

# THE JOURNAL

of the ASSOCIATION OF ANGLICAN MUSICIANS



VOLUME 28, NUMBER 7 † SEPTEMBER 2019

AAM: SERVING THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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# Girl Choristers, Invisible Women, and Breaking Through the Inertia in the Music of the Episcopal Church, Part I

SUSAN JANE MATTHEWS, D.M.A.

## Introduction

As a young graduate student at the Eastman School of Music, I heard a performance of the *Te Deum for organ* of Jeanne Demessieux (1921-1968), exquisitely played in concert by Christopher Young at the Fisk organ of Downtown United Presbyterian Church, Rochester, New York. I was mesmerized by this music that unexpectedly awoke my soul. In discovering a picture of this legendary French woman organist in a 1992 article by Karrin Ford in *The American Organist* magazine, I glimpsed dimly an image of my own self, another young woman who was passionate about the organ, whose working class family had selflessly supported the best musical training available, and one who had died the very year I was born. Demessieux's music and the story of her life inspired and sustained me through the vocational vacillations of the next twenty years of my life, including a pilgrimage to the 12<sup>th</sup> Arrondissement of Paris to see the modest two-manual organ Demessieux played, hidden from sight in the balcony of L'Église du St.-Esprit, from 1933 to 1962, until her appointment at L'Église de la Madeleine in 1962.

In the Fall of 2018, a very kind and talented choir member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church of Burlingame, California, musicologist James Steichen, introduced me to the wedding organ music of Fanny Hensel (1809-1847). I was captivated by her music, which revealed to me the truth of the composer of the organ processional at Fanny's wedding. (Fanny's younger brother, Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, never completed the promised processional in time for her 1829 wedding, though in 1845 he reused memories of a sketch for the opening march of Sonata III, Opus 65.) In Fanny Hensel's *Das Jahr for piano*, again I found the musical voice of a woman that gave me life, learning a movement each month, through a challenging year as my mother's health suddenly declined. Though her extensive formal musical training did not include preparations to be a church organist, Fanny incorporated chorales into the months of March, December, and a *Nachspiel*, in turn representing Easter, Christmas, and the presence of the divine through the passing of each year. Fanny's final version of *Das Jahr* was not published until 2000, some 158 years after its composition. This musical calendar was very nearly lost to the world, since Fanny was counseled by her brother and father to remain invisible, to not publish nor perform publicly as

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### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Is there a burning issue on your mind? Have you found an article in this or a previous issue of *The Journal* controversial or thought-provoking? Please share your thoughts with the membership by writing a Letter to the Editor. Letters may be edited for length and tone.

# THE JOURNAL

of the ASSOCIATION OF ANGLICAN MUSICIANS



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The deadline for submissions is the fifth day of the month preceding the month of publication. All submitted material is subject to editorial selection, correction, and condensation for reasons of clarity, style, and space. The contents of an article or letter do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Association or of the Editor.

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*The Journal of the Association of Anglican Musicians* is published monthly, except for May/June and July/August, for members of the Association. Complimentary copies are also sent to bishops, deans, and seminaries of The Episcopal Church. Subscriptions are available to libraries and publishers.

Advertising space is available at the following rates: \$225 for full page; \$115 for half page; \$80 for quarter page; \$50 for eighth page.

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## From the President



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I love to watch cooking shows. My culinary skills are merely adequate, but television allows me to explore the world's cuisine. Some of my favorite programs were filmed in exotic locales—Samin Nosrat's *Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat* or Anthony Bourdain's *Parts Unknown*. I laugh as

Ina Garten, the *Barefoot Contessa*, whips up her latest complex creation, gleefully exclaiming, "How easy is that?"

I also enjoy some of the more down-to-earth reality shows. I confess that one of my favorites is *Restaurant Impossible*. Chef Robert Irvine is given two days and \$10,000 to turn around a failing restaurant. Although changes typically include a thorough cleaning, upgraded décor, and a streamlined menu, the chef spends most of his time working with the owners and staff. He has no patience with infighting, power dynamics, sloppy work, or negative attitudes. Chef Robert calls it like he sees it. When people listen, real change happens, and the restaurant not only survives, but flourishes. When they refuse to follow his counsel, things crash and burn within a matter of months.

I've spent some time reflecting on how church work resembles reality cooking shows. There are days when I secretly wish for "*Church Impossible*." Give me a couple of days, \$10,000, the freedom to say what I'm thinking, and people who are required to listen. I could make a real difference!

In my experience, however, church work bears a greater resemblance to *Guy's Grocery Games*. In this show, contestants are given a sheet of coupons, ten dollars, and two minutes to select and purchase ingredients. Then, they have a short period of time in which to prepare a complete meal for the judges. Additionally, each meal challenge has a nonsensical theme, such as "only frozen foods" or "only items from aisle 7." The judges evaluate results based on their own tastes and preferences, which are often contradictory. What's a chef to do?

Week in and week out, we work within a given set of resources and parameters to design liturgies imbued with creativity, beauty, and skill. Most of us have learned how to stretch a budget. And there is never, ever enough time. Most days, we're pulled in several directions at once, with different "dishes" competing for our attention. When a sauce doesn't come together, or the meat is undercooked, or the entire tenor section is out of town, or the bride is late, we deftly move to "plan B" and save the day. With experience, this flexibility improves, and we learn to change directions on a dime. And yet, even after working diligently to overcome obstacles and deliver exactly what was requested, sometimes the rules seem to change midstream. We realize that the "judges" don't always understand our vision or appreciate our efforts.

I often remind myself that the only thing I can change is my own response to the set of circumstances I have been given. This fall, I decided to turn to an unconventional source

for inspiration. In his profile as a motivational speaker, Chef Robert Irvine articulates these five keys to success:

- Clarify your goals
- Keep emotional attachment to a minimum
- Image—first impressions are essential
- Service—quality service will result in return visits
- Shortcuts are not always better—quality versus time.

How could these principles apply to my ministry, or to yours?

### Clarify Goals

What are the two or three most important things to improve this year? Trying to fix everything that needs attention is a recipe for overwork and burnout. Write down your goals and post them where you will see them each day. Discuss them with your rector or dean; share them with your choirs. Focus on them throughout the year as you plan and make choices.

### Keep Emotional Attachments to a Minimum

Music making is intensely personal. For many of us, our work is "who we are." When conflict, betrayals, and disappointments happen in church, it is difficult to separate our professional and personal lives. Care and pray for your choir members, students, and co-workers, but make sure that you have a personal life and a prayer life outside of work. Set aside a "sabbath" day each week to unplug from work-related email and social media.

### Image/First Impressions

Visitors form lasting impressions based on their first visit to a church. Likewise, the first choir rehearsal of the season sets the tone for the entire program or academic year. In both cases, we only have one chance to make a positive first impression. As church musicians, let us commit to offering our very best the first time, every time. Our choirs are leaders of worship; let's teach them to do the same. As a clergy colleague often states, there is no such thing as a "low" Sunday.

### Service/Quality

Just as a restaurant with consistent quality attracts return customers, a music ministry that offers consistent quality will draw people to the Church. This is true regardless of musical style or choir size. Choose music of the highest quality that is appropriate for your congregation, choir, and instrument. Occasionally, you may want to "spice up" the menu with something from a different style that will linger on the palate.

### Shortcuts Are Not Always Better

Lifelong learning is one of our best practices in liturgical music. Choirs and congregations are formed by the breadth of the Anglican musical tradition, from plainsong chant to the best composers of the present day. As we are immersed in music and liturgy, we join the voices of all generations in singing God's praises. The Episcopal Church's best evangelism is to be who we are.

Let us begin this new year with renewed focus and joyful expectation. Keep the feast! How easy is that?

Marty Wheeler Burnett

# Girl Choristers, Invisible Women, and Breaking Through the Inertia...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

appropriate for a woman of her upper class standing, for which music could only be an “ornament,” never a vocation. This counsel she followed, despite the urging of her supportive husband, the artist Wilhelm Hensel, until the last year of her short life when she began to publish. Meanwhile, several of her compositions had been published under Felix’s name, the origin of an anecdote recorded in Queen Victoria’s journal: Felix had to confess to the queen that her favorite *Lied* (*Schöner und schöner*), published under his name, had been composed by his sister. Fanny funneled her passion for music into private Sunday concerts at the Hensel home in Berlin, *Sonntagsmusiken*, concerts to which prominent European musicians came to hear the music of both siblings, to be inspired by Fanny’s performances as a pianist and as director of her own choral ensemble.

It has been a heartfelt joy to share the timeless music of these two composers, to allow the musical voice of these women from twentieth-century France and nineteenth-century Germany to be heard in the twenty-first century. One

may glimpse an image of the divine in the profound extant music of these two women musicians, whose life stories form a continuum with those of women musicians in 2019 seeking vocations in the church and publication of compositions. I turn to focus on these women who are a part of my own vocation as musicians in the Episcopal church, girl choristers and invisible women, and identify how we might break through centuries of inertia so that a visible place for women in the musical leadership of the Episcopal Church may be fully seen.

\* \* \*

## *Girl Choristers, Invisible Women Leadership, and Inertia in the Numbers*

In 2019, many choir stalls in Episcopal churches and cathedrals throughout the country are full of enthusiastic, well-trained, and dedicated girls and women. There are two Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) summer training courses for girls flourishing in the United States (Gulf Coast course and the Carolina course) and six more popular courses including both girl and boy choristers. As Richard Seal of Salisbury Cathedral successfully introduced in 1991 a girls’ choir in parallel with a boys’ choir to sing with professional men singers, and cathedrals followed around England, so too in the United States did Richard Webster at St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in Evanston, Illinois, begin a girls’ choir in 1989 and Bruce Neswick at the Washington National Cathedral in 1997, that have proved beacons for the rest of the Episcopal Church in the United States.

However, as at Westminster Abbey and St. Paul’s Cathedral of London, likewise in the United States there are very visible Episcopal churches and cathedrals in 2019 where there are no opportunities offered for a girl to become a chorister in the choir. There is not a woman applying for a Director of Music post in the Anglican communion in 2019 who can list on their résumé that they were a girl chorister in the prestigious choir of St. Thomas, New York City, or of Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, the latter the same cathedral where one may trace the first steps of women’s ordination in the Episcopal Church to the recognition of Phyllis Edwards there as a deacon in 1965.

In *The Hymnal 1982*, in the pew of most Episcopal churches, among the 720 hymns one may find nine tunes by seven women composers and thirty-three texts by twenty-six women poets. In sum, twenty-nine women are represented in *The Hymnal 1982* in thirty-eight hymns with an original tune and/or text by a woman, five percent of the hymns.

In 2019, the gender ratio of AAM membership has remained stable for the past twenty-five years at seventy-five percent men and twenty-five percent women. Seven women have served as president of AAM, including the current president, Marty Wheeler Burnett, women representing seventeen percent of AAM presidents.

Affiliate membership of RSCM America hovers similarly at seventy-four percent men and twenty-six percent women. In the 2019 RSCM summer course training brochure, one viewed the pictures of nine male conductors directing the nine courses, the listings of eight male organists and one woman organist (organist Janet Yieh at the Rhode Island RSCM

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course), and online could further note seven male chaplains and two women chaplains.

