

# Kurt B. Knecht, D.M.A.

---

## Address

3344 Dudley St.  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68503  
Phone: 402.560.6208  
E-mail: kurt@kurtknecht.com

---

## Education

**Doctor of Musical Arts**, August 2009  
University of Nebraska – Lincoln  
Major: Composition  
Minor: Organ performance  
GPA: 4.0

**Masters of Music**, May 1995  
Southern Methodist University  
Specialization: Composition  
GPA: 3.9

**Bachelor of Music**, May 1993  
University of Tampa  
Concentration: Piano Performance and Music Theory  
GPA: 3.9

---

---

## Brief Biography

Kurt Knecht is a composer, organist, and conductor currently living in Lincoln, Nebraska. His compositions have been described as “funky” and “joyous” in the Washington Post, and the American Record Guide has called him a “fresh voice.” His compositions have become a staple of the modern choral festival literature having been performed on All State and ACDA concerts in over 16 states. Recent performances of his compositions include international performances at festivals and concerts in Germany, the Netherlands, Singapore, Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Cuba, and a performance at the Kennedy Center by the Grammy Award winning Washington Chorale. He is regularly commissioned and publishes with Walton Music. He has received the ASCAP Plus award (2008-2010) from the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers. His composition *Missa Prolationem* was awarded the Folsom Prize for the most outstanding dissertation of the University of Nebraska in 2009. As an eclectic performer, Kurt has been a featured soloist with groups ranging from Smokey Robinson to The Florida Orchestra. Kurt also regular appears as a concert organist. He has served as an accompanist to many of the nations leading choral conductors having performed in concert with Jo-Michael Scheibe, Jerry McCoy, Doreen Rao, Andre Thomas, Kevin Fenton, and Therees Hibbard. He received the Bachelor of Music from the University of Tampa with concentrations in Piano Performance and Theory, the Master of Music in Composition from Southern Methodist University, and the Doctor of Musical Arts in Composition with a minor in Organ Performance from the University of Nebraska – Lincoln.

## Publications and Commissions

*Ordo Rachelis* for SATB chorus and piano.

Commissioned by David Matthews for the University of South Florida Chamber Singers, Dr. James Bass, conductor. Scheduled premiere: Fall 2011.

*The Burial of the Dead* for SATB chorus, soloists and chamber orchestra.

Commissioned by the Lincoln Lutheran Choir and the Nebraska Arts Council, Josh Norris, conductor. Scheduled premiere: May 2011.

*Pied Beauty* for TTB chorus

Commissioned by the Louisiana American Choral Directors 2009 Inaugural Men’s All-State Choir, Dr. Gary Packwood, conductor. Premiere: Oct. 2009.

*Sero Te Amavi* for SSATTB chorus

Premiered by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Chamber Singers, Fall 2007. Walton Music Publications 2009.

*Shalom Aleikhem* for SSA chorus, clarinet and piano.

Premiered by the Tampa Bay Children's Chorus, December 2007. Walton Music Publications 2008.

*That thine eyes may be opened* for SATB chorus and organ.

Commissioned by St. Catherine of Alexandria Episcopal Church, Temple Terrace, FL for their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Premiered by the St. Catherine's Adult Choir, April 22, 2007

*Suite for Organ (Tocatta – Pasacaglia – Chorale Prelude on Sine Nomine – Chorale Prelude on Melita – Fugue)* for organ solo.

Commissioned by Palma Ceia Presbyterian Church, Tampa for the new Cassavant organ. Premiere by Kurt Knecht, January 2007.

Featured at the first Pipe Organ Encounter Advanced Faculty Recital in Lincoln, Nebraska. Summer 2008. Movements have also been used in several national organ competitions.

*Nocturne* for piano solo

Commissioned by Palma Ceia Presbyterian Church, Tampa, FL. for the new Steinway. Premiered by David E. Matthews, November 6, 2005

*Without Warning* for SATB chorus and piano

Commissioned by the historic Coral Gables Community Church. Dr. Jo-Michael Scheibe, director of music.

