

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Thanksgiving Fills the Cathedral

Sunday, November 20, 2011
Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, Milwaukee, Wis.

(September 29, 2011-Milwaukee, Wis.) Present Music, Milwaukee's new music ensemble, commissioned and premiered *Wind, Water, Clouds & Fire*, a significant composition by Henry Brant (1931-2008), a pioneer of spatial music and a Pulitzer-Prize winner in music, in 2004. Present Music will once again present this stirring and contemplative spatial piece at the annual Thanksgiving concert on Sunday, November 20 at 4pm at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in Milwaukee, Wis.

This epic piece features nearly 150 singers, trumpeters, keyboard players, violinists, wind players and percussionists from Present Music, Milwaukee Choral Artists, Vocal Arts Academy of Milwaukee, Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra violinists, Pius XI High School Choir, Arrowhead High School Choir, and Homestead High School Choir. Each chorus sings text from Leonardo Di Vinci's philosophic and scientific reflections on wind, water, clouds and fire with the choruses and musicians widely situated throughout the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in a performance that evokes the scale and immensity of the natural world.

Henry Brant on his music:

"It has never seemed to me that life is a simple matter, and I have always felt that music can reflect everyday existence. For me, spatially contrasted musical events present opportunities for representation in the concert hall as musical equivalents of the incessant bombardment of social and environmental catastrophes."

Present Music chose to include this piece as part of the 30th season because it received such acclaim when it was premiered in 2004 at two sell-out concerts at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist. This commission is an excellent example of Present Music's commitment to the commissioning of new works and support of contemporary composers.

Sharon Hanson, Director of Milwaukee Choral Artists, on Henry Brant:

"The Milwaukee Choral Artists will never forget the premiere of *Wind, Water, Clouds & Fire*. Our fondest memories are of the rehearsals and actual performance. Henry was performing on the organ in the balcony, where MCA was positioned as one of the antiphonal choirs. Here was this small, elderly man (at the time, he had just turned ninety-one), playing the organ with the energy, drive, and determination of a performer one third his age! We will never forget his smile and sense of humor."

Brant's *Wind, Water, Clouds & Fire* recording is available for purchase on Henry Brant Collection: Vol. 3. Aside from Present Music, this piece has only been performed one other time by the Seattle Chamber Players in 2007. As is tradition, the Opening Song, Friendship Dance and Closing Song will be performed by the Bucks Native American Singing & Drumming Group. Present Music will also perform *Annum per annum* by Arvo Part, *Exsultet* by James MacMillan, *Fanfare for St. Edmundsbury* by Benjamin Britten, and *Words of the Angel* by Ivan Moody (trumpet version).

Buy online at www.presentmusic.org or call (414) 271-0711. Single ticket prices are \$15, \$25, \$35 and half-priced for students (students must order by phone). Subscriptions start at \$80. Phone sales will be open until Friday, November 18 at 5pm. Online print-at-home sales will remain open until Sunday, November 20 at noon. Non-discounted tickets will be available at the door. This performance is not recommended for children 12 years old and younger. Patrons are encouraged to bring food donations to the concert to benefit Hunger Task Force.

Present Music office: Broadway Theatre Center, 158 North Broadway, Milwaukee, WI 53202
Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist: 812 N. Jackson St., Milwaukee, WI 53202

This event is an independent function and is not related to, nor sponsored by, nor controlled by the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist.

Links

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Present Music is Milwaukee's internationally acclaimed new music ensemble. Celebrating 30 years of new music, Present Music commissions, performs, records, and tours the music of living composers. In the past quarter century, more than 55 new works, by composers from around the world, have come into existence because of Present Music. Founded by Kevin Stalheim, Present Music works closely with many of the world's most exciting and significant composers while supporting the talents of emerging voices. It nurtures the next generation of composers through its education program, the Creation Project.

Present Music is a member of the United Performing Arts Fund, which provides major financial support. This season is supported by a grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board with funds from the State of Wisconsin and the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional support provided by CAMPAC and by the generosity of foundations, corporations and individuals. PM has won the ASCAP/Chamber Music America's Adventurous Programming Award an unprecedented six times and can be heard on nine compact disk recordings on the Argo, Albany, Aoede, Northeastern, Naxos and Innova labels.

Present Music engages artists and audiences in imaginative and provocative experiences with new music through ensemble performance, education and commissioning.