College students majoring in organ in the Fall of 2019 identifying as female constitute the following percentages of these five prominent organ departments: Yale twenty-seven percent, Eastman thirty-four percent, University of Michigan forty-one percent, Indiana University forty-eight percent, and St. Olaf fifty percent. From a 2014 survey, the American Guild of Organists (AGO) membership identifies as forty percent women and sixty percent men. However, in *The American Organist* magazine one finds in the advertisements of the two most visible concert organ management agencies that women organists still only represent seventeen percent of the roster at Phillip Truckenbrod Concert Artists and twenty percent at Karen MacFarlane Artists.

In a survey by Lyn Loewi of websites of the 100 churches and cathedrals of the Episcopal Church with the largest average attendance in 2017 (ranging from 415 to 1,889 people), she found:

- 7% Deans/Rectors are women
- 75% Clergy staff include at least one woman
- 10% Directors of Music are women
- 0% Cathedral Directors of Music are women  
(sixteen cathedrals are in this top 100 listing)

Considering all Episcopal cathedrals in the United States, fifteen percent currently have a woman as the Director of Music. While girls and young women visibly appear in excellent training programs as choristers and organists, women disappear from the lists of visible composers, professional organizations, concert organists, and from the leadership of music in large Episcopal churches and cathedrals.

### *Reflections of Directors of Music in the Episcopal Church*

To present a broad spectrum of perspectives on girl choristers and the visibility of women in leadership in music in the Episcopal Church today, I asked for reflections on a set of questions from directors at twelve Episcopal churches and cathedrals, the course managers of the two 2019 RSCM summer courses for girls, and also from alumni of chorister training programs.

For the purposes of this article, the chorister training program of a given Episcopal church or cathedral may be placed broadly into one of three categories:

1. Girls' Choir (with also separate training of boys)
2. Boys' Choir (with **no** separate training of girls offered)
3. Co-ed Chorister Training

Due to space limitations, what is quoted below is only a sampling of the thoughtful and detailed responses of directors. The music staff person quoted is indicated by a \*.

### *Reflections of Directors of Music in the Episcopal Church: 1. Girls' Choirs*

In each of the four outstanding choirs included in this study, girl and boy choristers separately receive first-rate musical training and performance opportunities to sing the treble (soprano) line with professional adult singers singing alto, tenor, and bass. Websites detail the innovative scheduling that allows all singers to flourish and to offer various models for study, as a church seeks to introduce chorister training inclusive of both girls and boys. See the bibliography, which will appear in Part II, for a 2015 dissertation on the introduction of girl choristers in English cathedrals by Amanda Mackey for eleven more models. This section also includes reflections from the course managers of the two 2019 RSCM summer courses for girls.

• Christ Church Cathedral, Lexington, Kentucky  
www.ccclex.org

\*Erich Balling, *Canon Musician*  
Kathleen Balling, *Music Assistant*  
Lisa Hall, *Assistant Organist*

Choir of Men and Boys founded: 1962

Girls' Choir founded: late 1960s. *Under the direction of Bruce Neswick, they were the first girls' choir to sing for a full week at Westminster Abbey.*

Choir of Men and Girls founded: 2006

Do alumnae of your girls' choir work as professional musicians and as musicians in the Episcopal Church? *We have sent several very gifted girls to music schools over the years. At present, they are not among our church music colleagues. They are teaching and performing in other venues.*

• Grace Church, New York City  
www.gracechurchnyc.org

\*Patrick Allen, *Organist & Master of Choristers*  
Hannah Cen, *Organ Scholar*

Choir of Men and Boys founded: 1894

Girls' Choir founded: 1994

In the Episcopal Church, are women as visible as men as choir directors, organists, and composers? If your response is no, what are some of the reasons? *In my own personal experience, women leaders, teachers, and colleagues have been a big part of my life and I am grateful for that. The United Methodist church where I was a child had women clergy and the music director was an amazing and talented woman—all this in the late 60's early 70's. Many were pioneers in their vocations and careers.*



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• Trinity Cathedral, Columbia, South Carolina  
[www.trinitysc.org](http://www.trinitysc.org)  
 \*Jared Johnson, *Canon Organist and Choirmaster*  
 Brent TeVelde, *Associate Organist and Choirmaster*  
 Katie Gatch, *Chorister Program Manager and Assistant Choirmaster*  
 Joe Setzer, *Fellow in Church Music*  
 Choir of Men and Boys founded: 2009  
 Choir of Men and Girls founded: 2009  
*Prior to 2009, all choristers sang together.*

Most Episcopal chorister programs are now co-ed. What have you seen as the benefits for your girls, your boys, and your cathedral choir ministry at large, in having your girls and boys rehearse separately? *In our chorister program, the separate schedules are meant to benefit everyone. It helps us to reconcile age differences, to teach well in smaller groups, and to provide cohesive choirs for all of the Cathedral services. Our boys are ages 8-13, and our girls go right up to age 18. We also work with "young men" in their own separate rehearsal with a voice coach. In the beginning of my tenure here, I worked with them all together, and two things were difficult: retaining the oldest and most outstanding girls in a group with young boys; and recruiting new boys into the same group with mature and brilliant girls. The boys would despair and shrink, and the girls would be held back from their full stature. It makes for a big-scale operation with many separate rehearsals, but it serves the church and gives us the best chance to teach each chorister well.*

• Washington National Cathedral, District of Columbia  
[www.cathedral.org](http://www.cathedral.org)  
 \*Canon Michael McCarthy, *Director of Music*  
 Tom Sheehan, *Organist*  
 George Fergus, *Assistant Organist*  
 Brian Glosch, *Chorister Program Manager*  
 Elissa Edwards, *Music Outreach Officer & Voice Instructor*  
 Choir of Men and Boys founded: 1909  
 Choir of Men and Girls founded: 1997

In the Episcopal Church, are women as visible as men as choir directors, organists, and composers? If your response is no, what are some of the reasons? *I do not believe that women are as visible in leading roles in the Episcopal Church. The church has, for centuries, fostered the tradition of music leadership in the church through intensive and rigorous education of the young. Unfortunately, for centuries this opportunity was only really available to boys. With a greater equality today, the opportunity to find a vocational "spark" in our budding church musicians, regardless of gender, is our work as mentors.*

• Carolina RSCM Summer Training Course  
[www.carolinarscm.org](http://www.carolinarscm.org)  
 \*Matthew Brown, *Course Manager*  
 Jared Johnson, *Director*

Do you think girls have equal opportunities to sing in the great choirs of the Episcopal Church? *I am consistently amazed at the high retention rate of returning choristers at the RSCM Carolina Course for Girls and Adults each summer. Our enrollment frequently reaches capacity by mid-March, and we often have a waiting list of girls wishing to attend. In some cases, it appears girl choristers are more often than not sustaining many parish music programs across the USA.*

In the Episcopal Church, are women as visible as men as choir directors, organists, and composers? If your response is no, what are some of the reasons? *I owe so much of my career to the strong inspiration of several women. Three in particular come to mind: Marie-Madeleine Duruflé, Margaret Mueller, and Dame Gillian Weir... As a male manager of a girls' course, I am always mindful for our girls to witness women in leadership roles as often as possible.*

What unique benefits are offered by the RSCM courses for girls as distinct from the co-ed offerings? *From my experience, there is a strong sense of community and esprit de corps developed at a course with one gender... I believe our younger girls ultimately excel and rise above some personal challenges and insecurities at the start of our week together by observing the leadership of our older, more experienced Choristers. Their experience each summer is only heightened when our staff includes a female chaplain, music director, or organist.*

• Gulf Coast RSCM Summer Training Course  
[www.rscmgulfcoast.org](http://www.rscmgulfcoast.org)  
 \*Anna Teagarden, *Course Manager*  
 Walden Moore, *Director*

The Gulf Coast RSCM course included some wonderful repertoire by women this summer. Do you think that it was important to the girls to sing music composed by women? *Yes, our girls especially enjoyed singing works by current students and sisters, Maggie and Katie Burk, who grew up going to RSCM courses and still participate in the courses. That was especially inspiring. We had a composition activity which the girls loved! I would like to see more encouragement of girls for composition. It seems to me that there is an uneven balance toward a push to performance [for girl choristers].*

What unique benefits are offered by the RSCM courses for girls as distinct from the co-ed offerings? *I have seen it year after year where girls return to old friends and relationships. It is a very safe space for them to BE girls, whatever that means to them exactly, without judgment or pressure, to just be... We also encourage them to be supportive of each other. ...there is very little competition, but instead an environment where girls are "pulling for" girls... sharing in their success and supporting in their shortfalls.*

## **Reflections of Directors of Music in the Episcopal Church: 2. Boys' Choirs**

These three Choirs of Men and Boys have offered internationally-renowned training to the boys of their prestigious choirs from the late 1800s and early 1900s to the present. They have not yet been able to find a way to open their doors to girl choristers, aside from a nine-day summer course for girls hosted by St. Thomas Choir School in New York City, offered since 2005.

• All Saints' Episcopal Church, Ashmont, Massachusetts  
[www.allsaints.net/](http://www.allsaints.net/)  
 Andrew Sheranian, *Organist and Master of Choristers*  
 Ross Wood, *Associate Organist*  
 Michael Raleigh, *Associate Choirmaster*  
 Choir of Men and Boys founded: 1887

Do you think girls have equal opportunity to sing in the great choirs of the Episcopal Church? *In the past fifty or so years, the majority of male choirs in the church have been disbanded, giving way to girl choirs or choirs with boys and girls. This is a good thing. Ashmont is certainly an outlier in this respect. We have a relationship with a local civic choir which tours internationally, and we encourage girls to sing with them and to stay involved with church through altar serving and Sunday school.*

In the Episcopal Church, are women as visible as men as choir directors, organists, and composers? If your answer is no, what are some of the reasons? *Women are not even close to as visible as men in Episcopal church music. Why? I imagine it's the same reason we still haven't had a female president of the USA. The histories of the church and the government are filled with the exploits of men. This needs to change. I can't begin to explain it.*

• Grace Cathedral, San Francisco

[www.gracecathedral.org](http://www.gracecathedral.org)

\*Ben Bachmann, *Canon Director of Music*

Chris Keady, *Assistant Director of Music*

Men's Choir founded: 1906

Choir of Men and Boys' founded: 1913

Cathedral School of Boys founded: 1957

Do you think girls have equal opportunity to sing in the great choirs of the Episcopal Church? *Certainly there are more girls' choirs in large parishes and cathedrals making music to a high standard than there were say, thirty years ago. I do think that the flourishing of girl chorister programs in this country has done a great deal to help keep the Anglican choral tradition alive.*

Where would you recommend girls sing in your community to have an experience equal to the one you offer to the boys? *San Francisco has one of the largest choral programs for girls and young women in the country. It has programs for a wider range of ages than our cathedral choir and has the added advantage of not being attached to a religious institution, thereby having more Sundays "off," which is an asset in this very secular city. That has been very appealing to parents seeking singing opportunities for sisters of choristers.*

What advice would you give to a girl who aspires to be a musician in the Episcopal Church? *There is nothing I can think of specifically geared toward young women that doesn't apply equally to young men. Practice always and learn all the repertoire you can. Vary your skills and musical interests. Hymn playing is as important as literature. Playing Bach is important, playing from figured bass and lead sheets is important. Sight reading is very important. Improvising is crucial. Be nice to people, and avoid thinking that your work is a ministry, even if it is.*

