

MUSICA SACRA

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Musica Sacra 2026-27 Season:

- “SurRound: The Earth Remembers” – October 7, 2026
- “Classics for Christmas: *A Ceremony of Carols*” – December 17, 2026
- Thea Musgrave’s *The Voices of Our Ancestors* – April 20, 2027
- Collaborations with Carnegie Hall (*Götterdämmerung*), New York Philharmonic (*Amadeus* in Concert), and New York City Ballet (*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*)



Musica Sacra at Carnegie Hall 2025 (photo by Brian Hatton), Gaia at Tewkesbury Abbey, UK, 2024 (Photo (c) Jack Boskett Media Ltd)

The 2026-27 season of Musica Sacra, New York’s elite professional chorus led by Music Director Kent Tritle, features three singular programs presented by the chorus at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine and Carnegie Hall as well as collaborations with Carnegie Hall, the New York Philharmonic, and the New York City Ballet.

The season begins with “**SurRound: The Earth Remembers**,” the latest in the group’s immersive SurRound events, performed at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine under the exhibit *Gaia*, a massive orb depicting the Earth using imagery from NASA – the program ranging from Meredith Monk’s *Astronaut Anthem* to Einojuhani Rautavaara’s *The First Elegy* and Renaissance works (October 7, 2026).

Musica Sacra’s annual holiday concert Carnegie Hall features Benjamin Britten’s eternal classic ***A Ceremony of Carols*** as well as selections with orchestra by Elgar, Handel, Leopold Mozart, and others (December 17, 2026). And the chorus’s spring concert centers around Thea Musgrave’s ***The Voices of Our Ancestors***, a 2014 work setting the creation hymn from the *Rigveda*, an ancient Sanskrit verse, and other ancient poems (all in English translations), for narrator, chorus, brass, and organ (April 20, 2027).

Musica Sacra continues its tradition of **collaborations with other top-tier organizations**: the chorus performs in **Carnegie Hall**'s presentation of *Götterdämmerung*, part of Wagner's Ring Cycle in Concert, the first such cycle in Carnegie Hall's history, conducted by Gianandrea Noseda with the Orchestra of the Zurich Opera (March 23, 2027). Musica Sacra is featured in the **New York Philharmonic**'s presentation of *Amadeus* in Concert, a live score performance to the acclaimed Miloš Forman film adaptation of Peter Shaffer's play, conducted by David Newman – part of the orchestra's The Art of the Score series (June 24, 25, 27, 2027). And the chorus returns to perform with the **New York City Ballet** for that company's signature production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (May 25-30, 2027).

Complete programs and links to event pages follow below.

Musica Sacra, founded in 1964, is New York's longest continually performing professional chorus, and the 2026-27 season marks Kent Tritle's 20th as Music Director. Musical America, in its coverage of the 2023 performances of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with the New York Philharmonic, praised the chorus's "stunning transparency," saying the group "achieved ravishing homogeneity in the frequent chorales while triumphing in the complex and moving 'Wir setzen uns mit Tränen' that closes the work."

"SurRound: The Earth Remembers" – Wednesday, October 7, 2026, at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine

This 2026 installment of Musica Sacra's immersive SurRound events – described by New York Classical Review as "what it feels like to be inside a piece of music" – takes place in the gothic nave of the Cathedral, with singers in motion throughout the placement of the audience under *Gaia*, a massive orb 23 feet in diameter depicting the Earth using NASA imagery, revolving and illuminated from within. A touring artwork by U.K. artist Luke Jerram, *Gaia* is on display at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine from September 18 to October 9, part of the Cathedral's commitment to St. Francis and his devotion to the earth.

Kent Tritle says, "We are thrilled to adapt our popular SurRound concept to revolve around the earth – almost literally, in this case! *Gaia* provides us with an opportunity to offer music reflecting the splendor, fracturing, and future hope for our planet." The program focus on the natural world features music by Renaissance composers Jean Mouton and Juan Pérez Bocanegra and by modern composers including Meredith Monk, Robert Paterson, Einojuhani Rautavaara, Caroline Shaw, and Christine Whitten Thomas, to words ranging from poems by Rainer Maria Rilke to texts in traditional Quechuan and Navajo – the complete program follows below.

"Classics for Christmas: A Ceremony of Carols" – Thursday, December 17, 2026, at Carnegie Hall

Musica Sacra's annual holiday season concert at Carnegie Hall this year is highlighted by Benjamin Britten's eternal Christmas classic *A Ceremony of Carols* for chorus and harp, with guest harpist Mariko Anraku. The evening also features music for chorus and orchestra both classic (*Sleigh Ride* by Leopold Mozart, *The King Shall Rejoice* by Handel) and modern (works by Reena Esmail, Morton Lauridsen, and Wayne Oquin) – the complete program follows below. Maximillian Morel, Principal Trumpet of American Ballet Theater, and David Pushkoff, Principal Trumpet of New York City Ballet, are featured in the orchestra.

