

GRADUATE CONDUCTING RECITAL

By

JERAMY A. NICHOLS

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE:

WILL KESLING, MEMBER

A PROJECT IN LIEU OF THESIS PRESENTED TO THE COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF MUSIC

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

2012

© 2012 JERAMY A. NICHOLS

To my mother for her love, support and constant encouragement

AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the University of Florida and the School of Music for developing the summer Masters of Music program for practicing teachers and for the implementation of Secondary Concentrations. This has given me the opportunity to fulfill my dreams of achieving an advanced degree in music and to study and learn with a highly qualified, professional, and talented faculty.

TALBE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
AKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	4
ABSTRACT.....	6
INTRODUCTION.....	7
PROGRAM ORDER.....	8
PROGRAM NOTES.....	10
SCORES.....	13
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.....	14

Summary of Performance Option in Lieu of Thesis
Presented to the College of Fine Arts of the University of Florida
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Music

GRADUATE CONDUCTING RECITAL

By

Jeremy Nichols

May 2012

Member: Will Kesling
Secondary Concentration: Choral Conducting

On April 10, 2012, I conducted a graduate recital in the University Auditorium. This graduate conducting recital was in fulfillment of requirements for the choral conducting secondary concentration. The program was comprised of an eclectic array of seven choral compositions. Among these compositions were: *Cry Out and Shout*; *O Magnum Mysterium*; *Pavane Op. 50*; *Spinning Chorus* from *Der fliegende Holländer*; *Prayer of the Children*; *A Red, Red, Rose*; and *My Soul's Been Anchored in the Lord*. These choral compositions ranged from a Romantic Art Song, an Opera Chorus for women, and styles from the Twentieth Century leading to a Traditional Spiritual. Within this assorted array of choral compositions were selections in English, Latin, and German that represented different historical eras from living and deceased composers Knut Nystedt, Morten Lauridsen, Gabriel Fauré, Richard Wagner, Kurt Bestor, James Mulholland, and Moses Hogan. The majority of the pieces were *a cappella* with the remainder having piano accompaniment. The selection of music represented a variety of styles, tempi, and harmonic structures. The performers were student members of the University of Florida Concert Choir from the School of Music.

INTRODUCTION

On April 10, 2012, I conducted a graduate choral conducting recital. This conducting recital was in fulfillment of requirements for the Secondary Concentration in Choral Conducting. The repertoire was comprised of an eclectic array of seven different choral works consisting of: *Cry Out and Shout*; *O Magnum Mysterium*; *Pavane Op. 50*; *Spinning Chorus* from *Der fliegende Holländer*; *Prayer of the Children*; *A Red, Red, Rose*; and *My Soul's Been Anchored in the Lord*. These choral compositions were in English, Latin, and German that represented different historical eras from living and deceased composers Knut Nystedt, Morten Lauridsen, Gabriel Fauré, Richard Wagner, Kurt Bestor, James Mulholland, and Moses Hogan. Among these eclectic choral works were a Romantic Art Song, an Opera Chorus for women, and styles from the Twentieth Century concluding with an Afro-American Spiritual.

I decided to perform these selections to represent the immense assortment of choral music and to show how different styles and genres can be performed together. To begin the program, I chose the choral work *Cry Out and Shout* for its ability to grab the attention of the audience with its quick rhythms and loud dynamic markings. The program then moves through a sacred motet, *O Magnum Mysterium*, to a Romantic Art Song, *Pavane Op. 50*, that illustrates the how dancers view other dancers from their masqueraded masks during a processional Pavane dance. The next two choral pieces in the program focused on the lush harmonies of the women's and men's sections of the choir in the *Spinning Chorus* from *Der fliegende Holländer* and *Prayer of the Children*. For the final two choral works, the performers performed a stunning arrangement of Robert Burns poem, *A Red, Red Rose*, and Moses Hogan's arrangement of *My Soul's Been Anchored in the Lord* to conclude the program. The performers were student members of the University of Florida Concert Choir from the School of Music. The selections of

music represented *a cappella* and piano accompaniment with a variety of styles, tempi, and harmonic structures.

