Earthquake

for SATB chorus (soprano solo) and organ

Commissioned by the American Guild of Organists for the Biennial National Convention in Houston, Texas, 2016

ZRW publishing

Score Notes

- Completed: May 2015.
- + Duration: ca. 7'30".
- Text: "Earthquake" by Thomas Merton, from THE COLLECTED POEMS OF THOMAS MERTON, copyright ©1977 by The Trustees of the Merton Legacy Trust. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corp.
- Commissioned by the American Guild of Organists for the Biennial National Convention in Houston, Texas, 2016.
- Dedicated to Crista Miller.

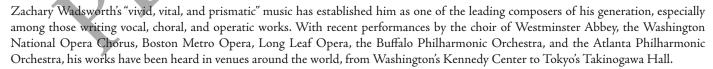
Organ Performance Notes

- Organ registrations are meant as guidelines and should be freely adjusted by the performers to suit the instrument, choir, and acoustic at hand.
- In the opening gap registration in the organ pedals, the 1' stop should be soft and well-blended with the Swell registration. This may be best achieved with a 2' flute stop super-coupled to the Pedal.
- Throughout the flowing eighth-note sections at the beginning and end of the work, the organist should employ overlap-legato.

Program Note

Thomas Merton (1915-1968) was a monk, a social activist, and a poet. His writing vividly describes a peaceful and socially aware Christianity. In 1966, in response to the Christian non-violent movement for Civil Rights, he wrote "Eight Freedom Songs." In the last of these, "Earthquake," he reimagined Isaiah 52 as a call to action for the Christians of the world to use their "marching feet" to become "messengers of peace," and to build a world in which "All ... people / shall be one."

This message of strength and obligation reverberates powerfully in the continuing civil rights struggles of our time, and the poem's strong inner rhythms resonated powerfully with me as a composer. My anthem, *Earthquake*, starts darkly with Merton's invocations to "tell the thunder / To wake the sky," but erupts joyfully with images of the bright paradises of love and unity.



As winner of the 2011 King James Bible Trust Award, Wadsworth's anthem *Out of the South Cometh the Whirlwind* was performed at Westminster Abbey in the presence of Queen Elizabeth II. Other recent honors include a Fellowship from the Douglas Moore Fund for American Opera, a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, three Morton Gould Young Composer Awards from ASCAP, and first-prize recognition in competitions sponsored by the American Composers Forum, the Pacific Chorale, the Boston Choral Ensemble, and the Esoterics. Wadsworth's music is widely broadcast and distributed, with recent publications by Novello, G. Schirmer, and E.C. Schirmer, and broadcasts on NPR, BBC, and CBC.

Wadsworth earned graduate degrees from Cornell University (DMA) and Yale University (MM), and is an honors graduate of the Eastman School of Music (BM). Originally from Richmond, Virginia, Wadsworth (b. 1983) has taught at Williams College, the Interlochen Center for the Arts and the University of Calgary, and he maintains an active performing life as a tenor and pianist.

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to Crista Miller

Thomas Merton (1915-1968)

Zachary Wadsworth (b. 1983)

















