

# Great Sacred Music

## Sunday, December 5, 2021

Gregorian chant, 11th century: Alma redemptoris mater  
Chor Leoni, Diane Loomer

Pierre Villette: Hymne à La Vierge  
Choir of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, Geoffrey Webber

Gerre Hancock: Magnificat  
Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys, Jeremy Filsell  
Nicholas Quardokus, organ

The Latin of this Marian antiphon translates as “Loving Mother of the Redeemer.” French composer Pierre Villette (1926-1998) was a student of Maurice Durufle. Dr. Gerre Hancock (1934-2012) was Organist and Director of Music at St. Thomas Church, New York from 1971-2004. He studied with Nadia Boulanger, Jean Langlais, and Marie-Claire Alain.

Justin Merritt: Corde natus ex parentis  
St. Olaf Choir; Nidaros Cathedral Girls' Choir, Anton Armstrong and Anita Brevik

Anton Bruckner: Virga Jesse  
RIAS Chamber Choir, Hans-Christoph Rademann  
The RIAS Chamber Choir is a German ensemble affiliated with the Berlin Radio Orchestra.

Louis Claude Daquin: Noel Suisse (Noel No. 12, Swiss Carol for Organ)  
Christopher Herrick, organ  
1739 Parizot-1992 Dupont organ in the Church of St. Remy de Dieppe, France

American composer Justin Merritt (1975-) is a Professor of Music at St. Olaf College. We think of Anton Bruckner as the composer of great symphonies. But he got his start as a church musician during which time he wrote several fine liturgical motets and anthems. 18th-century French organists used to improvise of popular carols before Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve.

Commentary: The Rev. Mindy Douglas

Sir John Stainer: God so loved the world from The Crucifixion  
St. Paul's Cathedral Choir, London, John Scott

Adrian Willaert: Mirabile mysterium  
Fortuna, Patricia Petersen

Traditional, arr. Graham Ross: O Come, O Come Emmanuel  
Choir of Clare College, Cambridge, Graham Ross  
Nicolas Haigh, organ

“God so loved the world” is a chorus for SATB which is found in Sir John Stainer’s 1887 oratorio “The

Crucifixion." Adrian Willaert (c. 1490-1562) was a Flemish composer who spent much of his career in Italy. John Mason Neale translated the 12th-century Latin antiphon "Veni, veni, Emmanuel" in 1851.

Ivo Antognini: Christe, Redemptor omnium

Choral Scholars of University College Dublin; Irish Chamber Orchestra, Desmond Earley

Louis Claude Daquin: Noel No. 8, "Noël étranger, sur les jeux d'anches sans tremblant et en duo"

Michel Chapuis, organ

1710 Silbermann organ in the Abbey Church of Marmoutier, France

Ivo Antognini, a choral composer and jazz pianist, was born in Locarno, Switzerland, in 1963. French organist Michel Chapuis (1930-2017) was noted for his performances of French Baroque music.

J.S. Bach: Cantata 70, "Wachet! betet! betet! wachet!"

Holland Boys' Choir; Netherlands Bach Collegium, Pieter Jan Leusink

Ruth Holton, soprano; Sytse Buwalde, alto; Knut Schoch, tenor; Bas Ramselaar, bass

This cantata was composed for the 2nd Sunday in Advent. The original cantata was lost. This is a reconstruction of BWV 70a using the movements of BWV 70 which scholars have surmised that Bach would have used.

Traditional: Selections from Vigil of the Nativity of Christ

Russian Patriarchate Choir, Anatoly Grindenko

The Russian Patriarchate Choir of Moscow was founded by Anatoly Grindenko in Trotse-Sergieva Lavra in 1983.

Leo Sowerby: Fantasy for Flute Stops

Catharine Crozier, organ

Aeolian-skinner Organ in Saint John's Chapel of the Groton School, Groton, Massachusetts

Catharine Crozier (1914-2003) was one of the great virtuoso organists of the latter part of the 20th century.

Marc-Antoine Charpentier: In Navitatem Domini Canticum, H416

Les Arts Florissants, William Christie

Buffalo, New York native William Christie (1944-) is the founder of the renowned French ensemble, Les Arts Florissants.

J.S. Bach: Magnificat in D, BWV 243

Taverner Consort & Players, Andrew Parrott

Emily Van Evera, soprano I; Evelyn Tubb, soprano II

Caroline Trevor, alto; Howard Crook, tenor; Simon Grant, bass

Bach's Magnificat was first performed at Vespers on Christmas Day in 1723 in Leipzig. The work consists of 12 movements and is considered to be one of the finest compositions written by the master.

George Frideric Handel: Chandos Anthem No. 10, "The Lord is my light"  
Choir of King's College, Cambridge; Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Sir David Willcocks  
April Cantelo, soprano; Ian Partridge, tenor; Andrew Davis, organ continuo

Handel wrote the eleven Chandos anthems whilst in the employ of James, Duke of Chandos from 1717-1719. Some musicologists have opined that these anthems were in fact sketches for much larger works Handel would compose later on.

Heinrich Schutz: Magnificat, with Christmas interpolations  
Gabieli Consort and Players/Boys Choir & Congregational Choir of Roskilde Cathedral, Paul  
McCreesh, director

Matthew Westphal writes: "Heinrich Schütz's Christmas Story, besides being a historical milestone, has always been one of 17th-century music's crowd-pleasers--the former because it's the ancestor of Christmas oratorios by Bach, Charpentier, and even Berlioz; the latter because it presents engaging depictions of the characters in the Nativity story with a cornucopia of colorful instruments (piping recorders for the shepherds, a galumphing bassoon (representing the gait of the camels?) for the three wise men, regally blaring cornets for King Herod, and pompous trombones for his priests). As you might expect, there are a number of fine recordings of this proto-oratorio, from the graceful and somewhat delicate rendition of René Jacobs to the high-energy performance of Robert King. As usual, Paul McCreesh goes where no one has gone before, showing us the context for which Schütz probably wrote the work in the first place: a Christmas Day Vespers service at the court in Dresden where the composer was chapel master. McCreesh's reconstruction includes thrilling performances of two Christmas hymns (with tunes by Luther himself), organ music by Scheidt, a psalm from Schütz's collection *Psalmen Davids*, a delicate motet for four soloists, and (in an electrifying reading) a lavish multiple-choir Magnificat. Alongside all these, McCreesh's rendition of the Christmas Story seems--well, not lackluster, exactly (it's very skillfully done, and Susan Hemington Jones as the Angel is a particular treat), but a bit less inspired than the rest of the program. So if that one work is all you care about, you may want to consider the Jacobs or King versions; otherwise, this disc won't disappoint--it's as exciting a Christmas record as you'll find."