

SO HALLOW'D THE TIME

Christmas Music by Brian Galante & Stephen Paulus



DE 3580



TAYLOR FESTIVAL CHOIR *Robert Taylor, conductor*



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BRIAN GALANTE: So Hallow'd the Time*

**STEPHEN PAULUS: How Far is it to Bethlehem;
Christmas Dances;* Pilgrim's Hymn**

**Taylor Festival Choir
Robert Taylor, conductor**

Total playing time: 49:35

*** World Premiere recordings**

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BRIAN EDWARD GALANTE:

So Hallow'd the Time* (26:08)

1. Wisdom (5:38)
2. Peace (5:18)
3. Love (5:16)
4. Light (4:57)
5. Hope (4:59)

STEPHEN PAULUS:

6. *How Far is it to Bethlehem* (3:19)

Christmas Dances* (16:02)

7. Break Forth (4:41)
8. Methinks I Hear (2:44)
9. The Nativity of Our Lord (4:18)
10. On the Nativity of Our Saviour (4:19)

11. *Pilgrim's Hymn* (3:05)

**Taylor Festival Choir
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Conductor's Preface:

Recording projects are always deeply personal. There is planning with friends, colleagues and patrons; time spent studying composers and scores; then a great deal of time spent with musicians, producers and engineers in rehearsals, recording and editing sessions. This of course leads to socializing, and ultimately the sharing of your heart and soul with people you care about. This project, however, has been personal on even deeper levels.

The nature of the Taylor Festival Choir lends itself to friendships being built. Many of the singers are former students from the College of Charleston. Others are colleagues I have met over the years, while still others come to us as talented "friends of singers." The members of the TFC truly love one another, which I believe is tangible in our sound. The instrumentalists on this disc are also dear friends. Mary Taylor is my beloved wife, and she and I watched harpist Abby Kent grow from a Charleston child prodigy to one of the world's great harpists. Jennifer Hull Dambaugh (flute) and Kari Kistler (oboe) are both core members of the Charleston Symphony, our hometown orchestra—and thanks to countless concerts with them over two-plus decades, these musicians are cherished friends. Finally,

looking into the alto section of the TFC and making eye contact with my daughter (Kiri Taylor) makes for a level of fulfillment that one can only dream about!

I count myself extremely privileged that both of the composers represented on this disc are (or were in the case of our dear departed friend Stephen) personal friends of mine. I first met Brian Galante back in 1993 when we were both studying music at Louisiana State University. I was working on my doctorate under the tutelage of Dr. Ken Fulton (who served as one of our session producers), and Brian was a whiz-bang, super smart and talented undergraduate. It was evident then that Brian would go on to accomplish great things. We have been wonderful friends since that time, and he has written a number of works for the TFC—currently serving as our Composer-in-Residence. A personal anecdote: he was my daughter's very first baby-sitter, when she was only weeks old!

I met Stephen Paulus in 2000 when I emailed him to ask about performing one of his works. He talked me out of the piece I had picked, and urged me to perform his then-newly written *Mass* for choir, strings and percussion. I wound up conducting that work many times over the years, as well as many of Stephen's other creations. Stephen was a humble, humorous and truly

fun individual to be around. Above all, he was a deeply spiritual man, though in an ecumenical sort of way. I'll never forget exchanging books with him one spring day in Charleston, when Stephen said "Rob, this conversation is why we became friends." That sort of perspective permeates Stephen's entire musical output.

On yet another level of "personal," the individual to whom *Christmas Dances* was dedicated was my college choir director, John Erwin. For five years I sang in this wonderful conductor's ensemble back home at the University of Central Arkansas (UCA). He was my collegiate voice teacher, and a personal friend of my parents. While I was growing up, John was an honored guest in our home more times than I can count—and there was never any doubt that I would attend college at UCA to study with him. I am honored to present in this album the world premiere recording of a work dedicated to one of my most cherished mentors.

Speaking of my mom, this album leads to the ultimate level of personal connection. My mother, Cornelia Anne Taylor (1937-2015) was the ardent matriarch of the Taylor Festival Choir. She was our organization's first Treasurer, and she was our greatest fan. She was also my best friend and (rather strangely) my first music teacher. I

say "strangely" because my father was the renowned musician in the family. But it was Mom who started me on piano at age 7 (It didn't work—I'm a *terrible* pianist)! Mom was John Erwin's personal friend, met Stephen Paulus twice, loved Brian Galante like family, and was the world's greatest grandma to Kiri and a loving mother-in-law to Mary. Without her this project would not have been possible.

This CD is for you, Mom.

Namaste and Sláinte,

Rob

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

So Hallow'd the Time

Rob Taylor and I began discussing a new choral cycle in Spring 2014. Composition of the work was meant to be part of my sabbatical from Pacific Lutheran University, and we aimed for a premiere in 2015. Alas, life got in the way, and it was not until 2017 that the work was completed and premiered in Charleston, SC.

During this time, as I began to sketch—and discard—ideas for a cycle, an overarching theme of "journey" emerged, and I became more focused on the time leading

up to Christmas rather than the day or season itself. I wanted the listener to experience movement from darkness to light, from cold to warmth, from the unsure to the certain. And when I heard that Rob intended to pair this new work with Stephen Paulus' *Christmas Dances*, I immediately knew two texts that would figure prominently in my composition.