• St. Thomas, Fifth Avenue, New York City

[www.saintthomaschurch.org/](http://www.saintthomaschurch.org/)

\*Jeremy Filsell, *Organist and Director of Music*

Benjamin Sheen, *Associate Organist*

Nicholas Quardokus, *Assistant Organist*

Choir School for boys founded: 1919

*The Saint Thomas Choir School is the only boarding school solely for choristers in the United States, and one of only three schools of its type remaining in the world today.*

Girl Chorister Summer Course founded: 2005

*The Choir School hosts a nine-day choral experience in sacred music to outstanding middle and high school girls, ages 12 - 19, with*

*excellent music and social skills. <https://choirschool.org/girls-choir.html>*

Do you think girls have equal opportunities to sing in the great choirs of the Episcopal Church? *Yes. It is clear that there is also a terrific opportunity... to consider founding an equivalent St. Thomas-style experience for girls specifically. Equivalent chorister programs, which used to exist, could be revived with the similar financial and visionary input instituted here 100 years ago. It would be great to see a corresponding program for girls. We also know how tough it is to get boys to sing at a young age and opportunities for them to do so on their own terms are rare. In our vital efforts to provide similar opportunities for girls, we should remain aware of what we could conceivably lose, for boys are easily discouraged. We hope to feel justified in allowing boys to thrive, offer and learn music for this tiny window of childhood opportunity in their lives.*

### ***Reflections of Directors of Music in the Episcopal Church: 3. Co-ed Choristers***

The following five choirs represent stellar examples of the most common structuring for chorister training in the Episcopal Church today, in which boys and girls rehearse and sing together.

• Church of Heavenly Rest, New York City

[www.heavenlyrest.org](http://www.heavenlyrest.org)

\* Mollie Nichols, *Director of Music*

Lydia Saylor, *Youth Choir Assistant* (an alumna of the chorister program of Heavenly Rest)

Do you think girls have equal opportunities to sing in the great choirs of the Episcopal Church? If not, please reflect on this. *It is moving in that direction. Some choirs are mixed and some separate boys and girls for vocal or educational reasons. Boy choir schools have a long and excellent tradition doing what they do. I would encourage other same sex Episcopal boarding schools to actively offer a similar program for girls and an excellent mixed choir program at other Episcopal schools where that is appropriate to their student attendees.*

What advice would you give to a girl who aspires to be a musician in the Episcopal Church? *Build your skills to be as proficient as possible and develop as broad a variety of musical skills as you can. Be knowledgeable about the past and open minded, creative, and inquiring about the future. Be collegial and organized in your work and view your work as a vocation.*

• Cathedral of St. John, Albuquerque, New Mexico

[www.stjohnsabq.org](http://www.stjohnsabq.org)

\* Canon Precentor Maxine Thevenot, *Director of Cathedral Music and Cathedral Organist*

Edmund Connolly, *Assistant Organist-Choir Director*

Do you think girls have equal opportunities to sing in the great choirs of the Episcopal Church? If not, please reflect on this. *As the view from the pew changes and more women are placed in highly visible roles in the church, be it in the pulpit, at the altar, at the organ, or in front of the choir, this can't help but inspire those younger members of the congregation and choir alike to aspire to be in like positions should they feel called. My hope is that it will be only a matter of time before the funding will be in place for girls' choirs to be started in places which currently only*

*have a choir of men and boys, to best afford equal opportunity and encouragement to work in what was once known as a male-only field. I must confess that, while I am grateful for the opportunities I had when I was younger, I wish I had had the great fortune of growing up a chorister in a choir of some skill, where the exposure to the music of the established "great" composers would have surely sped up the process of becoming a well-rounded, educated musician!*

In the Episcopal Church, are women as visible as men as choir directors, organists, and composers? If your response is no, what are some of the reasons? *As a visible minority in church music leadership, it is imperative that we advocate strongly for those boys and girls to pursue their goals and dreams, and to do everything in our power to enable them to become the organists, choral conductors, and composers of tomorrow. It is not enough to simply encourage one sex over the other. Encouraging a young teenage boy is as important as it is a young teenage girl. In that way we will encourage sympathetic musical leaders, who in turn will, hopefully, do the same.*

• Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, New York City  
www.stjohndivine.org

\* Kent Tritle, *Director of Cathedral Music and Organist*  
Raymond Nagem, *Associate Director of Music and Organist*  
Bryan Zaros, *Associate Choirmaster*  
*Choristers include students in grades 4–8 from the Cathedral School, since the founding of the school in 1901.*

In the Episcopal Church, are women as visible as men as choir directors, organists, and composers? If your response is no, what are some of the reasons? *This is a tough question. A dear friend really struggled through a generation of male-dominated church music direction. She worked with marvelous people, from John Bertalot to Jim Litton; they were not the problem. The problem was that as a woman, she had to work doubly hard to be sure her labors would be respected beyond the church yard, by other church musicians.*

What advice would you give to a girl who aspires to be a musician in the Episcopal Church? *Go for it! And find a program that really works for you. Accept nothing less than equal opportunity!*

• Trinity Cathedral, Portland, Oregon  
www.trinity-episcopal.org

\* Bruce Neswick, *Canon for Cathedral Music*  
David Boeckh, *Organ Scholar*

Do you think girls have equal opportunities to sing in the great choirs of the Episcopal Church? If not, please reflect on this. *Most of our churches with boy treble lines also now have girl treble lines. Those that don't will catch up eventually. My principal worry is with churches that don't have choral provisions for trebles of either gender.*

In the Episcopal Church, are women as visible as men as choir directors, organists, and composers? If your response is no, what are some of the reasons? *It's not that women aren't as visible as men in these areas, it's that their numbers don't equal. We need to do a better job at recruiting women into these professions.*

• Trinity Church, Copley Square, Boston  
www.trinitychurchboston.org

\* Richard Webster, *Director of Music and Organist*  
Colin Lynch, *Associate Director of Music and Organist*

*While boy and girl trebles rehearse together at Trinity, boy trebles all sing Decani and girls all sing Cantoris.*

In the Episcopal Church, are women as visible as men as choir directors, organists, and composers? If your response is no, what are some of the reasons? *NO! The principal reason, as I see it, is inertia. "We've always done it that way." A second reason is that, to change a culture, though not impossible, is extremely difficult and painstaking. It's interesting that the place of women clergy in leadership positions (bishops, deans, cardinal rectors) has shifted dramatically, while the presence of women in prominent musical posts lags behind.*

What advice would you give to a girl who aspires to be a musician in the Episcopal Church? *Do not take no for an answer. Don't let anyone tell you what you may or may not do, or what you can and cannot do. Claim your rightful place. Challenge your male colleagues at every level. Raise consciousness 24/7. Never give up!*

The conclusion of this article will be published in the October issue. This second part reflects on the invisibility of women composers in most Episcopal choir libraries, includes poignant insights from seven young musicians on their experiences as choristers in the Episcopal church, and the transformative impact on their lives of seeing women in the roles of directors, organists, and composers. Closing remarks address breaking through the inertia of a stained glass ceiling for the music of women in the Episcopal church, to a movement that sings in seeing and hearing one another fully.



Since October 2005, Susan Jane Matthews has been Director of Music at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Burlingame, California, where she is organist, director of the Chancel Choir, and founding director of the St. Paul's Choir School for boys and girls (2007). She has directed the choir in two recordings, *Sweetly singing in the choir* (2014) and *Searching for stars, to be released for Christmas*

2019. She previously served as Director of Music at St. Michael's Episcopal Cathedral, Boise, Idaho, and as Principal Organist of Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, where she has recorded two solo organ CDs for the Gothic label. Dr. Matthews completed a Bachelor of Arts Phi Beta Kappa at Haverford College, and MM and DMA in organ at the Eastman School of Music. She has performed and presented choral and organ workshops at AAM Conferences and AGO Conventions and chapter programs, including several lecture recitals on the life and organ works of Jeanne Demessieux. She is on the Board of Directors of the RSCMA and has served as an assistant director at the Pacific Northwest RSCM training course, and as organist and junior girls headmaster at the RSCM training course at King's College in her hometown of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

# Women Anglican Composers

Presented at the 2019 Boston Conference

LYN LOEWI, D.M.A.

In February 2018, I became the Interim Director of Music at St. John's Cathedral in Denver, a church with a healthy music program and one of the largest congregations in the Episcopal Church (USA). I had the privilege of working with Michie Akin, who joined me as Interim Associate Choirmaster. Michie had just retired from St. Matthew's Cathedral in Dallas and joined St. John's as a parishioner—a gift from God. My first instinct, and Michie's as well, was to program music that was well known, the center of the standard repertory. This would gain us some time and make the choir and congregation comfortable, but I quickly grew impatient with the steady stream of (mostly dead) white men. This was not a Civil War reenactment. I wrote my D.M.A. thesis on women composers for the organ, but I did not know the names of the women choral composers.

Screwing up my courage, I made the decision to have an Easter anthem by a woman to balance out the Vaughan Williams "Let All the World." Women were present at the first Easter and by God they would be there at St. John's, too. I googled "women composers Easter anthems" and came up with exactly one hit: Melissa Dunphy's "The Day of Resurrection." (See page 12.) With double choir, divisi, a cappella, tricky tonal shifts, and a mixed meter, there were several problems:

I did not know the piece.

I had never heard of the composer.

As an interim and a woman, I felt vulnerable to being judged by my selection.

Finally, I was not *sure* the piece was any good. Would it stand up to the core repertory or would people say, "Where did that piece come from? It doesn't belong."

Allow me to digress for a moment. Back in 1983, as a doctoral student at Stanford University, happily studying the organ music of Florence Price, Clara Schumann, Ethel Smyth and others, I sent an abstract of my project to the *Musical Quarterly*, hoping for a publication. In a hand-typed reply, I was informed that my interest in women composers was amusing, but it was not research. He, of course it was a he, the editor, suggested I study Beethoven. I have thought of that comment many times over the years and how misguided it is to assume we know all the great music.

In the February 2018 issue of the *New Yorker*, Alex Ross reported on the discovery of Florence Price manuscripts in the basement of her abandoned summer home in Illinois. Attempting to explain why this discovery is important, he addressed the concept of "The Classics":

...there's no doubt that the jargon of greatness has become musty, and more than a little toxic.... Harvard-based scholar Anne Shreffler, who wrote of instilling

different values in her classes, said, "Instead of telling students it's great, you can say it's worth their while: historically fascinating, well crafted, genre bending, or just listen-to-this-amazing-moment-at-the-end. Rather than a religious icon." To reduce music history to a pageant of masters is, at bottom, lazy. We stick with the known in order to avoid the hard work of exploring the unknown.<sup>1</sup>

Imagine a continuum of church music: on one end we have the loud, brassy, triumphant, and militaristic writing of Stanford, Parry, and the lot. The texts declare a great God of power and might. The singer stands in close proximity to all that glory, knowing the mind of God. The future is secure and pension funds robust. At the other end of the spectrum, we find mysticism, doubt, tales of birth and creation, and songs to Mary. It's not so loud, and the texts not so overtly patriarchal. Mary's *Magnificat*, the words of radical social upheaval, is a favorite.

