

Great Sacred Music

Sunday, May 15, 2022

Paul Halley: Christe, qui lux es et dies

Woodley Ensemble, Robert Lehman

Martin Luther: Psalm 46

Choir of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, John Scott

Andrew Lucas, organ

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina: Salve Regina

The Studio of Ancient Music of Montreal, Christopher Jackson

Paul Halley, English-born Canadian composer, pianist and organist was born in 1952.

He and Rob Kennedy both studied organ with Gerald Wheeler in Montreal. This setting of Psalm 46 uses a paraphrase of Martin Luther's magnificent hymn "A mighty fortress is our God." The Studio of Ancient Music of Montreal was founded in 1974.

Traditional English, arr. John Rutter: All things bright and beautiful

Cambridge Singers; City of London Sinfonia, John Rutter

Words by Cecil Frances Alexander

Johann Pachelbel: Toccata in E minor

Marilyn Mason, organ

Fisk Organ, Opus 87, "The Marilyn Mason Organ" at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

English composer John Rutter (1945-) is highly regarded for the beautiful melodies

he composes. Dr. Marilyn Mason (1925-2019) was Professor of Organ at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Commentary: Dr. Susan Treacy

Gregorian Chant: Ave maris stella

Dominican Sisters of Mary Mother of the Eucharist

Giovanni Felice Sances: Ave maris stella

Duke Vespers Ensemble; Mallarme Chamber Players, Brian Schmidt

Julianna Emanski, soprano; Elizabeth Knight, alto; Christopher Jacobson, organ

Owain Park: Ave maris stella

Choir of Trinity College, Cambridge, Stephen Layton

The Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist are based in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Giovanni Felice Sances (1600-1679) was an Italian composer and singer. Owain Park is a

British choral composer and conductor, born in Bristol in 1993.

Herbert Sumsion: They that go down to the sea in ships

Worcester Cathedral Choir, Donald Hunt

Adrian Partington, organ

Jacques-Denis Thomelin: Hymne Ave Maris Stella

Jean-Baptiste Robin, organ

Thomelin (c1640 - 1693)

J.S. Bach: Cantata 166, "Wo gehest du hin?"

Leonhardt Consort; Tolzer Knabenchor; Collegium Vocale Gent, Gustav Leonhardt

Christoph Wegmann, soprano; Paul Esswood, countertenor  
Kurt Equiluz, tenor; Max van Egmond, bass

The German translates as "Where are you heading?" This was composed for Cantate,  
the fourth Sunday after Easter, and first performed on 7 May 1724.

Henry Purcell: Awake and with Attention Hear  
Tolzer Knabenchor, Gustav Leonhardt  
Peter Kooy, bass

Robert King writes: "Awake, and with attention hear is one of  
two settings Purcell made of poems by Abraham Cowley. Cowley (1618-1667)  
was the leading English poet of his time, a notable character (briefly  
imprisoned on suspicion of being a spy) and was responsible for introducing  
the irregular Pindaric Ode form which was later taken up by Dryden and others.  
Like Purcell, his talent was obvious at an early age, for his first poem was  
written when he was only ten years old. Cowley's writing was much admired:  
Charles II said at his death 'that Mr Cowley had not left a better man behind  
him in England', and the poet was buried in Westminster Abbey. Purcell  
clearly enjoyed setting Cowley's graphically descriptive, classical ode,  
full of bloodthirsty sentiments, and the result is a striking composition  
on a first-rate piece of poetry. Purcell's astonishing music alternates  
between sections of semi-recitative and arioso; everywhere word-painting abounds.  
The opening is dramatic. The 'drowsy world' is commanded to listen as the  
'loud prophet' brings his message. The two poles are to 'suppress their stormy  
noise' – even the raging sea is miraculously calmed. A 'dreadful host of  
judgements' rises inexorably up the chromatic scale to 'scourge the rebel  
world', marching around in a winding melisma: the sword of God wreaks its  
dreadful revenge ('from it streams a dismal ray' is especially blue in its

harmonic colouring), copious amounts of blood are spilled and eventually nothing but bones are left. In the first section of arioso it is calmly announced that a sacrifice will be prepared by God, not of animals, but of mankind.

In a momentous section we hear that mankind will violently fall, and even 'Nature and Time shall both be slain': the 'wide-stretched scroll of heaven' will burn and the sun will 'headlong into the sea descend'. In a dolorous minor section, we hear that the few people who remain will be poisoned by the debris. Purcell's genius for setting words rarely was given such graphic material!

The 'destroying angel' rhythmically struts his territory in a short section of arioso, surveying his chosen ground before an even more desolate scene of destruction is outlined, with serpents rolling in the streets, wolves howling, and the 'wing'd ill omens of the air' living in the 'gilt chambers' of mankind; even the leopard 'does not stay'. Unburied ghosts 'sadly moan' and satyrs cackle horribly at their groaning discomfort. To complete the destruction, evil spirits angularly 'dance and revel in the mask of night'. Mankind's folly has ensured that the world has been turned topsy-turvy."

Ralph Vaughan Williams: Flos Campi

Corydon Singers w/the English Chamber Orchestra, Matthew Best

Nobuka Imai, viola

English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams composer "Flos Campi" (Flower of the field) in 1925 for strings, solo viola and wordless chorus.

Annibale Padovano: Mass for 24 Voices

Huelgas Ensemble, Paul Van Nevel

Venetian composer Annibale Padovano (1527-1575) was organist of Saint Mark's, Venice

from 1572-1565 after which he was the director of music for the Hapsburg Court in Graz, Austria.

George Frideric Handel: Silete venti

English Baroque Soloists, Sir John Eliot Gardiner

Sylvia McNair, soprano

Greg Murray notes: "Silete venti was composed in London during the 1720s, some of its musical material being shared with the oratorio Esther, a Chandos Anthem and one of the B flat organ concertos."

Josef Haydn: Missa Solemnis

Collegium Cantorum St. Gallen; Southwest German Philharmonic, Constance Mario Schwarz

Judith Graf, soprano; Ingrid Alexandre, alto;

Lukas Albrecht, tenor; Michael Haag, bass

Haydn's Heiligmesse or Missa Solemnis in B flat dates from 1796

Charles-Marie Widor: Andante sostenuto from Symphonie Gothique (No. 9) in C minor, Op. 70

Jean-Willy Kunz, organ

Casavant Opus 3900, Grand Orgue Pierre-Béique in the Maison symphonique de Montreal.

Kunz is the Montreal Symphony Orchestra's organist in residence.