In 2005, I served as an interim choral director at Highland Park Presbyterian Church in Dallas, Texas. In addition to preparing the choir for weekly worship services, I was responsible for the church's annual Christmas concert. So I set out to find a fresh new work for chorus and orchestra. Ironically, the answer presented itself in an older cantata by Paulus, one overshadowed by his more popular Christmas compositions and arrangements. The title of his work, *So Hallowed is the Time*, pointed me in the direction of Shakespeare. The only a cappella movement in the work, "A Child, My Choice," reminded me of Robert Southwell's exquisite poetry. Hence, the pairing is much more than two works connected by a seasonal theme. *So Hallow'd the Time* is a purposeful homage to Paulus, in recognition of his considerable influence on my work—and, indeed, on American choral music.

In "Wisdom," the opening movement, the harp, flute, and violin paint an austere

picture of a cold—yet somehow hopeful—winter landscape. The writing is deliberately "transparent" ... with no foliage on the trees to hide the harshness of winter as we wait for rebirth, for a return to the light and warmth of a "gracious" time to follow. After an initial invocation to "Wisdom," the choral writing is broken up, as each part sustains only fragments of words, only syllables of the first "O Antiphon." Words are not connected; phrases do not line up. A baritone solo then reinforces this fragmentation with Shakespeare's text: casting the "hallow'd" time of the birth of the Christ child against the darkness and cold of winter.

Movements two ("Peace") and four ("Light") present excerpts from John Milton's *Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity*, as they wrap these title themes around the central message of the third movement ("Love"). In movement two, we look to the birth of the child to bring peace and order to an otherwise chaotic or wild time. The setup is folk-like, though the melody is not simple. In movement four, we learn that the harmony of the spheres coalesced around the birth of the child, bringing color, warmth and music to an otherwise desolate world. The baritone soloist returns, not as a wary narrator, but as a host, a celebrant, a king bringing together the power of the crystal spheres

into one ringing voice. The music here is festive, a call to celebration, with a sense of majesty and wonder that will ultimately lead us into the final movement.

Robert Southwell's beautiful poem "A Child, My Choice" provides the text for the third movement of the work. This movement serves as the anchor for the cycle, informing the motivic material for much of the outer movements. It is the only movement that does not begin with an "O Antiphon," for the text itself is a plea. The music evokes a lullaby, presented with a tenderness meant to symbolize a mother's love and a powerful comfort to a lost and needy world.

In movement five, Alfred Lord Tennyson's exuberant text "Ring Out Wild Bells" helps to bring the work to a joyful close. The pleading quality of the last "O Antiphon" gives way to a driving, rhythmic crescendo in the instrumental parts. A theme first heard in the third movement now becomes a choral explosion of sound. At times, the violin seems to be leading the dance. At others, the flute part evokes an exuberant child who simply cannot contain his excitement. Echoes of previous movements return like chiming bells, and the "peace" motive that left movement two seemingly unfinished returns as we "ring in the Christ!"

Ultimately, this cycle is about hope. We cast off the cold and dark of the past and welcome the "love of truth and right," the "common love of good", and a "thousand years of peace." The larger heart prevails, and the human spirit is reborn: a message that rings true, even today.

—Brian Galante

No modern American composer has been more devoted to choral art than Minnesota native **Stephen Paulus** (1949-2014). While his instrumental works certainly deserve their niches in the repertoires of orchestras and chamber ensembles the world over, it is his 400-plus choral compositions that will likely be his abiding legacy. Ranging from large-scale works such as the *Holocaust Oratorio* to the miniature *Pilgrim's Hymn* featured on this album, Paulus's compositions have been frequently performed (and recorded) by top-notch ensembles, including the Dale Warland Singers, the L.A. Master Chorale, the Robert Shaw Festival Singers, the Taylor Festival Choir and countless others. They have received repeated domestic and international recognition, including multiple GRAMMY® nominations and awards.

Paulus's choral style blends his neo-romantic melodic genius with a jazz-inspired

harmonic palette, making for a style that is instantly recognizable. Rhythmic appeal is also a fundamental goal of Paulus's compositions, given his creative, but never pedantic use of multiple meters and syncopations. Paulus's music has a rare capacity to captivate connoisseurs and more casual listeners alike: a characteristic Paulus valued and consistently sought to achieve.

Christmas Dances, scored for SATB choir, flute and harp, was composed in 2008 for the Arkansas Chamber Singers and their excellent conductor John Erwin in celebration of the ensemble's 30-year anniversary. About the commission, Erwin states:

When I asked Stephen to write for ACS I was floored that he was so enthusiastic to write for us and so very gracious during the process. I told him that I was drawn to the early Christmas poetry of the 16th and 17th century, particularly that of Ben Jonson and Robert Herrick, wrought with metaphor and symbolism. "On the Nativity of Our Lord" was one of the poems I suggested, and though I thought we would be getting only three in the set, he wanted to include his take on a poem by Christopher Smart. His combination of poetry in the set was so beautifully done, and most wonderful was his treatment of the gentle parts of the text with sweet and tender musical moments.