51 ...he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

52 He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted the humble and meek.

53 He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.

Women like Florence Price are welcome at the table. The future is a mystery, and there are no guarantees, no safety net. Life is held loosely in an open hand, and the singer clings to hope like a life raft.

Said another way, my church music continuum stretches from powerful to disenfranchised; justice for some and not for others; those in the center aisle and those occupying the furthest regions. Because women and people of color have been systematically excluded for so long, I am calling attention to this imbalance in our programming and mindset.

If we were playfully to admit to a secret recipe for Anglican music, it would be something like this:

1 cup Stanford (you may substitute Parry)

1 cup Palestrina (you may substitute Tallis or Attwood)

½ cup Howells (for naughty chromaticism and spice)

½ cup Living AAM and British composers (This is the good stuff.)

and finally,

Balance with

1 teaspoon Rutter

1 teaspoon Moses Hogan

1 teaspoon Jesus Christ the Apple Tree by Elizabeth Poston.

Our standard repertory, the high class "Tiffany box" product of the wealthy Episcopal Church, is overwhelmingly composed by white men, and because white men have overwhelmingly occupied the lucky end of that continuum, we are missing the voices of the exiled: women and people of color. I have limited my attention to works by women, *but*



the church, are also welcome. The piece was great. It took a lot of rehearsal time, as interesting new music often does. Sometimes, that is a price worth paying.

Now we had crossed another bridge in my mind. I was basically choosing music at random and, lo and behold, it is just fine. With few exceptions, there was not a single woman composer whose name I knew. I had to decide for myself. All of us are highly trained musicians. We don't actually need anyone to tell us if the music is any good. We make that call alone. Is it interesting and well-written? Is it trite and derivative? I can tell that, and so can you.

Repertory choices for Christmas were more numerous. We included Elizabeth Maconchy's "There is no Rose," Elizabeth Poston's "Balulalow," and Melissa Dunphy's "O Oriens," among all the many standard selections.

In January, I was asked to pick an audition piece for our three Director of Music finalists. In a spirit of wickedness, I chose an unpublished *Magnificat and Nunc dimittis* setting by Cecilia McDowall, her "St. Alban's Service." (*Shown on opposite page and below.*) I wanted to be sure the music was new to each person. All three did an excellent job learning the piece and teaching the choir this exotic canticle of shimmering beauty.

In Lent we sang "Ave verum" by Canadian composer Stephanie Martin. We also purchased her "Now the Queen

of Seasons," an Easter anthem for choir, brass, and organ, easy enough for the choristers to sing as well. The effect was every bit as good as the Dunphy was the previous year. We tackled another difficult, but fantastic Lenten work. Susan Matthews' choir was singing "The darkness is no darkness" by Judith Bingham, an atmospheric work of primal intensity, using the full vocal range (low Cs representing darkness and high B-flats for the light.) Written as a fantasy on Wesley's "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace," the two pieces are always performed together. The Bingham ends on the dominant and leads directly into the Wesley.

For Maundy Thursday, I programmed the piano prelude "Troubled Water" by Margaret Bonds. I am smitten with this piece of Jazz + Juilliard + Chicago South Side. Bonds studied with Florence Price before getting her B.A. and M.M. in piano at Northwestern University. In both women, we see the language of the Black community of Chicago's South Side, deftly combined with brilliant, European-style compositional technique.

I want to stress that these pieces were relatively minor additions to an otherwise standard Holy Week repertory. The liturgies stayed the same. We indulged in "transformative expansion"<sup>4</sup> by simply adding a few fresh sounds. On Good Friday, we included a second piece by Bonds, the alto solo

**The St Albans Service**  
SATB and organ

**Nunc Dimittis**

The Book of Common Prayer, 1662 CECILIA McDOWALL

Expressive  $\text{♩} = c. 60$

**SOPRANO 1 & 2** *mf* *poco* *mp*

Lord, now let-test thou thy ser- vant de-

**ALTO** *mf* *poco* *mp*

Lord, now let-test thou thy ser-

**Man.**

part in peace: ac- cord - - ing to thy

- vant de- part in peace: ac- cord ing to thy

Thy word.

**SOPRANO 1** *mf*

word, thy word. For mine eyes

**SOPRANO 2** *mf*

word, thy word. For mine eyes.

**ALTO** *mf*

word, thy word. For mine eyes,

For mine eyes,

For mine eyes.

**Man.**

have seen thy sal- va- tion,

eyes have seen: thy sal- va- tion,

**Man.**

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“Lord I just can’t keep from cryin’.” The other anthems were by Juan of Portugal, Pablo Casals, and Philip Stopford. The juxtaposition of standard repertory with the new voices brought depth and wonder to the worship. The unique and extraordinary voice of Margaret Bonds was, for me, the most spiritually moving music during my interim time.

After Easter, a wedding couple requested chants by Hildegard von Bingen. While some of her chants are remarkably virtuosic, many, such as “Caritas abundat in omnia,” are both beautiful and manageable. I added an octave drone on the antiphonal organ and three staff singers sang from the back gallery to the ecstatic response of the wedding party. All the Hildegard chants are available for free online.

In May, we consecrated the eleventh Bishop of Colorado, Kym Lucas. For the service, it seemed appropriate to have at least one woman composer represented. Sarah MacDonald had just written her April U.K. report in the TAO about women composers, and mentioned that there is no Anglican chant by women. I asked Sarah if she would write one for us. She responded with an ingenious cryptogram containing Kym Lucas’s name (*see opposite page*).

We sang Jane Marshall’s “Become to us the Living Bread” (*at right*) at communion two days before she died. I wish she could have known how the beauty of that small piece has stayed with me. Since the Boston conference, Keith Weber of Grace Song, Inc., has had the piece engraved by Marvin Havard. Keith was involved with the original commission of the work and now invites us all to use the piece free of charge. Thank you, Keith!

**Become to Us**

Text by: Miriam Drury      Music by: Jane Marshall

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**The Day of Resurrection**

Allegretto ♩ = 112+      Melissa Dunphy

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Last and surely least, I decided to write an Anglican chant for Michie's and my last Sunday. Why? Because we had nothing by a women in the morning service. This was no longer acceptable to me. Our rehearsal time was limited, but the chant could be learned quickly. I also felt the urge to put my own small "B.A.C.H." into the music and the year.

In the last twelve months, we did twenty-five anthems by women. I also played some twenty-five organ pieces by women, averaging one woman composer per week. I am guessing (perhaps unfairly) that this is more music by women than any other church or cathedral in the country, maybe the whole world. That was not my original intention, but it felt right. I needed to feel connected to the worship, to have these exiled voices with me as if to affirm my own right to exist and be connected to the Imago Dei, that God in whose image I, too, was created. And, it was still only ten percent of the 250 or so anthems that we did in a year. The other ninety percent was standard repertory of old and new male composers, including Richard Webster, Stephen Tappe, Michael McCarthy, David Hurd, Joel Martinson, Jonathan Dove, James MacMillan, and so on. Why the urgency to incorporate works by women? Because two millennia of shutting women out have blinded us to the ways to reintegrate them, *reincorporate* them into the Body of Christ.

Who among us is teaching the next Marie-Claire Alain or Marilyn Mason to play the organ, women I was fortunate to have as teachers and role models? Who is teaching composition to the next Elizabeth Poston? Conducting to the next Marin Alsop? How are we preparing our girl choristers for leadership roles when there are so few role models? Is there not room for a plurality of voices, room for those who occupy the edges? In the spirit of inclusion, here are some suggestions:

- Start a composer-in-residence program at your church.
- Trust your ability to judge a piece of music without regard to gender or name recognition of the composer.
- Understand that most women composers write secular music because they can make a living there. Orchestral composer Jennifer Higdon has, for example, written sacred music, but no one is doing it, that I know of.
- Commission music by women. Don't overlook American composers and those women who are local in your community.
- Urge publishers to recruit women composers and re-issue works of Elizabeth Poston, Mary Howe, Mabel Daniels, and the like, who were in their day tremendously prolific and successful.
- Use your social networks to share what you found.
- Program concert series that feature equal numbers of women and men conductors, organists, and performers.
- Value and encourage all your choristers equally.

Get started. Wade in the Water. You will be astonished at the treasures to be found.

#### ENDNOTES:

<sup>1</sup> Alex Ross, "The Rediscovery of Florence Price." Accessed January 29, 2018. [https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/02/05/the-rediscovery-of-florence-price]: 68.

<sup>2</sup> John Wolffe, *Religion in History: Conflict, Conversion and Coexistence* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004): 206.

<sup>3</sup> See Denise Levertov and Paul A. Lacey, "The Avowal" in *Selected Poems* (New York: New Directions, 2003): 142.

<sup>4</sup> See Matthew Owens and Graham Welch, "Choral Pedagogy and the Construction of Identity: Girls" in *The Oxford Handbook of Choral Pedagogy* edited by Frank Abrahams and Paul D. Head (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017): 167-181.

**A CRYPTOGRAM FOR THE REV. KYM LUCAS**  
presented on the occasion of your consecration  
as the 11th Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Colorado:  
a psalm chant for Psalm 100, loosely based on  
John Rutter's setting of the words "O be joyful in the Lord";  
with prayers for your new ministry  
from Sarah MacDonald, Selwyn College Cambridge, April 2019

Musical note:	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	/	/
/	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	/	/
/	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	/	/
/	V	W	X	Y	Z	/	/	/	/
/	K	Y	M	L	U	C	A	S	Bishop
/	D	D	F	E	G	C	A	E	B

*Lyn Loewi (D.M.A., Stanford) studied organ with John Rodland, Marilyn Mason, Herbert Nanney, and Marie-Claire Alain. She holds a unanimous First Prize in organ from the French National Conservatory. From 2012 until 2019, Lyn was Assistant Organist and then Interim Director of Music at St. John's Cathedral, Denver. In addition to many years as a church musician, she has taught at the University of Minnesota, Portland State University, and Lewis and Clark College. Lyn wishes to thank Amanda Sprott-Goldson, Susan Jane Matthews, and David Loewi for their help writing this article.*



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## Book Review

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ERIK W. GOLDSTROM

Laurenz Lütteken, James Steichen, translator. *Music of the Renaissance: Imagination and Reality of a Cultural Practice* (University of California Press, 2019, ISBN-13: 978-0520297906), 248 pp., \$48.67 (Hardback).

The mass cycle, motet, and madrigal (or if you're more adventurous, the *frottola*, *caccia*, and *villotta*) are all considered harbingers of the period we broadly refer to as the Renaissance. Yet, at the end of the day, these are all rather positivistic “end products”—the type of information one rattles off in a music survey course or on a final exam essay. More important, perhaps, are the cultural and historical shifts that surround this compositional boneyard—the attitudes and aesthetics that ultimately resulted in the production of these defining genres. That is the task of Laurenz Lütteken's *Music of the Renaissance: Imagination and Reality of a Cultural Practice*. Originally published in 2011, it has recently been released in an English translation by James Steichen with a forward by Christopher Reynolds. Lütteken views the Renaissance through the lens of an history-altering perception: the emergence of the concept of the “musical work.” (p. 1) But, it is not enough to merely engage this concept at face value. Ultimately, Lütteken's book becomes a discourse on relationship—namely the relationship between humans and music and how that is reflected in the musical life of the Renaissance.