The Voices of Our Ancestors – Tuesday, April 20, 2027, at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine

The Voices of Our Ancestors is a 2014 work for narrator, chorus, brass, and organ by Thea Musgrave that sets the creation hymn from the *Rigveda*, an ancient Sanskrit verse dating in its written form from 1500-

1200 B.C., and eleven other poems translated into English from almost as many languages. The Scottish-born Musgrave, who has lived in the U.S. since 1972, celebrates her centenary in 2028.

Poet and author David Mills will narrate the work, and his poetry will be featured in the course of the program. Mills's first book, *Boneyarn*, about New York's African Burial Ground, won the 2022 North American Poetry Award from the Poetry Society of Virginia.

The program begins with selections of medieval polyphony and works by Josquin des Prez and Adrian Willaert from the Medici Codex of 1518. (Within view of the audience is a tapestry created with artwork commissioned by Pope Leo X, who commissioned the Medici Codex as a wedding gift to his nephew.)

[Thea Musgrave](#) wrote about her work: "This poem spoke to me so vividly that I knew I had to find a way to set it to music. I then searched for other ancient poems that could accompany it: not only with poems about the eternal existential questions but also with poems expressing intimate human feelings of love, despair, loss, and enjoyment. In the end I found eleven other poems in Vedic, Sanskrit, Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, Chinese, Latin, Greek and Egyptian – though all translated into English. All of them date from ancient times. I feel they still speak vividly to us today."

MUSICA SACRA

Since its founding in 1964, the mission of Musica Sacra has been to create definitive, professional, choral performances of the highest caliber. It does so with concerts, recording, the commissioning and performing of new choral works, and collaborating with other top tier performing arts organizations.

Musica Sacra is known for its interpretations of the masterpieces of choral music – Tallis's *Spem in Alium*, the choral oeuvre of J. S. Bach, the masses of Mozart and Haydn, the Requiems of Mozart, Brahms, and Fauré, Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*, Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*, Strauss's *Deutsche Motette*, Bruckner's motets, and Schönberg's *Friede auf Erden*, among others – and its involvement in contemporary repertoire; the group has given the world and New York premieres of choral works by composers including Benjamin Britten, Dave Brubeck, Anthony Davis, Aaron Copland, David Diamond, Aram Khachaturian, Duncan Patton, Vincent Persichetti, Daniel Pinkham, Bernard Rands, and Peter Schickele. Notable commissions range from Alan Hovhaness's *Revelations of St. Paul, The Death of Moses* by Ned Rorem, and Richard Danielpour's *Prologue and Prayer* to works by Alessandro Cadario, Robert Convery, Michael Gilbertson, Ricky Ian Gordon, Wang Jie, Libby Larsen, Meredith Monk, Robert Moran, and Kim D. Sherman.

Recent highlights of Musica Sacra's singular history of collaborations with other ensembles and organizations include the New York Philharmonic's recent performances of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, Handel's *Messiah*, and Mozart's Requiem and live score performances of *Amadeus* and *2001: A Space Odyssey*; Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic led by Gustavo Dudamel; and the New York City Ballet's performances of *Les Noces* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Musica Sacra has recorded on the RCA, BMG, MSR Classics and Deutsche Grammophon labels:

<https://musicasacrany.com/recording/>

Each year Assistant Music Director Michael Sheetz, aided by Musica Sacra singers, works with students in Title 1 schools across New York City, giving workshops centered around each of the season's concerts:

<https://musicasacrany.com/education/>

www.musicasacrany.com

Kent Tritle has been Music Director of Musica Sacra since 2008. One of America's leading choral conductors, called "the brightest star in New York's choral music world" by The New York Times, he is also Director of Cathedral Music and Organist at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City and Music Director of the Oratorio Society of New York. In addition, Kent is a member of the graduate faculty of The Juilliard School, serving its Vocal Arts Department. An acclaimed organ virtuoso, he is also the organist of the New York Philharmonic. <https://kenttritle.com>

Musica Sacra 2026-27 Season

Wednesday, October 7, 2026, at 7:30 pm
Cathedral of St. John the Divine

MUSICA SACRA

"SURROUND: THE EARTH REMEMBERS"

Kent Tritle, conductor

This program will be performed under *Gaia*, a touring artwork by U.K. artist Luke Jerram.