The opening movement, "Break Forth O Beauteous Heavenly Light," incorporates an adaptation of Jonathan Rist's text from the well-known hymn by the same name. Paulus presents an original melody whose opening line is reminiscent of Rist's hymn, but which soon takes a series of twists and turns as Paulus' tonal and modal wanderings reflect the mysticism of the narrative. In keeping with the cycle's title, the feeling of a Pavane is present, as Paulus sets the scene with the pastoral, lilting sounds of lute and flute, over which the chorus elegantly intones Rist's text. Movement two is also based on lyric stemming from a hymn—in this case Timothy Swan's "Methinks I hear the Heavins Resound," from the 1801 collection *New England Harmony*. This is a more vigorous "dance," mostly in triple meter but including joyous bursts of syncopated, multimeter segments that bring Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* to mind.

Movement three—"The Nativity of our Lord"—provides a moment of reflection, as well as the sort of gorgeous, thickly homophonic choral writing for which Paulus is widely known. Set to the aforementioned Christopher Smart poem, the movement is through-composed, with no distinctive, repeated melodic content. Still, this is a movement that leaves the listener transfixed, and later humming segments

from this hauntingly beautiful setting. In movement four Paulus sets Ben Johnson's "On the Nativity of our Saviour", which "sings the birth" of the kingly babe, the "Author of both Life and light." While it is not a true recap of the second movement, it is related thematically and similarly makes use of multiple meters and motoric instrumental writing to propel the cycle to a rousing conclusion.

The two additional Paulus inclusions on this disc are two of his most frequently performed miniatures. *How Far is it To Bethlehem* is a wonderfully crafted arrangement featuring soprano and tenor solos and an oboe line that provides a Middle Eastern flavor to this well-known traditional English carol. *Pilgrim's Hymn* is arguably Paulus' best-known work. Performed at the funerals of Presidents Reagan and Ford, *Pilgrim's Hymn* stems from Paulus' opera *The Three Hermits*. The beautiful melodic writing, Paulus' rich harmonic palette as well as the text by Michael Dennis Browne justify the reputation of this miniature masterpiece.

— Rob Taylor

SO HALLOW'D THE TIME

MOVEMENT 1: WISDOM

O Sapientia, quae ex ore Altissimi
prodigiisti, attingens a fine usque ad finem,
fortiter suaviterque disponens omnia:
veni ad docendum nos viam prudentiae.

– from 'O Antiphons', 7th century
[*O Wisdom, coming forth from the mouth
of the Most High, reaching from one end
to the other mightily, and sweetly ordering
all things: Come and teach us the way of
prudence.*]

Some say that ever 'gainst that
season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
This bird of dawning singeth all
night long;
And then, they say, no spirit dare
stir abroad,
The nights are wholesome, then no
planets strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power
to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

– from *Hamlet*, Act I, Scene I
William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

MOVEMENT 2: PEACE

O Rex Gentium, et desideratus earum,
lapisque angularis, qui facis utraque unum:
veni, et salva hominem, quem de limo
formasti.

– from 'O Antiphons', 7th century
[O King of the nations, and their desire, the cornerstone making both one: Come and save humankind, which you fashioned from clay.]

It was the winter wild,
While the heaven-born child
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;

But peaceful was the night,
Wherein the Prince of light
His reign of Peace upon the earth began:
The winds, with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kiss...

The stars, with deep amaze,
Stand fix'd in steadfast gaze,
Bending one way their precious influence;
And will not take their flight.
For all the morning light...

– from *Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity*,
John Milton (1608-1674)

MOVEMENT 3: LOVE

Let folly praise what fancy loves,
I praise and love that Child,
Whose heart no thought, whose tongue
no word,
Whose hand no deed defiled,

I praise Him most, I love Him best,
All praise and love is His;
While Him I love, in Him I live,
And cannot live amiss.

Love's sweetest mark, laud's highest theme,
Man's most desired light.
To love Him life, to leave Him death.
To live in Him delight.

He mine by gift, I His by debt,
Thus each to other due,
First friend He was, best friend He is,
All times will find Him true.

Though young, yet wise, though small,
yet strong,
Though Man, yet God He is;
As wise He knows, as strong He can,
As God He loves to bless.

His knowledge rules, His strength defends,
His love doth cherish all;
His Birth our joy, His Life our light,
His Death our end of thrall.

Alas! He weeps, He sighs, He pants,
Yet do His Angels sing;
Out of His tears, His sighs and throbs,
Doth bud a joyful spring.

Almighty Babe, Whose tender Arms
Can force all foes to fly,
Correct my faults, protect my life,
Direct me when I die!

– Robert Southwell (1561-1595)

MOVEMENT 4: LIGHT

O Oriens, splendor lucis aeternae, et sol
justitiae: veni, et illumina sedentes in
tenebris, et umbra mortis

– from 'O Antiphons', 7th century
[*O Dayspring, splendor of light eternal
and sun of righteousness: come and
enlighten those who dwell in darkness and
the shadow of death.*]

Such musick (as 'tis said)
Before was never made,
But when of old the sons of morning sung,
While the Creator Great
His constellations set,
And the well-balanc'd world on
hinges hung;...

Ring out, ye crystal spheres,
Once bless our human ears,
If ye have power to touch our senses so;

And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time...

Yea, Truth and Justice then
Will down return to men,
Orb'd in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,
Mercy will sit between...
And Heaven, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high
palace hall.

– from *Ode on the Morning of
Christ's Nativity*,
John Milton

MOVEMENT 5: HOPE

O Emmanuel, expectatio Gentium, et
Salvator earum: veni ad salvandum nos,
Domine, Deus noster.