Our relationship to music changed in the Renaissance (as it would again for the Baroque), triggered by this conscious understanding of the “musical work.” This relationship has many

parameters and in his introduction, Christopher Reynolds summarizes many of Lütteken's key points. “He [Lütteken] is interested in such things as the contexts in which music was heard, the institutions that supported and required music, the relationship of music to the other arts, music and borders of all kinds, the development of composers as independent thinkers (“creators”), and the perceptions of time and space.” (p. x) In this short survey, I want to examine just a few of the fascinating aspects of music and culture that Lütteken has unveiled, assuring you that much more remains to be unpacked.

As previously noted, Lütteken sees the emergence of the concept of the musical work as a defining element of the Renaissance. However, he is quick to point out that the inquiry cannot end there. “While the musical work stands as the focus of inquiry, it cannot be the actual object of such a history, which would result in a kind of musical art history. A more fruitful approach is to attempt to circle in on the object by exploring significant areas of meaning.” (p. 5) One such area of meaning is the rise of musical professionalism. A key element that laid the groundwork for the changing relationships seen in the Renaissance was the development of mensural notation in the latter part of the thirteenth century. This innovation freed music from the rhythmic modes and allowed individual voices to stand in clearly defined relationships. Musical works consequently became more complex and with it arose a clear distinction between the musical professional and the musical amateur. More and more, “the performance of complex and demanding polyphonic music [was] understood as the collective enterprise of a group of professionals.” (p. 10)

It was the rise of the chapel and its organizational procedures that had much to do with this understanding of the musical professional. The chapel had its roots in the fourteenth century and had long been the locus for the performance of intricate Gregorian chant. Spurred on by the new possibilities afforded by mensural notation (p. 57), the papal chapel clerics (in Avignon) were divided into two groups: one for liturgical

responsibilities with limited musical duties and a second that was primarily focused on musical concerns (albeit within the context of liturgical function). (p. 57) In the end, the first group was excised, leaving only the musically oriented clerics. Given the development of a complex polyphony, musically astute professionals became a necessity.

In contrast to the other arts, whether the artist's workshop or the mostly solitary practices of poets, musical works required a complicated collective organization in order to be reproduced. Their internal structures needed to be arranged in a clear and hierarchical manner, since the presentation of a mass setting or a motet necessitated a definite form of inner organization in order to be deemed a success. (pp. 56-57)

Furthermore, because the chapel system (musical professionalism) relied upon a regulated internal structure, the repertoire of these institutions could be easily transferred from location to location with little problem. It was this “normalization” of the musical production system that allowed for the international style that we have come to associate with the Renaissance (and why composers such as Lasso could serve in courts as far flung as Naples, Rome, and Munich). “The development of the chapel as a professional musical institution produced yet another, perhaps unanticipated result. The uniformity of structures (even in the fifteenth century) and the mobility of the elite throughout Europe produced at least the nucleus of an international repertoire.” (p. 61)

But of course, it wasn't only the church that had chapels, and the importance of the court chapel exploded during the Renaissance. As music became a commodity (the monetization of music), competition emerged for the best singers and the best composers. Nobles regularly employed “head hunters” to lure prominent composers and singers to their court. Music, as we all know, was (and still is) an expensive commodity, and the founding of a chapel required substantial financial outlay and patronage. This turned the “Kapellmeister” into a highly

compensated specialist. Not only were composers and singers enticed by the highest bidder, but the works of these composers were printed and disseminated. The music thus became a product available for distribution, and this distribution brought fame and honor, not only to the patron, but to the composer himself. (pp. 78-79)

As previously alluded, another key change in our relationship to music was in its transmission—a movement away from the anonymous entries of music in manuscript. With the development of the printing press in 1450 and Petrucci's landmark musical publication in 1501, ascribing authorship to works became standard practice. (pp. 68-69) And with this practice, the composer rose from obscurity. (p. 65) It became increasingly important for works of a single composer to be gathered into collections; for example, Lasso's sons collected many of his works into a grand memorial volume in a posthumous attempt to solidify his fame, while Adrian Willaert's 1559 *Musica Nova* (a unique publication that mixed madrigals and motets) was published during his lifetime. Composer portraits also began to emerge, "part of a need to give fixed form to the creative individuality and even physicality of a musician." (pp. 68-69) Composers as diverse as Jacob Obrecht, Hans Gerle, and Johann Münstermann were all committed to the eternity of canvas.

One of the relationships with which Renaissance composers grappled was the idea of music as an *artes liberales*. Since late antiquity (ca. middle of the fifth century), the *artes liberales* consisted of the trivium (grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic) and the quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music). Music belonged to the *artes liberales* "since they were worthy of a free man—in other words, representing an undertaking not concerned with acquisition, exchange, or bodily labor, but rather with knowledge." (p. 48) However, during the Renaissance there was an increasing association of music with the sensual (rather than only the intellectual). This "sensuous presence of music, articulated by so many witnesses (not all of them written) in the fifteenth century, including musical scholarship, in the end helped bring about the loss of music's erstwhile

special status." (p. 51) Instead, the conversation turned toward virtue, and musicians (especially instrumentalists) were found to have an excess of this desirable attribute. Previously, instrumentalists were of low degree because their art emphasized manual labor. With this new perception, "the virtue of instrumentalists, especially organists or lutenists, made it possible to envision the discipline of music in the moment of playing, and this presence allowed the stain of manual labor to disappear." (p. 149)

One relationship that is often misrepresented (according to Lütteken) is music's association with antiquity. Mythology and ancient history are often touted as being "rediscovered" in the Renaissance and a driving force behind creativity. But the devil is in the details and Lütteken brings the problem into focus. "Engagement with antiquity is found in music-theoretical treatises.... but not—or in only a few notable exceptional cases—in compositional practices. Only in the last third of the sixteenth century did a new pathway for engaging with antiquity emerge." (p. 173) Music was always brought into a relationship with antiquity, he argues, but it was accompanied by *new* music. The representation may be antiquarian, but the music was fully contemporary.

Interestingly, it was this late sixteenth-century pathway that would signal the end of the Renaissance

The "onrush of antiquity" in music beginning in the 1570s thus reveals itself as a Janus-faced undertaking, not simply consisting of the reconstruction of ancient contexts but rather of the *intentional and subtle blending of antiquity with compositional demands of the present moment*. (p. 178—emphasis mine).

The focus here was on the idea of musical drama, purportedly derived from "ancient techniques," and its end result was the creation of an entirely new form—instrumentally accompanied solo singing that was fully expressive of its text.

The success of modern text representation in the madrigal was undisputed, but was accomplished at the expense of textual comprehension. Interest thus turned to making

a literary text as musically expressive as possible while still being comprehensible, through the imitation of a purportedly ancient technique. (p. 180)

Thus was born monody, recitative, and opera, commencing with the work of Cavalieri and Peri and exploding full force in Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*. This turn to affective language also caused the unity of musical style to collapse; various regional styles representing a variety of musical cultures came to the fore and laid the groundwork for the Italian, German, and French styles we recognize in the Baroque era. Lütteken neatly sums up this landmark transition:

Thus the paradigm shift of 1600 reveals itself not as the result of compositional craft turning into a practice, but was rather grounded in fundamental aesthetic transformation and a significant change in the forms of perception. The significant locus of this change, if not its instigator, was the stage. (p. 188)

*Music of the Renaissance* is a fascinating discourse on the cultural and aesthetic relationships that characterize musical thought and practice from roughly the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries. Lütteken forges a complex but understandable path through the historical/cultural issues of the day, and ties them to a key element of understanding: the emergence of the concept of the musical work. Multiple disciplines are brought to bear on his argument—through architecture, painting, and poetry the author deftly shows the correlations with (and derivations from) musical art. This is not a book that traces form, performance practice, or structure and there are very few musical examples. Rather, the author is interested in those things that surround the work, the *zeitgeist* in which perceptions mold and change the musical art of the Renaissance. It is a brilliant piece of work that packs a world of information into a relatively slim volume. **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.**

## Choral Music Reviews

JASON OVERALL

Franz Josef Haydn. *Missa in B-flat major "Creation Mass,"* satbSATB, orch. (Bärenreiter-Verlag, BA 4656-02, 2019), 204 pp., \$55.00.

Bärenreiter has partnered with G. Henle to publish new critical-practical editions of Haydn's large-scale vocal works. This effort principally comprises his oratorios *Die Schöpfung* and *Die Jahreszeiten* and the six large symphonic masses. One of these latter pieces, the Mass in B-flat, is the most recent target of the collaboration. The subtitle "Creation Mass" has been used since the early nineteenth century, and it stems from a single eight-bar quotation of a melody from the oratorio that had already gained considerable public popularity by the time Haydn composed the mass. While the work itself is of large-scale proportions, with a performance timing of around forty-five minutes, the orchestration is modest, with only paired oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, and trumpets joining the strings and organ. The organ mainly fulfills a continuo role of buttressing the harmony, yet it has true *concertante* passages, notably in the "Et incarnatus est" section of the *Credo*. The style is very recognizable as Haydn, with the refined elegance that typifies his symphonies and string quartets. The vocal soloists trade off with the full chorus in the conventional manner of other mass settings. In one curious—and brief—passage, there are actually two soprano and two tenor solos during the "Amen" of the *Gloria*. While this oddity may be explained in the full critical commentary, it occurs without remark in the full score. With choral parts of only moderate difficulty and even solo lines that avoid virtuosic writing, this mass would be well within the abilities

of many church choirs able to mount performances of orchestral works. As is normal for Bärenreiter, choral scores, orchestral parts, and other performance material are available for purchase.

Franz Schubert. *Magnificat in C major,* satbSATB, orch. (Bärenreiter-Verlag, BA 5657, 2019), 55 pp., \$32.00.

Franz Schubert. *Stabat Mater in G minor,* SATB, orch. (Bärenreiter-Verlag, BA 5656, 2019), 22 pp., \$21.00.

These two modestly-sized works present a variety of opportunities for performance in concert or liturgical setting. The *Magnificat* has a performance time of under ten minutes, and the *Stabat Mater* is even shorter. Orchestral forces are similarly modest, with the *Magnificat* requiring paired oboes, bassoons, and trumpets joining the strings and singers, and the *Stabat Mater* employing paired oboes, clarinets, and bassoons, as well as three trombones for the wind section. Musically, the works are in Schubert's familiar style, straddling the Classical and Romantic eras and combining the clarity of structure of Haydn with an incipient expressiveness foreshadowing later nineteenth-century composers (and without the excesses of the likes of Berlioz). The *Stabat Mater* sets the first four stanzas of the sequence two times successively without significant musical repetition. The first four bars of "Stabat Mater dolorosa" are the same both times, yet the music then moves

in different directions melodically and harmonically. While excerpting a portion of the long poem is common for musical settings of the *Stabat Mater*, Schubert also omitted several lines from the *Magnificat* in his setting. The critical commentary speculates on Schubert's motives, but admits that no satisfactory conjecture exists. The truncated text does little to limit the usefulness of the canticle, however, since its use in strict liturgical setting at Evensong is small. As a concert piece or extended anthem, it is entirely successful. Both works have plenty of Schubert's charm and grace, while placing minimal demands on vocalists.

