

# fernando ortega

## *The Crucifixion of Jesus*

In the early 1990s, young composer and pianist Fernando Ortega, classically trained and musically complex, entered the Christian music scene. His distinctively earthy sound perplexed and even defied the pop status quo. Descended from eight generations of Mexican weavers, this son of the Rio Grande entwined thoughtful melodies with Celtic, bluegrass, classical and Latin American influences to create something unique and rare.

Today, Fernando is one of Christian music's most respected artists, his works encompassing modern hymns, liturgical songs, and Inspirational and praise & worship favorites. With three Gospel Music Association Dove Awards and a *Billboard* Latin Music Award to his credit, Fernando's Christian radio hits include "This Good Day," "Jesus, King of Angels" and "Sleepless Night." Renowned for his stirring arrangements of beloved hymns— "Give Me Jesus" and "Be Thou My Vision," among others— his solo discography features 18 projects in a heralded career spanning more than 25 years.

His latest offering, the much-anticipated *The Crucifixion of Jesus*, follows the same devotional trajectory of 2011's *Come Down O Love Divine*, this time centering on the events of Holy Week. Co-produced with Bernard Chadwick in a customized recording space in Fernando's Albuquerque home, it's the most intentionally devotional project he's ever released, a meticulous labor of love. Engineered and mixed by GRAMMY® Award-winner Brandon Bell, the project was an epiphany of sorts for Fernando. "It was about finding my way through the mystery of Holy Week," he explains, "working my way through the events leading up to Christ's death, the betrayal, the communion...all of it a meditation."

Featuring 11 contemplative songs and six readings, the album is a sweeping narrative which carries the listener from Palm Sunday to the Crucifixion. In stark and stunning compositions like "In My Father's Kingdom" (the Last Supper), "Stay With Me Here" (Garden of Getsemane), "Ah Holy Jesus, How Have You Offended" (the betrayal) and others, Fernando paints in unforgettable strokes the heart of the Gospel, the way of sorrow Jesus traveled to redeem the world.

"Every aspect of our lives should be measured out by the narrative of Christ's life," Fernando says. "Year after year, through the journey of this Holy season, "Christ's ministry starts again and again."

