
THE JOURNAL

of the ASSOCIATION OF ANGLICAN MUSICIANS



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AAM: SERVING THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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HEALEY WILLAN: FIFTY YEARS LATER

The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Death of Healey Willan (1880–1968)

RUBEN VALENZUELA

Marking the anniversary of a composer's birth or death offers opportunities to celebrate his or her work and to promote an interest in the composer's life and legacy.¹ 2018 marks the fiftieth anniversary of Healey Willan's death, providing the impetus to explore his vast musical output and to examine his distinguished career as a composer, teacher, and church musician. Importantly, 2018 also marks the last major anniversary in which persons directly associated with Willan remain available to offer first-hand accounts of his life. These persons include his daughter Mary Willan Mason, his long-time assistant and Ritual Choir cantor Albert Mahon, and his immediate successors at St. Mary Magdalene's, Giles Bryant and Robert Hunter Bell.

Two noteworthy observances of this anniversary are underway. The first is organized by the Healey Willan Society, based at St. John Cantius Church (R.C.) in Chicago. This organization, led by the Rev'd Scott A. Haynes (a priest of the Canons Regular of St. John Cantius) with the support of Mary Willan Mason, manages Willan's musical estate and aims to foster his vast musical legacy.² A principal goal of the Society is to put back into print as many of Willan's liturgical works as possible through the publisher Biretta Books, which also publishes the works of living composers. The Society also seeks to promote collaborative efforts between musicians and musical organizations to perform Willan's larger works; to administer the newly launched website HealeyWillan.com; to create and maintain an online catalog to facilitate the study, performance, and recording of Willan's works; and to offer general opportunities to promote and support performances of Willan's music. The Society has several events planned, including a recent anniversary concert celebrating the musical and personal connections between contemporaries Healey Willan and Ralph Vaughan Williams.³ This concert featured Willan's *Lady Motets (I Beheld Her, Beautiful as a Dove; Fair in Face; and Rise up, my Love, My Fair One)*, and the anthem *In the Heavenly Kingdom*, in addition to Vaughan Williams' *The Pilgrim's Progress, Five Mystical Songs*, and other works.

One other noteworthy observance is currently underway in San Diego, California, appropriately titled *Willan West: A Southern California Celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Death of Anglo-Canadian Composer Healey Willan*.⁴ Willan West is in residence for a year at the Anglo-Catholic parish of All Saints', San Diego; my colleague Angel Mannion and I are collaborating in the leadership of this endeavor. The series offers monthly opportunities to hear Willan's choral music in liturgical

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The deadline for submissions is the tenth day of the month preceding the month of publication. All submitted material is subject to editorial selection, correction, and condensation for reasons of clarity, style, and space. The contents of an article or letter do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Association or of the Editor.

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From the President



Dear Friends,

I don't know about you but for me, once Holy Week and Easter Day are over, summer starts to loom on the distant horizon, and with it the advent of that welcome and necessary time of refreshment and renewal. Soon, many of us will share laughter and good cheer at our Conference in San Antonio or when we take well-deserved time off to recharge with family or friends. To say that this season of rest and renewal is essential would be an understatement, for, at the end of the season, we are drained and have nothing left to give. The hashtag #RunningOnEmpty springs to mind. This welcome down time is truly vital if we are to be ready for fall. Joy and laughter are indeed the healers and renewers as we spend time recharging.

Laughter is, of course, not restricted to a specific season and is a welcome healer and renewer year-round. The older I get, the more I realize that humor plays a crucial role in my professional life. No, I'm not talking about being a comic—the funny guy, where everything is made into a joke. I've seen young teachers try to espouse that role only to fall flat on their faces when they actually need their students to take them seriously. No, I'm talking about humor: about making people smile, making them laugh, even making them LOL. It's such a powerful tool for connecting with folks and drawing them in. And isn't that exactly what we as directors, teachers, preachers, or leaders are trying to do?

When I was younger, I was often accused of taking myself way too seriously. And with good reason: I did! I was so concerned that everything should be just right, be completely accurate...be "perfect" in fact (whatever that is). I wasn't able to relax into humor for fear it might sabotage my authority or waste valuable rehearsal time. (From first appearances, you might be forgiven for assuming this still to be the case, but I promise, it's not.) As I've mellowed with age, I find that injecting humor into whatever context I am involved in is so helpful. Whether I am joking with my third and fourth graders in Junior Choir or my adults in Temple Choir, it is equally efficacious and bonding.

When people laugh, they are drawn more fully into whatever they are doing. They are engaged. They are having fun—enjoying themselves. Thus, in my multi-job career (picking up from Stephen Leist's lead article last month about the part-time musician), I find that it's always helpful to have something funny to say in any rehearsal I take or lecture I give. Moreover, when we become angry, I would be so bold as to say that humor becomes even more important. It can diffuse and transform a situation quickly, turning things around to a positive vein. Sadly, the opposite is true. Anger and temper tantrums rarely lead to good music making. I'll never forget a friend stomping angrily out of Mass, replete with slammed sacristy door, when there had been a train wreck in the *Sanctus*. Imagine how foolish he looked slinking back in for

the *Agnus Dei* moments later. Letting it go with a brief look of disappointment followed by a reassuring smile would have been so much more effective.

A short story from my parish illustrates the power of laughter perfectly. At our Annual Meeting in 2017, we were faced with a difficult agenda. We had to deal with passing a budget that involved a large deficit. It was obviously a challenging topic—the elephant in the room, in fact. No one was looking forward to it, but it was something we just couldn't avoid. Our new Rector injected humor into the meeting. He had us laughing. Several times, in fact. By the time we got to the budget, people were able to take the news on board with good humor, pass the budget, and strategize about how to reduce the deficit. He galvanized us into leaving that meeting in excellent spirits, determined to fix our deficit. And we've been quite successful since.

The power of laughter has been acknowledged since time immemorial and the available quotations are way too many to number. The writer of Ecclesiastes hit the nail on the head in Chapter 8, Verse 15, when he remarked "Then I commend mirth." French writer Victor Hugo also realized its importance, stating: "Laughter is the sun that drives winter from the human face," while Chilean poet Pablo Neruda gets his priorities right in *Your Laughter*: "Take bread away from me, if you wish, take air away, but do not take from me your laughter." Shakespeare, of course, has plenty to say. The Duke of Venice in *Othello* makes my point better than ever I could when he states: "The robbed that smiles, steals something from the thief," excellent advice when receiving critical feedback or unwanted commentary. However, my favorite is from *The Merchant of Venice*, where Venetian nobleman Gratiano exclaims, "With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come," perhaps because it's most relevant to me!

By the time I write again, the June 1 deadline for the next round of grant applications will have passed. The Board will consider these at its meeting in San Antonio prior to the Conference. It has doubled the amount of funding available from \$7,500 to \$15,000. I'm sad to report that we received no applications during the first quarter of the year, so \$15,000 is still available to be disbursed. Do please spread the word. Go to the grants page on the website: www.anglicanmusicians.org/grants/ for further information. Grants are not just for AAM members, incidentally. Other groups or individuals can apply. I extend a welcome to our two newest members of the group that considers applications—AAM's Endowment committee—Robert McCormick and Bonnie Linder, and my thanks to Clara Godshall for stepping into the chair position. They are all waiting to hear from you. Please don't disappoint them.

It is also still not too late to register for this summer's San Antonio Conference, "I was glad when they said unto me: Let us go into the House of the Lord." Full details can be found on the Conference website: www.conference.anglicanmusicians.org. Please do consider joining us. While the deadline for Conference Scholarships has officially passed, funding is still available. Please see the announcement in this issue for what is offered and how to apply. I particularly encourage you to do this if you were affected by the natural disasters that hit the country this past fall, because the Board has made extra funds available to assist with registrations precisely for this purpose.

This is also the last time I shall email my column to our current *Journal* editor, Mark Howe. I want to take a moment to thank Mark profoundly for the stellar job he has done editing the *Journal* these last three years. Having preceded him in the position, I can attest only too well to just how much work is involved each month. It has truly been a pleasure having the *Journal* in such safe and capable hands and I send our deepest thanks and best wishes for a well-deserved break from the monthly routine.

Sincere thanks as well to Stephen Tappe, Margaret Secour, and Timothy Krueger for their service to the *Journal*, all of whom rotate off the Editorial Board this summer. This summer also brings changes to AAM's Professional Concerns and Development Committee. Members Bruce Barber and Geoff Butcher will rotate off and I extend my sincere thanks to both of them for their service in this important ministry.

Whatever you do this summer, I send my best wishes for relaxation, renewal, and laughter. For the joy of time spent with family and friends. For the laying down of the load of professional responsibilities—even if for a short time—so that you can recharge and renew and be ready for all the fall has to bring.

Best wishes,



Paul

2018 AAM Conference Scholarships

CONFERENCE SCHOLARSHIPS

The Association has a variety of scholarships available for the San Antonio Conference, each for up to \$500 to cover the cost of early registration. These are awarded at the discretion of the President.

NATURAL DISASTER HARDSHIP SCHOLARSHIPS

The Board will cover half the cost (\$250) of early registration for the San Antonio Conference for any AAM members experiencing hardship due to one of the three natural disasters that occurred this past fall: Hurricane Harvey in Texas, Hurricane Irma in Florida, and the Northern California Santa Rosa fires. In your letter of application, please outline how you have been impacted by one of these disasters. This funding is made possible by the surplus from the 2017 Winchester Conference.

To apply for either type of scholarship, please send a letter or email of application to:

Dr. Paul Ellison (pellison@anglicanmusicians.org)
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All applications will be kept confidential.

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HEALEY WILLAN: FIFTY YEARS LATER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

context through Masses and Evensongs, as well as occasional symposia in connection with particular events. These monthly liturgies are sung by an *ad hoc* choir called the Willan Collective, which brings together professional choral musicians from San Diego and the wider Southern California community.

