

**The Philadelphia Chorus Brings an Afternoon of Peace  
at Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral**

**THE VOICE OF PEACE**

**A concert featuring**

**Vaughan Williams' "Dona Nobis Pacem"**

**Rutter's "Gloria"**

**and other selections**

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Role | Thank You!

With a decent-sized staff of reviewers at B Sharp, it is a rare opportunity for Laura and I to have the opportunity to review a show. This past weekend, we were honored to be able to do just that.

The Philadelphia Chorus, under the direction of the brilliant and talented Artistic Director Raquel Garcia, presented their holiday concert, THE VOICE OF PEACE, at Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral. What a perfect venue for vocal and instrumental music, boasting astonishing acoustics for voice and orchestra! I am not sure that we have the space on our website to describe how beautiful this concert was!

From the opening number to the classic last note, the church was filled with thought-provoking music. Different styles and diversities rang poetry throughout the entire concert.

The concert opened with Kim André Arnesen's *Even When He Is Silent* which was pure beauty. This lead to Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem*. This work, consisting of six inner works, was seamless. The choir's mesmerizing harmonies, and the angelic voice of Melanie Sarakatsannis along with the pure baritone of John Miles added to its warmth and inspiration. Laura had a choir director in high school who used to say, "if there is a pause before the applause, you know you just performed excellently." Yes, I'd say it was excellent.

After a brief intermission, the chorus sang six very unique numbers. Each number was a work of art in of itself. Three of these musical numbers, David Burger's *T'ilah*, Christopher Tin's *Baba Yetu*, Michael Jackson's *Heal the World*, touched us the most. John Rutter's *Gloria* was a beautiful ending to this wonderful concert.

The choir consistently produced smooth harmonies and clear diction throughout the performance and the orchestra was exceptional. The additional solo voices of Johanna Schweitzer (soprano), Sarah Wade (soprano), Nick Edelman (bass), Megan Keiser (soprano), Bob Rodgers and Sid Misra (tenors) were wonderfully chosen for their specific solos and all were outstanding.

To paraphrase B Sharp's Cosette Lyncheski's April 10th review regarding Raquel Garcia; she was truly the most important person at this performance. As she conducts, the music dances exquisitely. In this most recent performance, the mix of classical and contemporary works showed us that her thought process for this concert was telling a story about the tremendous turmoil that surrounds us each and every day. Peace on earth is something that we all should aspire to.

Raquel Garcia and The Philadelphia Chorus has much to be proud of to put on such a quality performance. If you haven't seen them yet, it should be in your future plans.

We look forward to their Spring Concert on April 2, 2017 when they perform, among other selections, Gershwin's *Porgy & Bess* (concert version), featuring soprano Iris Fairfax and baritone Rocky Sellers. We hope you join us!

THE VOICE OF PEACE  
Sunday, December 4, 2016 at 4:00 pm  
Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral  
23 S 38th St, Philadelphia, PA 19104

[www.thephiladelphiachorus.org](http://www.thephiladelphiachorus.org)