– from 'O Antiphons', 7th century
[*O Emmanuel, the hope of the nations and
their Savior: come and save us, O Lord and
our God.*]

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.
Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

...The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

– from *In Memoriam CVI*,
Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)

HOW FAR IS IT TO BETHLEHEM

How far is it to Bethlehem? Not very far?
Shall we find the stable room lit by a star?
Can we see the little child – is He within?
If we lift the wooden latch, may we go in?
May we stroke the creatures there, ox,
ass, or sheep?
May we peep like them and see
Jesus asleep?
If we touch His tiny hand, will He awake?
Will He know we've come so far, just for

His sake?

Great kings have precious gifts, and we
have naught.
Little smiles and little tears are all we
have brought.
For all weary children Mary must weep.
Here on His bed of straw, sleep,
children, sleep.

God's in his mother's arms; babes in
the byre,
Sleep, as they sleep who find Their
heart's desire.

– Frances Chesterton (1869-1938)

CHRISTMAS DANCES

MOVEMENT 1: BREAK FORTH

Break forth, O beauteous heav'nly light
And usher in the morning;
Ye shepherds, shrink not with affright,
But hear the angel's warning.
This child, this little helpless boy,
Shall be our confidence and joy,
The powers of evil overthrowing,
At last our peace bestowing.

– Jonathan Rist (1607-1667)
adapted by Stephen Paulus

MOVEMENT 2: METHINKS I HEAR THE HEAVINS RESOUND

Methinks I hear the Heavins Resound
And all the earth exulting ring
To usher in this glorious day
And hail the spotless infant King.
Methinks I see a heavinly host
Of angels dancing on the wing
Methinks I hear their cheerful notes
So merrily they dance and sing.

– Timothy Swan (1758-1842)

MOVEMENT 3: THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

Where is this stupendous stranger,
Swains of Solyma, advise,
Lead me to my master's manger,
Shew me where my Savior lies?
O Most Mighty! O MOST HOLY!
For beyond the seraphs thought,
Art thou then so mean and lowly
As unheeded prophets taught?
O the magnitude of meekness!
Worth from worth immortal sprung;
O the strength of infant weakness,
If eternal is so young!
Nature's decorations glisten
Far beyond their usual trim;
Birds on box and laurel listen,
As so near the cherubs' hymn
Spinx and ouzels sing sublimely,

'We too have a Savior born';
Whiter blossoms burst untimely
On the blest Mosaic thorn.
God all-bounteaus, all-creative,
Whom no ills from good dissuade.
Is incarnate, and a native
Of the very world he made.
O Most Mighty! O MOST HOLY!

– Christopher Smart (1722-1771)
abridged by Stephen Paulus

MOVEMENT 4: ON THE NATIVITY OF OUR SAVIOUR

I sing the birth, was born tonight,
The Author both of Life, and light;
The Angels so did sound it,
And like the ravish'd Sheep'erds said,
Who saw the light and were afraid,
Yet search'd, and true they found it.
The Sonne of God, th'Eternall King,
That did us all salvation bring,
And freed the soule from danger;
Hee whom the whole world could not take
The World, which heaven and earth
did make;
Was now laid in a Manger.
The Father's wisedom will'd it so,
The Sonne's obedience knew no NO,
Both wills were in one stature;
And as that wisedom had decreed,
the Word was now made Flesh indeed,
And tooke on him our Nature,

What comfort by him do wee winne?
Who made himselfe the price of sinne,
To make us heires of glory?
To see this Babe, all innocence;
A Martyr born in our defence;
Can man forget this Storie?
I sing the birth, was born tonight!

– Ben Johnson (1573-1637)

PILGRIM'S HYMN

Even before we call on your name
To ask you, O God,
When we seek for the words to glorify You
You hear our prayer;
Unceasing love, O unceasing love,
Surpassing all we know.

Glory to the Father,
And to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit.

Even with the darkness sealing us in,
We breathe your name,
And through all the days that follow so fast,
We trust in You;
Endless Your grace, O endless Your grace,
Beyond all mortal dream.

Both now and for ever,
And unto ages and ages,
Amen

– Michael Dennis Browne (b. 1940)

Dr. Robert Taylor is the Director of Choral Activities at the College of Charleston, the Founding Artistic Director and President of the Taylor Festival Choir (TFC) and Taylor Music Group (TMG), and the Director of the Charleston Symphony Orchestra Chorus and Chamber Singers. Called a "rising star in the international choral scene" and a "true master of his craft" (*Charleston City Paper*), Taylor's choirs have been described as sounding "more musical than would seem possible" (*Charleston Post and Courier*), and have received numerous plaudits from critics and choral specialists for their technical proficiency, musicality and beautiful sound production.

Taylor's ensembles have performed throughout the United States and Europe. They have been featured in numerous festivals, conventions and special concerts, including the 2005 and 2009 American Choral Directors (ACDA) National Conventions, the 2004, 2008 and 2018 ACDA Southern Division Conventions, the 2008 and 2011 National Collegiate Choral Organization National Conventions, and multiple appearances in regional and state ACDA and AGO conventions. Taylor and his combined choirs performed with the Charleston Symphony Orchestra in a feature concert in the 2013 National Collegiate Choral Organization National Convention. Taylor's groups also appear annually in the prestigious Spoleto Festival U.S.A. and Piccolo Spoleto Festival.



