



**Spring, 2009
Preview**

**Testimony of Witnesses
An Oratorio of Remembrance**

*by Ruth Lomon,
Boston Secession
Composer-in-residence*

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PRESS RELEASE

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**Boston Secession Announces New CD Release,
*Surprised by Beauty: Minimalism in Choral Music***

***Recording features choral works by Arvo Pärt, Gavin Bryars,
Ruth Lomon and William Duckworth.***

BOSTON, MA – May 1, 2008 – Boston Secession, a professional choral ensemble conducted by Jane Ring Frank, has released its second studio recording, *Surprised by Beauty: Minimalism in Choral Music*. The CD features compositions by Gavin Bryars, Arvo Pärt, Ruth Lomon, and William Duckworth, and includes bonus tracks by William Walker.

The repertoire for the CD was chosen to showcase the subtle and intricate beauty of choral minimalism, which employs chordal repetitions, subdued harmonic shifts, and often intricate mathematical formulations. Boston Secession, which has been recognized for its “beautiful balance, musical surety, and English-styled straight-toned singing” (*Boston Globe*), has achieved a precisely blended and transparent tone in this recording, accentuating the inherent elegance of an art form that is both richly detailed and exquisitely subtle.

Jane Ring Frank, Boston Secession’s Artistic Director and Conductor, describes the recording as an opportunity to bring together a body of work that displays choral minimalism’s inherent aesthetic appeal. “Each of these composers has approached this work with careful deliberation, employing only the simplest musical means to achieve compositions of incomparable beauty. The sources of their inspiration vary widely, from the Sermon on the Mount (Pärt) to the unremarkable final moments in the life of philosopher

Immanuel Kant (Bryars). Ultimately, the recording is unified not only by the breathtaking beauty of each composition, but by the spiritual, meditative quality that infuses each work.”

The recording includes *The Beatitudes* [1990] by Estonian Arvo Pärt; *And so ended Kant’s travelling in this world* [1997] by England’s Gavin Bryars; *Transport* [2007] from the oratorio *Testimony of Witnesses* by Boston-based Ruth Lomon; and *Southern Harmony* [1981], a jubilant reinterpretation of 19th-century shape-note hymns, by American composer William Duckworth.

Boston Secession is a professional choral ensemble founded in 1996 by Jane Ring Frank, who is also Conductor of Philovox (publishing house E.C. Schirmer’s resident professional recording chorus), a Resident Scholar at the Women’s Studies Research Center at Brandeis University, a faculty member at Emerson College, Minister of Music at the First Congregational Church in Winchester, and Conductor of the Concord Women’s Chorus. Boston Secession includes many of Boston’s finest solo and choral professionals and is known for performances that are both passionate and precise, with a wide-ranging repertoire reaching from the 12th century to the present.

The CD was recorded in Church of the Redeemer in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, in June 2007. This is Boston Secession’s second professional recording. In response to Secession’s debut CD, *Afterlife, German Choral Meditations on Mortality*, the *American Record Guide* noted that the ensemble is “a very fine one, well blended and excellently in tune. Their performances of often quite difficult music are assured and musical.”

PURCHASING THE CD: The CD is priced at \$18 (including shipping) and may be purchased online by visiting Boston Secession’s web site at www.bostonsecession.org or by calling 1-800-BUY-MY-CD. For more information, please call 617-499-4860.

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Photographs available upon request.