Though portions of Willan's music are well known, much of the repertoire specifically composed for the Gallery Choir of St. Mary Magdalene remains relatively obscure. Over the course of 2018, Willan West will be performing Willan's fourteen *Missae breves*, his lesser-known motets and anthems, the *Tenebrae Responsories*, the *Reproaches*, fauxbourdon canticles, and hymns. Additionally, two concerts of his larger choral works will include *An Apostrophe to the Heavenly Host* and *Gloria Deo per immensa saecula*, sung in collaboration with the concert choir of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Most importantly, this series provides an opportunity to hear Willan's choral music in the context for which it was composed, within the fullness and richness of the Anglo-Catholic tradition. Willan West is also working on a new documentary that will focus on his life and music through firsthand accounts from individuals closely associated with Willan. This past February, a colleague and I spent a week in Toronto leading a first round of interviews with key individuals, including Mary Willan Mason, the Rev'd Canon David Harrison (Rector of St. Mary Magdalene), the Rev'd Canon Harold Nahabedian (former Rector of St. Mary Magdalene), Robert Hunter Bell, Giles Bryant, and Albert Mahon. In addition to this series of interviews, there was an opportunity to peruse and photograph important Willan artifacts contained in the archives of St. Mary Magdalene. This documentary will be an additional resource for those interested in Willan's life, and will serve as a companion to the 1959 documentary on Willan, *Man of Music*, produced by Roger Blais and the National Film Board of Canada.

The parish and choirs of St. Mary Magdalene will also highlight Willan's music throughout 2018, under current Director of Music and Organist, Andrew Adair. This past February 16, exactly fifty years after Willan's death, the combined choirs of St. Mary Magdalene and St. Thomas, Huron Street performed a concert titled *Willan 50*, under the direction of Matthew Larkin, with Giles Bryant as Master of Ceremonies. The program included *I Looked, and Behold a White Cloud* op. 344, and *Gloria Deo per immensa saecula*, among other works. For this special occasion, the parish archive displayed Willan-related materials including service leaflets, recital programs, pictures, music, and correspondence.

LEGACY

Willan left an indelible mark as a composer and church musician, with an influence felt well beyond his most beloved works—the *Introduction, Passacaglia, and Fugue*, the motet *Rise Up, My Love, My Fair One*, and the ubiquitous *Missa de Sancta Maria Magdalena*. Simply put, Willan was a liturgical

musician *par excellence*, possessing all of the requirements of an Anglican choirmaster resulting from his natural gifts and formative musical experiences. His early years included his regular and close associations with notable Tractarian parishes, among them St. Saviour's Church, St. Albans; St. John the Baptist, London; and All Saints' Margaret Street, London, where he regularly deputized as organist. Additional musical influences came through listening to R.R. Terry's choir at Westminster Cathedral, where he was able to absorb the music of the Renaissance masters, a rare opportunity for that time. In addition to hearing Terry's choir, Willan spent many evenings discussing this repertoire at Terry's home. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, was his friendship with Francis Burgess and his work with the London Gregorian Association, an experience that inspired and equipped Willan to set up similar models in Canada. Without a doubt, these formative experiences crystallized his views on liturgy and music well before his emigration to Toronto in 1913.

Willan understood the role of the liturgical musician. He was a consummate choir trainer and gifted improviser, and as a composer his works for St. Mary Magdalene were "bespoke" models of liturgical appropriateness. The musical plan that he developed during his first decade at St. Mary Magdalene (1921–1931), with the collaboration of Fr. Henry Griffin Hiscocks, speaks to this approach. He aptly divided the musical responsibilities between two choirs (the Ritual Choir and the Gallery Choir) and the congregation, and established plainsong as the foundation of the music of the Mass. Willan assigned the congregation various plainsong settings of the *Gloria in excelsis*, the *Credo*, and the *Asperges*. To the Ritual Choir he assigned the minor propers, and to the Gallery Choir the *Missa Brevis*, consisting of *Kyrie*, *Sanctus* and *Benedictus*, and *Agnus Dei*, including motets and fauxbourdons. This division of musical labor was unique for its time, and still forms the basis of the musical practice at St. Mary Magdalene. Willan felt strongly that the music of the Mass should be always in support of the liturgy, and as such he would describe it as being analogous to the incidental music of a drama or play. Indeed, this outlook was one of the catalysts for composing music tailored to the liturgy and ethos of St. Mary Magdalene. Although some of these compositions may seem a bit anachronistic due to their specificity, it is this very feature that brings to mind the phrase "beautifully fit, and fittingly beautiful" that perfectly describes Willan's liturgical output.

The common thread throughout Willan's long and distinguished career was his love and passion for plainsong and its subsequent influence on his church music. However, his early compositions clearly reflect the inescapable influence of nineteenth-century Romanticism, especially the musical language of Stanford, Elgar, and Parry. In contrast, the vast output of his church music composed after 1921 reflects a Neo-Renaissance style, which at every turn is indebted to plainsong and shows the greatest respect for the text and the human voice. This predilection to compose in Renaissance liturgical style was no doubt the result of his love for Tudor composers, but perhaps it was also a reflection of the sound that he experienced at Westminster Cathedral listening to R.R. Terry's choir.

Willan's total compositional catalog reveals his varied interests and the breadth of his musical style. He long considered his opera *Deirdre* (1943–45) his most important work. There is also a large-scale unfinished *Requiem* (1912) for chorus and orchestra that receives the rare performance and is filled from beginning to end with a compelling musical language. Though they are beyond the scope of this article, his ravishing Piano Concerto in C Minor, his two symphonies, and a large catalog of dramatic music, orchestral and band music, chamber music, piano and organ music, secular choral and solo songs, and miscellany that includes musical settings of limericks and other verse—all these are worth noting. All told, Willan composed nearly a thousand works over seventy years of his life.

An influential musician in Canada, Willan's compositions were the first Canadian works to attract widespread attention. Many of his noteworthy pupils in their own right went on to influence Canadian music. It is for this reason that he is often regarded as the Dean of Canadian composers, and was commemorated on a Canadian postage stamp in 1980 for



his musical service to Canada. One of Willan's greatest achievements was being commissioned to compose a homage anthem for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953. Willan's legacy, influence, and achievements are noted on a bronze tablet, placed at the main entrance to St. Mary Magdalene. This plaque was unveiled by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, on July 9, 1989; it reads:

As a composer, organist, choirmaster, and teacher, Healey Willan waged constant war on mediocre church music. In the process he elevated the position of the church organist and set the standard for his profession. Educated in the musical traditions of nineteenth-century England, Willan came to Canada in 1913 to take up a teaching position with the Toronto (now Royal Conservatory) of Music. While serving as organist and choirmaster here at St. Mary Magdalene (1921–1968), he composed the sacred music for which he is best remembered, and for which he was awarded a Lambeth Doctorate in 1956.

REMINISCENCES

The period following Willan's death in 1968 ushered in a new era in the life of St. Mary Magdalene. After all, as Precentor, Willan had been in complete charge of all musical matters for nearly fifty years! Those of us who have ever entered into a music position following the long and distinguished tenure of a notable musician know firsthand the inherent challenges of such a transition. Willan's successors have sustained and nourished this unique tradition, all the while adapting to meet the present-day musical needs of a living parish. Fifty years after his death, there is no mistaking

the tangible musical presence that is firmly grafted into the walls of St. Mary Magdalene.

The inimitable Giles Bryant was Willan's immediate successor and was Director of Music and Organist at St. Mary Magdalene from 1968 until 1975; he is responsible for the Healey Willan Catalogue. Bryant inherited a program that had waned during Willan's final years due to poor health and advanced age. My own recent conversation with Bryant at his home expressed many of the challenges that he experienced after taking over for Willan. Three interesting comments stood out in our conversation. Of the first few years of rehearsals with the Gallery Choir, Bryant recalls, "I had the distinct feeling that the choir was looking right through me, and still being conducted by Willan himself!" He went on to add that there was no getting around the fact that these were singers who had devoted their lives to singing for Willan and his approach. Bryant also noted the initial challenge of introducing new repertoire into the Gallery Choir's music list, which began to include music by contemporary composers. Additional accomplishments during Bryant's tenure included numerous recordings and plans for the restoration of the organ, which had fallen into disrepair.

Robert Hunter Bell (Director of Music and Organist 1975–1996) was Bryant's successor and recalls ending the practice of organ-accompanied minor propers, a practice that had been firmly in place throughout Willan's tenure. Bell added, "With the organ console approximately sixty feet away from the chancel, it could be somewhat messy, not to mention the anachronistic practice." Bell also introduced women singing plainsong at the Easter Vigil, which (according to Bell) was met with much acclaim. As with Bryant, Bell continued to update the Gallery Choir's music library, including replacing old editions of Latin motets set to English text with newer editions in the original Latin. One of Bell's most important accomplishments was the recording of Willan Masses, motets, and the *Tenebrae Responsories*, released in two albums by EMI: Virgin Classics in 1994 and 1997. These two recordings were highly influential in introducing Willan's choral music to a wide audience due to their distribution, and it was these recordings that caught my attention many years ago.

Another recent Willan successor, Stephanie Martin (Director of Music and Organist 2006–2012), has mentioned routinely experiencing a tangible Willan presence during her tenure. She recalls the steady stream of correspondence that arrived at the parish inquiring about Willan's compositions and how to acquire them. Thankfully, the Healey Willan Society has now made it possible to acquire significant portions of Willan's liturgical output, some of which had previously gone out of print. Martin, an accomplished composer in her own right, has mentioned the influence that Willan's music has had on her own compositions, in part because of her week-to-week



The author with Robert Hunter Bell, February 2018

experience with the choir and hearing them sing in the unique acoustical environment of St. Mary Magdalene. Martin was also instrumental in putting all of the *Missae breves* back into circulation, including a recording from 2009 that includes Willan's *Missae breves* X and XII and the *Reproaches*. Martin had previously undertaken research at the National Library in Ottawa, and has presented papers on various topics related to Willan's music. Most recently, with the guidance and support of Mary Willan Mason, she has been working on a plan to organize his correspondence.



