

justinmerritt

corde natus *for choir*

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Corde natus (Of the Father's Love Begotten) was written by Aurelius Clemens Prudentius (c.348 - c.413), a Roman judge. The principle melody, *Divinum Mysterium*, is from an 11th Century Sanctus trope. Both the text and tune are familiar as Christmas hymns.

I have tried to take my setting closer to its source than the typical hymn setting. The work opens with the tune sung as a chant in the sopranos.

Slowly, the rest of the choir "picks up" individual pitches in the melody, as though there were a very selective reverb in the hall, forming a diatonic sheen around the melody. The second verse is set mostly in strict modal counterpoint among the upper voices, but the men sing in parallel 5ths, echoing early organum. Finally, the text, tune and choir are split into 4 soloists and multiple separate parts, each presenting small portions of the preceding counterpoint in overlapping waves.

-notes by the composer

"... the highlight of the year came Nov. 9 with Justin Merritt's Five Preludes for piano..."
-Peter Schimpf, Bloomington Independent

"Several times I wrote "Wow!" next to a work being played..."
-Peter Jacobi, Herald Times

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In 2000 composer Justin Merritt (bn. 1975) was the youngest-ever winner of the ASCAP Foundation/Rudolph Nissim Award for *Janus Mask*. He is also the winner of a host of other awards including the 2008-09 Copland Award, the 2008 Minnesota Orchestra Composer Institute Prize for *River of Blood*, and the 2006 Polyphonos Prize

He received his Bachelors from Trinity University and

his Masters and Doctorate from Indiana University. He studied composition with Samuel Adler, Sven-David Sandström, Claude Baker, Timothy Kramer, Don Freund, and electronic and computer music with

Jeffrey Hass. He is currently Assistant Professor of Composition at St. Olaf College. He resides in Northfield, Minnesota with his wife Yuedong and their children Cullen Fang Ouxiang and Molly Fang Qinghe.

"...demands an audience's attention... Merritt's piece was the standout."
-Rob Hubbard, Pioneer Press

Corde Natus

Corde natus ex parentis
ante mundi exordium
A et O cognominatus,
ipse fons et clausula
Omnium quae sunt, fuerunt,
quaeque post futura sunt.

Saeculorum saeculis.

O beatus ortus ille,
virgo cum puerpera
Edidit nostram salutem,
feta Sancto Spiritu,
Et puer redemptor
orbis os sacratum protulit.

Saeculorum saeculis

Of the Father's Heart Begotten

Of the Father's heart begotten,
ere the world from chaos rose,
he is Alpha, from that Fountain
all that is and hath been flows;
he is Omega, of all things
yet to come the mystic close,

evermore and evermore.

O how blest that wondrous birthday,
when the Maid the curse retrieved,
brought to birth mankind's salvation;
by the Holy Ghost conceived;
and the Babe, the world's Redeemer
in her loving arms received,

evermore and evermore..

commissioned by
Scott Macpherson & the
Vokalensemble Kölner Dom
premiered December 2003 in the
Cologne Cathedral

other compositions by **justinmerritt**

orchestral	Janus Mask.....winds in 2s
	River of Blood.....winds in 2s
	Dervish.....winds in 2s
	Lachryme.....string orchestra
	Monster.....winds in 3s
choral	Corde natus.....SATB
	Lamentations.....SATB
	Hay Días.....SMsATBrB
	Nativity.....SATB
	Adoro Te Devote.....SATB
	Fire Sermon.....SSATB & orchestra
solo	Standard Deviation.....violin
	Bar for Hans Sachs.....flute
	Veloce.....violin & piano
	Coupling.....organ
	Drum Break.....percussion
chamber	A Gauze of Misted Silver.....string quartet & harp
	Ravening.....string quartet
	Invocation.....8 solo brass
	The Day Florestan Murdered Magister Raro.....clarinet, violin, cello, & piano
	Trio.....violin, cello, & piano
piano	5 Preludes.....piano
	Chaconne: Mercy Endures.....piano
	Rococo Suite.....piano
	Sierpinski Gasket.....piano
	Windchimes.....piano
	Hive.....4 pianos, 16 hands
vocal	Dissonance.....song cycle
	Steps Into Stillness.....song cycle
	Dhammapada.....song cycle
	London Thoroughfare, 2AM.....tenor, horn, violin, & piano
	May Evening in Central Park.....baritone & piano