

RDH Music SeriesR. Douglas Helvering

An Advent Alleluia

1. *Creator of the Stars*
2. *Out of the Depths*
3. *Drop Down, Ye Heavens*
4. *Today Christ is Born*

For Mixed Chorus with
Brass Quintet, Timpani, Percussion, and Organ
(optional SSA, Treble chorus, and Treble Solo)

conductor's score



www.rdouglashelvering.com

Instrumentation and Text

Instrumentation:

Brass Quintet (Trumpets in C, Horn in F, Trombone, Tuba)
Timpani (Standard Four-Drum arrangement)
Auxiliary Percussion (Glockenspiel, Snare Drum, Suspended Cymbal, Crash Cymbals)
Pipe Organ
Mixed Chorus (with the additional option for SSA choir, single-line treble choir, and treble solo)

Movement 1 – Creator of the Stars

Alleluia! Creator of the stars of night, your people's everlasting light,
O Christ, redeemer of us all, we pray you hear us when we call.
Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison. (*Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.*)
Praise we sing to Christ the Lord, virgin's son, incarnate Word!
To the holy Trinity, praise we sing eternally! Alleluia!

Movement 2 – Out of the Depths

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.
(*Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.*)
Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord; O Lord, hear my voice!
O let your ears consider well the voice of my appeal.
I wait for you, O Lord; my soul waits for Thee; in your word is my hope.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Movement 3 – Drop Down, Ye Heavens

O Morning Star, O day-spring, Rising Sun, splendor bright, O Oriens!
O Morning Star, splendor of eternal light,
O Sun of Justice, come shine on those seated in darkness and the shadow of death.
Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour forth righteousness:
Let the earth be fruitful. Drop down, ye heavens, and bring forth a Savior!
O Morning Star, O Oriens!

Movement 4 – Today Christ is Born

Hodie Christus Natus Est! (*Today Christ is born!*)
Today Christ is born: today the Savior has appeared:
Today the Angels sing on earth, the Archangels rejoice:
Today the righteous rejoice, saying: Glory to God in the Highest. Alleluia!

Composer – R. Douglas Helvering

Dr. Helvering is a highly active composer, conductor, and educator. His music has been featured at all of the major choral national and regional conventions as well as at prestigious venues worldwide including the historic Carnegie Hall in New York. He is an alum and adjunct professor of the famed Westminster Choir College in Princeton, NJ. Find more information about Dr. Helvering's work, including a full listing of compositions, audio, and video at www.rdouglashelvering.com.



AN ADVENT ALLELUIA

Composer's Notes

Commissioned by Sing Omaha in the summer of 2013 for their annual 'A Christmas Fanfare' concerts, Executive and Artistic Director Matt Hill desired a work that spoke to the themes of the Christian season of Advent, speaking of humanity's need for salvation, of prayerful waiting and watching, and of our joy as the promise of salvation is fulfilled in the birth of Jesus Christ.

The work is divided into four movements. The performance time is between 17 and 18 minutes. *An Advent Alleluia* allows for multiple choral forces but can be performed by a single mixed choir if desired. The SSA passages are designed for a separate choir, but singers from the SATB choir may be used. The Treble passages are designed for a separate single-line treble choir, but a combination of soloists or small groups may be used. In all cases, the conductor's discretion must be used to best utilize the available forces for a balanced overall sound.

A combination of ancient and beloved Advent texts is used throughout the piece. First, we hear a few lines from an anonymous 7th century Advent Vespers text. The movement's ending lines are from the last verse of Luther's famous chorale, *Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland*. The chorale's tune is historically heard in the first Sunday of Advent. In this setting, the chorale tune is retained (the only non-original music in the entire work), in augmentation, and set against fast flowing major sonorities. The *Kyrie*, a cry for mercy, forms the middle section of the movement. The opening and ending Alleluia sections are full and resonant but offered amidst the context of our own human shortcomings.

The second movement takes the *Agnus Dei* text and pairs it with a paraphrase of the opening verses of Psalm 130. Similar to the *Kyrie*, the *Agnus Dei* is a prayer for mercy, a plea for salvation. Treble voices are featured in the *Agnus Dei* sections. The middle section is a powerful, repetitive lament, coming to a climactic conclusion as the singers affirm hope in God.