**The author with Albert Mahon,
July 2017**

Albert Mahon, another former key individual at St. Mary Magdalene, had very close interactions with him from 1948 until Willan's death in 1968.⁵ Mahon, originally a member of the Ritual Choir, was later appointed Cantor, a post he held into the 1970s under Giles Bryant. In addition to his work as cantor, Mahon developed a friendship with "the Doc," as he called him, and assisted

him in a number of musical and administrative matters. As one example, Mahon helped Willan organize the minor propers, which had originally been transcribed on loose sheets of manuscript paper. Mahon, at present in his mid-90s, recalls, "In my early days with the Ritual Choir we would try to make sense of all of the loose sheets of paper in order to organize the propers of a particular day—sometimes minutes before the Mass!" Eventually, Mahon gently suggested to Willan that the propers be recopied and bound in multiple volumes for each member of the Ritual Choir. Mahon remarked, "I didn't realize it then...[but] by suggesting new copies of the propers, I made quite a bit of work for the Doc as he had to go back and recopy them by hand again." Mahon proudly showed me one of these bound volumes, labeled Advent to Whitsunday, with occasional pages filled with Willan's text modifications owing to the use of different missals at various points during their use.

One of Mahon's most vivid remembrances was his account of Midnight Mass in 1967, Willan's final Mass. Mahon recalls,

He was very frail, and had been out of the public eye for some time due to poor health, yet, he somehow managed to get to St. Mary's for Midnight Mass. Having arrived, he was led up the steep and narrow stairs leading to the gallery. Once there, he made his way over to the organ console where he was assisted by Margaret Harmer, one of Willan's longtime musical assistants who had recently taken over many of the musical responsibilities due to the Doc's absence. Though he was very frail and battling poor eyesight, I recall his vigorous playing that evening, as though the clock had rolled back, including masterful improvisations. Immediately following Mass, the Doc was led down the narrow stairs where I had occasion to meet him, and recall him saying to me "Well old man, that is the last time I shall come down these stairs." The Doc died a month and a half later on February 16.

EPILOGUE

Willan was the perfect English gentleman. The manner in which he routinely described his ancestral provenance speaks to his wit and sense of humor: English by birth, Irish by extraction, Canadian by adoption, and Scotch by absorption. He always displayed a warm and attractive personality that formed part of his character his entire life. He could be somewhat shy at times, and is remembered for being kind and generous; he always had a joke or naughty limerick up his sleeve. He had a slight speech impediment, which made his constant storytelling and limericks even funnier:

*A soprano there was named Yvette
And she really was rather a pet,
When she sang Christmas carols
The clergy went barrels,
And passed out when she sang a motet.*

To Isabel

*A second soprano named Isabel
delighted in faculties visible
When at umpteen past eight
she turned up somewhat late;
she got by in a way almost kissable,
did Isabel.*

Willan always carried himself with a sense of decorum, and he reserved his colorful jokes and limericks for the Arts and Letters Club, of which he was a longstanding member. He was not a particularly pious person, but without question was a spiritual person and believed in the supernatural. He believed in ghosts, and would often refer to the "grey lady" who inhabited St. Mary Magdalene at various points and times. He

would say, "I don't bother her, she doesn't bother me...actually,

I'm rather fond of her, I believe she loves plainchant." He also

was convinced of a ghost inhabiting his 139 Englewood Drive residence, a claim supported by other family members.⁶

When not at his beloved St. Mary Magdalene, Willan spent much of his time in his home study, which he called his "junk room." The room, a repurposed set of bedrooms, was filled with a number of items including his piano, a desk, a music writing desk, his library, a pipe collection, and numerous pictures of friends, colleagues, and professional achievements. All in all, his junk room was described as an orderly clutter, filled with boxes of paper, with specific items very much in their place.

In his day-to-day life, Willan got around Toronto by streetcar, as he never owned an automobile. Albert Mahon

To Isabel (December 24, 1935)



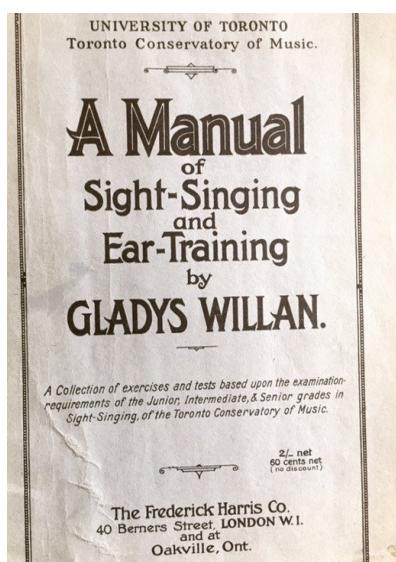
Willan in his beloved "junk room" (1967)

described to me the Sunday ritual of picking up the Doc to take him to and from church; he took longer trips by train or ship, as was the case with his trips to England. He is remembered for always being very well dressed, and from an early age he used a cane. His dress always included a hand-tied bow tie, and in the winter months British tweed and spats. In later life this manner of dress, along with his British accent and heightened sense of decorum, gave him a certain aristocratic look. He also loved animals, and was particularly fond of his dog Trixie.

As a husband and father, Willan had his faults. Without question he loved and provided for his family. After all, he had made the big move from England to Canada in order to gain financial security for them. While in Toronto, he was initially content to accept the organist position at St. Paul's, Bloor Street, despite its low-church persuasion. It is well known that he was soon at odds with this job, yet remained there for eight years in order to support his family. His full schedule kept him

busy most evenings and away from home. Yet, as his daughter mentioned in our recent conversation, when he was home he was very loving, generous with his time, and interested in the activities of his family.

Willan was married to Gladys Willan nearly sixty years, having wed in 1904; she died in 1964. Gladys was a highly trained musician, an award-winning pianist who had studied at the



A Manual of Sight-Singing and Ear-Training (Gladys Willan)

Royal Academy of Music.⁷ After their marriage, she put aside professional musical activities to assume the role of wife and mother. Of course, this was not unique to the Willans and was typical for the generation and time.

Willan is known to have had extra-marital affairs, which must have caused great strain on their marriage. These affairs came to a head during the summer of 1941 when at the age of 60 he fell into a serious relationship with a young woman. St. Mary Magdalene gave him an ultimatum: either immediately end the relationship or leave his position. He sent in his resignation forthwith and left his position at St. Mary's. Willan was asked to return during the summer of 1942, at which point his relationship with the woman had ended. It has also been remarked that he had been unable to compose while away from St. Mary's, and therefore he was eager to return to his familiar surroundings. Willan officially returned to his position in September 1942, and remained until his death in February 1968. A small plaque honoring his tenure at St. Mary's, which is affixed to the organ case in the chancel, clearly marks the gap in his years of service (1921-1941 and 1942-1968).

Willan referred to music as his chief delight, both his profession and his hobby. He enjoyed life to the fullest and appreciated beauty in all its forms—beautiful music, good food, good drinks, fine clothes, fine tobacco, good friends, and on down the list. As mentioned in my previous article, his devotion to beauty is what undoubtedly fueled his approach to liturgical music. He was driven and committed to doing his part to create a “holiness in beauty,” and he firmly believed in the act of worship as God’s consecration of beauty through the spirit of the liturgy.

When my work at St. Mary Magdalene's is finished I think I shall feel like Don Camillo, and say "Well, Lord, I've tried to make your worship beautiful, and I've done it for your glory, not for mine; but You know that, so I needn't say anything more about it." And perhaps He'll smile. I hope so.

—Healey Willan, 1951

ENDNOTES:

¹ In “Healey Willan: Establishing a Musical Legacy” (*Journal of the Association of Anglican Musicians*, vol. 26: no. 3, March 2017) I discussed the unique circumstances surrounding Willan’s appointment as Precentor of the Church of St. Mary Magdalene, Toronto, including his establishing of a unique musical and liturgical tradition in partnership with the Reverend Henry Griffin Hiscocks, then Rector of St. Mary Magdalene.

² For further information on the Healey Willan Society: HealeyWillan.com (Fr. Scott A. Haynes, St. John Cantius, Chicago)

³ Though Healey Willan and Ralph Vaughan Williams never formally met, they were known to send each other birthday cards, since they shared a birthday on October 12.

⁴ For further information on Willan West 2018: willanwest.org, or on Facebook: WillanWest 2018/willanwest.

⁵ The Mahon family is filled with distinguished musicians. Albert's son Peter Mahon is a Toronto-based professional singer and conductor who leads the Tallis Choir, Toronto. One of Albert's grandsons, Andrew Mahon, is currently a professional freelance singer in the U.K. who regularly sings at Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral, as well as with the Gabrieli Consort, and Tenebrae, among other ensembles. Andrew's sister, Rachel Mahon, was previously the organ scholar at St. Paul's Cathedral, London, and now the Assistant Organist at Chester Cathedral.

⁶ Willan's residence at 139 Englewood Drive receives considerable mention in *The Big Book of Canadian Hauntings* by John Robert Colombo. The book recalls the Rector of St. Mary Magdalene (Fr. Brain) paying a visit to perform an exorcism, complete with acolytes, books, and candles in full procession.

⁷ Gladys Willan is also known for writing an influential ear-training manual (Frederick Harris Company), the first of its kind in Canada at the time of its publication.

