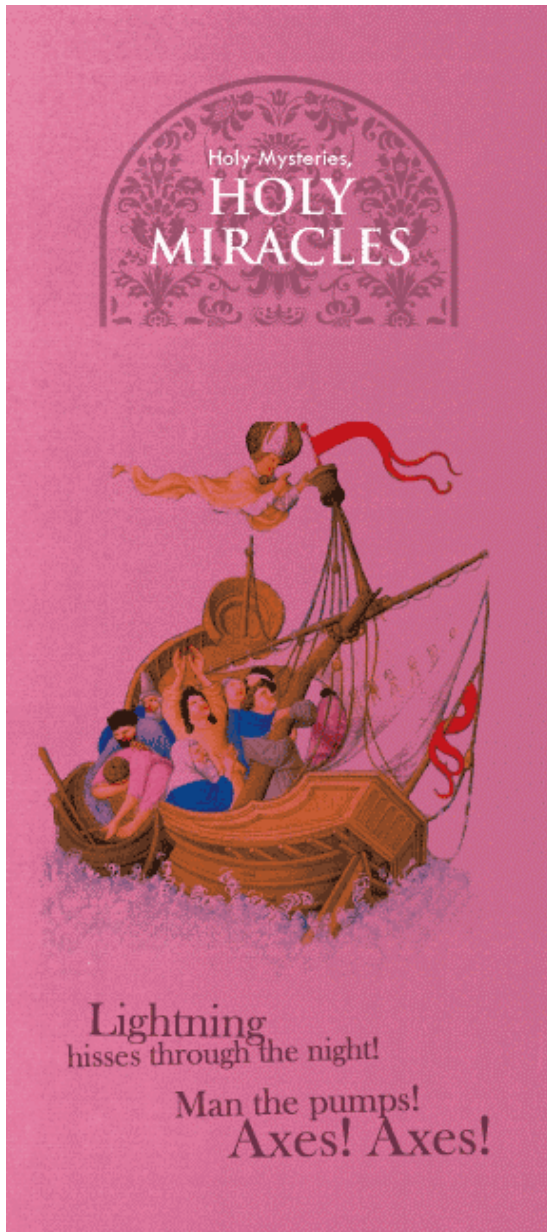


For immediate release

## OTTAWA CHORAL SOCIETY

**Matthew Larkin's Farewell Performance with the Ottawa Choral Society to  
Feature Benjamin Britten's Majestic Saint Nicolas Cantata**



**Wednesday, November 30, 8:00 pm**

**St. Joseph's Church**

Wilbrod & Cumberland, Sandy Hill

**Matthew Larkin & Kevin Reeves**, conductors

**Eric Friesen**, narrator

**James McLean**, tenor

**Phillip Holmes**, baritone

**Boys Choir of Christ Church Cathedral**, Matthew Larkin, Director

**Boys Choir of St. Matthew's Anglican Church**, Kirkland Adsett, Director

**Ottawa Children's Choir**, Jackie Hawley, Director

**Jean Desmarais** and **Roland Graham**, piano four hands

**Ottawa Music Company Orchestra**

**Tickets:** \$35 reserved; \$30 general; \$27 seniors; students \$10; children 12 and under Free

Online at [www.ottawachoralsociety.com](http://www.ottawachoralsociety.com)

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From OCS Members

At the Door

**Advance Outlets:** please consult the OCS website.

### **Part One: The Journey of the Magi**

Celebrated broadcaster **Eric Friesen** opens this evening with a reading of *The Journey of the Magi*, T. S. Eliot's enigmatic meditation on the meaning of the Nativity and **Kevin Reeves** directs an anthology of beautiful carols by William Crotch, Peter Cornelius, David Willcocks, Healey Willan and

Kenneth Leighton, among others, that re-interpret the biblical story of the three star-led chieftains who traveled far to behold the fulfillment of an ancient promise.

## Part Two: Saint Nicolas Cantata

After seven brilliant seasons, we are sorry to announce that this evening marks **Matthew Larkin's** farewell appearance as Music Director of the Ottawa Choral Society. Throughout his tenure, he has been a source of inspiration whose musical genius has brought the choir to new levels of stylistic excellence and expressiveness. For the occasion, Matthew has chosen to say his good-byes with one of his own most beloved works, Benjamin Britten's majestic ***Saint Nicolas Cantata***. Britten's cantata, composed in 1948, chronicles the life and miracles of the legendary 4<sup>th</sup> Century Assyrian holy magician, who does all things in *three's*—the holy number of the Trinity. With his *three* purses of gold, Nicolas ransoms from a life of sin, *three* young maidens about to be sold into slavery; he rescues *three* terrified sailors from a perilous storm at sea; and he restores to life *three* small 'pickled' boys who, during a time of great famine, had been salted down in brine, and were destined for the dinner plate!

The great English tenor, **Sir Peter Pears**, created the role of Nicolas, and most poignantly, sang it with the Ottawa Choral Society, in Montreal, on the eve of his beloved companion Benjamin Britten's death in 1976. The splendid Canadian tenor **James McLean** returns tonight to reprise the role of Nicolas, which he first performed with the OCS in 1981 under Brian Law. We welcome James back to our stage and know that he will reincarnate the beloved saint with the same lyric beauty and gravitas that **Pears** brought to the role.