

Great Sacred Music

Sunday, January 9, 2022

Conrad Kocher, arr. by David Willcocks: As with gladness men of old
Choir of King's College, Cambridge, Sir David Willcocks
Ian Hare, organ
Text: W. Chatterton Dix Tune: Dix by Conrad Kocher (1786-1872)

Thomas Tallis: Te lucis ante terminum
Magnificat, Philip Cave

Giovanni Gabrieli: O Domine Jesu Christe
Choir of Westminster Abbey, Martin Neary
Martin Baker, organ

The text for the hymn "As with gladness men of old" was written by William Chatterton Dix (1837-1998). From Linnrecords.com: "Magnificat was formed in 1991 by its conductor, Philip Cave, to explore the rich diversity of choral music from the last five centuries. The ensemble specialises in the restoration and performance of neglected choral masterpieces of the 16th and 17th centuries." Giovanni Gabrieli (1557-1612) scored his motet for 8 voices. The Latin translates as "O Lord, Jesus Christ"

John Rutter: O Lord, how manifold are thy works from The Gift of Life, Six Canticles of Creation
The Cambridge Singers; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, John Rutter

Herbert Howells: Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks
Choir of St. Paul's Cathedral, John Scott
Christopher Dearnley, organ

John Rutter writes: "The Gift of Life is a six-movement choral celebration of the living earth, of creation, and of life itself, offering a kaleidoscope of moods from contemplative and prayerful to majestic and inspirational." Herbert Howells wrote his ravishing setting of Psalm 42 "Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks" in one day on January 8, 1941.

Commentary: Alan McLellan

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

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina: Lucis Creator optime
Choir of Clare College, Cambridge, Timothy Brown

German composer Peter Cornelius published Weihnachtslieder, Op.8 in 1856. It consist of six songs of which "Die Konig" or "The Three Kings" is the most popular. This ancient hymn is attributed to Pope Gregory the Great (540-604) and is used at Vespers for Sundays after Epiphany. The Latin translates as "O blest Creator of the Light."

Gabriel Faure: Cantique de Jean Racine, Op. 11
Choir of St. John's College, Cambridge, George Guest
Sir Stephen Cleobury, organ

Olivier Messiaen: O sacrum convivium
BBC Singers, Sir Stephen Cleobury

Juan Bautista Cabanilles: Tiento X (tercer tono)
Jose Suarez, organ
18th-century organ in the convent of San Geronimo in Tlacoahuaya, Mexico

French composer Gabriel Urbain Fauré composed his Cantique de Jean Racine in 1864-65 at age 19. Olivier Messiaen composed his setting of "O sacrum convivium" ("O sacred feast") in 1937. It is the only work he wrote for use in the Roman Catholic liturgy. After the Spanish conquered the Aztecs in the 16th century, they imposed the Roman Catholic religion on the natives. This process included the building of churches replete with pipe organs. At first, some instruments were brought over from Spain. Eventually local craftsmen learned how to build instruments, of which this early 18th-century organ is an example.

J.S. Bach: Cantata 154, "Mein liebster Jesus ist verloren"
Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra and Choir, Ton Koopman
Bernhard Landauer, alto; Christoph Pregardien, tenor; Klaus Mertens, bass

This cantata for the first Sunday after the Feast of the Epiphany was first performed on Sunday, January 9, 1724 in Leipzig. According to Simon Crouch, "This short but impressive cantata starts with an impassioned tenor aria in which the soul bemoans the loss of Jesus. According to Robertson, you may wish to listen carefully for a pre-echo of the sword motif from Wagner's Ring hidden between the final sentences of this aria!" The German translates as "My dearest Jesus is lost."

Antonio Vivaldi: Confitebor tibi, Domine, RV 596
The King's Consort, Robert King
Jean Rigby, contralto; Charles Daniels, tenor; Neal Davies, bass

Italian Baroque composer Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741) set Psalm 110 and scored it for three voices - alto, tenor, and bass.

Gregorian chant: Mass VIII: De Angelis
Benedictine Monks of Santo Domingo De Silos

Benedictine Monks of Santo Domingo De Silos in Spain gained great fame back in the 90s when this CD went triple platinum in CD sales. No mean achievement for an obscure genre of church music.

Michelangelo Falvetti: Nabucco
Cappella Mediterranea; Namur Chamber Choir, Leonardo Garcia Alarcon

From the Cappella Mediterranea's website: "Heralding Giuseppe Verdi's first masterpiece written 130 years later, Falvetti's Nabucco is halfway between a historical oratorio and a drama per musica. One of its great figures is the King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar who invades Babylon and deports its population. One could read this Nabucco as a political tool of the Sicilians' resistance to Spanish

oppression."

Jean-Baptiste Lully: Te Deum
Le Concert Spirituel, Herve Niquet

Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632-1687) was actually born as Giovanni Battista Lulli, a native of Florence. He spent most of his life and career in the employ of King Louis XIV of France.

W.A. Mozart: Church Sonata in F, K. 224
Amsterdam Mozart Players, Peter Hurford, organ
1976 K. B. Blank organ in Bethlehemkerk, Papendrecht, Holland

Mozart's church sonatas are short works for organ and strings written to be played between the reading of the Epistle and Gospel during the Mass.