Conductor, organist, and musicologist Ruben Valenzuela is Director of Music and Organist of All Souls' in Point Loma, San Diego. Additionally, he is the Founder and Artistic Director of the Bach Collegium San Diego. As a musicologist, he has undertaken research at Centro Nacional de Investigación, Documentación e Información Musical, Carlos Chávez (CENEDIM), and the Archivo del Cabildo of Mexico City Cathedral, focusing on the basso continuo in Novo-Hispanic music. Valenzuela holds a B.Mus. in Church Music and Organ from Loma Linda University, an M.A. from San Diego State University in Musicology, and a Ph.D. in Musicology from Claremont Graduate University.

FROM THE EDITOR

MARK HOWE

This issue of the *Journal* marks my last as Editor; at the San Antonio Conference, my term ends and I hand over the reins to the capable Stephen Leist.

And since this is my last shot at having a free hand to write what I want, I'd like to say something about choirs. But first, let me direct your attention back to the November 2015 issue. (You can see this issue in the Members' Area of the AAM website.) Richard Webster's page 5 article, "Cute No Longer, Thanks Be to God: Building and Maintaining a Choir of Children" is a statement on the value of forming and training young voices and young souls. I strongly recommend that all my AAM brothers and sisters read or reread Richard's views on this subject.

Richard and I worked together at St. Luke's in Evanston, Illinois 1989-91, when I was teaching at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary and serving in an extremely part-time capacity as Associate Organist at St. Luke's. Over my brief time there, I saw the profound value to these young people, and to the Church, that accrued to this work.

When I left Evanston, I hoped to build a choir program of young voices in my next post; but alas, it was a part-time job, and the financial support was not in place. Eight years later, when I came to my present position in Burlington, Vermont, there was interest, energy, and money enough, and after a year of dreaming and scheming about the role of such a choir and the strategies for starting it up *ex nihilo*, we launched a Treble Choir with four young singers. Seventeen years later, the program is thriving, and we normally have between twenty-five and thirty young singers to whom singing good music well, in a loving ensemble, is one of the central identifying traits of their Christian life. They sing every Sunday from September to June. Children growing up here today have never known a St. Paul's Cathedral without music led by young people.

In an annual report a few years back, I wrote that this choir was

a vigorous aspect of St. Paul's Cathedral's life. On any given Tuesday afternoon, Wednesday evening, or Thursday afternoon, a steady flow of boys and girls moves ... into the choir room, where they enact Christian community and formation in a musical practice. (Yoga people refer to their work as a spiritual practice; ours is too, with music as the mode.) It is a privilege to witness the growth of these singers as musicians and human beings.

I write this now not to blow my own horn, but to say again what many of us know: that the life of the Episcopal Church depends on the vigor and animation of its youngest members; that singing together is a compelling characteristic of a living community of Christian faith and a powerful metaphor for the Reign of God; and that it's important to plant the seeds of discipleship now, so that the Church in the future has members who know what this spiritual practice is.



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Richard Webster wrote, in that article I mentioned, [Young singers] thirst for guidance, truth, insight, confidence, and the tools with which to shape their lives. Through the challenge that a fine choir program offers spiritually, musically, and intellectually, we help them discover God's purpose in their lives. We are training them to run the Great Race.

I want to urge as many people as read these words to work chorally with the next generation of Great Racers, or to support those who do. In doing so, we train young people "to run the Great Race" by giving them skills in sight-singing, musicianship, community, respect, aural acuity, and prayer. We give them the chance to "rehearse their attitudes toward the Divine," as the late Mark Searle used to say of liturgy. We offer them a way to understand and build a harmonious relationship between the individual and the corporate. We do, musically, the kind of spiritual formation that the Body of Christ needs, and we assert faith in the future of that Body.

* * *

In closing, let me state my appreciation of all those who have contributed to the *Journal* in my time as Editor—authors, reviewers, the Editorial Board, proofreaders, Susan Markley, Jim Garvey, and Paul Ellison. I have enjoyed this work.

A Proposed Change to the Canons of the Episcopal Church

AAM's Employment Task Force, which was begun in 2016 under the leadership of then-President James Garvey, has developed a proposal to change the Canons of the Church (Title I, Canon 17 [Of Regulations Respecting the Laity]), by adding the following language:

Sec. 9. Any Lay Person accepting employment within the Church in any capacity is entitled to a letter of agreement describing the duties and responsibilities of the position, including details of salary and any benefits. The letter will include provisions for an annual performance evaluation, procedures for the reconciliation of disagreements, and contain a clearly articulated dissolution clause. Employees are to be circumspect in their conduct avoiding any moral or pastoral conduct of a nature to bring material discredit upon the Church.

RATIONALE

The proposed Canon is presented to support the ministry of lay employees. The duties and requirements for the ministries of bishops, priests, and deacons are outlined in multiple Canons giving the requirements and duties of those in holy orders. No Canon is provided, however, outlining the duties and responsibilities of lay employees. Since these ministries vary and have specific requirements in different settings, their descriptions cannot be set by Canon. However, for clarity in these situations, a letter of agreement should outline the duties and responsibilities of a particular ministry, including details of salary and benefits, and a "clearly articulated dissolution clause," as provided for assistant clergy in Canon III.9.3c.

Such a letter of agreement should also include provision for an annual performance evaluation and procedures for the reconciliation of disagreements, as recommended for both clergy and lay employees in General Convention Resolution D084 of 1984. The Canon proposed here would direct that Lay Employees have their duties and responsibilities set forth in a document that is signed by both rector (priest-in-charge, dean) and lay employee. In this way, both parties have accountability to each other and to the church. This is the norm in other professions and should be no less so in the Church. Having letters of agreement for lay employees enshrined in the Canons gives clergy, vestries, and lay employees recourse in the event that disputes arise. It should be noted that this change will not override "at will" status in states where this is the law.



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THE PROCESS

AAM's Employment Task Force (Marty Wheeler Burnett, the Rev'd Geoffrey Butcher, Paul Ellison [chair], Christopher Jennings, Ellen Johnston, Linda Patterson, and the Rt. Rev'd Keith Whitmore) worked with the two other large groups of Episcopal Lay Professionals, namely Forma (the Network for Christian Formation) and the Episcopal Communicators, to learn about the process of proposing and advocating new legislation. Members of the Task Force (and any other AAM members present at General Convention) are, ideally, prepared to discuss the proposal with members of diocesan delegations, and to answer questions. Representatives of Forma and the Episcopal Communicators have been helping the Task Force prepare to be effective. Forma involves itself with proposed legislation, writing position papers and lobbying.

At General Convention, which will be held in Austin, Texas July 5-13, proposals are formally sponsored, filed, and assigned to a legislative committee, which will study proposed legislation and hear testimony for and against it. After these hearings, the committee votes to send it to the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops for discussion and voting.

This proposal may well be adopted if it is widely supported and if there are members ready to testify when it comes up for a legislative committee hearing. One bishop told us it stands a good chance if it gets to the floor and out of the committee. The Task Force will have representatives ready to speak in favor of action.

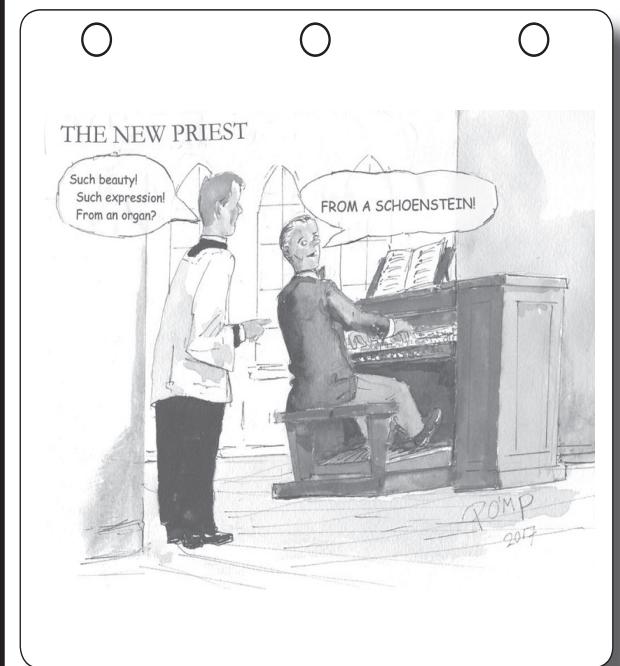
It will be helpful if legislative committee members have already heard from AAM members before they arrive. The Committee on the Constitution and Canons includes the following members, and their respective dioceses:

- The Rt. Rev'd Mark Hollingsworth (Ohio)
- Mr. James Simon (Ohio)
- Ms. Kathleen Wells (Fort Worth)
- The Hon. Kelley Kimble (West Texas)
- Ms. Louisa McKellaston (Chicago)
- The Rt. Rev'd Laura Ahrens (Connecticut)
- Hon. Joseph Alarid (Rio Grande)
- The Rev'd Dawn Allen-Herron (Alaska)
- Mr. Kevin Babb (Springfield)
- Mr. Charles Banks (Central Pennsylvania)
- The Rev'd Canon Stephen Casey (Central Pennsylvania)
- The Rt. Rev'd Brian Cole (East Tennessee)
- Sra. Carmen Figueiroa (Puerto Rico)
- Mr. Brad Foster (Montana)
- The Rt. Rev'd S. Johnson Howard (Florida)
- The Very Rev'd Timothy Kimbrough (Tennessee)
- The Rt. Rev'd W. Jay Lambert (Eau Claire)
- Canon Charles Mack (Northern California)
- The Very Rev'd Dr. Neal Michell (Dallas)
- Mr. Douglas Oles (Olympia)
- Mr. Webster Paraison (Haiti)
- Mr. Scott Remington (Central Gulf Coast)
- The Hon. Rose H. Sconiers (Western New York)
- The Rev'd Canon William Spaid (Western Michigan)
- The Rt. Rev'd George R. Sumner, Jr. (Dallas)
- The Rev'd Canon Bradley Wirth (Montana)
- Ms. Mary T. Yeiser (Lexington)

If you have been elected to go to Austin as a deputy, please let Linda Patterson know. AAM members can and should reach out to their dioceses' delegations before they leave for Austin, urging the delegations' support; the AAM Conference will be less than a month before the Convention, which begins on July 5. The names of deputies for each diocese can be found on the General Convention website: https://extranet.generalconvention.org/governing_and_interim_bodies/house_of_deputies, and diocesan websites will have contact information for those deputies.