Dr. Taylor's professional ensemble, the Taylor Festival Choir (TFC), has been hailed by critics and choral specialists alike as being one of the nation's finest. Performing a full season of concerts in the Charleston area, TFC also has toured throughout the USA and Ireland and has recorded with Delos Recordings, Centaur Records and MSR Classics. TFC's 2016 Delos release featured the world premiere recording of *Celtic Mass* by Michael McGlynn, alongside *Mass* by James MacMillan, a performance described as "very impressive indeed....many will be drawn to this (recording) simply because of the intensity Taylor brings to his readings, and the way his choir responds with such po-

tent empathy for the music." (MusicWeb International).

Taylor has conducted more than 70 extended choral/orchestral works to critical acclaim, his interpretations of modern works and the works of Ralph Vaughan Williams being especially praised. His recording of Vaughan Williams' *Epithalamion* and *An Oxford Elegy* was hailed as "a highly accomplished performance," one in which "his forces capture [Vaughan Williams' scores'] ebb and flow perfectly" (*American Record Guide*). With the CSO Chorus, he has prepared numerous choral/orchestral masterworks for performances with prestigious conductors such as the late maestros David Stahl and Joseph Flummerfelt, Louis Solemno, Stuart Molina, Dr. Kenneth Fulton, Dr. Joe Miller and JoAnn Faletta.

As Director of Choral Activities at the College of Charleston, Dr. Taylor oversees all choral studies and endeavors, including leading the acclaimed Concert Choir, the Madrigal Singers, and directing the choral strand of the College of Charleston's Master of Arts in Teaching in the Performing Arts degree. He serves as editor of the Robert Taylor Choral Series with Colla Voce Publications. Along with his wife, violinist/Irish fiddler Mary Taylor, Taylor coordinates the Celtic and Choral Arts Series (formerly the Taylor Music Festival) in Piccolo Spoleto: a

series of concerts and workshops emphasizing musical education and performance in both classical and Celtic/folk disciplines. Deeply involved in Piccolo Spoleto and with the Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs, Taylor was recently awarded the Piccolo Spoleto Lifetime Achievement Award.

Brian Edward Galante continues to find success and acclaim as a composer and arranger. His compositions are published by GalanteMusic, Walton and Colla Voce Music, and have been performed by professional, collegiate, and advanced high school choirs throughout the United States and Europe; and recorded for commercial release by Centaur Records, MSR Classics and PLU Media. He is the recipient of multiple ASCAP Plus awards, and is a regular composer-in-residence for the Taylor Festival Choir (Charleston, SC).

Brian is Associate Director of Choral Activities and Chair of the Department of Music at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington, where he conducts the University Chorale. Before taking on his administrative responsibilities, he also conducted University Singers (SA Chorus) and Men's Chorus, and taught undergraduate courses in Vocal Pedagogy for the Choral Music Educator, Choral Methods and Choral Literature.



Galante received the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Choral Conducting, with a related field in Voice Science and Pedagogy, from the University of North Texas. He holds Master of Music and Bachelor of Music Education degrees from Louisiana State University. Previous choral appointments include Visiting Associate Director of Choral Studies at Louisiana State University; Conductor of the UNT Men's Chorus and Conducting Associate of the UNT A Cappella Choir; Director of Choral Music/Coordinator of K-12 Music at Highland Park High School, Dallas, Texas; Director of Choirs at Episcopal High School and Director of Music at St. Louis King of France Catholic Church, both in Baton Rouge.

Choirs under Galante's direction have presented invitational performances in Carnegie Hall and Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center, New York; the Meyerson Symphony Center, Dallas; Notre Dame Cathedral and Sacre Coeur, Paris; the 2010 Washington Music Educators Association conference, the 2011 Northwest MENC Conference, and the 2012 Northwest Division ACDA Conference.

Frequently in demand as a clinician and adjudicator, Galante has conducted honor choirs at all levels. He served as President of Louisiana American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) from 2001-2003, and remains an active member of the National Collegiate Choral Organization (NCCO), the American Society for Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP), Washington ACDA, and the Washington Music Educators Association. Brian served as Program Chair of the 2010 and 2018 Northwest ACDA Region Conferences, on the National Technology Committee (2007-2011), and Associate Conference Chair of the 2013 National ACDA Conference and President of the Northwest ACDA Region from 2018-2020.

Stephen Paulus was a prolific American composer of classical music. He wrote over 600 works for chorus, opera, orchestra, chamber ensemble, solo voice, concert band, piano, and organ, receiving premieres and performances throughout the world as well as a Grammy nomination for Best Contemporary Classical Composition in 2015 and 2016, which he won in 2016. His music on *Stephen Paulus: Far In The Heavens* was also nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Choral Performance in 2016 and *Stephen Paulus: Three Places of Enlightenment, Veil of Tears & Grand Concerto* won a Grammy Award for Best Classical Compendium in 2016. His musical style has been described by *The New York Times* as "lush and extravagant," and critics from the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, *Opera News*, and many others have praised his work. *The New Yorker* described him as a "bright, lyrical inventor whose music pulsates with a driving, kinetic energy." He was a recipient of both NEA and Guggenheim Fellowships.