PROGRAM

Cry Out and Shout Knut Nystedt
(b. 1915)

O Magnum Mysterium Morton Lauridsen
(b. 1943)

O great mystery, and wonderful sacrament, that animals should see the new-born Lord, lying in a manger! Blessed is the Virgin whose womb was worthy to bear Christ the Lord. Alleluia!

Pavane, Op. 50 Gabriel Fauré
(1845-1924)

Spinning Chorus (from *Der fliegende Holländer*) Richard Wagner
(1818-1883)

Whir and whirl, good wheel, gaily, gaily turn!
Spin, spin a thousand threads, good wheel, whirl and whirl!

My love out on the seas thinking of his dear at home;
Ah, good wheel, roar more!
Ah, if you could raise a wind, he'd soon be here.

Spin, girls, spin busily!
Whir and whirl, good wheel! Tra-la-ra la-la-la-la-la!

Whir and whirl, good wheel, gaily, gaily turn!
Spin, spin a thousand threads, good wheel, whirl and whirl!

My love out on the seas will earn much gold in southern lands;
Ah, good wheel, roar more!
He'll give it to his dear if she spins busily.

Spin, girls, spin busily!
Whir and whirl, good wheel! Tra-la-ra la-la-la-la-la!

Prayer of the Children

Kurt Bestor
(b. 1958)

Can you hear the prayer of the children on bended knee, in the shadow of an unknown room? Empty eyes with no more tears to cry turning heavenward toward the light.

Crying, " Jesus, help me to see the morning light of one more day,
but if I should die before I wake, I pray my soul to take."

Can you feel the hearts of the children aching for home, for something of their very own.
Reaching hands with nothing to hold onto but hope for a better day, a better day.
Crying, " Jesus, help me to feel the love again in my own land,
but if unknown roads lead away from home, give me loving arms, away from harm.

Can you hear the voice of the children softly pleading for silence in their shattered world?
Angry guns preach a gospel full of hate, blood of the innocent on their hands.
Crying, " Jesus, help me to feel the sun again upon my face?
For when darkness clears, I know you're near,
bringing peace again."

Dali čujete sve dječje molitve?

Can you hear the prayer of the children?

A Red, Red Rose

James Mulholland
(b. 1935)

O my Luve's like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June;
O my Luve's like the melodie
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luve am I:
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry:

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun:
I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee well, my only Luve
And fare thee well, a while!
And I will come again, my Luve,
Tho' it were ten thousand mile.

PROGRAM NOTES

Knut Nystedt (b. 1915) is a Norwegian orchestral and choral composer. Nystedt's compositions for choir and vocal soloists are mainly based on texts from the Bible or sacred themes. Major influences on his compositions were inspired from the composer Palestrina and from the body of Gregorian chant. In 1966, the King of Norway selected Nystedt as Knight of the Order of St. Olav in recognition of his contributions to Norwegian music. He was appointed Commander of St. Olav in 2002 by the King of Norway. *Cry Out and Shout* is a sacred *a cappella* choral work composed for six voices (SSATTB). The text is adapted from Isaiah, Chapter 12.

Morton Lauridsen (b. 1943) is an American composer and has been a professor of composition at the University of Southern California for more than thirty years. In 2006, he was named an "American Choral Master" by the National Endowment for the Arts. He is also the recipient of the National Medal of Arts from the President in 2007. Musicologist and conductor Nick Strimple describes Lauridsen as the "only American composer in history who can be called a mystic, whose probing, serene works that contain an elusive and indefinable ingredient which leaves the impression that all the questions have been answered". Lauridsen's *O Magnum Mysterium* is based on the responsorial chant from the Office of Matins for Christmas Day. This motet is perhaps one of the most popular and performed choral works by an American composer. With the use of tone clusters and inverted triadic harmonies, Lauridsen paints a picture of the birth of Christ from the animals' perspective.

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) was a French composer, organist, pianist, and teacher. He was one of the foremost French composers of his generation and his musical style influenced many 20th Century composers. The *Pavane* was originally a piano piece, but the orchestra with optional chorus is better known. Its rhythm was obtained from the slow processional Spanish court dance of the same name. The *Pavane* flows from a series of harmonic and melodic climaxes that conjure a somewhat haunting elegance.