AAM will have a presence at General Convention this year in Austin, Texas, July 5-13, with a booth in the Exhibit Hall that will be open every day. Any AAM members who will be at General Convention or are in driving distance and are available to help staff it—even if only for an hour or two—should contact Linda Patterson to get on the schedule (linda@stpetersbrenham.org). Those who staff it will have promotional materials to distribute and will be given “talking points” to discuss as visitors come through. Our booth will give us an opportunity to discuss the proposed Canon change with deputies and bishops, and to distribute our rationale and reasons for concern.

Scattered leaves ... from our Sketchbook



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Book Review

ERIK W. GOLDSTROM

Bonnie J. Blackburn and Laurie Stras, eds. *Eroticism in Early Modern Music* (Routledge [Ashgate], 2017; ISBN-13: 978-0815365594), 328 pp., \$49.95.

Distance lends enchantment, and frequently an air of delusional sanctity. The further removed we are from any given era the more apt we are to lionize personas and cultures, setting whole ranks of predecessors on rarified pedestals, while forgetting that they were actually part of a collective humanity rife with compelling “flaws” and excess. Scholarship is often the best corrective for such contemplations; for example, *Carmina Burana* helps reframe our visions of eleventh- and twelfth-century clerics and theology students, while Christoph Wolff reminds us that “when Bach retreated into the solitude of his composing studio, all by himself, he apparently preferred to do so with a bottle of brandy.”¹

Eroticism in Early Modern Music holds up a mirror to some of Western music’s most influential composers from the (primarily) sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to show just how “grounded” these cultures actually were. Sometimes overtly bawdy, sometimes brilliantly disguised in a maze of hidden meaning, music proves to be no different from other art forms in portraying the erotic, sexual side of earthly humanity. Arising from the conference “Eros and Euterpe: Music and Eroticism in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries” held at Indiana University in 2004, these essays² range from examinations of specific works (e.g. Purcell’s *O dive custos*) to cultural capitals (“Masculine Power and Music at the Court of Ferrara”), and even compositional techniques and theory itself (“The Lascivious

Career of B-Flat,” “The Ways of Black-Note Erotica”). Ten essays plus an Introduction make up this collection and the authors represent a wide spectrum of institutions from the U.S., Canada, U.K., and Ireland. First published in 2015, it was recently released in a far more affordable paperback edition. Space permits only a few examples, so I will focus on three of the assembled arguments. If you’ve made it this far, rest assured that my discussion will remain well within the bounds of propriety. However, be well assured that the choicest examples have been kept in reserve.

Why make a study of such “transgressive music” at all, you might ask. Simply put, because it informs not only our understanding of the works themselves (and oftentimes the performance practices thereof—music is most erotic when it is heard), but also (and perhaps more importantly) the culture and societies that created them. “Erotica is also arousing, but ideally it engages with its consumers’ aesthetic sense, their intellect, and perhaps also with their sentiments.” (p. 2) Co-Editor and Introductory author Laurie Stras reminds us that social conventions regarding sexuality haven’t always been consistent and aren’t necessarily the ones to which contemporary society adheres. Not only did “humanism make even lust an intellectual exercise,” (p. 2) but also people in previous centuries (not that long ago, mind you) discovered clear medical and emotional benefits in the arms of erotic interest. This may seem hard for us to process living as we do in a society still influenced by Victorian attitudes and sentiments. Linda Phyllis Austern takes this up to a greater extent in her article “Lo Here I Burn”: Musical Figurations and Fantasies of Male Desire in Early Modern England,” but here Stras focuses on notions of intent and implications of “decency”:

[E]xplicit material might be justified by its intellectually humorous or recreational nature or its use within the context of marriage and domesticity, or paradoxically as illustrations in medical texts or morality prints. The notion that play or recreation was essential to mental and physical health underpinned

many justifications for erotica, both literary and visual. (p. 3)

However, there is a clear division between erotica and obscenity. “Obscenity—sexual content that mocks, offends, or disgusts—is anti-erotic, in that its principal motivation is neither to arouse nor to engage a positive aesthetic for its audience.” (p. 5) As clear as what it is *not*, it can be difficult to find what the erotic actually is. One characteristic property of erotica can be its hazardous ambiguity, often encoded in both metaphor and allusion. “Yet this is perhaps the point with erotica; its very essence depends on multiple meanings that may be perceived differently by different audiences at different times and in different contexts.” (p. 5) Nuance aside, erotica’s true effectiveness depends on *our* understanding of the aesthetic principles and cultural codes (p. 1)—an intellectual pursuit of an historical lust.

Sadly, the present volume focuses only on secular music but, make no mistake: the editors clearly understand that such erotic encoding is not absent from the sacred realm. “[M]usical erotica and erotic music were by no means confined to the top shelf of the music-seller’s display... They were embedded in the broadest repertoires of secular music (and indeed sacred, although this repertory lies outside the purview of the current collection).” (p. 16) And should you have any doubts about the commingling of the erotic with the sacred, take a moment to consider the sexualized underpinnings of our Christian canon literature (the stories of Judith and Holofernes, and Samson and Delilah) or saintly legends (Mary Magdalene, the temptation of St. Anthony). The erotic implications of these stories and legends have yet to negate their spiritual legitimacy within the Christian community.

So let us begin with “The Lascivious Career of B-flat” by author Bonnie J. Blackburn. It is nigh impossible to speak of B-flat or hexachords in general without invoking the spectre of Guido, and this is no exception. In case you’ve forgotten, that nefarious B-flat (B-fa) lies outside the hexachord system. Its presence is only tolerated (barely, by some) when the tritone between F-B is imminent. Its status was that of an interloper (p. 20) and as such, “it was

characterized by some music theorists as soft and fickle, negative qualities associated with the female sex. Thus began the lascivious career of B-flat." (p. 20)

Enter the eleventh century and Guido d'Arezzo. His position on B-flat's tenuous existence is clear:

There are those who add another [that is to say, another note, i.e., b-flat] next to the first in the high pitches [a], but this license scarcely pleases Father Gregory; moreover, the wise moderns do not even mention this. Accordingly, however much the little tone itself may be made among some, nevertheless, rightly it is called superfluous among many. But the other second [note, i.e. square b] is always authentic. (p. 22)

Remember Guido's solmization aid, *Ut queant laxis?* It avoids B altogether!

But why all the fuss? Blackburn identifies two strands of medieval thought to shed some light on the problem. B *molle* (soft) or B *rotundum* (round) are other terms for B-flat. "Characterizing B-flat as soft, *molle*, meant that it attracted all the negative traits associated with women in the Middle Ages; its round shape (as opposed to the square b) made it unstable, liable to change—weak, irregular, and improper." (p. 26) Strike one. But there was an additional line of thought, no less dangerous, wherein B-flat wasn't weak, but rather sweet. Johannes de Garlandia, channeling a now unknown Bernardus (not Clairvaux) wrote, "The semitone, as Bernard says, is the sweetness and spice of all song." Blackburn confirms, "For clerics, this sweetness was dangerous." (p. 27) Strike two.

So, B-flat was either weak or sweet, neither of which are positive attributes. Its alliance with the female sex made it particularly dangerous to men, for it could promote "effeminacy" (not in the modern sense)—encouraging men to behave in the manner of women. Ladislaus de Zalka wrote in the fifteenth century that the reason Timotheus was expelled from Sparta was that the chromatic genus made young men so effeminate that it led them to "acts of Venus" (p. 29). In the Middle Ages, women were believed to

have an insatiable sexual appetite; thus, anything that led men into this realm of feminine behavior was dangerous. By deductive reasoning, then, chromatic music made men lascivious. (p. 29)

Quickly, let's see how this works in real time. As the sixteenth century emerged, musical terminology came to be used metaphorically, specifically the solmization syllables. Such solfeggio games were not lost on the average performer. Texts amplified these musical *doubles entendres* to capitalize on the erotic appeal of their texts. A short English carol (macaronic no less) from the sixteenth century will suffice:

O the *re me fa* the frier her tawght
Inducas,
Sol la, this nunne he kyst full oft
In temptationibus
The frier sang all be *bemoll*
Inducas,
Of the nunne he begate a cristenyd
sowle
In temptationibus.

Friars already had a bad reputation, lauded for their sexual prowess, and clearly our sixteenth-century English chum is no different. With a ruse of teaching her to sing, our friar seduces the nun by singing B-flats (*bemoll*) and, hey presto, our nun is with child. What amazing, dangerous, and lascivious nature is held in that chromatic alteration of B. *In temptationibus* indeed.

For early modern Europe, music could also be a way of expressing masculinity and male erotic fantasies. Linda Phyllis Austern focuses on these issues in "Lo Here I Burn: Musical Figurations and Fantasies of Male Desire in Early Modern England." Purveyors of erotic art flourished throughout early modern England: "the assignees of Thomas Morley through Henry Playford and beyond aided and abetted the mass dissemination of an astonishing array of sexually-charged material by the leading composers of art-music, as well as that most versatile pornographer, Anonymous." (p. 176) As I remarked earlier in this review, erotica was seen to promote healthful benefits in a (male-dominated) society. "In contrast to the Victorian sensibilities that regarded the frank expression of sexuality in any medium as shocking,

their early modern forebears considered the exercise of what vernacular medical manual termed "Venus" or "Venery" to be necessary to life and health." (p. 182) Channeling ancient Roman thought on the issue, sex was often regarded as crucial to the preservation of a healthy lifestyle. "Regular indulgence kept the body free of noxious waste and maintained its necessary stasis." (p. 182) Of course, too much was as bad as too little, and unrestrained sexual activity was "death's harbinger." (p. 183) So this may well account for the flood of sexually explicit material, but how is this material reflective of notions of masculinity?