Splendor & Interconnection

Gregg Smith (1931-2016)

Meredith Monk (b. 1942)

Jean Mouton (1459-1522)

Now I Walk in Beauty

Astronaut Anthem

Sancti Dei omnes (From the Medici Codex of 1518)

Lament & Fracture

Robert Paterson (b. 1970)

Christine Whitten Thomas (b. 1979)

Einojuhani Rautavaara (1928-2016)

"Infinite Oceans" (from *The Essence of Gravity*)

"Prière de la Baleine" ("Prayer of the Whale")

from *Choral de Bêtes*

Die Erste Elegie (*The First Elegy*)

Reconciliation & Renewal

Frank Ticheli (b. 1958)

Caroline Shaw (b. 1982)

Robert Paterson (b. 1970)

Christine Whitten Thomas (b. 1979)

Juan Pérez Bocanegra (ca.1598-1631)

Earth Song

and the sparrow

"A Song on the End of the World" (from *Eternal Reflections*)

Take Peace

Hanacpachap Cussicuinin

Thursday, December 17, 2026, at 7:30 pm
Carnegie Hall

MUSICA SACRA

“CLASSICS FOR CHRISTMAS: A CEREMONY OF CAROLS”

Kent Tritle, conductor

Mariko Anraku, harp

Maximillian Morel & David Pushkoff, trumpets

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

A Ceremony of Carols

Francesco Onofrio Manfredini (1648-1762)

Concerto for Two Trumpets in D

Morton Lauridsen (b. 1943)

O Magnum Mysterium

Reena Esmail (b. 1983)

“The unexpected early hour” from *A Winter Breviary*

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

The Snow

Leopold Mozart (1719-1787)

Sleigh Ride (Schlittenfahrt)

Marcel Grandjany (1891-1975)

Aria in Classic Style for harp and strings

Wayne Oquin (b. 1977)

O Magnum Mysterium

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

The King Shall Rejoice

Tuesday, March 23, 2027, at 6 pm

Carnegie Hall

GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG – WAGNER’S RING CYCLE IN CONCERT

Orchestra of the Zurich Opera House

Gianandrea Noseda, Music Director and Conductor

Cast to include:

Klaus Florian Vogt, Siegfried

Daniel Schmutzhard, Gunther

Christopher Purves, Alberich

Mika Kares, Hagen

Camilla Nylund, Brünnhilde

Iulia Maria Dan, Guttrune

Agnieszka Rehlis, Waltraute

Musica Sacra

Kent Tritle, Director

Tuesday, April 20, 2027, at 7:30 pm
Cathedral of St. John the Divine

MUSICA SACRA

THE VOICES OF OUR ANCESTORS

Musica Sacra Chorus
Musica Sacra Brass
Kent Tritle, conductor
Raymond Nagem, organ
David Mills, narrator

St. Martial, c. 1200	<i>Victimae Paschali laudes</i>
Worcester Fragments (c. 1300)	<i>Gloria-Spiritus procedens a Patre</i> (arr. Denis Stevens)
<i>From the Medici Codex of 1518 commissioned by Pope Leo X</i>	
Josquin des Prez (c.1450/55-1521)	<i>Inviolata et integra est</i>
Adrian Willaert (c.1490-1562)	<i>Regina Caeli Laetare</i>
David Mills will read excerpts from his poetry collection <i>Boneyarn</i> .	
Thea Musgrave (b. 1928)	<i>The Voices of Our Ancestors</i>
	The Creation Hymn (<i>Rigveda</i> , c. 1500-1200 BC)
	Time (Bhartrihari, c. 500 AD)
	The Royal Crown (Solomon ibn Gabirol, 1021-1058)
	From the Sacred Book (Zoroaster, 7th c. BC)
	Inscription on the City of Brass (8th c. Arabic)
	You will die (Shi King, compiled c. 500 BC)
	The Gift of Speech (Sa'di, 1210-1292)
	Dido's Lament (Virgil, 70-19 BC)
	The Desolate City (8th c. Arabic)
	Age (Anacreon, 6th c. BC)
	Let us drink (Alcaeus, 610 BC)
	The Song of the Hunter (Egyptian Papyrus Harris, c.1539-1075 BC)

May 25-30, 2027
David H. Koch Theater, Lincoln Center
NEW YORK CITY BALLET

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Musica Sacra, Kent Tritle, director, is featured in performances of Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

June 24, 25, 27, 2027

David Geffen Hall, Lincoln Center

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC

[AMADEUS IN CONCERT](#)

David Newman, conductor

Musica Sacra

Kent Tritle, director

Film and live score performance, part of The Art of the Score series

July 23, 2026