

Great Sacred Music

Sunday, December 12, 2021

Traditional: O come, o come Emmanuel
Choir of King's College, Cambridge, Philip Ledger
Adrian Partington, organ

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina: Rorate coeli desuper
Voices of Ascension, Dennis Keene

Anonymous 18th century melody, arr. Philip Ledger: Lo! he comes with clouds descending
Choir of King's College, Cambridge

English scholar John Mason Neale translated the Latin text of "O come, o come, Emmanuel" which he found in Thesaurus Hymnologicus. "Rorate caeli" (Drop down ye heavens) is an antiphon for the Fourth Sunday of Advent. Philip Ledger was Organist and Director of Music at King's College, Cambridge from 1974 to 1982.

Commentary: Thomas Nutt-Powell

Robert Lowry: How can I keep from singing?
St. Paul's Cathedral Choir, John Scott

Charles Wood: O Thou the central orb
Guildford Cathedral Choir, Andrew Millington
Peter Wright, organ

from the Salisbury Psalmodie: Veni, Redemptor gentium
Tallis Scholars, Peter Phillips

Robert Lowry composed the tune for "How can I keep from singing" in 1869. The lyrics for Charles Wood's "O Thou the central orb" are taken from a sonnet written by English poet Henry Ramsden Bramley's (1833-1917) sonnet of the same name. The author of "Veni, Redemptor gentium" (Come, Savior of the Gentiles), Ambrose (340-397) was one of the great Latin church fathers of the Church.

Traditional: On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry
Choir of Wells Cathedral, Malcolm Archer
Rupert Gough, organ

Orlando Gibbons: See, see, the word is incarnate
University of California Berkeley Chamber Chorus; Berkeley Festival Consort of Viols, John Butt
Jeffrey Thomas, tenor

The text for "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry" was written by Charles Coffin (1676-1749). Godfrey Goodman wrote the text for "See, see, the word incarnate, an anthem Orlando Gibbons composed for SSAATB voices.

Giaches de Wert: Vox in Rama
Pomerium, Alexander Blachly

Franz Schubert: Ave Maria, D. 839
Anne Sofie von Otter, mezzo-soprano; Bengt Forsberg, piano

J.S. Bach: Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 660
Matthew Dirst, organ
C.B. Fisk organ, Opus 85, in Memorial Church, Stanford University, Stanford, California

Much of the music of Flemish-born composer Giaches de Wert (1535-96, pronounced Geeack de Vehut) is largely unknown. Schubert's much-loved "Ave Maria" is one of seven songs from a setting of Sir Walter Scott's poem "The Lady of the Lake." Johann Sebastian Bach composed three versions of this Advent chorale tune. This one is a trio.

J.S. Bach: Magnificat in D, BWV 243
Bach Choir of Bethlehem, Greg Funfgeld
Julia Doyle and Rosa Lamoreaux, soprano; Daniel Taylor, countertenor
Benjamin Butterfield, tenor; Daniel Lichti, bass-baritone

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.

Josef Haydn: Missa "Rorate coeli desuper"
Choir of Christ Church Cathedral Oxford; Academy of Ancient Music, Simon Preston

Austrian composer Josef Haydn wrote this mass when he was a teenager. The voice parts sing different lines of the text simultaneously. This telescoping of the text creates a short, compact mass setting.

George Frideric Handel: Organ Concerto No. 14 in A
Concerto Amsterdam, Jaap Schroder
Daniel Chorzempa, organ
18th-century organ of the Old Catholic Church of St. Anne and St. Mary, Haarlem, the Netherlands

Handel's Organ Concerto No. 14 in A was composed most likely in 1739 and probably was performed during a performance of the ode Alexander's Feast.

Various: Evensong for Advent
Choir of King's College, Cambridge, Sir Stephen Cleobury
James Vivian, organ; Robert Quinney, organ

The Choir of King's College, Cambridge, offers Evensong for Advent as it is sung in the College Chapel.

Anonymous: Intonent hodie; Exultemus et letemur; Gaudens in domino; Seint Nicholas was borne in teh citee of Patras from Legends of St. Nicholas
Anonymous 4

Susan Hellauer writes: "Traditions of St. Nicholas Day (6 December) such as feasting, the giving of gifts and St. Nicholas cookies, survived and were brought with 17th-century Dutch settlers to New York City (then New Amsterdam). During the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, New Yorkers of English extraction needed a patron saint to counteract the British St. George. They looked to the St. Nicholas (or Sinter Klaas) traditions of their Dutch antecedents for inspiration and created Santa Claus."

Louis Claude Daquin: Noel No. 11, "en recit, en taille et en duo"
Michel Chapuis, organ
1710 Silbermann organ in the Abbey Church of Marmoutier, France

French Baroque organists entertained the congregation before Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve with improvisations on popular carols or Noels.

Pierre Moulu: Missa Missus est Gabriel angelus
Brabant Ensemble, Stephen Rice

Stephen Rice writes: "Missa Missus est Gabriel angelus perhaps represents Moulu's finest achievement in terms of purely musical expression. Pierre de Ronsard in the introduction to his *Livre de mellanges* of 1560 described Moulu as a disciple of Josquin."

Rupert Lang: Magnificat
Chor Leoni Men's Choir, Diane Loomer
Mariateresa Magisano, mezzo-soprano

Canadian musician Rupert Lang has been organist and choirmaster of Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver, British Columbia since 1986.