Michael John Trotta. *O Gracious Light,* SATB, div. unacc. (MorningStar Music Publishers, MSM-50-6312, 2019), 5 pp., \$1.95.

A sturdy D major enriched with non-chord tones and cadential uses of the flattened seventh-scale degree sets a contemporary yet stable, sun-drenched atmosphere for the invitational hymn. Homophonic text setting in the voices moves with unhurried direction. Melismas appear at key moments, expanding the rhetorical discourse without undermining the momentum. Adding to the sense of stability, the 4/4 meter is never challenged, and most of the rhythm is restricted to quarter-note motion. At the verse beginning "You are worthy at all times..." Trotta abruptly increases the activity with murmuring sixteenth-note undulations in the soprano. This brief passage

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provides relief from the strong quarter-note pulse on either side, intensifying the entire hymn. Something of a recapitulation marks the final refrain, suggesting but not directly quoting the opening measures. The setting ends effectively with a final *piano* cadence.

Jason Cole. *O Gracious Light*, SATB, unacc. (CanticaNOVA Publications, 3003, 2018), 6 pp., \$1.90.

Cole's setting of the invitatory hymn is also cast in an uninterrupted flow of 4/4 measures, yet the free-flowing lines of eighth-note motion, evoking chant, and rhythmic organization create a weightless feel, deemphasizing the beat pattern. While the setting is largely homophonic, declamation of the text is offset from time to time, lending a slight call and response flavor. The tonal landscape begins in G minor and shifts abruptly to G major at the words "and to be glorified through all the worlds." Curiously, the first section is notated with three flats yet with every instance of A-flat cancelled by a natural accidental. This extraneous notation clutters the score a bit and visually obscures the obvious key center, although this is a small consideration. The piece is moderately easy with modest ranges, plenteous stepwise motion, and no part divisions.

Steven Rickards. *Preces and Responses in B-flat*, cantor, SATB, unacc. (Colla Voce Music, 38-20122, 2016), 11 pp., \$2.00.

Steven Rickards, an accomplished countertenor and member of the Christ Church Cathedral (Indianapolis) choir, draws on his own proficiency as a choral singer in creating these masterful settings of the responses. Perhaps not surprisingly, the alto line has some of the most interesting passages, and it is the only line that consistently divides. Rickards' harmonic language falls well within standard Anglican precedents, yet he infuses a gentle nod from time to time with gestures more typical of Broadway musicals or even barbershop quartet. These echoes are muted and merely add spice to the otherwise conventional declamation of the responses. Most choral statements are cast in 4/4 time, with one appearance of 3/4 and a lone 6/8 phrase adding variety. A homophonic Lord's Prayer

is one of the highlights of this very attractive and very useful set of choral responses.

Craig Phillips. *The Birmingham Preces & Responses*, cantor, SATB, unacc. (Selah Publishing Co., 410-926, 2019), 10 pp., \$2.50.

The expert skill in handling choral forces that typifies Phillips' compositions is apparent on every page of these responses written to honor AAM member Dr. Stephen Schaeffer's twentieth anniversary at the Birmingham, Alabama, cathedral. Phillips opted for a setting that follows the implied rhythm of speech to shape the metrical organization. Occasional measures of 3/8 delightfully unsettle the dominant quarter-note pulse, while drawing attention to the rhetoric of the prayers. Phillips achieves a mature, nuanced tonal language even without use of chromatic alterations. Harmonies are interestingly unconventional even when entirely diatonic. His confident writing flows from his prolific experience as a choral composer, and lines are unflinchingly vocally conceived. Altos and basses divide from time to time, yet these responses lie well within the reach of most choirs who routinely sing evensong.

David Ashley White. *The Palmer Preces & Responses*, cantor, SATB, unacc. (Selah Publishing Co., 410-949, 2019), 6 pp., \$2.25.

David Ashley White has a distinguishing ability to create tuneful, straightforward music even while using sophisticated compositional methods, such as aleatory techniques and rhythmic intricacy. The responses he wrote for his own parish, Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church, in preparation for the choir's residency at Wells Cathedral, breaks that mold a bit. Daring dissonances and unexpected harmonic shifts strike a much different sonic impression than is typical of his works. Yet the effortless compositional rhetoric retains his unique voice. The Lord's Prayer flows in a meterless homophonic chant governed by even eighth-note motion. The set favors D major, even while finding cadential destinations in other closely-related keys. The final "amen" cadences for the collects, however, end first on D major,

then D minor, and lastly on G major. This final *fortissimo* chord somehow seems utterly unavoidable, as if the entire discourse were pointing to this spot all along. The harmonic interest of these responses is a very attractive element. Even with some spicy sonorities, the choral parts are of only moderate difficulty. The set makes an obvious pairing with White's *Palmer Canticles (Magnificat & Nunc dimittis)*.

Steven Rickards. *Magnificat and Nunc dimittis in D*, Unison, kbd. (Colla Voce Music, 38-20123, 2016), 12 pp., \$2.05.

A winsome asymmetric accompanimental motif repeats quasi-ostinato to begin this treble Evening Service. The lackadaisical figure, with its gently rocking 5/8 pattern, creates a mood of serene joy. The unison vocal line is imminently singable, with intuitive gestures and plenteous stepwise motion. Rickards transposes the accompaniment motif into a variety of keys in quick succession, yet its attractively memorable character makes the harmonic motion natural and never jarring. The *Gloria Patri* follows seamlessly in the same vein. The *Nunc dimittis* slows the rhythmic motion through the addition of a beat in each bar, organizing the 7/8 meter in 3/8 + 2/8 + 2/8. The swaying pattern of the first canticle gives way to soft arabesque, maintaining the eighth-note flow while relaxing the pace. Rhythmically the vocal line is a little trickier in this canticle, with syncopations that obscure the asymmetric beat pattern. Rhythmic challenges aside, Rickards's expertise as a singer forms his compositional approach, endowing his music with lines that are extremely vocally idiomatic. Both canticles use the same setting of the *Gloria Patri*, and the entire evening service is well within the skill level of young musicians with modest experience.

David Conte. *Magnificat and Nunc dimittis*, SATB, org. (E. C. Schirmer, 8694, 2018), 19 pp., \$2.80.

Trinity Cathedral, Cleveland, commissioned this Evening Service in honor of its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and Conte delivered a mature, masterful setting that earns a place in the

standard repertoire. His individual compositional voice and supreme command of musical rhetoric produces music of distinctive character. Conte indulges in some fairly adventurous harmonic language that poses challenges and promises great rewards for those who internalize it. Conte's skill as a composer and familiarity with audience reception yields a reserve that pushes boundaries without exceeding them. The choral writing is accessible to experienced choirs while still residing within the spectrum of proficient volunteers. Ranges stay within normal tessituras, and memorable melodic gestures provide further accommodation to singers, while allowing Conte to explore his distinctive harmonic language. Listeners will be rewarded not with predictable church-music clichés, but with substantive music from an accomplished compositional voice. These canticles are likely to become staples within the venerable canon of settings of the Evening Service.

Richard Allain. *The Wells Responses*, SS, org. (Novello / Hal Leonard, 00288723, 2018), 8 pp., \$3.00.

Richard Allain. *The Wells Service*, SS, org. (Novello / Hal Leonard, 00288724, 2018), 23 pp., \$5.50.

Accomplished treble choirs will find great interest in these masterful settings of the prayers and canticles for Evensong. Matthew Owens of Wells Cathedral has overseen an impressive campaign of commissioning and performing new works, and this result of his work is an excellent addition to Evensong repertoire. The responses alternate between passages marked [growling] and [purring]. The former often feature unsettled asymmetric meters and anxious figuration in the organ. The latter employ whole-note and half-notes predominantly in a static air of calm. The Lord's Prayer also includes the instruction for strings in the organ, and the ethereal tone clusters form a haze of sound. This is no bland slush machine, however, with lots of very spicy dissonances and surprising harmonic twists. Throughout the set, the tonal center of C is often asserted, particularly on cadences, yet it is not a traditional take on harmony. All the same, Allain's individual language is

consistent enough that the logic is aurally perceptible on first listen. The vocal lines wind around each other in sinewy strings of seconds and unprepared dissonances. Individually, the lines are not particularly difficult, given the predominance of stepwise motion or small intervallic leaps and modest range at top and bottom. On the other hand, the unusual harmonic landscape and the frequent collisions between the two parts make this music for experienced singers. The *Magnificat* and *Nunc dimittis* carry most of these principles forward on a larger canvas. The unsettled, anxious figuration of the responses becomes a tranquilly playful mixed meter in the opening measures of the *Magnificat*. Unorthodox organization of 4/4 bars (3/8 + 3/8 + 2/8) alternate with 7/8 measures which nonetheless exude an unhurried simplicity. Again, the two vocal lines collide frequently in thorny seconds. Tonal centers change, often abruptly, and the singers must be secure in navigating their course from one passage to the next. Once the text reaches the laundry list of "He hath" statements, the music dances in an off-kilter 3-beat pattern in 4/4 meter as in the opening measures. Rather than the languid pointillism of the introduction, however, this section uses repeated chords to propel the music through the verses. The gentle arabesques return for the final section of "He remembering his mercy..." only to resume the rhythmic drive for the *Gloria Patri*. Just as the *Magnificat* reinterprets the [growling] passages of the responses, the *Nunc dimittis* evokes the [purring] sections while giving a slightly different take on the idea. Allain generates more forward motion than the responses reach while nevertheless maintaining the peaceful atmosphere. At the words "to be a light to lighten..." energetic triplet against duplet eighth-note motion erupts in a brilliant blaze. The confident quarter-note and half-note motion of the voices above this undulation proclaims the exultation of the text with deliberate joy. The *Gloria Patri* returns to the sustained chords of the opening of the canticle, and as the organ weaves around many distant, complex harmonies, the voices chant the words on a single pitch. Only at the end do the two voices unfold

into harmony as the organ ceases its peregrine wanderings, settling into an unconventional cadential chord. Both the responses and the canticles feature a sophisticated harmonic and rhythmic language, yet the music is of profound beauty in all its varied moods. Given that younger singers carry few preconceptions and prejudices (unlike adults often do), careful teaching of this music would make it accessible to ensembles with confidence and some experience.

David Ashley White. *Magnificat (My Soul Proclaims with Wonder)*, Unison, 2-part, org. (Selah Publishing Co., 410-940, 2019), 4 pp., \$2.00.

Carl Daw's masterful paraphrase of the *Magnificat*, dating from 1989, is matched with a unison setting by David Ashley White in this new publication. White uses the opening of Daw's text as a refrain, indicating that all singers perform the refrain each time. He then sets the remainder of the text as verses. Stanzas one and three use a melody scored for soprano and alto, and stanza two and four feature a different melody for tenors and basses. This treble/bass division is the only call for two parts, as there is no harmony in the vocal writing. The verses are unaccompanied, lending a folk-like feel to the canticle. Strong chords in the organ part announce the refrain each time, rooting the lilting 6/8 melody in a strong rhythmic pulse. The tunes, in White's familiar, breezy style, require no teaching because the music is so intuitive. The setting would work extremely well in situations that call for a congregational performance of the *Magnificat*, although the score seems to be laid out for choral forces. Congregations could be invited to sing the refrain only, or have the full assembly sing throughout, with verses divided between upper and lower voices. A crowning organ coda caps the canticle with an emphatic musical exclamation point.