Manliness was judged differently in early modern England from the way it is today. Complex hierarchies of age, education, breeding, and wealth came into play and, unlike today where secondary characteristics (beards, musculature) are the prime determiners of masculinity, "manliness was more a construct of gesture, action, word, and deed than of bodily form."³ (p. 176) Consequently (and as we saw earlier), notions of effeminacy were also different. Rather than an attribute of men who engaged in same-sex practice, effeminacy referred to men whose masculinity had been drained away by an "excessive" devotion to women and bodily pleasures. (p. 184)

Let's look at two musical examples that exhibit masculine and erotic encoding, beginning with John Dowland and *My Lord Chamberlain and his Galliard*. The galliard is a dance form with strong masculine associations, in part because of its vigorous, athletic movements. The lute, too, was placed firmly within the male arena—a symbol of the "consummate courtier." With these two masculine identifiers firmly established, let's move to the piece itself. Although it is a "conventional" lute duet, its technical precision requires an unusual execution: "the sharing of a single instrument by two players whose only possible position is the smaller one in the other's lap." (p. 186; emphasis mine) Through the performance requirements devised by the composer himself, this untexted piece supplies all the necessary potential for same-sex intimacies within a musical realm, all under the guise of performance practice.

Off to the pub for one further illustration. The pub (alehouse) was a male-dominated social outlet that supported the performance of masculinity—much as the sports bar does today. Here men would gather not only to drink, but also to tell stories and share “exploits” as a means of bonding and camaraderie. Music was part of this environment; catches and rounds were the most common of the drinking songs. Often benign when seen as a monophonic work, for those with canons (rules) the resolution of that canon would result in a strikingly different piece. For example, William Cranford’s song *Here dwells a pretty Mayd* scans:

*Here dwelles a pretty Mayd, whos
name is Sis
You may come in and kisse her
Her whole estate is seventeen pence
a year
Yet you may kisse if you come but
neare.*

Only when the song is performed in the intended three-part canon does the text divulge its erotic implications.

Finally to Henry Purcell who masterfully contributed to all the erotic genres of his day. Eroticized mourning had become a familiar trope among painters of the seventeenth century, and it should come as no surprise that such proclivities would bleed over into the musical arts. Thus Henry Purcell and his Elegy for Mary II, *O dive custos*, scored for two sopranos and continuo. Author Alan Howard examines this work from the perspective that “the sexual imagery results almost exclusively from the composer’s own creative decisions, and can thus be understood as a deliberate strategy of expressive intensification.” (p. 268) Taken on its own, Henry Parker’s text for this elegy gives no hint of an underlying sensuality.

Purcell effects this erotic change on two fronts: firstly through a re-gendering of narrative voices, and secondly through artistic/compositional means. Parker’s text lives in the masculine realm, with its references to the House of Orange, the institutions of Oxford and Cambridge, and also the innermost circles of the Court. It is only in the fourth stanza

that the “implicitly male voice invokes explicitly feminine attributes by enjoining specifically female entities to mourn the departed queen.” (p. 269) Purcell truncated Parker’s elegy, setting only the first four of the original ten stanzas, choosing to end with its images of weeping muses and goddesses. In scoring the elegy for two sopranos, Purcell alerts us to his re-gendering of Parker’s original text. He now presents us with the “spectacle of two women mourning”—anonymous female supplicants who gradually slip into the role of weeping nymphs with the words, “Mary is dead.” (p. 269)

In terms of musical construction, Purcell goes to great lengths to symbolize musically the erotic content of this lament. The scoring of the two sopranos is crucial: their lines interweave and share similar ranges, and they finish each other’s ascending and descending lines. Purcell goes to great lengths to show their physical proximity (their intimacy, if you will) by unifying the parts as much as possible. As for other elements of musical erotic encoding:

The sensuality of Purcell’s duet becomes most obvious from the arrival at a highly-charged dominant pedal in measure 97, leading quickly to a registral climax in measure 100. Previously coherent text-setting gives way here to a succession of disjointed and repetitive utterances; bodily secretions combine with non-verbal exclamations and repeated name-calling to produce an audibly realistic simulation of ardent lovemaking. (p. 265)

In short, we are privy to nothing less than sexuality implied by women’s grief. Their communal nature “provides a context within which the subject of erotic contact and bodily intimacy among women inevitably comes to the fore. [I]t is the convergence of mourning and eroticism.” (p. 274)

Eroticism in Early Modern Music is a brilliant foray into the subversive underside of music from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This collection of ten essays successfully shows how eroticism was clearly encoded into the musical art of the day, both the popular and the erudite. And perhaps more importantly

than the hidden (or not so hidden) erotic implications of the works is the gradual unveiling of the cultural attitudes themselves—the understanding of erotica within the constructs of sixteenth- and seventeenth- century society. This collection is absolutely compelling and if you are interested in music’s ability to reflect culture and attitude, or you enjoy intellectual journeys into innuendo and *double entendre*, this book is for you. But be careful and mind your B-flats. **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**

ENDNOTES

¹ Christoph Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician* (W.W. Norton, 2000), p. 409.

² Two of the essays are new to this collection.

³ Although see Christopher Oldstone-Moore’s *Of Beards and Men* (University of Chicago Press, 2017) for an in-depth examination of beards and masculinity.

On a personal note...

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for the amazing work that Mark Howe has done as Editor of the *Journal*. Although much of our relationship evolved through email exchanges, I looked forward to our (almost) monthly banter. Mark was always the thoughtful and meticulous Devil’s Advocate and handled my barrage of thematic and semantic challenges with aplomb. Needless to say, AAM has been well served by his work and I am thankful for the time spent under his directorship.

Choral Music Reviews

JASON OVERALL

Eric Ewazen. *God's World*, SATB, piano. (Theodore Presser, 312-41876, 2017), 11 pp., \$2.50.

Edna St. Vincent Millay's ecstatic paean to nature is one of her most recognized and beloved poems. Eric Ewazen, who trained at the Juilliard School and now a member of the faculty there, matches Millay's elation with this exuberant setting. Widely spaced chords in a stately triple meter dominate the piano accompaniment while the voices move in an extended-tonality homophony. Ewazen varies the texture of both choir and piano as the piece progresses, yet he retains the masterful fluidity of tonal language that gives expression to the transcendence of the text. The music swells and wanes in waves of sounds traversing the full spectrum of dynamic range, peaking at appropriate rhetorical moments. A return to the opening musical material ends the piece with the opening line "O World, I cannot hold thee close enough!" with one final *crescendo* and sudden *diminuendo*. The autumnal touches to the poem's images make this an excellent option for St. Francis Day. The choral parts are not particularly demanding, although the slippery tonality will require some careful teaching. And while the accompaniment strongly favors the percussive attack of a piano, adaptation to the organ would be possible.

Robert G. Farrell. *I Love You, Lord*, SATB, unacc. (Paraclete Press, PPM01814, 2018), 2 pp., \$1.20.

Passages from Psalm 18 form this earnest choral prayer. The heartfelt simplicity in both text and musical language flirts with triteness, yet a reserved performance could produce an excellent musical statement of

devotion. Even with a few chromatic turns, mainly in traditional gestures, the music is of only moderate difficulty. It would serve well as an introit for Evensong or Holy Eucharist.

Stuart Forster. *Benediction*, SATB, opt. org. (Paraclete Press, PPM01815, 2018), 3 pp., \$1.20.

Forster sets the bishop's blessing at the end of the liturgy of Confirmation from the 1928 Book of Common Prayer for this choral benediction. The choral homophony moves through the text with direction. The conservative tonal language challenges neither singers nor congregation. The final blessing is given to the bishop or priest as the choir hums wordlessly before a trifold Amen. The setting is something of *Gebrauchsmusik*, yet it fills its role capably. Liturgies that would benefit from a choral setting of the blessing would be well served by this option.

Patrick Hawes. *Angelus Domini*, SATB, unacc. (Novello/Hal Leonard, 14043161, 2013), 2 pp., \$2.95.

Recently composers, notably British choral composers, have been writing music to be contained in albums. This interesting nod to popular music marks a new genre, or at least sub-genre, for classical music. Like a sonata or symphony, these album collections contain pieces for one ensemble—for instance, choir. Unlike multi-movement works, however, the constituent numbers operate simultaneously as autonomous works and as a part of a larger program. This suggests the "art album" concept pioneered by groups like the Beatles and establishes an interesting new formal organization for classical music. Patrick Hawes has enjoyed a meteoric rise to fame in the British classical music world, winning accolades for his instrumental and choral music. He cites his Christian faith as a chief source of inspiration, and many of his concert works retain an overt spirituality, blurring the lines between sacred and secular. His 2014 album *Angel* features the choir of New College, Oxford in a series of works depicting the presence of angels in varying forms. Hawes drew on some pre-existing choral pieces and supplemented them with newly composed material. *Angelus Domini* is

a simple six-voice homophony hymn setting the first versicle of the medieval devotion known as the *Angelus*. While Hawes did not conceive of the setting for the Christmas season, the singularity of the text makes it a lovely option for Advent and Christmas as well as Marian commemorations any time throughout the year. The gentle quarter-note motion, stable major-key tonality, and conservative vocal ranges make this hymn accessible to choirs of all sizes and abilities. The translucent purity of the harmonies and quiet rapture of the tone promise to make it popular with listeners.

Patrick Hawes. *Factum est silentium*, SATB, violin. (Novello/Hal Leonard, 14043083, 2013), 9 pp., \$4.50.