Beginning in 1979, fresh out of graduate school with a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota, he was commissioned by the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and later went on to write a total of 12 operas with performances coming from the Boston Lyric Opera, Washington Opera, Minne-



sota Opera, Sacramento Opera, The Berk-shire Opera Company and others.

With 55 orchestral works to his credit, Paulus served as a Composer in Residence with the orchestras of Atlanta, Minnesota, Tucson and Annapolis. Conductors who premiered his works include Osmo Vänskä, Christoph van Dohnanyi, Kurt Masur, Sir Neville Marriner and Leonard Slatkin. Orchestral commissions include a violin concerto for the Cleveland Orches-tра and William Preucil, a jazz concerto co-written with his son, Greg, for the Min-nesota Orchestra as well as organ con-certos for the Phoenix Symphony and the Portland (Maine) Symphony.

Paulus wrote over 400 works for chorus ranging from his *Holocaust Oratorio*, *To Be Certain of the Dawn*, recorded by Minnesota Orchestra on the BIS label, to the poignant anthem, "Pilgrims' Hymn," sung at the funerals of Presidents Reagan and Ford. Both works were written with his frequent collaborator and friend, librettist Michael Dennis Browne. His works have received thousands of performances and recordings from such groups as The New York Choral Society, L.A. Master Chorale, Robert Shaw Festival Singers, VocalEssence, Dale Warland Sing-ers and countless others. Notable works for vocalist and orchestra include com-missions for Thomas Hampson, Deborah Voigt, Samuel Ramey and Elizabeth Futral. Instrumental soloists who have performed Paulus' works range from Doc Severinsen and Leo Kottke to Robert McDuffie, William Preucil, Lynn Harrell and Cynthia Phelps.

Paulus was a passionate advocate for the works and careers of his colleagues. In 1973 he co-founded the Minnesota Composers Forum, now known as the American Com-posers Forum, the largest composer service organization in the U.S. He also served as the Symphony and Concert Representative on the board of ASCAP from 1990 until 2014.

Stephen Paulus passed away in October 2014, but his music continues to be frequently performed and described by critics

as rugged, angular, lyrical, lean, rhythmically aggressive, original, often gorgeous, moving, and uniquely American. *The New Yorker* characterizes his music as having "impeccable technique and well-honed audience appeal," while *The New York Times* says "Mr. Paulus often finds melodic patterns that are fresh and familiar at the same time... His scoring is invariably expert and exceptionally imaginative in textures and use of instruments."

Instrumentalists:

Jessica Hull-Dambaugh is currently the Principal Flutist of the Charleston Symphony Orchestra in South Carolina and the Adjunct Flute Professor at the College of Charleston. Jessica has previously held both Flute and Piccolo orchestral positions with the Central City Opera Orchestra in Colorado and the Maryland Symphony Orchestra as Principal Flute. As a Miyazawa artist, she enjoys performing locally in various chamber ensembles, presenting masterclasses, and maintains an active private teaching studio. She holds degrees from the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam and Carnegie Mellon University.

One of the brightest new stars of the harp, **Abigail Kent** has won top international

awards. She was the February 2018 "New Artist" for Musical America International Magazine as well as the touring Harp Ambassador as "Concert Artist" for the American Harp Society 2017-19. She is a sought-after concert soloist, harp educator, and harpist for symphony orchestras like the Charleston Symphony and New World Symphony. She is a versatile multi-instrumentalist and has won numerous prizes on the Celtic harp through the Scottish Harp Society of America. Abigail's studies have taken her to the Royal Academy of Music in London, Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, Mannes School of Music in NYC, and she is currently pursuing her doctorate at The Juilliard School.

Dr. Kari Kistler is an in-demand performer of oboe and English horn repertoire, based in the Southeast. She is a core member of the Charleston Symphony Orchestra, and also freelances in the greater region. Kari was a Fellow with the New World Symphony for two-and-a-half seasons, and has recently performed with the New York Philharmonic, the Charlotte Symphony, and the Virginia Symphony. She earned her Bachelors of Music, summa cum laude and her Masters of Music from the Cleveland Institute of Music; and her Doctor of Music degrees from Florida State University, as well as her Performance Diploma from Boston University. Her main teach-

ers were John Ferrillo, John Mack, Robert Sheena and Dr. Eric Ohlsson.

Charleston-based **Mary Scott Taylor** is an accomplished performer on classical violin and Irish fiddle, and a string music educator with over forty years of experience. She is the founder of Na Fidleiri, a unique Celtic fiddling ensemble with whom she has toured the US and Ireland, and has performed with traditional artists such as John Doyle, Kim Robertson, Liz Carroll, Martin Hayes and many others. She is a member of the Charleston Symphony, Charleston's Ensemble of St. Clare at Meppkin Abbey and the Early Music Ensemble Charleston Pro Musica. An award-winning educator, she has taught in public and private schools in Texas, Oklahoma and South Carolina. A trained Suzuki violin instructor, Mrs. Taylor is the founder of the Suzuki Preparatory Program at Oklahoma City University. She holds a MM in Violin Performance from Sam Houston State University and a BME from Lamar University where she studied with Eduard Schmieder.

