

Great Sacred Music

Sunday, January 3, 2021

Joseph Gabriel Rheinberger: Omnes de Saba
St. Clement's Choir, Philadelphia, Peter Richard Conte

Peter Cornelius: The Three Kings
Polyphony, Stephen Layton
Robert Rice, baritone

Peter Warlock: Bethlehem Down
Voces 8

Warlock was a pseudonym used by music critic Philip Heseltine.
The Latin of the Rheinberger anthem translates as "All they from Saba came." German composer Peter Cornelius published Weihnachtslieder, Op.8 in 1856. It consists of six songs of which Die Konig or The Three Kings is the most popular. Bethlehem Down won the Daily Telegraph's annual Christmas Carol Contest in 1927. Peter Warlock was a pseudonym used by music critic Philip Heseltine.

Traditional, arr. Graham Ross: Hail to the Lord's Anointed!
Choir of Clare College, Cambridge, Graham Ross
Michael Papadopoulos, organ

Orlande de Lassus: Omnes de Saba venient
The Studio of Ancient Music of Montreal, Christopher Jackson
The Latin translates as "All they from Saba came". Motet for The Feast of the Epiphany.

Leo Sowerby: Picardy (from Six Meditations on Communion Hymns)
Robert Parris, organ
1927 E.M. Skinner organ at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Rochester, New York

"Hail to the Lord's Anointed!" can be found on Mater ora filium: Music for Epiphany, a CD released in 2016 by Clare College. Christopher Jackson was one of Canada's top early music specialists. The hymn-tune Picardy is widely used in the Episcopal Church with the text "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence."

Herbert Howells: Here is the little door
Choir of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, Geoffrey Webber

Sir Arnold Bax: Mater, ora Filium
The Rodolfus Choir, Ralph Allwood

English composer Herbert Howells wrote his Epiphany carol Here is the little door in 1918. Mater, ora filium by English composer Arnold Bax (1883-1953) was apparently inspired by a performance of William Byrd's Mass for Five Voices.

John Goss, arr. by David Willcocks: See amid the winter's snow
Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys, Gerre Hancock

Conrad Kocher, arr. W.H. Monk: As with gladness men of old
Choir of King's College, Cambridge, Sir Stephen Cleobury
Tom Etheridge, organ

Franz Tunder: Praeludium in G
Aude Heurtematte, organist
2010 L'Orgue Dominique Thomas (in ca. 1630 style) at the Church of the Assumption, Champcueil,
France

Organist of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, Sir John Goss (1800-1880) is best known for the music he wrote for "Praise, my soul, the King of heaven" and "See, amid the winter's snow." William C. Dix wrote the text of "As with gladness men of old." Aude Heurtematte is organ professor at the Conservatoire of Strasbourg and organist of L'Eglise St. Gervais in Paris.

J.S. Bach: Christmas Oratorio, BWV 248 Part Five
Bach Choir of Bethlehem; Bach Festival Orchestra, Greg Funfgeld
Tamara Matthews, soprano; Marietta Simpson, mezzo-soprano
Benjamin Butterfield, tenor; Christopheren Nomura, baritone

Bach's Christmas Oratorio is actually six free-standing cantatas. Part Five is intended to be sung on the first Sunday of the New Year. The German translates as "Let honour be sung to You, O God." If some of the music sounds familiar, that's because Bach recycled movements from other cantatas.

Johann Adolf Hasse: Chori angelici laetantes
Musica Antiqua of Cologne, Reinhard Goebel
Bernarda Fink, mezzo-soprano

A friend of Johann Sebastian Bach, German composer Johann Adolph Hasse (1699-1783) composed over 70 operas.

Commentary: Thomas Brown

Maurice Durufle: Toccata~Suite, Op. 5
Thomas Brown, organ
1992 Quimby/1962 Moller organ in St. Michael's Episcopal Church, Litchfield, Connecticut

Maurice Durufle (1902-1986) was organist at Eglise St. Etienne du Mont in Paris. He was an organ student of Charles Tournemire at the Paris Conservatoire

Johann Nepomuk Hummel: Mass in E flat, Op. 80
Czech Philharmonic Chorus; Vienna Academy Orchestra, Martin Haselbock
Amanda Halgrimson, soprano; Susan McAdoo, alto
Helmut Wildhaber, tenor; Petr Mikulas, bass

While Austrian composer Johann Nepomuk Hummel mainly wrote chamber music and was highly-regarded for his teaching of pianists including Carl Czerny, he did manage to find time to compose this Mass in E flat for the 1804 Marienfest in Eisenstadt

J.S. Bach: Prelude and Fugue in A minor, BWV 543

Nicholas Danby, organ
1968 Kemper & Son organ in the Marienkirche, Lubeck, Germany

This organ work of J.S. Bach dates from his time at Weimar (1708-1717).

Josquin Despres: Missa L'homme arme super voces musicales
Tallis Scholars, Peter Phillips

The Missa L'homme arme is the most famous mass written by French composer Josquin des Prez (c. 1450/1455–1521)

Manuel Arenzana: Dixit Dominus
Mexico City Chorus and Chamber Orchestra, Benjamin Jaurez Echenique
Irasema Terrazas, soprano; Gabriela Thierry, mezzo-soprano
Flavio Becerra, tenor; Jorge Cozatl, bass; Ivan Juarez, bass

Mexican composer Manuel Arenzana was Maestro de Capilla of Puebla Cathedral from 1792 to 1821