Another selection from the *Angel* album is this telling of the fight between the Archangel Michael and the dragon. Hawes uses the traditional antiphon text rather than the slightly different text familiar from Richard Dering's early-seventeenth century motet. The obbligato violin begins the anthem with an ethereal line that abruptly shifts into *con moto* quasi-minimalist figuration. Upper voices enter with simple polyphonic lines building from *piano* to *mezzo piano*. At the mention of Michael, homophony chords take over in *forte* exclamation of the battle and victory. The violin returns to the quiet, murmuring figuration as the slightly polyphonic texture reemerges to proclaim "salus honor virtus et gloria omnipotenti Deo," ending the work in a whisper. The part writing is not particularly challenging, and while this is more adventurous than *Angelus Domini*, choirs of all levels would enjoy this anthem.

Bill Heigen. *Psalm 23*, SSATBB, unacc. (Paraclete Press, PPM01817, 2018), 23 pp., \$4.30.

Heigen sets the psalm as it appears in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer psalter in an expansive choral texture that is predominantly eight-voice through division in alto and tenor lines. The music suggests a variety of tonal centers while maintaining a suggestion of local pan-diatonism within phrases. Added sixth harmonies abound, particularly in first inversion,

unifying the language. A few biting chromatic touches appear, providing an antidote to the wash of white-note chord clusters. Thick harmonies and quickly changing key areas require singers with skill and ability to tune chords well. The languid pacing also poses the danger of the loss of momentum and pitch integrity. With few moments offering obvious places to reset, the psalm setting requires an attention span able to encompass the entire piece in one large arc. Larger choirs with experienced singers would enjoy this extended setting.

Howard Helvey. *Rejoice all spirits!*, SATB, org, opt brass qt. (E. C. Schirmer, 7910, 2012), 10 pp., \$2.25.

Celtic monastic author Ray Simpson wrote the graceful text for this Easter anthem as an entry in his *A Holy Island Prayer Book*. Helvey's characteristic energetic style fits the joy of the prayer beautifully. Dancing quartal harmonies in the brass infuse the anthem with vibrancy. Choral statements are bold yet very straightforward in their homophonic motion. Frequent 3/4 interruptions to the common meter, and the further twist of hemiola figures in 3/4 passages, increase the rhythmic vitality. Helvey repeats the opening figure, forming a sort of ritornello, then he brings the opening back for a recapitulation for a series of crowning "Alleluia" statements. The score allows for organ-only performance with cued notes in the organ accompaniment. The antiphonal organization of organ and brass quartet musical material would, however, benefit greatly from use of instruments. This Easter anthem gives a lot of return for little investment of rehearsal time, making this a highly desirable piece for the end of Holy Week.

Stephen Lias. *Psalm 23*, SATB, unacc. (Alias Press, 392-01217, 2017), 8 pp., \$2.99.

Texas-based composer Stephen Lias has written works for a wide variety of instruments and ensembles, many of them evocative of scenes of nature. Perhaps this proclivity toward natural inspiration led him to this most bucolic of Psalms. The music is set in a rich B-minor with frequent excursions to other tonal areas. Lias's tonal language

is far ranging, suggesting at turns film noir scores, pandiatonicism, and traditional contemporary tonal choral writing. The music is overtly emotive but not tawdry or overly dramatic. The common meter never changes, yet the pacing does not feel stilted. Written in four voices throughout, the music poses few challenges to experienced singers. Lias resists any temptation to rush through the verses, producing a somewhat sprawling psalm setting. The varied tonal style ends up feeling a bit unfocused by the end, although each individual section is convincing on its own. The ending cadences naturally in B major, concluding the psalm *pianissimo*. This setting would be accessible to many choirs, and its directness of expression would make it an effective presentation of the psalm for Good Shepherd Sunday or other liturgical uses of the text.

Dan Locklair. *Ave Verum Corpus*, SATB div, unacc. (Subito Music Publishing, 91480590, 2011), 10 pp., \$2.25.

Dan Locklair has emerged as one of the most significant compositional voices in contemporary American choral music, based on a string of works that span a wide range of styles and scope. His setting of *Ave Verum Corpus* is something of a microcosm of his creative personality. It begins with a dreamy oscillation of harmonies typical of his early organ compositions (e.g. "The Peace may be exchanged" from *Rubrics* and "...beside the still waters" from *Windows of Comfort*) in a rich A minor cast. A few touches of rhythmic independence in the part-writing enlivens the languorous texture, while the steady half-note beat prevails. At the mention of "cruce" Locklair introduces the characteristic Baroque-era chromatic cross motif used by Bach and others, yet this recognizable gesture is so well prepared that it doesn't call attention to itself. Beginning with "cuius latus perforatum," the motet begins moving with greater immediacy. Syncopated lines call attention to the drama of the text as it builds to a climactic (although *piano*) moment on "mortis examine." The following list beginning with "O clemens" builds into widely-spaced fortissimo chords of arresting beauty. As the music moves

towards its conclusion on "O dulcis Jesu, fili Mariae" the passion subsides. A solo soprano enters, repeating the text above an unearthly long-held C-sharp major chord. Touches of pan-diatonicism, biting chromaticism, and Locklair's characteristic Lydian leanings all appear with seamless cooperation. For all its varied technique, the motet achieves a singularity of effect. With voice parts divided much of the time and some surprising harmonic shifts, this is not a piece for limited choirs. Larger ensembles with accomplished singers will eagerly embrace this as part of their regular repertoire.

Dan Locklair. *Spirit of Mercy, Truth, and Love*, SATB div, unacc. (Subito Music, 91480640, 2011), 6 pp., \$1.75.

Three verses of the familiar Pentecost hymn appear in logical, flowing choral writing. As the composer points out in an introductory note, each verse is pitched lower by step to signify the descent of the Holy Spirit to the Church. Locklair varies the musical material to match the text, yet it is nearly a strophic setting (pitch-center notwithstanding). All voices divide, requiring an ensemble able to carry eight parts. Beyond that, the piece's technical challenges are modest. This choral hymn is a welcome addition to the Pentecost repertoire.

Dan Locklair. *The Lord Ascendeth Up on High*, SATB, unacc. (Subito Music, 91480660, 2011), 3 pp., \$1.50.

This brief Ascension hymn setting for choir is homophonic throughout, yet it is far from a textbook four-part hymn. The jaunty rhythm, an effect assisted by frequent infusions of 3/8 bars, imparts a generous amount of liveliness to the joyful text. The tonal center shifts around between B-flat and E-flat on the one side and F on the other. Locklair nimbly fluctuates among the three with no real indication of primacy until the final, emphatic cadence on F major. The disjointed motion within each part and frequent accidental variation calls for careful attention to singers, yet this anthem is the most accessible of these three Locklair pieces. The feast of the Ascension is glossed over too

frequently, considering its status as a principal feast of the Church, and this lack is felt in the musical offerings as well. Nearly any choir observing the feast, either on Thursday or the Sunday following, could find a use for this finely written anthem.

June Nixon. *God Be In My Head*, sSATB, unacc. (Paraclete Press, PPM01821, 2018), 3 pp., \$1.20.

John Rutter's iconic setting of this Sarum Primer text has nearly defined the contemporary choral prayer and inspired a number of similar settings of this text. Many are quite lovely, arguably as effective as Rutter's, yet they are so imitative of the original that they do little to convince choirs of alternative possibilities. Nixon's approach is quite different, making this setting far from redundant. Choirs that have Rutter's motet as part of their core repertoire could add this version without fear of tautology. Luminescent chords with additive harmonies lend an opulence to the tonality. Solo voices emerge from the texture from time to time, advancing the rhetoric. Nixon's sure footing with part writing allows her to move through some spicy harmonies with absolute logic. The setting is only slightly longer than more straight-forward versions, yet it feels much more substantial. The parts divide, requiring sufficient voices to balance and blend, yet the ranges and demands are modest.

Tarik O'Regan. *Tell Me*, SSA, unacc. (Novello/Hal Leonard, 1000262018, 2014), 2 pp., \$1.70.

Tarik O'Regan's song cycle *Now Fatal Change* for counter-tenor and violin sets *The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation* by seventeenth-century poet Nahum Tate. O'Regan arranged the first movement for three solo voices or SSA chorus, gently referencing the violin writing in wordless lines while preserving the vocal solo melody intact. The atmospheric text, consisting only of "Tell me, some pitying angel, quickly say, Where does my soul's sweet darling stay, In tiger's, or more cruel Herod's way?" does not immediately suggest liturgical use, yet as part of a larger Advent context (and with some explanation), it could be an evocative contribution by advanced treble voices.

Instrumental Music Reviews

BRIAN P. HARLOW

David Briggs. *Variations on Veni Creator Spiritus* (2016 Birnamwood Publications, a division of MorningStar Music Publishers, Inc., MSM-10-028), 31 pp., \$17.00.

The Chenault organ duet series presents works by distinguished contemporary composers that were commissioned by Raymond and Elizabeth Chenault. This month we take a look at two recent examples, the first of which is this set of brief variations by the British organist David Briggs, now a resident of the United States and Artist-in-Residence at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York. This fine work takes its inspiration from the twentieth-century French school. The duet scoring allows for additional melodic lines without an increase in difficulty. For example, in *Variation 1 – Intermezzo*, Player Two plays the melody on a solo trumpet in dotted half notes while playing freely moving dotted quarter notes in the pedal. At the same time, Player One plays a scherzo-like melody and accompaniment with running eighth and quarter notes. Essentially, Player One is playing in simple meter and Player Two in compound meter. While this would be somewhat challenging for a single organist, it is quite easy when the music is divided between two performers. The five-part counterpoint in *Variation 6 – Ricercare* can easily be played on five different registrations, by virtue of having two players, although the performance requires a four-manual organ to obtain this effect. In *Variation 4 – Fanfare sur les Jeux d'Anches* and *Variation 5 – Scherzo*, the two players explore dialogue effects between manuals and registers. *Variation 7* is a two-part invention for the pedals alone with one player per part. Assuming

the players can agree on a tempo and bench height, it is both accessible and impressive. The *Final* recalls the final variation of Durufle's famous *Choral varié sur le thème du "Veni Creator"* composition on the same theme, using similar rhythmic figures. This is a lush and complex recital piece on a well-known theme that will keep an audience engaged through its quickly changing timbres.