*Deus noster refugiam* for SSAA chorus and piano

Commissioned by Melinda Doyle and the Blake High School of the Performing Arts Advanced Women's Chorus for the 2004 Florida ACDA Convention. Walton Music Publications 2006.

Performed by the Maryland All State Chorus during the 2007 festival.

*Michaelangelo's On Beauty* for SSAATTBB chorus

Walton Music Publications 2004

Recorded by the University of Miami Chorale on the album "What Dreams May Come."

Performed by the Georgia All State Chorus during the 2007 festival.

Performed by the Arizona All State Chorus during the 2007 festival.

Performed by the California All State Chorus during the 2005 festival.

Performed by the Iowa All State Chorus during the 2005 festival.

*Rock-a-my-soul in the bosom of Abraham* for SATB chorus (optional conga part).

Walton Music Publications, 2003

*Go Tell it on the Mountain* for SSAATTBB chorus (optional conga part).

Walton Music Publications, 2001.

Featured on concerts at the Kennedy Center by the Grammy Award winning Washington Chorale in 2007.

Recorded by the Master Chorale of Tampa Bay on the album "Christmas with the Master Chorale and the Empire Brass."

*Manly Men's Chorus Extravaganza* for TTBB chorus.

Walton Music Publications, 2001.

Performed by the New York All State Chorus during the 2001 festival.

Performed by the Louisiana All State Chorus during the 2002 festival.

Performed by the Tennessee All State Chorus during the 2003 festival.

Performed by the Kansas All State Chorus during the 2004 festival.

Performed by the Georgia All State Chorus during the 2006 festival.

Performed by the New Mexico All State Chorus during the 2006 festival.

*My beloved* for SSA chorus. Commissioned by the Florida State University

Advanced Secondary Lab Choir. Premiere – Fall 2003.

*Cradle song* for SSA chorus and piano.

Commissioned by David Matthews and the Tampa Bay Children's chorus. Premiere – Fall 2003. Scheduled Publication, Walton Music, 2010.

*Book of Spirituals* for Jazz Band and singer.

Commissioned by the University of Tampa Jazz Band. Premiered by Belinda Womack and the UT Jazz Band on April 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, 2002 in Tampa, FL.

*Unbounding Faith*. 75th anniversary hymn commission from St. John's

Lutheran Church, Weirsdale, FL, 1999.

---

## Honors and Awards

- 2009 Folsom Distinguished Dissertation Award for outstanding dissertation of the entire University of Nebraska for *Missa Prolationem*
- 2009 Music Alumni Achievement Award from The University of Tampa
- ASCAP Plus award (2008 -2010) from the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers

- Woodberry Prize for outstanding graduate seminar paper on an interdisciplinary 19<sup>th</sup> century subject. "‘That Christian Enamored with Aesthetics’: The musicological misunderstanding of Kierkegaard’s Don Giovanni Essay.", 2008, Departments of English and History, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
- Eva A. Christensen Memorial Organ Scholarship for outstanding student organist, 2008, Hixson Lied School of the Fine and Performing Arts, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
- F. Pace Woods Scholarship for outstanding creative / scholarly excellence, 2008, Hixson Lied School of the Fine and Performing Arts, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
- Vreeland Award for exceptional creative ability, 2008, Hixson Lied School of the Fine and Performing Arts, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
- Graduate Assistantship, 2006-2009 Hixson Lied School of the Fine and Performing Arts, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
- Don Nobles Award for outstanding student in composition, 1995 Southern Methodist University
- Pi Kappa Lambda, 1995, Music Honors Society Southern Methodist University
- Artistic Merit Scholarship, 1993 - 1995 Meadows School of the Arts, Southern Methodist University
- Graduate Assistantship, 1993 - 1995 Meadows School of the Arts, Southern Methodist University
- Sid Guber Memorial Award for Most Promising Young Artist, 1993 American Women in Radio and Television
- Alpha Chi National Honors Society, 1993 University of Tampa
- Florida Orchestra Young Artist Competition, First Prize, 1992 Florida Orchestra
- Artistic Merit Scholarship, 1989-1993, University of Tampa
- Academic Scholarship, 1989-1993, University of Tampa

---

## Selected Compositions

### Piano

*Radiolarians* - premiered by Kurt Knecht, Spring 2008. Lincoln, NE.