In the third movement, text from the Advent prose and *O Oriens* are offered. *Rorate Coeli*, from Isaiah 45, forms the basis for the Advent Prose, and has been used extensively for centuries in Advent imagery and liturgy. Shifting tonalities and Lydian mode fragments make for an optimistic and expectant sound. *O Oriens* is from a set of Advent antiphons, called "O Antiphons" because of the way each text begins. *O Oriens* historically has been used in services on December 21. Descending, cascading lines in the choir mark the coming of Christ. The movement concludes with a majestic statement heralding His arrival.

Finally, we hear the famous text, *In die Christus Natus Est*. This is the antiphon to the *Magnificat*. With its declaration of Christ's birth, it is typically sung on Christmas Day. This setting makes use of ascending fourths to build a melodically memorable motive. The mixed choir and treble voices alternate in their phrases while the tonality shifts, forming a triad of tonal centers. The work concludes with a final statement of Alleluia! The music from earlier Alleluia sections returns, but now the sound is more jubilant, being sung amidst the joy of God's promise fulfilled.

Throughout *An Advent Alleluia*, the music has been crafted with my personal reflection upon the text's deep meaning. Advent is a season that should not be overlooked. Its themes are central to the human experience. The music seeks to reflect the wide range of human circumstance, from desperation to delight, and from heartache to happiness. I offer it with humility and pride.



September 1, 2013

An Advent Alleluia

1. Creator of the Stars

R. Douglas Helvering
ASCAP

Triumphantly, ♩.=64

The musical score is arranged for the following instruments and voices:

- Horn in F:** Treble clef, 6/8 time. Dynamics: *mf*, *sfp*, *mf*, *sfp*, *mf*.
- Trumpet 1 in C:** Treble clef, 6/8 time. Dynamics: *mf*, *sfp*, *mf*, *sfp*, *mf*.
- Trumpet 2 in C:** Treble clef, 6/8 time. Dynamics: *mf*, *sfp*, *mf*, *sfp*, *mf*.
- Trombone:** Bass clef, 6/8 time. Dynamics: *mf*, *sfp*, *mf*, *sfp*, *mf*.
- Tuba:** Bass clef, 6/8 time. Dynamics: *sfp*, *sfp*, *sfp*.
- Timpani:** Bass clef, 6/8 time. Dynamics: *sfp*, *sfp*, *sfp*. Includes notes for (Ab, Bb, C, Eb) and (III: Db).
- Percussion:** Treble clef, 6/8 time. Includes sn. drum. Dynamics: *f*, *sfp*.
- SATB Choir:** Treble and Bass clefs, 6/8 time. No notes present.
- Organ:** Treble and Bass clefs, 6/8 time. No notes present.
- Pedals:** Bass clef, 6/8 time. No notes present.

9 (♩=96)

6

Hn. *sfp* *mf* *f* *mf* 3

Tpt. 1 *sfp* *mf* *f* *mf* 3

Tpt. 2 *sfp* *mf* *f* *mf* 3

Tbn. *sfp* *mf* *f* *mf* 3

Tba. *sfp* *f* *mf*

Timp. *sfp* (gliss) *f* *sfp* 3

Perc. *sfp* *f* to sus. cym.

SATB

Org. GR: plenum *f* 3

Ped.

11

Hn.

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn.

Tba.

Timp.

Perc.

SATB

Org.

Ped.

f (I:F) sus. cym *mf* *f* *mf*

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -

16

Hn.

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn.

Tba.

Timp.

Perc.

SATB

Org.

Ped.

f

mf

f

mf

f

mf

f

mf

f

mf

f

mf

f

mf

f

mf

f

mf

f

mf

f

mf

f

mf

to glock.

lu - - - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

lu - - - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

SW: voix celeste
PED: soft 16', 8'

f

mf

f

mf

21

Hn. *mp* *p*

Tpt. 1 *mp* *p*

Tpt. 2 *mp* *p*

Tbn. *mp* *p*

Tba. *mp* *p*

Timp. (Eb, Bb, C, F)

Perc.

SATB
 Cre - a - tor of the
 Cre - a - tor

Org. *mp*

Ped.

Hn.

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn.

Tba.

Timp.

Perc.

SATB

Org.

Ped.

mf *f* *mf* *f*

gliss (III:D \flat) (II:A \flat)

to cr. cym.

- ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

- ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

For On-Screen
Perusal Only

Hn.
 Tpt. 1
 Tpt. 2
 Tbn.
 Tba.
 Timp.
 Perc.
 SATB
 Org.
 Ped.

ff
ff
ff
ff
ff
 (I:F, III:C)
 cr. cym.
ff
ff
ff

Al - le - lu - ia!
 Al - - - le - - - lu - ia!

For On-Screen
 Perusal Only