Vocal Soloists:

Brandon Hendrickson, baritone, is an active performer on opera, concert and recital stages. Hendrickson's "mellifluous"

and "beautiful baritone," as hailed by *Opera News*, has been heard internationally in standard and contemporary operatic repertoire. His recent operatic engagements include performances with the Utah Festival Opera, the Annapolis Opera and the Des Moines Metro Opera. On the concert stage, Hendrickson's credits include performances at Carnegie Hall and the Piccolo Spoleto Music Festival, as well as with the National Philharmonic, the Great Falls Symphony Orchestra, the Oklahoma City Philharmonic, the Helena Symphony Orchestra, the Madison Symphony Orchestra, the Southeast Pennsylvania Symphony Orchestra, the Charleston Symphony Orchestra, the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra and the Baton Rouge Symphony Orchestra. An active recitalist, Hendrickson performs frequently by invitation, and his International credentials include appearances in Italy, Malaysia, Canada, Ireland, and the United Kingdom.

New York City native **Grace Kahl** is a lyric soprano who is quickly emerging on opera and concert stages. Some role highlights include Laurie Moss (*The Tender Land*), Nannetta (*Falstaff*), and The Rose (*The Little Prince*). She has performed at venues across the country including the Santa Fe Opera, the Utah Opera, the Des Moines Metro Opera, and Intermountain Opera Bozeman. A 2019 Metropolitan

Opera National Council Audition regional finalist, she was awarded first Prize in the 2017 American International Czech and Slovak Competition as well as Second Prize in the 2018 Palm Springs Opera Competition. Grace holds a Bachelors of Music from Queens College and a Masters of Music and an Artist Diploma from the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music.

Praised for her "hauntingly beautiful notes" and "possessing indescribable height of emotion," **Kori Miller** currently serves as the principal soprano for Taylor Festival Choir. Ms. Miller recently won a scholarship for the Opera Naples Young Artist Academy, where she worked with baritone Sherrill Milnes and tenor Bruce Ford. She has also been a featured soloist with the Charleston Symphony Orchestra in performances of Bach's *Mass in B minor*, Handel's *Messiah*, Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem* and *Serenade to Music*, the Faure *Requiem*, and Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass*. Operatic performances include Countess Almaviva (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Ciesca (*Gianni Schicchi*), Yum-Yum (*Mikado*), and Lola (*Gallantry*). A graduate of the College of Charleston, Ms. Miller is working toward her M.M. degree in vocal performance and vocal pedagogy from the University of North Texas under the instruction of Dr. Stephen Austin.

Tenor **Joshua Overby** is a graduate student in choral music at the College of Charleston (CofC), where he studies with Dr. Rob Taylor. He recently served as one-year interim conductor at James Island High School. At the CofC, Mr. Overby was a member of the College of Charleston Concert Choir, and served as that ensemble's Student Conductor for five years. He was also a member of the CofC Charleston Madrigal Singers, and sang lead roles with the CofC Opera. Also a percussionist, Mr. Overby intends to pursue a career in choral music upon completion of his graduate program.

Tenor **William Royall** received his Bachelor's degree in Choral Music Education from Winthrop University in Rock Hill, South Carolina. While pursuing his degree, he studied voice with Jerry Helton and John Fowler, and performed roles such as Marco in *Gianni Schicchi* and Le Dancaïre in *Carmen*. After graduating, Will became a member of the Opera Carolina Theater Company in Charlotte, North Carolina. Currently, Will enjoys singing with the Charleston Men's Chorus, Opera Charleston, and has been featured in a variety of solo engagements. He is in his seventh season with the Taylor Festival Choir and also serves as Vice President of the board for the Taylor Music Group.

The **Taylor Festival Choir** (TFC) is a professional chamber choir based in beautiful Charleston, SC. Founded and conducted by Robert Taylor, the choir is inspired by the lives and careers of his parents Bob and Cornelia Taylor, venerated music educators in their home state of Arkansas. Since its inception in 2001, the Taylor Festival Choir has toured and been heard in prestigious venues and festivals throughout the United States, Ireland and the UK, and has garnered a reputation of excellence among critics and choral specialists alike. TFC has been featured in multiple American Choral Directors Association Conferences, including the 50th anniversary celebration and National Conference in 2009.

TFC is part of the Taylor Music Group, and serves as the professional choir-in-residence at the College of Charleston and Circular Congregational Church. It presents a full concert season in the Charleston area, and serves as the flagship ensemble for the Piccolo Spoleto Celtic Arts Series. TFC has recorded with Delos Productions, MSR Classics and Centaur Records. Their most recent release, featuring James MacMillan's *Mass* and the world premiere recording of *Celtic Mass* by Michael McGlynn has met with rave reviews: MusicWeb International (London) calling the TFC's performance "choral singing at the

very finest level...a very impressive performance indeed." *Sing We Now of Christmas*, recorded with legendary traditional Celtic artists, has been called "a choral feast that will linger long in your memory after you've heard it" (Audio Society of Atlanta).

Personnel in the ensemble represent conductors, educators, performers and professionals from throughout the United States. The TFC performs the finest choral literature from all eras, medieval to modern, with particular emphasis on new music. It has collaborated with and commissioned esteemed composers such as Stephen Paulus, Trevor Weston, Brian Galante, Michael McGlynn, David Maves, Edward Hart and Karen Marolli. TFC also performs folk music from the Celtic nations, frequently collaborating with Na Fidleiri, as well as famous traditional Irish and Scottish performers such as John Doyle, Liz Carroll, Kim Robertson and others. Dedicated to bringing the beauty and spiritual enrichment of choral music to as wide an audience as possible, the Taylor Festival Choir tours frequently, and performs outreach concerts in schools and churches throughout South Carolina and surrounding states.