*Nocturne* - premiered by David E. Matthews, Nov. 6, 2005. Tampa, FL.

*Sitz im Leben* – premiered by Kurt Knecht, Nov. 22, 1992. Tampa, FL.

## Organ

*Toccata – Adagio – Fugue*

*Trois Nouvelles Études* – premiered by Kurt Knecht, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009 at the University of Tampa Outstanding Music Alumni Concert, Tampa, FL.

**Sursum Sonata** – scheduled premiere: April 2011

## Solo Voice

*Ballad of the vocal performance major* for mezzo soprano and piano. Premiered by Cami Philgren at the University of Nebraska, 2010.

*Christ the Companion* for soprano solo and piano. Premiered by Talea Schroder at St. Mark's on the Campus Episcopal Church, 2009. Lincoln, NE.

*Three Poems of Gerald Manley Hopkins* for soprano solo and piano. Premiered by Eugenia Garrity and Kurt Knecht at the 2005 Southern Regional Conference of the College Music Society at the University of Florida.

*Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird* for soprano solo and piano. Text: Wallace Stevens.

*5 poems by Carl Sandburg* premiered by Holly Heffelbower, soprano, Fall 2006. Lincoln, NE.

Performed by Gretchen Geist, soprano, Spring 2009. Tampa, FL.

## Choral

*I it am* for SATB chorus, violin, viola, clarinet, and organ. Premiered April 2010. St. Mark's on the Campus, Lincoln, NE.

*Pied Beauty* for TTB chorus and piano. Premiered October 2009 by the Louisiana All State Men's Chorus. Gary Packwood, conductor.

*Sero Te Amavi* for SSAATTBB chorus. Premiered November 2007 by the University of Nebraska Chamber Singers, Therese Hibbard, conductor

*That thine eyes* for SATB chorus and organ. Premiere – Temple Terrace, Florida. 2007.

*Without Warning* for SATB chorus and piano. Premiere – Temple Terrace, Florida 2006.

*Deus Noster Refugium* for SSAA chorus and piano. Premiered by the Blake High School Advanced Women's chorus at the 2004 Florida ACDA conference.

*On Beauty* for SSAATTBB chorus. Premiered May 2003 by the University of Miami Chorale, James Bass, conductor.

*Shalom Aleikhem* for SATB chorus, piano, and clarinet. Premiered February 2003 by the University of Tampa Collegiate Chorale, Kurt Knecht, conductor.

*A Cradle Song* for SSA chorus and piano. Premiered December 2003 by the Tampa Bay Children's Chorus. Averill Summer, conductor.

*My Beloved* for SSA chorus. Premiered Spring 2004 by the Florida State University Advanced Secondary Lab Choir. Cynthia Gaitanis conductor.

*Sanctus* for SATB chorus and organ. Premiered in 2001 by St. Catherine's Episcopal Church, Tampa FL. Kurt Knecht, organist and conductor.

*Rock-a-my-soul* SATB choral arrangement. Premiered November 2000 by the University of South Florida Chamber Singers. John Richmond, conductor.

*Manly Men's Chorus Extravaganza* for TTBB chorus. Premiered November 2000 by the University of South Florida Men's Glee Club. Sid Haden, conductor.

*Go Tell it on the Mountain* SSAATTBB choral arrangement. Premiered November 2000 by the Master Chorale of Tampa Bay. Jo-Michael Scheibe, conductor.

## Chamber

*The Ten Plagues* for woodwind octet. Premiered by Campo Aperto, Leonardo Lebas, conductor. Lincoln, Nebraska, 2007.

Performed at the Centro Mexicano para las Musica y las Artes International Festival. Universidad de Michoacan Sa Nicolas de Hidalgo, Morelia, Mexico, Summer 2007.

*Quartetto Tampa* for string quartet.

*Meditation and Ecstasy* for clarinet and piano, premiered by Amanda Morrison, clarinet. Lincoln, Nebraska 2004.

*El Café Irradiacente* for violincello and piano, 2003.

