

Great Sacred Music

Easter Day, April 4, 2021

Traditional, arr. John Rutter: Jesus Christ is risen today
The Choir of Saint Thomas Church, New York City; Saint Thomas Brass, John Scott
Jeremy Bruns, organ

Randall Thompson: Alleluia
Harvard University Choir, Murray Forbes Somerville

Joseph Noyon, arr. Gerre Hancock: Christus Vincit
The Choir of Saint Thomas Church, New York City; St. Thomas Brass, John Scott
Jeremy Bruns, organ

From Oxford University Press: Christ the Lord Is Risen Today is an arrangement of the Easter hymn tune 'Lyra Davidica' for SATB, optional congregation, and organ or brass choir. Dr. Murray Forbes Somerville was Gund University Organist and Choirmaster from 1990 to 2003, The Memorial Church at Harvard University. This festive Easter anthem by French composer Joseph Noyon (1888-1962) is the only piece in his extensive oeuvre which survives in common usage.

Henry Ley: The strife is o'er
Choir of Liverpool Cathedral, David Poulter
Ian Tracey, organ

Pietro Mascagni: Regina coeli (Easter Hymn) from Cavalleria rusticana
Atlanta Symphony Orchestra & Choruses, Robert Shaw
Christine Brewer, soprano

Diane Bish: Improvisation on the hymn tune "Duke Street"
Diane Bish, organ
1969 Walcker organ of the Ulm Cathedral, Austria

Francis Pott translated the 17th century Latin text for "The strife is o'er" in 1861. The musical forces which appear in this morning's performance of Mascagni's Easter Hymn are as rich and lush as the music itself. Kansas native Diane Bish (1941-) has had a dazzling career as a professional organist. Ms. Bish has played recitals on organs worldwide.

Easter Greeting: The Reverend Canon Jean Parker Vail

Sir Arthur Sullivan, arr. by Richard Webster: Welcome, happy morning
Choir and Congregation of Christ Church, Georgetown, Richard Webster
Thomas Smith, organ; Brandon Almagro, trumpet; Kevin Businsky, trumpet

Sir Charles Villiers Stanford: Ye choirs of new Jerusalem, Op. 123
Worcester Cathedral Choir, Donald Hunt
Paul Trepte, organ

Stanford completed Ye choirs of New Jerusalem in 1910. The text comes from the Latin hymn written

by Fulbert of Chartres (952-1028). Fortunatus, Venantius Honorius Clementianus (ca. 540-ca. 600) wrote the text for "Welcome, happy morning" as well as for "Vexilla Regis prodeunt" and "Pange lingua, gloriosi praelium certaminis."

Herbert Howells: Te Deum
Choir of St. John's, Elora, Noel Edison
Paul Halley, organ

Maurice Duruflé: Fugue on the Theme of the Carillon of Hours of the Cathedral of Soissons
Todd Wilson, organ
Schudi organ, Saint Thomas Aquinas, Dallas, Texas

English composer Herbert Howells wrote his Collegium Regale setting of the Morning canticles for King's College, Cambridge in 1941. The Dean of York, Eric Milner-White, had been Dean of King's from 1919-1941 and had challenged Howells with the suggestion "that he might be the man to revitalize English church music composition." Howell's grand setting of the Jubilate and Te Deum was the composer's response to that challenge. ABOUT the Duruflé, William McVicker writes: "The Fugue sur le thème du Carillon des Heures de la Cathédrale de Soissons, Op 12, is dedicated to Canon Henri Doyen, organist of the Cathedral at Soissons, and the descending eight-note theme is taken from the carillon there. Duruflé, the contrapuntal craftsman, uses the theme in inversion, augmentation and stretto, by which time the joyful carillon has infused the entire toccata-like texture and the fugue comes to an end in A minor with a series of crashing chords."

J.S. Bach: Cantata 31, "Der Himmel lacht, die Erde jubilieret"
Bach Collegium Japan, Masaaki Suzuki
Monika Frimmer, soprano; Gerd Turk, tenor; Peter Kooy, bass

The German translates as: "The heavens laugh, the earth rejoices." This cantata was composed while Bach was at Weimar. First performed in 1714, the cantata was presented again in 1724 and 1731. In addition to three trumpets, tympani and three oboes, the score calls for the use of a taille, which is an alto oboe which Bach used to double the viola part.

W.A. Mozart: Mass No. 14 in C, K. 317 "Coronation"
Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra & Chorus, Eugen Jochum
Edda Moser, soprano; Julia Hamari, mezzo-soprano;
Nicolai Gedda, tenor; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone

Mozart's Coronation Mass was first performed in Salzburg Cathedral on Easter Day in 1779. The sub-title probably comes from the use of this mass at the coronation of Emperor Leopold II or his successor Emperor Franz. Having Nicolai Gedda and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau on the same Mozart recording is simply sublime.

Marcel Dupré: Prelude and Fugue in B, Op. 7 No. 1
Haig Mardirosian, organ
Dobson organ at Sykes Chapel, University of Tampa, Florida

French organist Marcel Dupre (1886-1971) gave over 2,000 recitals worldwide during his lifetime.

Hector Berlioz: Te Deum, Op. 22

European Community Youth Orchestra; London Symphony Chorus; London Philharmonic Choir
Claudio Abbado
Francisco Araiza, tenor; Martin Haselbock, organ

Over 900 musicians gave the first performance of Hector Berlioz' Te Deum at St. Eustache, Paris in 1855. He wrote it to honor Napoleon Bonaparte but ended up dedicating it to Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's consort.

Dietrich Buxtehude: Toccata in D minor, BuxWV 155
Brenda Lynne Leach, organ
Berghaus organ in St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

Danish organist Dietrich Buxtehude influenced countless young organists including Johann Sebastian Bach and George Frideric Handel with both his compositions and his career path..

J.S. Bach: Easter Oratorio, BWV 249
Taverner Consort & Players, Andrew Parrott
Emily Van Evera, soprano; Caroline Trevor, alto;
Charles Daniels, tenor; Peter Kooy, baritone

What we know as the Easter Oratorio began as a cantata for Easter Day 1725. Bach gave it the title Easter Oratorio when he revised the work in 1735. He further revised the oratorio in 1740. This is the version on our playlist.

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina: The strife is o'er, the battle done
Choir of Saint Paul's Parish, K Street, Jeffrey Smith
Bruce Neswick, organ

The tune Victory to which this ancient hymn-text is sung is based on a Magnificat composed by Giovanni Luigi da Palestrina. W. H. Monk composed the Alleluya refrain.