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# Instrumental Music Reviews

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BRIAN P. HARLOW

César Franck. *Complete Works for Organ and for Harmonium I: Early Organ Works/Fragments* (2018 Bärenreiter-Verlag BA 9291), 80 pp., 29.95 € (\$34.00).

I have always had an affinity for the physical presence and appearance of books and scores. In the early days of studying piano and organ, I would relish getting new scores from my teacher. One day my teacher presented me with a mustard yellow, oblong Kalmus score, *César Franck Complete Organ Works, Vol 4*. He suggested that for a student recital coming up I could either play a piece I had been working on, or learn a new piece from this book, César Franck's *Choral in A minor*. If I was willing to work hard I could learn it, he said, and it was obvious that he wanted me to take up the challenge. Naturally, I did, and this ordinary looking book became one of my prized possessions. Over the next couple of years, I collected two more volumes of the *Complete Organ Works* and it never crossed my mind that there might be other organ works by César Franck beyond the four volumes. The twelve monumental works were all I knew. After all, the scores were labelled "Complete Organ Works." Recordings and recital programs supported this point of view. My three CD sets of the complete works of Franck consist of only the twelve symphonic pieces, with one performer including the first published organ work, *Andantino*. Later, another teacher showed me a copy of *L'Organiste*, and I was intrigued. But after seeing that they were for harmonium with optional pedal, I dismissed them. (I was a teenager, after all!) According to liner notes by Neil Wright © 2008 (Priory Records CD

845), "*L'Organiste* has been overlooked largely as a result of criticism by Harvey Grace based on a misplaced comparison with the symphonic organ works." Grace characterized them as "mostly trivial" and it appears that most of our organist colleagues have had a similar perspective. This attitude extends to the other early organ works of Franck, some of which were conceived for the *Grand Orgue* and are by no means trivial. Rollin Smith's fabulous book, *Playing the Organ Works of César Franck*, explores the twelve great organ works in great detail, yet only contains passing mentions of the early *Pièce in E-flat*, the *Andantino*, the early version of the *Fantaisie in C*, and *L'Organiste* in the opening biographical chapter.

The lack of awareness of the early and minor works of César Franck is why this new Urtext edition by Bärenreiter is so important. In conjunction with the International César Franck Society, this eight-volume edition will include variants of the *Six Pièces*, *L'Organiste*, and the early *Pièces posthumes*, edited and published by Tournemire under the title *L'Organiste II*. While *L'Organiste* was a product of the end of Franck's long career, the first volume of this new edition contains early works: *Pièce in E-flat* (1846), *Pièce (Fantaisie) in A* (1854), *Andantino* (1856/57), *Pièce (Fantaisie) in C* (1856), and two fragments. Apart from the fragments, these pieces have been previously published but have not been widely available or well-known. They provide crucial information about Franck's development as a musician and composer for the organ, especially as the music written in the latter part of his life is typically the focus of study.

Discovered and published by Norbert Dufourcq in 1973, *Pièce in E-flat* from 1846 is the earliest known organ work by Franck. The manuscript makes it obvious that the piece was worked on in three different stages, but Franck signed and dated it at the end, evidently pleased with the result. The indications in the score require a three-manual organ with *Pédales de combinaison*, a variety of reed stops, and a *ravalement* with an extended compass down to FF. At the time, only a few organs in and around Paris met these requirements, and scholars have

debated which organ influenced this piece. There is a strong possibility that Franck wrote it with the 1842 Clicquot/Cavaillé-Coll organ of Saint Roch in mind, where Lefébure-Wely was organist. (preface, p. XXVI) Like many of Lefébure-Wely's organ pieces, *Pièce in E-flat* is an extroverted showpiece. Franck delights in the dynamic range of Cavaillé-Coll's new style of organ and exploits many possibilities, including eighth-note accents created by quickly activating the combination pedals, a dialogue of extreme dynamic contrasts between the Recit *ppp* and the Grand Orgue *fff*, and even a passage marked *pppp*. Throughout the fantasia-like work, three themes are presented in succession and then developed. Chorale passages, a short fughetta, and an extended coda with an active pedal part are other noteworthy features. A fine performance of this by Daniel Roth is available on YouTube, which gives a sense of the possibilities of these early works.

The *Pièce (Fantaisie) in A* from eight years later is the largest preserved organ work that Franck wrote before the *Six Pièces*. (Preface p. XXVII) It was discovered quite recently by Joël-Marie Fauquet and published in 1990. The work was written quickly, even hastily, and contains numerous corrections and repeat-bar abbreviations. (Preface p. XXVIII) In contrast to the previous piece, Franck is sparing in his indication of dynamics, though this may be because it was for his own use and he did not bother to write everything down. These aspects of the manuscript suggest that it may have been written for the dedication of the new Ducroquet organ at Saint-Eustache, then the largest organ in Paris. The manuscript is dated May 19, 1854, and we know that Franck played the inaugural concert at Saint-Eustache on May 26, 1854, which included an improvisation and a "Fantaisie." The *Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris* (May 26, 1854) called it "a carefully composed and energetically performed fantasia." (Rollin Smith, *Playing the Organ Works of César Franck*, Pendragon Press, 1997, p. 12) Using sonata form, Franck writes themes of contrasting character and develops them through variations, sequence, abbreviation, canon, and change of mode. (Preface

p. XXVIII) While the development section might have benefitted from some editing and shortening, there are many beautiful moments, including some that are reminiscent of the *Grand Pièce Symphonique* (perhaps partially because of the related key). There is a liberal use of canon and double pedal is used creatively. One section in particular sounds as if it were inspired by the compositions of Lefébure-Wely. Though the largest of these early organ compositions, it ends quietly.

The *Andantino* was César Franck's first published organ work. In tripartite form, it demonstrates restraint, especially when compared to the prevailing style in the 1850s. The central section is in the parallel major and is characterized by a certain naiveté. After the recapitulation, there is an extended passage in E-flat major before resolving back to G minor. This charming miniature deserves to be heard more often.

The last complete piece in this volume is the *Pièce (Fantaisie) in C* of 1856. Although the opening section of this *Fantaisie* would later be used by Franck to open the *Fantaisie in C* of the *Six Pieces*, the editor, Christiane Strucken-Paland, argues that it should be considered an independent early work. This runs somewhat counter to the interpretation by Jesse Eschbach and Robert Bates who published three versions together as *Fantaisie für die Orgel in drei Versionen* (Bonn, 1980). Strucken-Paland argues that this piece "shows a fully autonomous conception and therefore, despite a certain material relationship with Opus 16, would be inappropriately characterized if it were classified as a forerunner of the latter." (Preface p. XXXI) The latter two of the C major Fantasies are much more closely related, differing only in their opening section where Franck uses the opening of the 1856 piece in the final version. This first version, presented here, is in ABA form, while the later two *Fantaisies* are in a looser episodic form. The outer A sections are the familiar opening from the *Fantaisie in C*, Opus 16, with some straightforward variants at the reprise. The middle section is stimulating and effective as Franck experiments with thematic transformation of a slightly chromatic arch-like theme. Especially memorable

is a transformation into a sharp dotted rhythm played *marcatissimo*. Franck explores remote modulations as well as different resolutions of the diminished seventh chord, while making full use of the swell pedal and the combination pedals. A chorale-like "prayer" theme provides relief after a large crescendo and musical climax. After another build-up, the "prayer" theme is played on full organ and then extended throughout a slow diminuendo that leads to the reprise of A. Like the *Pièce (Fantaisie) in A*, this work brings to mind Franck the improviser in the recollections of Louis Vierne.

I have never heard anything which could compare with Franck's improvisations from the point of view of purely musical invention. At church, it took him a certain time to get into the mood—several trials, a little experimenting, then, once started, a lavishness of invention partaking of the miraculous; a polyphony of incomparable richness, in which melody, harmony and structure vied with one another in originality and emotional conception, traversed by flashes of manifest genius. ("Memoirs of Louis Vierne; His Life and Contacts with Famous Men." Translated by Esther Jones, *The Diapason* 29/11 p.12.)

Two fragments from 1854 discovered by Fauquet are also presented in this volume. The opening section of the first in E-flat is missing, but nevertheless the work could be performed as a postlude or short recital piece, given its stirring ending. The second fragment, also in E-flat, is a short *Prière* with a chorale-like theme. The addition of a simple tonic triad at the end would make this a useable short piece of service music.

This edition contains all that one would expect from an Urtext edition: a scholarly preface, a biographical timeline, stop lists of relevant instruments, a four page glossary, all in three languages, and, of course, an extensive critical commentary. All of this is done with the thoroughness and excellence that Bärenreiter is known for. Overall, these youthful works paint a picture of a maturing composer exploring the new technologies and

colors made available to him, thanks to the new symphonic organ, while simultaneously experimenting with form and scale. It sheds light on and increases awareness of significant early works by one of the organ's most important nineteenth-century composers. It will be exciting to see what other discoveries this new complete edition will offer.

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## Recording Review

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MARJORIE JOHNSTON

**BBC Legends: Giuliani—Benjamin Britten's War Requiem.** Stefania Woytowicz, Peter Pears, Hans Wilbrink, Soloists; the Melos Ensemble, Benjamin Britten, Conductor. Wandsworth School Boys' Choir, New Philharmonia Chorus, New Philharmonia Orchestra, Carlos Maria Giuliani, Conductor (BBC Music, 2000, in association with IMG Artists; Live recording, Royal Albert Hall, London, 6 April 1969), Amazon used from \$7.81, new from \$132.00 (see also Spotify and other audio streaming services).

Feedback from readers of the *Journal* is helpful and appreciated, and with this review I honor the request of an AAM member who wished for a review of a classic recording. I found a recording I did not know of a piece I know well: Benjamin Britten's "War Requiem." The construction of the piece is truly unique: one conductor leads the soprano soloist, chorus, and boys' choir in the Latin Requiem text,

while a second conductor directs a chamber orchestra that accompanies the tenor and bass soloists, who offer settings of the World War I poet, Wilfred Owens. Mr. Britten's partner Peter Pears, for whom the tenor solo part was written, is joined on this disc by baritone Hans Wilbrink and soprano Stefania Woytowicz.

When dealing with such a well-known masterpiece, it is impossible not to make comparisons with other recordings or performances one has heard or been a part of. Some say that all performances or recordings where Mr. Britten played a role have a similarity. This 1969 performance brings Britten together with the legendary Italian conductor and Verdi specialist, Carlos Maria Giulini, and the fact that it is a live recording brings a shimmering vitality to the production that I found spellbinding. It is a superb achievement, and the re-mastering was well worth the effort.

