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RETURN OF THE SUN

29th Annual Winter Solstice Celebration in the World's Largest Cathedral

Dec. 18 - 20: Paul Winter Consort, Theresa Thomason, Renato Braz & Paul McCandless

NEW YORK — For nearly 30 years, Paul Winter's Winter Solstice Celebration has joined The Nutcracker and the Radio City Christmas Spectacular as New York's most enduring holiday events.

Winter, the six-time Grammy-winning saxophonist, will once again bring his ensemble to the world's largest cathedral, St. John the Divine, for four concerts (Dec. 18-20) celebrating the winter solstice and the return of the sun.

Highlights of this year's concerts:

- **Renovated Cathedral** – The event will once again occupy the entire space of the 600-foot-long Cathedral, following renovations since the fire of 2001. [cathedral history attached]
- **Rebuilt Pipe Organ** - The music will again incorporate the titanic Aeolian-Skinner pipe organ, which has been silent during the seven-year restoration.
- **Guest Musicians** - The Paul Winter Consort will be joined by: Brazilian singer and guitarist Renato Braz, Gospel singer Theresa Thomason and woodwind master Paul McCandless. [musician bios attached]

“For me this solstice celebration is an ever-renewing thrill—watching the sun gong ascend 12 stories with its player to the vault of the Cathedral; or hearing the 'tree of sounds' as it slowly turns, reflecting a myriad of lights from its hundreds of bells, gongs and chimes,” Paul Winter said.

SOLSTICE TRADITION IN NEW YORK'S GREAT CATHEDRAL

Since ancient times, as the darkening December days approach the longest night of the year, people have felt a calling to come together. The winter solstice—the great turning point of the year—is when the Sun returns, and days begin to lengthen toward the spring.

In the tradition of these solstice gatherings, the Paul Winter Consort began giving winter solstice concerts in 1980, as a musical celebration of the return of light. Soon the Consort became artists in residence at the Cathedral and continued the solstice tradition, along with concerts blessing animals and other annual events.

But while special guest musicians and dancers from around the world have been essential to these solstice celebrations, the biggest star has always been the Cathedral, Winter said.

“Over 28 years, the event has evolved into a theatrical celebration that inhabits the entirety of this great space. Of all the places I've played in America, only two could host a concert on this scale: the Cathedral and the Grand Canyon,” he said.

DETAILS — The Cathedral is located at Amsterdam Avenue at 112th Street, Manhattan. Shows: Dec. 18, 19, 20 at 8 p.m., and Dec. 20 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$35, \$50 and \$75. To purchase tickets, or find out more information visit: solsticeconcert.com

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ABOUT THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE

The Cathedral, begun in 1892, remains unfinished, with construction and restoration a continuing process. Situated on an 11.5-acre property in Manhattan's Morningside Heights, the Cathedral is almost exactly two football fields in length (601 feet) and the nave ceiling reaches 124 feet high. Seven chapels behind the choir are each in a distinctive nationalistic style to represent the seven most prominent ethnic groups arriving at Ellis Island as the Cathedral was built. It houses one of the nation's premiere textile conservation laboratories, and its tapestry collection includes works by Raphael.

Visiting speakers and performers have included the Archbishop of Canterbury, Buckminster Fuller, the Mayor of Jerusalem, Duke Ellington, the Dalai Lama, Cesar Chavez, Rene Dubos, Thomas Berry, Jesse Jackson, Vaclav Havel, Gary Snyder, Brian Swimme, Secretaries General of the United Nations, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Paul Winter Consort.

The Cathedral Church, the mother church of the Episcopal Diocese of New York and the Seat of its Bishop, is chartered as a house of prayer for all people and a unifying center of intellectual light and leadership. It serves the many diverse people of our Diocese, city, nation and world through an array of liturgical, cultural and civic events; pastoral, educational and community outreach activities; and maintains the preservation of the great architectural and historic site that is its legacy.

ABOUT THE MUSICIANS

Theresa Thomason - Theresa's remarkable vocal talent was first acknowledged at the age of 13, when she won national acclaim for her gospel performances. She reached the airwaves with a single entitled "Fresh Enuff," and this was followed by a winning performance at the famous Apollo Theater in New York. She has performed in over 150 European cities, the Vatican, for the Dalai Lama, at the United Nations, with Pete Seeger and at Germany's Festival Musica Sacra.

Renato Braz - Born in São Paulo, Brazil to parents of Guarani Indian heritage, Renato began singing at the age of five, and by his teen years was playing drums and singing in the bars and clubs of São Paulo. Since 1996, he has released five CDs, including Quixote, which he recorded after winning a vocal competition in which over 1,900 vocalists entered. Born to sing, and resolved to sing only from his heart, Renato Braz has emerged as one of the most beautiful and compelling male voices in Brazil.

Paul McCandless - During a career spanning three decades, Paul McCandless has brought a soaring lyricism to his playing and composing that has been integral to the sound of two seminal world music bands, the Paul Winter Consort and the relentlessly innovative quartet. A gifted oboe player, he has performed with Wynton Marsalis, Pat Metheny, Steve Reich, Art Lande and Bruce Hornsby. His collaboration with Béla Fleck yielded the 1996 Grammy for Best Pop Instrumental.

Paul Winter - A six-time Grammy Award-winning saxophonist, Paul Winter was a college student in 1961, when his sextet won the Intercollegiate Jazz Festival and was signed by Columbia Records. The next year, the band toured Latin America as cultural ambassadors for the U.S. State Department, playing 160 concerts in 23 countries. They were the first jazz band to perform at the White House. In 1980, the Paul Winter Consort became artists-in-residence at the Cathedral of St John the Divine. Paul Winter has received a Global 500 Award from the United Nations, and the Peace Abbey's Courage of Conscience Award, among others.

Paul Winter Consort - Paul Winter formed the consort in 1968 as a forum for all the various musics he had come to love, from Bach to Brazilian, jazz to the voices of whales and wolves. He borrowed the name, 'consort' from the ensembles of Shakespeare's time, the house bands of the Elizabethan Theater. Musicians such as David Darling, Paul McCandless, Ralph Towner, Glen Moore, Collin Wolcott, Nancy Rumbel, Jim Scott, Rhonda Larson, P.Halley, Russ Landau, Glen Velez, Paul Halley, Eugene Friesen, Susan Osborn, Arto Tunçboyacıyan, Paul Sullivan, Mickey Hart, Oscar Castro-Neves, Nóirín Ni Riain, Jordan Rudess, Davy Spillane and many others have performed in or with the Consort. The Consort has played more than 2,500 concerts in 48 countries.