Taylor Festival Choir

Soprano

Kori Miller – Principal
Karen Cook
Leah Durham
Grace Kahl
Tatiana Waldon
Andrea Scheulen

Alto

Emmalee Hinson – Principal
Jasmine Crowder
Chelsea Loew
Maria Miller
Katie Small
Kiri Taylor

Tenor

Maurice Burgess – Principal
James Franklin
Bates O'Neal
Josh Overby
Will Royall
Andy Stewart

Bass

Jordan Boyd – Principal/Associate Conductor
Tom Gerber
Brandon Hendrickson
Andy Jamison
Lee Lingle
Robert Ward

This album is dedicated to the memory of Cornelia Taylor, 1937-2015.

Special Thanks: Taylor Music Group, College of Charleston Department of Music and School of the Arts, Circular Congregational Church, Charleston SC, Judy Hammett, Holley Van Horn, Ellen Dressler Moryl, Mepkin Abbey, Dr. Kenneth Fulton, John Erwin, Lorna Barker and Christ Church, Mount Pleasant SC, John Barry, and Kristi, Riley and Brayden Galante

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Galante photo credit: John Froschauer

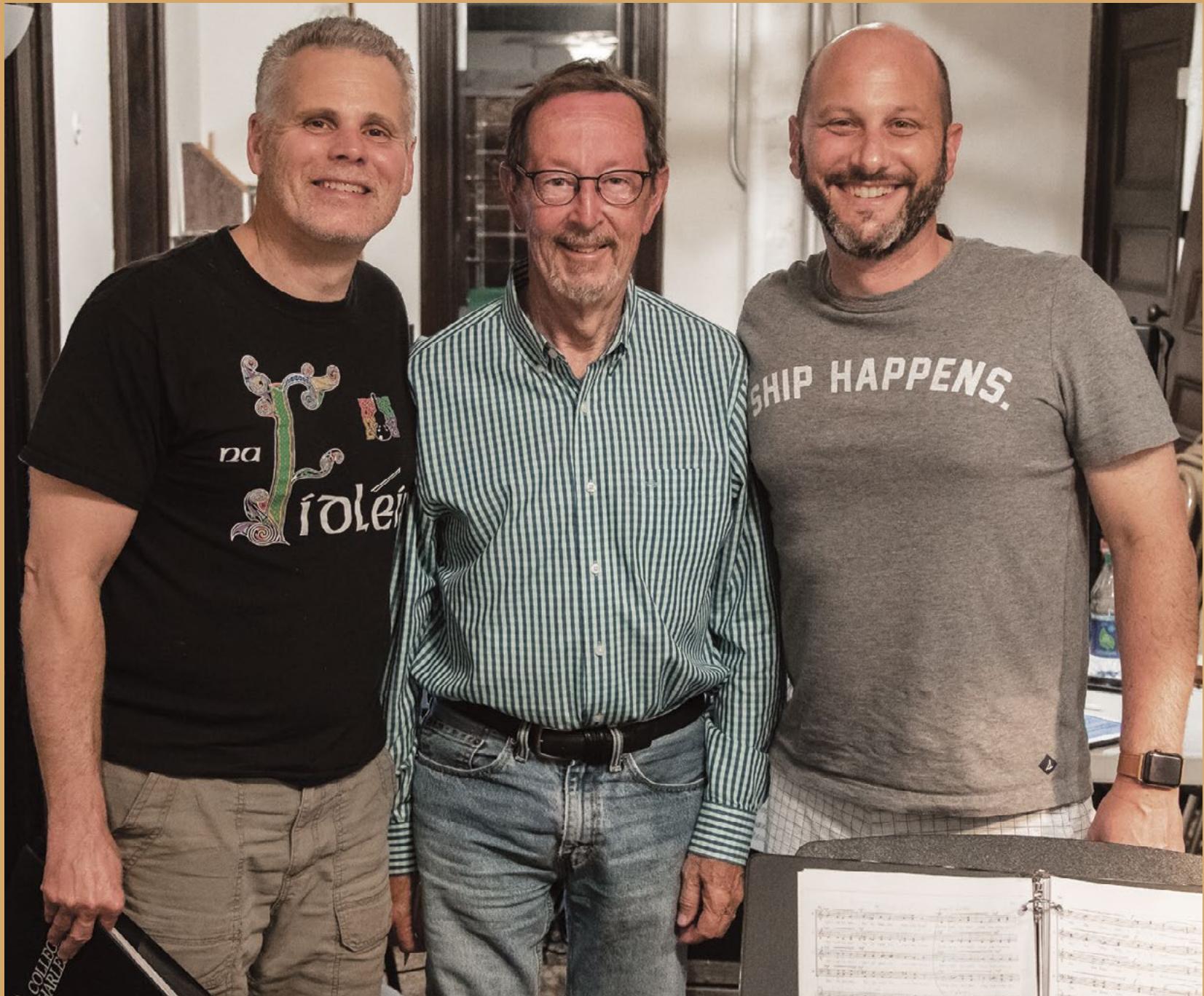
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From left to right: Rob Taylor, Kenneth Fulton, Brian Galante



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