1. *Requiem aeternam*: The chorus' delivery of this text does not have the breathy, fearful quality that some interpreters prefer, but more of a clean, matter-of-fact approach. Even the boy choir seems to impart the perspective of an emotionally drained soldier. The *Kyrie* at the end of the movement sounds like a prayer that is predisposed to defeat: Lord have mercy.
2. *Dies irae*: The brass playing is pristine and confident in military style, and the chorus sounds menacing and angry as it communicates the vengeance of the "day of wrath." With few exceptions, choral intonation is exceptional at all dynamic levels, and that aspect does not sound digitally enhanced. The tempi sound just a bit faster than those I've experienced, almost pressing, but Mr. Britten was right there, and the pace does not seem unnatural, even in the live acoustic. The "Recordare" section was one place I did miss the quality of a modern recording, as the richness of the women's voices could have used some enhancement and lift from the rest of the symphonic texture.
3. *Offertorium*: Here the boys' sound is especially chilling as they pray for deliverance. Then the mocking

contrapuntal style in "Quam olim Abrahae" sets up the cruelly altered ending of the Abraham and Isaac story, after it is introduced so poignantly by the tenor and baritone soloists. Who could not be haunted by the return of the boy choir on "Hostias"? (translated, "*Sacrifices and prayers of praise, O Lord, we offer to thee. Receive them, Lord, on behalf of those souls we commemorate this day. Grant them, O Lord, to pass from death unto life, which once thou promised to Abraham and his seed.*") The chorus' recap of the "Quam olim Abrahae" text finds the musical line turned upside down, and it's delivered here with even more malice than before.

4. *Sanctus*: Polish soprano, Stefania Woytowicz, sounds born to sing the *Sanctus* and *Benedictus*, and the ensemble Maestro Giulini beckons from the orchestra and chorus is exact and tight in both iterations of the perilous "Hosanna."
5. *Agnus Dei*: The 5/16 meter leaves one feeling uneasy and off-balance, as the tenor soloist describes soldiers who have lost limbs; their experiences are juxtaposed with Christ's journey toward crucifixion. The listener is transfixed in anticipation of the final movement.
6. *Libera me*: Again, meter is unsettling as there are long sections when groups making up the complete ensemble are in different time signatures. The soprano soloist is remarkably pitch perfect, while still sounding terror-stricken in the "Tremens" section of the *Responsory*. The brass and percussion persist with their driving military mantra, and the climactic "Dies illa" just about parallels a live performance. I can't imagine letting crowd noises on the recording deter one from experiencing this! The baritone and tenor soloists have a final confrontation in the afterlife, with the baritone explaining, "I am the enemy you killed, my friend." The heart-wrenching poetry, "Let us sleep now," brings the work to a close with the return of the boy choir and full performing forces for an introspective, intentionally hollow ending.

Why review this recording instead of Decca's venerable 1963 première

with Maestro Meredith Davies and Mr. Britten with his handpicked soloists, Peter Pears, Galina Vishnevskaya, and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau? Several reasons, the first being Mo. Giulini, who was an admirer and a friendly colleague of Mr. Britten. The Italian musician had been drafted into the army when he was eighteen and even served on the front lines, though he shared a pacifist point of view with Mr. Britten. His connection to the work was already established, as he had conducted it once before in Edinburgh in 1968. In Phillip Reed's liner notes, he quotes Kathleen Mitchell (the wife of Mr. Britten's publisher, Donald Mitchell) regarding that performance: "Giulini had the chorus singing from their souls. He is a graceful conductor to watch—all flow and poetry. Ben's Melos in marvelous voice. He and Giulini together as if they had one heart beating instead of two."

Another strong appeal of this disc is the chorus. A talented singer friend of mine once described her voice as "unharmful by voice lessons." The New Philharmonia Chorus has that quality. That is not to imply that these singers were not trained and reliable; they simply sound like musicians who not only took direction well, but also followed their natural talents and instincts with incredibly professional results. Memories of my first performance of this work under the direction of Maestro Robert Shaw are revisited each time I hear or sing it. Those who worked with Mr. Shaw heard him constantly stress that the root of the word "amateur" is "love," and that intangible quality comes through in a palpable way in this recorded live performance.

Some critics spurn the acoustic of Royal Albert Hall as "swimmy" and cannot abide the coughing and crowd noise which are inevitable in a live recording. I treasure the acoustic and the crowd here; while there is nothing like being physically present, it is satisfying to go back in time with a live recording to imagine oneself in the audience of a great performance. Doing so with this recording is a meaningful indulgence that I recommend.

## News of Members

### HONORARY AAM MEMBERSHIP ANNOUNCED



AAM Past President **Paul Ellison** presented **Dr. James O'Donnell**, Organist & Master of the Choristers at Westminster Abbey, with his Certificate of Honorary Membership in AAM during a recent visit to London. James wrote: "Thank you so much for this. I'm very honored and grateful to the Association for this gesture. Please would you pass on my pleasure in accepting and my thanks to the membership?"

### SIXTH ANNUAL RSCM NEW JERSEY CHORAL FESTIVAL

Choristers from around New Jersey gathered on Saturday, June 1 at Christ Church in Short Hills for the Sixth Annual RSCM New Jersey Choral Festival. This year's program was conducted by Gail Blache-Gill, Minister of Music at St Paul and the Incarnation, Jersey City, and

accompanied by **Dr. Andrew Moore**, Director of Music at Christ Church, and Andrew Zhang, Organist at Holy Trinity, West Orange, and Piano Instructor at St Paul's Choir School, Englewood.

The event was organized by **Mark Trautman**, Missioner for Music and the Arts of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark.

Repertoire included Harrison Oxley's "Preces and Responses," an Anglican chant Psalm by S.S. Wesley, and Dyson's *Evening Canticles in C minor*. Ms. Blache-Gill also taught us a new gospel piece, "Jesus Promised" by Tim Carpenter and most recently premiered by the Chicago Mass Choir.

The RSCM New Jersey Festival is a wonderful opportunity for choristers from around the state to spend a day making music together, making new friends, and a time for Christian formation and fellowship. Previous directors have included **Bruce Neswick**, Rob Ridgell, **Loraine Enlow**, Donald Morris, and Dr. Malcolm Merriweather. The next festival will be spring 2020, and dates and venue will be announced soon. Everyone is welcome!

### ST PAUL'S CHORAL FESTIVAL A SUCCESS

More than thirty singers representing seven congregations gathered on Saturday, May 4, 2019, for a choral festival and Evensong at St Paul's in Englewood, New Jersey. **David Pulliam**, Director of Music at St Luke's, Darien, Connecticut, led the festival,



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accompanied by Will Roslak, Associate Musician at St Luke's. The choir sang the *Evening Canticles in D* by George Dyson, *Preces and Responses* by **Craig Philips**, and Herbert Howells' "O Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem." Choirs represented at the festival included St Luke's, Darien, St Paul's, Englewood, (**Mark Trautman**, Director of Music), St Paul's and the Incarnation, Jersey City, New Jersey (Gail Blache-Gill, Director of Music), Trinity, Asbury Park, New Jersey (Samantha Scheff, Director of Music), St. John's, Somerville, New Jersey (**Jeff Clearman**, Director of Music), Trinity, Church, Hartford, Connecticut, (Jackson Merrill, Director of Music), and Christ Church Cathedral, Springfield, Massachusetts (Robert Hansler, Director of Music). An offering was taken to support a scholarship for the RSCM Rhode Island Course in memory of Gordon Appleton, who led a similar festival for many years at St Bartholomew's Church in New York City.

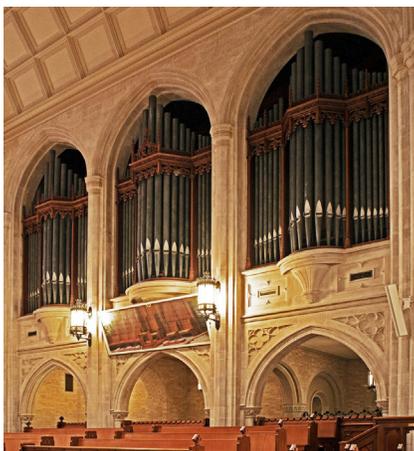


David Pulliam directs the choir at the St. Paul Choral Festival.

# News of Note

## EAST TEXAS PIPE ORGAN FESTIVAL

The 2019 East Texas Pipe Organ Festival will be held November 10-14. The festival honors the life and career of Roy Perry who, along with the Williams Family of New Orleans, sold, designed, and tonally finished numerous Aeolian-Skinner pipe organs throughout the states of Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee. The Festival will include thirteen recitals, a masterclass by **Clive Driskill-Smith**, and lectures by George Bozeman, Brink Bush, and Scott Cantrell. This year's recitalists include Brink Bush, Jared Cook, **Scott Dettra**, Clive Driskill-Smith, Christian Elliott, Jan Kraybill, Christopher Marks, Patrick Parker, **Eric Plutz**, John Schwandt, Walt Strony, and **John Walthausen**. The featured Aeolian-Skinner organs are at First Presbyterian Church, Kilgore, Texas; St. Luke's United Methodist Church, Kilgore; and St. Mark's Cathedral, Shreveport, Louisiana; with additional instruments in Dallas by Aeolian-Skinner, Richards Fowkes & Co, Schudi, and others. For more information, go to [easttexaspipeorganfestival@yahoo.com](mailto:easttexaspipeorganfestival@yahoo.com).



Photograph by David Brown

1959 Aeolian-Skinner, Opus 1308 at St. Mark's Cathedral, Shreveport, Louisiana.

## New AAM Members (April and June 2019)

Bryan Anderson  
St. Thomas Church  
Houston, TX

Joshua Lawton  
Trinity Parish  
Newton Centre, MA

Victoria Shields  
First Presbyterian Church  
New Canaan, CT

Christian Crocker  
Church of the Nativity  
Huntsville, AL

Clayton Logue  
St. John's Church  
Wailuku, HI

Martin Sunderland  
Eastern Shore Chapel  
Virginia Beach, VA

Nicholas Halbert  
Christ the King RC Church  
Dallas, TX

Erin McAdams  
St. Paul's Church  
San Antonio, TX

Jacob Taylor  
St. Paul's Church  
Indianapolis, IN

Bonnie Harris-Reynolds  
St. Thomas Church  
College Station, TX

Samuel Nelson  
St. Paul's Church  
Lynnfield, MA

Paul Thomas  
St. Paul's Church  
Chattanooga, TN

David B. Johnson  
St. Paul's Church  
Riverside, CT

Rebecca Peal-Sconce  
St. Christopher's Church  
Dallas, TX

Jason West  
Christ Church  
Rockville, MD

Ann Labounsky  
Church of the Redeemer  
Pittsburgh, PA

Caroline Senn  
St. Paul's Church  
Watertown, WI

Christopher Windle  
Church of the Atonement  
Chicago, IL

## CALLING ALL CHOIRS!

Guildford Cathedral (UK) would welcome any choirs considering a tour of England to participate in our worship program. This beautiful, spacious, cathedral has recently been renovated and now possesses a six second acoustic, along with a very fine organ. We have the possibility of two weeks' residencies in Guildford Cathedral in 2020: August 10 – 16, and August 17 – 23. Any choir interested in visiting a magnificent cathedral, with an exciting acoustic, fine organ, and in a beautiful part of England, close to London, with an historic town centre, we'd love to welcome them. We will also be happy to take enquiries from choirs considering singing in 2021 or 2022. For more information, please e-mail Sub Organist Richard Moore: [richard@guildford-cathedral.org](mailto:richard@guildford-cathedral.org).



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