

THE CATHEDRAL OF SAINT PAUL

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

CHORAL CONCERT: THE CATHEDRAL CHOIR

WITH COLIN ALEXANDER, BARITONE

BRUCE LUDWICK, JR., CONDUCTOR AND ORGAN

TYLER CANONICO, ORGAN AND CONDUCTOR

MAY 31, 2015 AT 4:00PM



MESSE 'CUM JUBILO', Op. 11

MAURICE DURUFLÉ

(1902-1986)

- I. KYRIE
- II. GLORIA
- III. SANCTUS
- IV. BENEDICTUS
- V. AGNUS DEI

MISSA SINCERE IN MEMORIAM, Op. 187

JOSEF RHEINBERGER

(1839-1901)

- I. KYRIE
- II. GLORIA
- IV. SANCTUS
- V. BENEDICTUS
- VI. AGNUS DEI

FIVE MYSTICAL SONGS

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

(1872-1958)

- I. EASTER
- II. I GOT ME FLOWERS
- III. LOVE BADE ME WELCOME
- IV. THE CALL
- V. ANTIPHON

ABOUT THIS EVENING'S REPERTOIRE

Welcome! This afternoon's program is presented as a gift to the community: we are very happy that you are here! The majority of the concert is made up of the most important liturgical texts of Christianity, the Mass "Ordinary". They are said or sung at every Mass and have been set to music for well over a thousand years. Therefore, it is no surprise that they have inspired such beautiful and diverse settings. The two Masses presented today are contrasting yet complementary settings. Maurice Duruflé was one of the greatest French organists and composers of the 20th Century. Growing up in the choir of Rouen Cathedral, Duruflé received a thorough grounding in Gregorian chant, piano, and organ. These influences would inform his entire compositional (*cont.*)

output. Enormously self-critical, his small body of work is of extremely high quality. Duruflé's Masses prominently feature chant melodies, which is perhaps unsurprising as he grew up during the ascent of the Liturgical Movement in the Catholic Church. In the case of today's Mass, it uses the eponymous setting ('Cum iubilo') of Mass IX, appointed to feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Kyriele. Duruflé treats the chant with great subtlety: it is really not possible to perform this Mass well without knowledge of Gregorian chant and its *chironomy* (or conducting). Even Duruflé's way of barring rhythms is fascinating and idiomatic. Movements range from tranquil (*Kyrie*) to exuberant (*Gloria*) to mysterious (*Agnus Dei*). There is a marked shift to a more subdued mood during the movements (*Sanctus, Benedictus, and Agnus Dei*) which occur during the Canon of the Mass. One understands that Duruflé sees, as did the Second Vatican Council in its document *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, his settings of the Ordinary as part of the liturgical action—neither submissive or overbearing, but open to the action of the Holy Spirit himself. Even the solo section of the *Gloria* and the only solo movement (the *Benedictus*) are modest and understated, elegant rather than overly emotional. This Mass is Duruflé's compositional ethos at its purest.

Josef Rheinberger wrote in a totally different idiom in 19th Century Germany. Around this time, the awakenings of a chant movement (that would eventually give birth to the Liturgical Movement itself) were stirring in Catholic Germany. Heavily secularized music and the influence of the Lutheran chorale was giving way to a renewed appreciation of Gregorian chant. Rheinberger, born in Liechtenstein, eventually became court music director for Ludwig II of Bavaria in Munich as well as professor at the Munich Conservatory. A musician with a tremendously varied career, Rheinberger gained renown for his church compositions, but along the way also prepared the premiere of a Wagner opera (*Tristan*), among other things, and became the central figure in German Catholic church music of the late 19th Century. He was a much better composer than the figures of the Caecilian movement in Germany (with whom he is often uncharitably lumped.) He also refused to take sides for or against Wagner's work. This won him Brahms' admiration, and the *Mass Op. 187* is one of the fruits of this admiration. Written in memory of Brahms, one sees relatively little of his influence: this piece is pure Rheinberger, even if it's a more harmonically adventuresome Rheinberger. Instead, one hears a great deal of Bach (a common influence of both Brahms and Rheinberger) and Rheinberger's incredible lyric gift. Known today mostly as an organist, his Masses are a reminder that his gift for vocal texture was formidable. The *Kyrie* is a perfect exposition, while the *Gloria*'s mood is more jaunty and varied—with a conclusion straight out of film music, it would seem, as minor suddenly is exchanged for major! The *Sanctus* and *Benedictus* have a pastoral mood (imagine the Alps!) with dialogue between the voices and an exploitation of scales that sounds gorgeous in the cathedral's acoustic. The *Agnus Dei* is very contrapuntal, but deploys imitation in such a way that it maintains a very lyric quality. This assimilation of techniques shows why Rheinberger was so highly respected in his time. He maintained cordial relationships with the major musicians of his time, including Liszt, and was coveted as a teacher. Through his American pupils, especially Horatio Parker, he had a huge influence on the generally Germanic trajectory of composition in American art music in the late 19th— and early 20th Centuries.