*Jazz Sweet* for saxophone quartet. Premiered by the Bay Area Saxophone Quartet. Tampa, Florida, October 2000.

*Hymns for the Rhythm Children* for string quartet, 1995.

*Paroxysm* for soprano saxophone and piano. Premiered by the Meadows Contemporary Ensemble. Dallas, Texas, 1993

*Meditation* for violin, cello, and piano. Premiered by Spectrum Contemporary Ensemble. Tampa, Florida, 1992

## Large Ensemble

*The Burial of the Dead* for SATB chorus, soloists and chamber orchestra. Commissioned by the Lincoln Lutheran Choir and the Nebraska Arts Council, Josh Norris, conductor. Scheduled premiere: May 2011.

*Missa Prolationem* for SSAATTBB chorus, soloists, string quartet, and organ. Premiered by the Chiara String Quartet and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Chamber Singers. Therees Hibbard, conductor. Lincoln, NE, April 29, 2009.

*Prismwhirl* for orchestra, 2005.

*Book of Spirituals* for Jazz Band and singer. Premiered by Belinda Womack and the University of Tampa Jazz band, April 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, 2002.

---

## Recordings

*Christmas with the Master Chorale of Tampa Bay & Empire Brass*. This limited distribution CD features joint and separate performances by The Master Chorale of Tampa Bay and the Empire Brass. *Go Tell it on the Mountain* is a featured piece.

*What Dreams May Come – The University of Miami Chorale*. Albany Records. This recent release of new American choral music features *Michelangelo's On Beauty*.

*The Vibes: On the Rise*. This recording by a small a cappella men's group features the *Manly Men's Chorus*.

---

## Significant Performances

### Performances as soloist

Solo organ recital – guest artists. University of Tampa, Dobson concert series. April, 2011.

Solo organ performance – Music Alumni Achievement Award on the University of Tampa Minaret Concert series. The concert featured several performers all performing Knecht pieces.

Solo organ recital – guest artist. St. Catherine's of Alexandria Episcopal Church, Temple Terrace, FL. December, 2008

Solo organ recital – First Friday Concert Series. St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Lincoln, NE. November, 2008.

Joint faculty organ recital – faculty artist. First Plymouth Congregational Church – Pipe Organ Encounter Advanced, Lincoln, NE. July, 2008.

Solo organ recital – Zion Lutheran Church, Imperial, NE. April, 2008.

Joint organ recital – Kurt Knecht and David Matthews. Palma Ceia Presbyterian Church, Tampa, FL. January, 2008.

Organ recital with original choral works – St. Catherine's of Alexandria, Temple Terrace, FL. May, 2008.

Final Organist of joint concert for the American Guild of Organist-Tampa Chapter's "Bach Bash" 2004.

Smokey Robinson. Featured soloist. Industrial Show. Naples, Florida, 1998.

Ravel: *Concerto for Piano in G Major* Third Movement. The Florida Orchestra. Tampa, St. Petersburg, Clearwater, Florida, 1991.

Grieg: *Concerto for Piano in A Minor* First Movement. The Mostly Pops Orchestra of Tampa. Tampa, Riverview, Florida, 1992.

### Performances as accompanist

Piano and organ accompanist for concerts and festivals with such notable choral conductors as Eph Ehly (University of Missouri – Kansas City), Doreen Rao (University of Toronto), Jo-Micheal Scheibe (University of Southern California), Jerry McCoy (University of North Texas), Kevin Fenton (Florida State University), Robert Summer (University of South Florida), John Richmond (University of Nebraska-Lincoln), Andre Thomas (Florida State University), Therees Hibbard (University of Nebraska-Lincoln) and David Clark Isele (University of Tampa).

Piano accompanist for UNL chamber singers performance of Corigliano's "Fern Hill" with the Chiara String Quartet.

Organist and pianist for the Tampa Bay Children's Chorus tour of England and Scotland, Summer 2000. Performances included St. Sepulchre's, London, Coventry Cathedral, Coventry. The tour concluded with a performance in Holy Trinity Church, St. Andrews as part of the Doreen Rao Choral Music Experience Institute.

