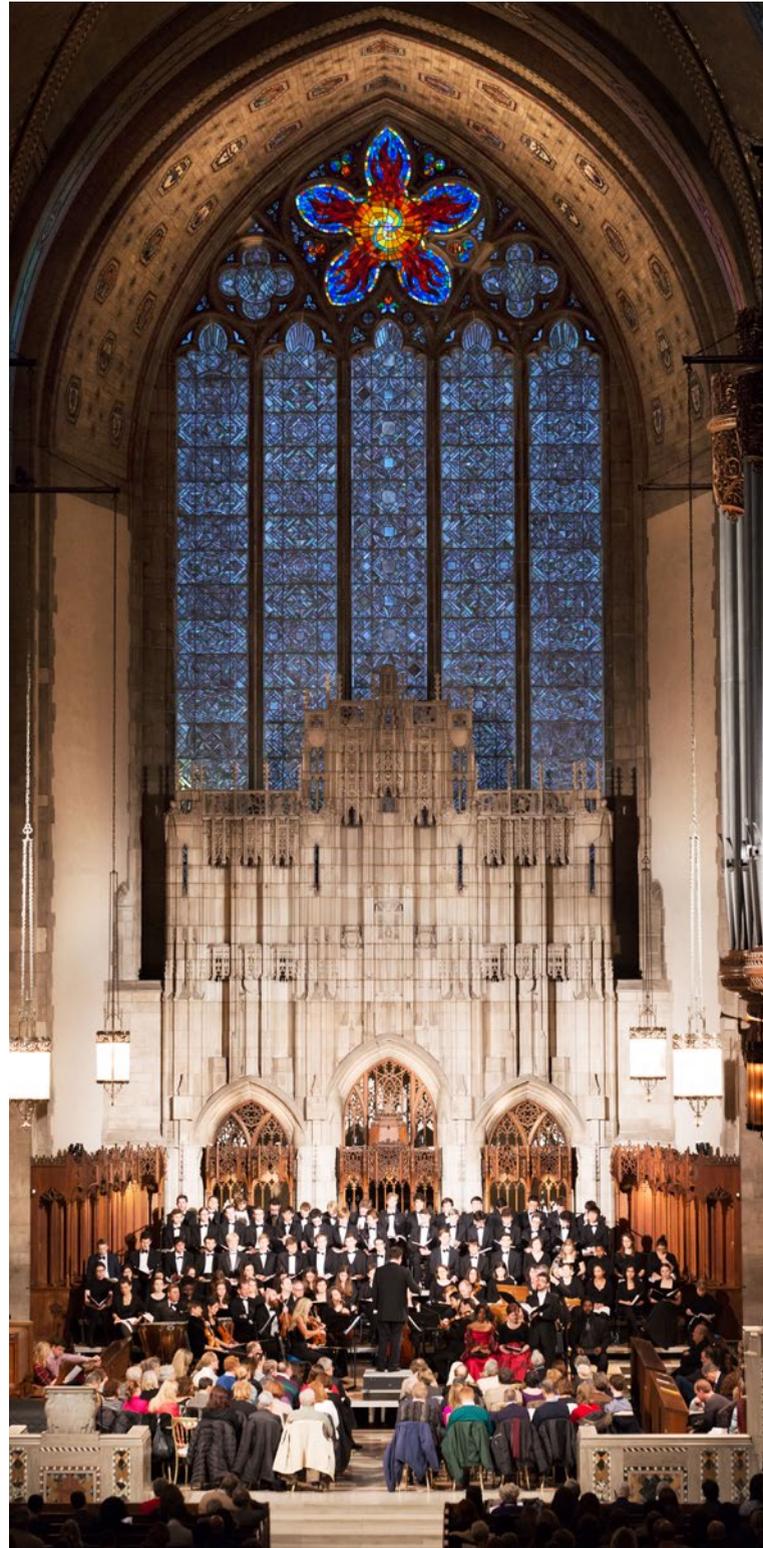
Gregory Fudala

TIMPANI

Eric Pancer *principal*

ORGAN CONTINUO

Thomas Weisflog *principal*





Rockefeller Chapel
The University of Chicago

ROCKEFELLER MEMORIAL CHAPEL

The Rev. Dr. Maurice Charles DEAN

Dr. James Kallembach DIRECTOR OF CHAPEL MUSIC

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