



THE CROSSING @ CHRISTMAS

Donald Nally, Conductor

A Native Hill, a Gavin Bryars world premiere
The Jeffrey Dinsmore Memorial Concerts

PROGRAM

There will not be an intermission.

Friday, December 14 @ 8 PM

Church of the Holy Trinity, Rittenhouse Square

PROGRAM NOTES

"What is a man anyhow? What am I? What are you?"

So asked Walt Whitman...and so we ask, as we contemplate our place in the universe. This December, The Crossing returns to the composer of *The Fifth Century*, a rich and profound commissioned work that led to the ensemble's 2018 Grammy® Award for Best Choral Performance. Gavin Bryars is writing a substantial work for unaccompanied choir, a major contribution to the ever-increasing volume of new literature The Crossing aims to inspire. With his signature introspective musical language, at once both grand and intimate, this new work promises to be a welcome meditation in contrast to the temporal chaos of the season and of our world.

Visit crossingchoir.org to learn more about this commission, the libretto and the journey.

A Native Hill for choir a cappella (2018)

Gavin Bryars

Following the success of the previous collaboration between The Crossing and Gavin Bryars (*The Fifth Century*, for choir and saxophone quartet) Gavin Bryars wrote a substantial new a cappella work, provisionally called *A Native Hill*, setting texts by the American writer Wendell Berry from his 1968 essay of the same title. Although at first appearance pastoral, Berry's descriptions of the minutiae of his rural existence have a profound metaphysical and even political force. He has been called, a little simplistically perhaps, a modern Thoreau although here his visionary prose has something of the mysticism of Bryars' previous work with The Crossing when he set Thomas Traherne. The composer is able to draw on the close working and personal relationship he has developed with the choir and his intimate knowledge of the singers' individual characteristics.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

The Crossing

The Crossing is a Grammy® Award-winning professional chamber choir conducted by Donald Nally and is dedicated to new music. It is committed to working with creative teams to make and record new, substantial works for choir – most often addressing social issues – with the possibility of changing the way we think about writing for choir, singing in choir, and listening to music for choir.

"...a chamber choir that manages to generate the power of a symphony orchestra."
—WQXR