Organist and pianist for the Howard W. Blake High School for the Performing Arts. 2002-2006. In addition to regular concerts during the season, the choirs took tours to New York which included performances at the Riverside Church and Washington, D.C. where the choir performed at the historic Christ Church in Alexandria.

### **Premieres of Works by Other Composers**

Jen-Kuang Chang: *Bodhisatva* for chamber ensemble. Pianist. Lincoln, Nebraska, 2006.

David Clark Isele: *Tocatta* for organ solo. Organist, Tampa, Florida, 1999

Kevin Hanlon: *The Lark of Avignon* for piano and wind band. Pianist, Dallas, Texas 1998

Peeter Tamearu: *Antiphon* for piano solo. Pianist, Dallas, Texas, 1995

Elliot Schwartz: *Chamber Concerto V for Bassoon* for Bassoon, String Quartet and Piano. Pianist, Tampa, Florida, 1992

### **Clinician/ Adjudication**

Adjudicator for Region VI organ competition of the American Guild of Organist. March 2011.

Lincoln Public School System teacher training session, "Choral Warm-ups: Form and Function." Summer 2009.

Choral Director for Choral Evensong Workshop for the Southwest Diocese of the Episcopal Church. St. Peter's Cathedral, 2005.

Organist for Choral Evensong Workshop for the Southwest Diocese of the Episcopal Church. St. Peter's Cathedral, 2004.

### **Rehearsal accompanist**

Beethoven: *Missa Solemnis* Tampa, Florida, 1999. The Florida Orchestra with the Master Chorale of Tampa Bay, the University of South Florida Chamber Singers, and the University of Miami Chamber Singers. Men's sectional rehearsal accompanist.

Mendelssohn: *Elijah* Tampa, Florida, 1998. The Florida Orchestra with the Master Chorale of Tampa Bay and the University of South Florida Chamber Singers. Rehearsal accompanist for the Chamber Singers.

Berlioz: *Requiem* Tampa, Florida, 2001. The Florida Orchestra with the Master Chorale of Tampa Bay.

---

## Work Experience

### Academic

Nebraska Wesleyan University (Adjunct Faculty) 2010-2011

Courses: Medieval and Renaissance (History), Music since 1800 (History), World Music, African American Music

University of Nebraska –Lincoln (Adjunct Faculty) 2010-2011

Courses: Freshman Theory, Freshman Aural Skills, History of Rock.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln (Graduate Assistant) 2006-2009

Courses: Sophomore Aural Skills

University of Tampa (Adjunct Faculty) 1999-2004

Courses: Collegiate Chorale, conductor; Women's Glee Club, conductor; Camerata, conductor; Freshman Theory; Freshman Aural Skills; Sophomore Theory; Sophomore Aural Skills; Orchestration; Romantic and 20<sup>th</sup> Century History; Applied Composition; Applied Piano; Music Appreciation

Florida Southern College (Adjunct Faculty) 2000

Courses: Applied Composition; Applied Jazz Piano

Southern Methodist University (Graduate Assistant) 1993-1995

Courses: Sophomore Aural Skills; teaching assistant for Electronic Music

## **Music Director**

St. Mark's on the Campus Episcopal Church, Lincoln, Nebraska. 2006-present

Supervise music program of an academic parish with high musical standards and tradition of excellence and historic music, provide organ music for all services, rehearse regular adult choir and occasional children's choir, coordinate music program of the parish including concerts from visiting artists and University faculty and students.

Created Lincoln's first interfaith Selichot worship service in coordination with the South Street Temple.

Developed Gregorian Chant based meditation service with Jonah Sirota of the Chiara Quartet.

St. Catherine's Episcopal Church, Temple Terrace, Florida. 2004-2006

Supervise music program including adult and youth choirs, instrumental ensembles, presentation of masterworks, and coordinating concert series. Lead workshops for the diocese of Southwest Florida for Choral Evensong. Expand ecumenical work to include multiple services with other denominations including participation in a joint service with two conservative synagogues and a Roman Catholic congregation. Coordinate music and programs for Vacation Bible School. Serve on board of Tampa Bay Children's Chorus as liaison between chorus and church.

