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Hear My Prayer

Choral Music of the English Romantics

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: MASS IN G MINOR
STANFORD: THREE MOTETS OP.38
PARRY: SONGS OF FAREWELL

HIS MAJESTY'S CLERKS
ANNE HEIDER, DIRECTOR

ENGLISH ROMANTIC CHORAL MUSIC**Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)****Mass in G Minor (1922) (22:30)**

- | | | | | | |
|---|--------|--------|---|-----------|--------|
| 1 | Kyrie | (3:46) | 4 | Sanctus | (4:15) |
| 2 | Gloria | (3:58) | 5 | Agnus Dei | (3:43) |
| 3 | Credo | (6:29) | | | |

Charles Villiers Stanford (1852–1924)**Three Motets, Op. 38 (1905) (8:42)**

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------|--------|
| 6 | I. Justorum Animae | (2:59) |
| 7 | II. Coelos Ascendit Hodie | (1:57) |
| 8 | III. Beati Quorum Via | (3:35) |

Hubert Parry (1848–1918)**Songs of Farewell (1918) (27:05)**

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|----|--|--------|
| 9 | I. My soul, there is a country | (3:05) |
| 10 | II. I know my soul hath power to know all things | (1:44) |
| 11 | III. Never weather-beaten sail | (2:51) |
| 12 | IV. There is an old belief | (3:28) |
| 13 | V. At the round earth's imagined corners | (6:21) |
| 14 | VI. Lord, let me know mine end | (9:13) |

HIS MAJESTIE'S CLERKES**Anne Heider, Director****TT: (58:39)**

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HEAR MY PRAYER — CHORAL MUSIC OF THE ENGLISH ROMANTICS

Notes by Anne Heider

What makes a 20th-century composer “romantic”? One of the hallmarks of romanticism is a preference for the distant over the immediate past as source material for new artistic creation. By deploying the forms, structural principles, and even some of the melodic idioms of plainchant and 16th-century polyphony, Vaughan Williams’s Mass in G minor qualifies, even though its essential voice is of the 20th century.

The first performance, by the City of Birmingham Choir under Joseph Lewis in 1922, drew critics’ fire: “Have there since [ninth century composer] Hucbald been so manzy consecutive fifths in a Mass?” huffed the *Musical Times*. Sir Richard Terry, who with his Westminster Cathedral Choir led the English revival of a capella singing, gave the Mass its first liturgical performance in 1923 and defended the work as “one of the greatest choral works of the century,” praising its fiery intensity and devotional spirit.

Vaughan Williams conceived the piece in terms of its liturgical function. In this succinct setting, the composer uses deceptively simple means — haunting modal melodies, luminous triadic harmonies, and fluid, sensitive rhythms — to reveal and heighten the drama inherent in each of the five ancient texts. By bringing back in the

final movement the opening melody of the first (at the words *miserere nobis*, which like *Kyrie eleison* are a prayer for forgiveness), Vaughan Williams creates a satisfying sense of wholeness and completion.

“Stanford was a great teacher,” said Vaughan Williams, “and like all great teachers he was narrow-minded. A broad-minded teacher is useless.”

A brilliant musician with apparently boundless energy, Charles Villiers Stanford became Organist of Trinity College at Cambridge while still an undergraduate, and also directed two musical societies in Cambridge. He was the principal composition teacher at the Royal College of Music from its opening in 1883, and was elected Professor of Music at Cambridge in 1887 (he held both posts until his death). He directed the London Bach Choir from 1885 to 1902 and the Leeds Festival from 1901 to 1910.

His students “smarted initially under the intolerant, autocratic lash of damning criticism of slovenliness, vulgarity, dubious material or workmanship, vagueness of attitude and the like; all acknowledged his ability to seize on the solution to every technical difficulty, and testified to the effectiveness and lasting worth of such teaching” (Frederick Hudson). Vaughan

Williams, Holst, Coleridge-Taylor, Ireland, Bridge, Bliss, and Howells are among the many British composers who bloomed under Stanford's tuition. His long list of works touches virtually every genre of classical composition including liturgical music and opera.

Charles Hubert Hastings Parry was an influential music educator and administrator as well as an eminent composer. He became Director of the Royal College of Music in 1894; six years later he was appointed Professor of Music at Oxford. His leadership and demand for higher standards helped free British musical life from unthinking deference to Continental composers and ushered in the second English Renaissance in music. He accepted perhaps too many festival commissions for oratorios and choruses, with predictable and occasionally perfunctory results; but when he composed for himself, the solid craftsmanship

of his writing was illuminated by genuine artistry.