Richard Wagner (1813-1883) was a German composer, conductor, theorist, and essayist, primarily known for his operas. He was without a doubt the most popular and influential German composer in the second half of the nineteenth century. While writing in a highly original musical style, Wagner introduced many innovative operatic standards as the Tristan chord and leitmotif, the recurring musical idea connected with a particular character, place, or mood. The *Spinning Chorus* comes from the Opera *The Flying Dutchman* (*der fleigende Holländer*) and was set for a women's chorus. The *Spinning Chorus* opens the second act with a group of local girls spinning and singing in Daland's, the sea captain's house. Daland's daughter, Senta, is gazing upon his picture telling the story of the legendary Dutchman who hangs from the wall and how she desires to save him. She then continues to sing the story of the Dutchman and how the ghost captain tempts Daland for his daughter's hand in marriage.

Kurt Bestor (b. 1958) is an American composer, performer, and arranger. He graduated from Brigham Young University where he studied Studio Composition and holds an honorary degree from Utah Valley University. Bestor has released over a dozen CDs and has been

awarded an Emmy Award for ABC's theme for the 1988 Winter Olympics. He has also composed several television introductions including Good Morning American and Monday Night Football. Bestor's *Prayer of the Children* is his most famous and most performed choral composition. This piece was written in light of the Yugoslav wars to honor the children of the former Yugoslavia. Ironically, this song was never intended to be published. The inspiration for *Prayer of the Children* came while Bestor was living in the former Yugoslavia and witnessing the horrendous civil war that was taking place. The composition was inspired by the frustrations and deep feelings he had for the suffering children.

James Mulholland (b. 1935) is Professor of Music at Butler University in Indianapolis, Indiana. His choral composition *A Red, Red Rose* is from *Four Robert Burns Ballads* and is one of Mulholland's finest works. The lush harmonies of this stunning arrangement of Scotland's most famous poet, Robert Burns, are simply breathtaking.

Moses Hogan (1957-2003) was the most distinguished contemporary director, conductor, and arranger of traditional spirituals during his short life. He was a graduate of the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts, Oberlin Conservatory of Music, and studied at New York's Julliard School of Music. Hogan was the director of The Moses Hogan Chorale and The Moses Hogan Singers which made their debut in 1998. Hogan also served as the editor of the new Oxford Book of Spirituals. His arrangements, such as *My Soul's Been Anchored in the Lord*, are hugely popular and performed by high school, college, church, community, and professional choirs around the world.

SCORES

Nystedt, Knut. *Cry Out and Shout*. Summy-Birchard Publishing Company: SUMCO 4895-5, 1956.

Lauridsen, Morton. *O Magnum Mysterium*. Southern Music Publishing Co.,Inc.: No. 2227209, 1995.

Fauré, Gabriel. *Pavane, Op. 50*. Broude Brothers Limited: B.B. 807, 1952.

Wagner, Richard. *Spinning Chorus* from *Der fliegende Holländer*. ed. Rutter: Three Opera Choruses for Upper Voices. Oxford University Press: OCCO 21, 1995.

Bestor, Kurt. *Prayer of the Children*. The Pinnacle Group: CH 96166, 1995.

Mulholland, James. *A Red, Red Rose*. European American Music Corporation: EA445-7, 1980.

Hogan, Moses. *My Soul's Been Anchored in the Lord*. Hal Leonard Corporation: No. 08703235, 1999.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jeramy A. Nichols received his Bachelor of Science degree in Music with applied studies in vocal performance, choral music education, and church music ministries from Olivet Nazarene University in Kankakee, Illinois. He has been teaching music for the past ten years in Indiana, Florida, and thus far has taught elementary, middle and high school grade levels. In March 2011, Mr. Nichols was given the opportunity to travel to Beijing and Shanghai, China to conduct Palmer Trinity School's String Orchestra during their tour of China. Mr. Nichols received his Master of Music degree in Music Education with a Secondary Concentration in Choral Conducting from the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida. Upon completion, Mr. Nichols hopes to pursue Doctoral studies.