A major influence to this day in Anglophone sacred music is Ralph Vaughan Williams. It is ironic that someone who identified as an atheist (eventually progressing to at least agnosticism) had such a gift for composing sacred music! His *Five Mystical Songs* are one of his most frequently performed works being, as they are, adaptable to seemingly any instrumentation and a wide variety of choral forces. Written to texts by the 17th Century British clergyman George Herbert, they are evocative and adventuresome without departing from Christian orthodoxy. The mood here is clearly Easter, as is made explicit in the title of the first movement. The idea of all voices, even all things, giving glory to God is echoed in the way Williams deploys the choir as an accent to the soloist's (*cont.*)

various texts, eventually culminating in a joining of forces, imploring the Holy Spirit to fill in our defects with “his sweet art”. Harkening back to the Good Friday hymn *Cruce Fidelis*, the second movement explores how even the wood of the Holy Cross is alive through the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. This life is sustained in his Church and through its members. The very personal nature of the poetry here is all focused toward a universal truth: Easter Day and the Resurrection (“*Can there be any day but this... There is but One...*”) The third movement is a particularly moving exposition of the unworthiness of the believer (in his own eyes) and his reconciliation with God through recognition of sin (and subsequent repentance). The believer, after accepting the yoke of service, is invited to a clearly Eucharistic feast; after all, the accompaniment is none other than the Corpus Christi hymn of St. Thomas Aquinas, *O Sacrum Convivium*. The fourth movement is immediately familiar to many in its hymn form, “Come my way, my truth, my life” (THE CALL). The solo version is more exciting due to its sudden modulation, eventually returning to a peaceful conclusion. The final movement, *Antiphon*, is for chorus only and reflects the truth that all things on Earth were created to praise the Holy Trinity. Today’s feast is exactly this: a reminder of the focal point of our prayer over the next few months, the Blessed Trinity. Thank you for your attendance today!

THE CATHEDRAL CHOIR

BRUCE LUDWICK, JR., DIRECTOR OF MUSIC AND ORGANIST

TYLER CANONICO, ASSISTANT ORGANIST

COLIN ALEXANDER
JEANNE AVERHART (*Choir Librarian*)
ANN CONGER
RODNEY DAVIDSON
MANDY DONALDSON
TERRI DORMAN
LINDA KAY

CHRISTINA KERPER
JOHN KERPER
MICHAEL KERPER
VIRGINIA MARTIN
TERRI MCCLUNG
PITTMAN OWEN
JOSEPH SARGENT

AMANDA TAPLEY
ANDERS THOMPSON
STEPHEN VINSAVICH
JIRI VLACH
DOROTHY WELCH
JAMES WELCH
ZOE WIRT

Möller Op. 11682 (1985) 4 manuals, 55 ranks

Great	Swell	Positive	Pedal	Fanfare
16 Violone	16 Rohrbass (ext.)	8 Holzgedeckt	32 Untersatz (ext.)*	8 Festival Trumpet
8 Principal	8 Spitzprincipal	8 Gemshorn	16 Principal	Chimes
8 Harmonic Flute	8 Rohrflöte	8 Gemshorn Celeste	16 Violone (Gt.)	
8 Violone (ext.)	8 Viole	4 Principal	16 Subbass	
4 Octave	8 Viole Celeste	4 Koppelflöte	16 Rohrbass (Sw.)	
4 Waldflöte	4 Octave	2 Octave	8 Octave	
2 Super Octave	4 Spitzflöte	1 1/3 Quint	8 Hohlflöte	
Cornet II (TC)	2 2/3 Nazard	Zimbel III-V	8 Rohrflöte (Sw.)	
Mixture III-V	2 Blockflöte	8 Krummhorn	4 Choral Bass	
8 Trompete	1 3/5 Terz		4 Hohlflöte (ext.)	
	Plein Jeu III-V		Mixture IV	
	16 Contra Hautbois (ext.)**		32 Contre Bombarde (ext.)**	
	8 Trompette		16 Bombarde	
	8 Hautbois		16 Contre Hautbois (Sw.)	
	4 Clairon (ext.)		8 Trompette (ext.)	
			4 Hautbois (Sw.)	

*To FFFF; CCCC-EEEE resultant

** Half-length

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THE CATHEDRAL OF SAINT PAUL

2120 3RD AVENUE NORTH

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA 35203

WWW.STPAULSBHM.ORG 205.251.1279

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SUNDAY MASSES

SATURDAY 5:00PM (ANTICIPATED), SUNDAY 8:30 & 11:00AM

WEEKDAY MASSES

MONDAY-FRIDAY, 6:30AM & 12:10PM

CONFESSIONS

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