His most inspired and most personal music is contained in the six unaccompanied motets, completed in 1918, *Songs of Farewell*. Parry worked and reworked the motets intensively from 1913 through 1915. They were premiered in somewhat piecemeal fashion in 1916 and 1917 by Sir Hugh Allen and the Bach Choir. But the composer never heard them sung as an entire set; that did not occur until a memorial concert in 1919. The motets have a crescendo of texture, from four parts in the opening work, to five, six, seven, and finally eight parts in the last, and a concomitant crescendo of emotional intensity, culminating in the anguished searching of Psalm 39. Parry's choice of texts reveals a crisis of faith (he was deeply disillusioned by the First World War); his settings illuminate the universality and emotional depth of these



Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958): *Mass in G minor* (1922)

soloists: Susan Piggott, soprano; Evelyn Wagner, alto;
Randolph Petilos, tenor; Donald Klingelhoef, bass

Kyrie eleison

Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison.

Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy.

Gloria

Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis. Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te, glorificamus te. Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam. Domine Deus, Rex cælestis, Deus Pater omnipotens, Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. Qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram. Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis. Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe. Cum Sancto Spiritu, in gloria Dei Patris, Amen.

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth. We praise you, we bless you, we worship you, we glorify you. We give thanks to you for your great glory. Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father. Lord Jesus Christ, only begotten son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, who takes away the sin of the world, have mercy on us. You take away the sin of the world; hear our prayer. You are seated at the right hand of the Father; have mercy on us. For you alone are holy, you alone are Lord, you alone are the most high, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father, Amen.

Credo

Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, factorem cæli et terræ, visibilium omnium et invisibilium. Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum. Et ex Patre natum ante omnia sæcula. Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero. Genitum non factum, consubstantialem Patri, per quem omnia facta sunt. Qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem descendit de cælis. Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine; Et homo factus est. Crucifixus etiam pro nobis; sub Pontio Pilato passus et sepultus est. Et resurrexit tertia die, secundum Scripturas. Et ascendit in cælum, sedet ad dexteram Patris. Et iterum

I believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen. I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, one in being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven. By the power of the Holy Spirit he was born of the Virgin Mary and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered, died and was buried. On the third day he rose again, in fulfillment of the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and

venturus est, cum gloria iudicare vivos et mortuos; cuius regni non erit finis. Et in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum, et vivificantem; qui ex Patre Filioque procedit. Qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur et conglorificatur. Qui locutus est per Prophetas. Et unam sanctam catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam. Confiteor unum baptismum in remissionem peccatorum. Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum. Et vitam venturi sæculi.
Amen.

Sanctus, Benedictus

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth, pleni sunt cæli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis. Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.

Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.

is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Sabaoth, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924): Three Motets, Opus 38 (1905)

Justorum animae; Wisdom 3: 1-3

Justorum animae in manu Dei sunt, et non
tanget illos tormentum malitiae.

Visi sunt oculis insipientium mori, illi autem
sunt in pace.

The souls of the just are in the hand of
God, and the torment of malice shall not
touch them; in the sight of the unwise they
seemed to die, but they are in peace.

Coelos ascendit hodie; Anonymous, 15th century, Mainz

Coelos ascendit hodie
Jesus Christus Rex gloriae!
Sedet ad Patris dexteram,
gubernet cœlum et terram.
Jam finent habent omnia,
Patris Davidus carmina.
Jam Dominus cum Domino.
Sedet in Dei solio

In hoc triumpho maximo.
Benedicamus Domino:
Laudatur Sancta Trinitas,
Deo discamus gratias.
Alleluia! Amen.

Today Jesus Christ, the King of glory, has

ascended into the heavens!
He sits at the Father's right hand,
ruling heaven and earth.
Now fulfilled
are David's songs,
now is the Lord with his Lord.
he sits upon the royal throne of God,
in this his greatest triumph.
Let us bless the Lord:
let the Holy Trinity be praised,
let us give thanks to the Lord.
Alleluia! Amen.

Beati quorum via; Psalm 118/119: 1

Beati quorum via integra est, qui ambulant
in lege Domini.

Blessed are they whose way is undefiled,
who walk in the law of the Lord.

Hubert Parry (1848-1918): Songs of Farewell

I. My soul, there is a country; Henry Vaughan (1622-1695)

My soul, there is a country
Far beyond the stars,
Where stands a winged sentry
All skillful in the wars:
There above noise and danger
Sweet Peace sits crowned with smiles
And One, born in a manger
Commands the beauteous files [i.e. ranks].
He is thy gracious friend
And, O my soul awake!

Did in pure love descend
To die here for thy sake.
If thou canst get but thither,
There grows the flow'r of Peace,
The Rose that cannot wither,
Thy fortress and thy ease.
Leave then thy foolish ranges,
For none can thee secure
But One who never changes,
Thy God, thy life, thy cure.

II. I know my soul hath power; Sir John Davies (1569-1626)

I know my soul hath power to know all things,
Yet she is blind and ignorant in all:
I know I'm one of Nature's little kings,
Yet to the least and vilest things am thrall.
I know my life's a pain and but a span;
I know my sense is mocked in ev'rything,
And, to conclude, I know myself a Man,
Which is a proud and yet a wretched thing.