First Christian Church, Tampa, Florida. 2001-2004

Develop church music program rehearsing multiple vocal and instrumental ensembles. Develop Taizé service. Develop contemporary service with senior staff, arranged music for multiple ensembles. Coordinate music and programs for Vacation Bible School. Oversee diverse concert series that includes University choruses and popular genres.

Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church, Tampa, Florida. 1995-2000.

Supervise large, diverse music program, staff, and budget. Develop big band jazz service, hire and supervise musical staff, arrange all music for 10 piece band weekly. Develop concert series as outreach program for church.

## **Staff Accompanist**

University of Nebraska, 2007- current.

Accompany vocal studio classes, and vocal and instrumental recitals.  
Piano and Organ accompanist for large choral ensembles.

University of South Florida. 1996-2004

Piano and organ accompaniment for rehearsals, concerts, and recordings of USF ensembles and classes including: USF Chamber Singers, Women's Chorale, University Singers, and vocal studio classes, flute studio classes, clarinet studio classes.

Florida Southern College. 2000

Piano accompaniment for vocal studio classes, recitals, and soloist with jazz band.

### **Other Related Work Experience**

- Theory teacher for Pipe Organ Encounter Advanced. Lincoln, NE, 2008.
- Music Specialist, Lake Magdalene Elementary School. Tampa, FL, 2004-6
- Interim Assistant Professor, University of Tampa, Spring 1996
- Interim Choral Director, Seminole Presbyterian School, Spring 1996
- Organist, Arrapaho United Methodist Church, 1994-1995
- Assistant Music Director, Annie Reinking's Broadway Theatre Project of Tampa, 1989-1995
- Music Director, Bye, Bye, Birdie, H.B. Plant High School, 1992
- Choir Master and Organist, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 1990-1992
- Music Director, Annie, Performance Preparatory Children's Theatre, 1990
- Organist, Immanuel Lutheran Church, 1989

### **Professional Organizations and Positions**

American Guild of Organists

American Choral Directors Association

Board member of Lincoln Organ Showcase, responsible for electronic communications (2009-2010)

---

## References

### **John Richmond, Ph.D.**

Professor & Director of the School of Music  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
School of Music  
Lincoln, NE 68588-0100  
Phone: (402) 472.5775  
E-mail: [jrichmond2@unl.edu](mailto:jrichmond2@unl.edu)

### **Christopher Marks, D.M.A.**

Assistant Professor of Organ  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
School of Music  
Lincoln, NE 68588-0100  
Telephone: (402) 472.2980  
E-mail: [cmarks2@unlnotes.unl.edu](mailto:cmarks2@unlnotes.unl.edu)

### **Rev. Dr. Jerold Thompson, D.Min.**

Rector  
St. Mark's on the Campus Episcopal Church  
1309 R St.  
Lincoln, NE 68508  
Telephone: (402) 474.1979  
E-mail: [smoc.rector@stmarks-episcopal.org](mailto:smoc.rector@stmarks-episcopal.org)

### **Jo-Michael Scheibe, D.M.A.**

Professor of Choral Music  
University of Southern California  
Thornton School of Music  
Los Angeles, CA 90089-0851  
Telephone: (213) 740.3226  
E-mail: [scheibe@thornton.usc.edu](mailto:scheibe@thornton.usc.edu)

### **Pamela Starr, Ph.D.**

Professor of Music  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
Lincoln, NE 68588-0100  
Phone: (402) 472.5122  
E-mail: [pstarr1@unl.edu](mailto:pstarr1@unl.edu)

### **David Clark Isele, D.M.A.**

Composer in Residence  
Professor of Music  
Director, Choral and Vocal Activities  
University of Tampa  
Tampa, FL 33606-1490  
Phone: (813) 257.3344  
E-mail: [disele@ut.edu](mailto:disele@ut.edu)

**Tyler Goodrich White, D.M.A.**

Associate Professor of Music  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
School of Music  
Lincoln, NE 68588-0100  
Phone: (402) 472.7698  
E-mail: [twhite1@unl.edu](mailto:twhite1@unl.edu)