Donald McCullough

BIOGRAPHY

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Donald McCullough is an American composer whose works have been critically acclaimed throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. Demonstrating a highly imaginative flexibility, McCullough is comfortable writing in a myriad of styles. Critical reviews describe his music as “…powerful and heart-wrenching,” “arresting,” “evocative,” “mystically beautiful” and “remarkably inspirational.”

Among his most recent works is ***Song of the Shulamite***, a setting of texts from the “Song of Solomon” commissioned by a consortium of 10 universities and arts organizations from throughout the country and scored for chorus and soprano soloist accompanied by an exotic instrumentation of marimba, vibraphone and harp.

Other recent commissions include: ***When Christ Was Born***, a setting of early Christmas texts scored for chorus and harp; ***The Essential Life***, a setting of six American poems scored for chorus, baritone soloist and orchestra celebrating the well-lived life; ***The Eye Begins to See***, a setting of a Theodore Roethke poem scored for chorus, piano and cello that takes the listener on an anguished journey through the self ultimately leading to inner peace; and ***Crossing the Bar***, a setting of Alfred Lord Tennyson’s beloved poem that McCullough scored for chorus and chamber orchestra or keyboard in loving memory of the passing of a dear friend.

McCullough’s ***Let My People Go: A Spiritual Journey along the Underground Railroad*** is a ground-breaking, recently-released, 70-minute dramatic choral work that artfully weaves together a rich tapestry of spirituals, code songs and first and third-person narratives that depicts the courageous struggle of ante-bellum slaves for freedom.

Hailed by the ***Washington Post*** for his “dazzling expertise” on the podium, Donald McCullough is also considered one of America’s pre-eminent choral conductors. After conducting the Master Chorale of Washington in the John F. Kennedy Center Concert Hall for more than a decade in performances described as "sensitive, scrupulous and heartfelt" (***Washington Post***), the Chorale developed a reputation for singing "with an innate sense of lyricism and musical poise" (***Washington Post***) and became the chorus of choice for the National Symphony Orchestra.

In 2009, McCullough moved to Atlantic Beach, FL to focus primarily on composing. He is also the Director of the Jacksonville Symphony Chorus.