III. Never weather-beaten sail; Thomas Campion (1567-1620)

Never weather-beaten sail more willing bent to shore,
Never tired pilgrim's limbs affected slumber more,
Than my wearied sprite now longs to fly out of my troubled breast:
O come quickly, sweetest Lord, and take my soul to rest.

Ever blooming are the joys of Heaven's high Paradise,
Cold age deafs not there our ears nor vapour dims our eyes:
Glory there the sun outshines whose beams the blessed only see:
O come quickly, glorious Lord, and raise my sprite to Thee!

IV. There is an old belief; John Gibson Lockhart (1794-1854)

There is an old belief,
That on some solemn shore
Beyond the sphere of grief,
Dear friends shall meet once more.
Beyond the sphere of Time
And Sin, and Fate's control,
Serene in changeless prime
Of body and of soul,
That creed I fain would keep,
That hope I'll ne'er forgo.
Eternal be the sleep,
If not to waken so.

V. At the round earth's imagined corners; John Donne (1572-1631)

At the round earth's imagined corners, blow
Your trumpets, Angels, and arise, arise
From death, you numberless infinities
Of souls, and to your scatter'd bodies go!
All whom the flood did and fire shall overthrow,
All whom war, dearth, age, agues, tyrannies,
Despair, law, chance hath slain; and you whose eyes
Shall behold God and never taste death's woe.

But let them sleep, Lord, and me mourn a space.
For, if above all these my sins abound,
'Tis late to ask abundance of Thy grace
When we are there. Here on this lowly ground,
Teach me how to repent, for that's as good
As if Thoud'st sealed by pardon with Thy blood.

VI. Lord, let me know mine end; Psalm 39: 4-13

Lord, let me know mine end and the number of my days, that I may be certified how long I have to live.

Thou hast made my days as it were a span long; and mine age is as nothing, in respect of Thee, and verily, every man living is altogether vanity.

For man walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain; he heapeth up riches and cannot tell who shall gather them.

And now, Lord, what is my hope? Truly my hope is even in Thee.

Deliver me from all mine offences and make me not a rebuke to the foolish.

I became dumb and opened not my mouth, for it was Thy doing.

Take Thy plague away from me, I am even consumed by means of Thy heavy hand.

When Thou with rebukes dost chasten man for sin, Thou makest his beauty to consume away like as it were a moth, fretting a garment; every man therefore is but vanity.

Hear my prayer, O Lord, and with Thine ears consider my calling, hold not thy peace at my tears! For I am a stranger with Thee and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.

O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength before I go hence,

And be no more seen.

His Majestie's Clerkes

Soprano:	Linda Dayiantis-Straub Christine Kelner Elena Kurth Dorothy Morris Susan Piggott Adriana Kopecka	Tenor:	Edward Bee Charles Blandy James Grober Jeffrey Hamrick Randolph Petilos Philip Seward
Alto:	Magda Krance Sonia Ness Catherine Schmidt Evelyn Wagner Virginia Warren Heidi Woll	Bass:	Paul Cox Robert Guenther Donald Klingelhoef Ian McCutcheon Eric Reese Anselm Soyring



His Majesty's Clerkes

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About the Performers

Since 1982 His Majestie's Clerkes has brought choral music, both familiar and unusual, to Illinois audiences in performances of the highest caliber. Although most of its repertory is a cappella, the group has enjoyed successful collaborations with period-instrument ensembles including the Newberry Consort, Orpheus Band, and Chicago Baroque Ensemble. His Majestie's Clerkes often commands sold-out houses for its concert series, now in its fifteenth year. The ensemble has also made guest appearances for the American Musicological Society, Performing Arts Chicago, Early Music from the Newberry Library, the American Choral Directors Association, and the Stratford-upon-Avon Music Festival.

His Majestie's Clerkes has brought to Chicago distinguished guest conductors Sir David Willcocks, Simon Preston, Paul Hillier, David Hill, and Alice Parker. The ensemble has been recorded for broadcast numerous times by Chicago Fine Arts Station WFMT-FM and by National Public Radio's "Performance Today." The Clerkes' recordings for the Centaur, Harmonia Mundi, and Narada Media labels have garnered widespread acclaim in national and international journals. The group has been a regular winner of grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Illinois Arts Council, and the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs.

A founding singer in His Majestie's Clerkes, Anne Heider became the group's Artistic Director in 1989. Heider's expertise in historical performance practices, a cappella repertory, and choral blend have shaped the ensemble's distinctive sound, which reviewers have described as "well-balanced and wonderfully phrased," "flawless," "mellifluous and heartfelt," and "heavenly."

Heider holds a B.A. in music history and theory from Wellesley College, an M.A. in musicology from New York University, and a D.M.A. in conducting from Stanford University. She is Associate Professor of Choral Music and Director of Choral Ensembles at Roosevelt University, where she teaches choral conducting and choral literature. Her research in early music has been supported by the Newberry Library, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and Roosevelt University.

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