Bruce Neswick. *Toccata* (2017 Birnamwood Publications, a division of MorningStar Music Publishers, Inc., MSM-10-687), 18 pp., \$12.00.

AAM colleague Bruce Neswick composed this organ duet for the Chenaults and it is also published as part of the Chenault organ duet series. A sophisticated work in the octatonic mode, the *Toccata* is largely monothematic, using a theme with a very narrow compass. Although it is not a complete quotation, the theme begins with the same intervals as the Easter chant *Haec dies*. The *Toccata* is notable for its strong rhythmic drive created by an energetic alternation between groups of two and three in free meter. The opening theme is foreshadowed in diminution during this rhythmic opening, after which it is repeated with the main theme floating above. A fanfare-dialogue motif provides contrast, though is also based on the same theme. Subsequently this entire block of music is presented a minor third higher. A *subito piano* suspended minor third announces the B section. This section begins gently with a freely chromatic duet by Player One accompanied by triads from Player Two after which the main theme enters in the pedals on a 4' Principal. The next section is distinct in having running sixteenth and eighth notes in a consistent meter, contrasting with the rest of the piece. During this section the main theme is played with staccato block chords underneath by Player Two while Player One continues with the running chromatic motives. An acceleration and *crescendo* followed by a brief pedal flourish leads to the telescoped recapitulation of the opening section in the original key and moving quickly to a coda with exciting pedal flourishes. This

is an engaging and energetic recital piece for organ duet, distinguished by powerful rhythm and a creative use of the octatonic mode. The registration scheme is relatively simple and calls for four manuals and a solo reed, though it could easily be modified for smaller organs. Neswick has a fluent style of composition and, while the tonal language is contemporary, audiences should connect with the exciting rhythms and be able to follow the main theme easily.

Myron Roberts. *Church Sonata for Piano and Organ* (2017 Paraclete Press PPM01701), 16 pp., \$11.25.

Originally entitled *Centennial Music for the Church of St. John the Baptist*, this piece was composed in 1989 when Roberts was a communicant of St. John the Baptist in Capitola, California. Written to celebrate the centennial of the church, it was first performed on the small six-rank organ there. The work is definitely not limited by these humble origins, however, and would be quite effective with instruments of all sizes. The first movement is in a clear ABA form and the themes are made up of short motives. The themes interlock between organ and piano, creating a wonderful interplay of timbres. The exuberant prelude is followed by a meditative second movement, *Communion*, free in style and tonality. The third movement, *Postlude*, is based on the Gregorian *Ite, missa est* and frames a central fugato with bold fanfare motifs. The style of the outer movements is characterized by bold harmonic shifts, parallel triads, and open fifths.

Myron Roberts (1912-2004) was a California native who later returned there after a thirty-four year career teaching at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. He was recognized during his lifetime as a composer of organ works, including *Hommage to Perotin* (1956), *Pastorale and Aviary* (1969), and *Fanfare and Tuckets* (1991). We should be grateful to editor Anthony Antolini, with whom Roberts developed a close friendship in retirement, for bringing this unpublished work to light and basing it on the original manuscript. Its brevity and clarity of form commend it to the attention of musicians who enjoy the combination of organ and piano.

Recording Reviews

MARJORIE JOHNSTON

Tell of His Love. The Choirs of the Cathedral of St. John, Albuquerque, New Mexico; Maxine Thévenot, Director of Cathedral Music & Organist; Edmund Connolly, Assistant Organist-Choir Director (Raven OAR-144, 2017; Peter Nothnagle, Recording Engineer and Editing; William T. Van Pelt, Executive Producer), \$15.98 www.ravencd.com; \$18.98, Amazon Prime.

There is much to appreciate in this 2017 release from Raven Compact Discs: the high quality of each ensemble and artist, the great diversity in its 20 tracks, the concise yet informative liner notes, among other things. There is no dip in quality as the performing forces change from full Cathedral Choir, to Cathedral Chamber Choir, to Select ATB, to either organist, to the excellent Cathedral Choristers. I especially liked *O Lord of Life*, a shape-note melody set for youth choir and organ by Australian-Canadian composer Barrie Cabena. The choristers sing right in the center of the pitch and are unafraid as they approach the upper range. Their diction and breathing are precise and musical in this strophic setting with the organ providing harmonic variety.

AAM member, Canon Dr. Maxine Thévenot, has been with the Cathedral Chorister program since its inception in 2006, taking over fully in 2009. Her experience with girl and boy choirs in Canada and in New York and other East Coast cities is highly valued in Albuquerque, where she is providing enviable opportunities for her younger singers, and she wisely makes use of those willing to sing solos. Abby Clarke delivers the ideal sound for Simon Lindley's *Ave Maria*, and

Jordyn Tatum is featured frequently throughout the recording. There is a James Gibson arrangement of *Brother James' Air* on which Miss Tatum and Iris Thornton-Gonzalez are soloists. A trap door may swallow me up as I confess that I'm tired of the tune, but I got past that to discover that these girls have clearly developed their intuitive vocal skill through their work with Dr. Thévenot. All three chorister soloists are a pleasure to listen to.

The CD opens with Thévenot playing a premiere recording of Denis Bédard's Variations on *Ubi Caritas*, a work commissioned by the Sewanee Church Music Conference. It is dedicated to Robert Delcamp, the legendary and recently retired Organist and Choirmaster at Sewanee, The University of the South. The variations last about six minutes and would make a fine addition to a church organist's library. The opening is lush and warm with some creative harmonic ideas decorating the familiar chant tune. My favorite section was the second variation, which manages to be simultaneously perky and subdued. The Oboe 8' is highlighted here on the Reuter Organ, Op. 2202—which, incidentally, is one of Reuter's flagship instruments in the Southwest. The last variation returns to the more familiar legato style associated with the melody.

Ola Gjeilo's *Ubi caritas* is next on the disc and though it's an original chant tune, the composer followed Durufle's form and dynamic patterns while deftly alternating between F-sharp minor and A major.

Thévenot chose to feature four compositions by her former mentor, McNeil Robinson, on this recording. The two met in 1998 at the AGO Convention in Denver, and she then pursued her graduate degree with him at the Manhattan School of Music. "I owe a lot to him because he pushed me in all the right ways and in all the right directions," she said in a phone interview. Of course AAM members know of Robinson's contributions to the Service Music portion of *The Hymnal 1982*, and he wrote the lovely and under-used hymn tune HAMPTON for "While shepherds watched their flocks by night" (Hymn 95). I was enchanted by Robinson's *O Sacrum Convivium*. It presents a very

sophisticated unison melody with organ accompaniment that Thévenot aptly describes as “harmonically adventurous.” Interesting that the same adjectives can be used to describe Robinson’s *Improperium*, even though the piece is significantly different from *O Sacrum*. To my ear, the organ is the star here, virtually accompanied by plaintive vocal writing for the heartbreaking Latin text, translated:

My heart expected reproach and misery and I desired one who would grieve with me and there was none: I sought one to console me, and I found none: and they gave me gall as my food, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

A completely different style is employed on *Haec Dies* as it “alternates plainchant passages with an ebullient, triple-time refrain.” The fourth Robinson work is a chorale prelude on LLANFAIR, masterfully played by Thévenot and showing the versatility of the organ with muted and gentle registrations. I think that parishioners would relish hearing this as a prelude during the Easter season.

There are works on the disc that many church musicians might consider “rep,” including George Dyson’s *Praise*, sung by the Cathedral Choristers; and Pablo Casals’ *O vos omnes*, on which the Cathedral Choir models a well-balanced choral sound in all configurations of voices and ranges. The acoustical environment of the Cathedral of St. John doesn’t hurt, but one can tell that the choir does not have to rely on it for its sonority. Thévenot pointed out that the acoustics of the space change seasonally. She has found it best to record in May and June since “the stone of the cathedral sings best when there is a little extra humidity” as Albuquerque approaches its monsoon season.

I very much enjoyed Kenneth Leighton’s *Fanfare*, played with great energy and panache by the Cathedral of St. John’s multi-talented Assistant Organist and Thévenot’s husband, Edmund Connolly. The pair also makes up the professional duo “Air & Hammers,” featuring Connolly as baritone soloist, and Thévenot at the piano or organ. This summer they will

perform in Great Britain the week before the cathedral choirs’ residency at Wells Cathedral.

The seven recordings these ensembles have made over recent years are viewable at www.ravencd.com/merchantmanager/index.php?cPath=24&page=1; they are felt to be an important documentation of what the musical community has been and is now capable of doing. Their director added, “Something tangible for folks to take home is a part of our community outreach.”

One more positive observation: in the liner notes there is a grouping of “session photos” showing the musicians at work and at rest. Seeing these candid pictures reminds us of what a joy it is to sing in a choir, and how important it is to include every generation in a church music program. Pictures don’t lie, and it’s evident that these people enjoy each other and delight in being a part of their choir family. The disc is dedicated to a beloved member of that family, Lee J. Rickard, who died just a few months after the recording was made. Not every church music program of this class and scope willingly shows its heart or its convivial side; it’s a refreshing touch, and was the “cherry on top” of this exceptional CD.

Requiescat in pace

C. Thomas Rhoads



C. Thomas Rhoads, 86, of San Clemente, California, died on March 11, 2018. Born March 27, 1931, he enjoyed a 65-year career as an organist and choirmaster in Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Burlingame, and San Francisco, California, and also in Honolulu. He taught in the Las Lomitas School District for over 30 years. Rhoads was a Life Member of AAM.

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*I was glad when they said unto me,
Let us go into the house of the Lord.*



*San Antonio,
Texas*