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Editor's Note of Introduction

With this issue, I assume the editorship of the *American Choral Review*, following in the steps of notable choral musicians and scholars Arthur Mann, William Weinert, and James John. While living in Chicago in the early 90s, I had the opportunity to coach with one of my choral heroes, Margaret Hillis, from whom I had absorbed ideas of score preparation. She helped me prepare *The Creation* when a conductor for whom I accompanied suddenly became indisposed. As a result of working with her, I remember receiving my first copy of the journal in the mail in 1993, and being enthralled with the scholarly articles, the reviews of recordings, music, and concerts. Paired with the professional focus and advocacy of Chorus America, I appreciated the niche that this concise journal provided for focused choral research articles and reviews. And after reading it from cover to cover, I immediately looked forward to the next one. A few years later, I had the opportunity to meet Alfred Mann while studying with William Weinert during an Eastman Summer Session. I was so pleased to meet the founder of this journal, and also the person who trained one of my favorite musicology professors at Ithaca, a young Donald Boomgaarden. So, it is the great respect I have for Alfred Mann, William Weinert, and my colleague James John that compelled me to accept this position. I want to thank Jim and Bill for the years of detailed excellence and contributions to this journal and to the field of choral music research. I look forward to their continued guidance on the Editorial Board, along with the notable scholar and conductor David DeVenney at West Chester University, and musicologist Michael Alan Anderson at the Eastman School of Music. –*Timothy Newton*

Herbert Howells in America: Three Commissions[1]

Joseph Sargent

On October 30, 2009, the *New York Times* published an article describing a rare event in the city's musical history. Three performances of music by Herbert Howells were occurring in the span of two weeks, one each by the Trinity Choir, the choir and orchestra of St. Ignatius Loyola, and the St. Thomas Choir of Men and Boys. Though ostensibly highlighting the composer and his performances, the article trumpeted a different perspective in its lead. The headline bore the proclamation, "Little Known in America," and the story opened with the following sentences: "Few American concertgoers know his name, let alone his music. He does not benefit from blockbuster anniversary concerts commemorating his birth or death. The New York Philharmonic, according to its database, has never performed his music."[2]

In his native England, Herbert Howells (1892-1983) enjoys wide renown especially as a composer of Anglican hymns, anthems, and canticles. Americans who admire Howells' music can be quite passionate in their devotion as well. The secretary of the

[1] I am grateful to the University of Montevallo's Faculty Development Advisory Committee for its support of this project, as well as Simonne Ronk and Diane Nye for their assistance with research collections at Boston University and Washington National Cathedral, respectively.
[2] Daniel J. Wakin, "Little Known in America, an English Composer Finds a Bit of Spotlight," *New York Times*, October 30, 2009, accessed October 7, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/31/arts/music/31howells.html.

North American branch of the Herbert Howells Society, commenting in the same *New York Times* article mentioned above, remarked that, "if you're a Howells nut, you're really a nut."[3]

Little has been written about Howells' music as performed, heard, and critiqued in America. This may be due to an abiding sense that the composer's music is, as one observer has put it, "quintessentially English," unavoidably tied to the cultural and liturgical traditions of his homeland.[4] Research on Howells tends to accentuate his position within the pantheon of English composers from the later nineteenth century onward, the so-called "English Musical Renaissance," even as the most recent studies have endeavored to broaden our critical view of the composer and his music.[5] Howells himself spoke of an English quality present in several of his pieces, especially those derived from native folksong, so there is good reason for viewing the composer in this nationalist frame.[6] But this does not preclude him from gaining attention elsewhere in the world; one might argue that the very "Englishness" of Howells plays a substantial role in his appeal to some Americans, who look with a sense of fondness toward the British choral tradition.

This essay offers new perspectives on Howells' compositional activity in America by presenting three "case studies"—instances where Howells composed sacred works on commission from U.S. ecclesiastical institutions. They include a *Te Deum Laudamus* in 1966 for St. Paul's Chapel at Columbia University in New York; *Magnificat and Nunc dimittis* (Dallas Canticles) in 1975 for St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Dallas; and another *Te Deum Laudamus*, composed in 1977 for the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C.[7] It has been suggested that commissions were especially important in inspiring Howells toward the end of his career; in light of this, a commission-oriented approach might be especially useful in understanding Howells' reputation in America.[8] Howells generally became known as a composer of organ music and then of choral music, his works being performed first in concerts and then gradually within liturgical contexts of increasing importance. More broadly, the commissions illuminate two other trends that invite deeper consideration in future studies. First, American reception of Howells is often connected with larger questions of English music reception, particularly music from the Anglican tradition, which is valued especially for its "Englishness" (however that may be defined by those engaging with the repertory). And second, this reception is noticeably shaped by individual advocates, typically music directors at prominent Episcopal churches, rather than professional ensembles, or publishers. The story of Howells in America thus takes on a personal dimension, shaped to some degree by the energies of a few "explorers" who sought out new repertory for American use.

The *Te Deum Laudamus* for St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University

The *Te Deum Laudamus* for Columbia's St. Paul's Chapel was commissioned by Searle Wright, an organist and composer who served as its music director from 1952 to 1971.[9] Wright held a lasting friendship with Howells, having first met the composer during a visit to England in 1957, and he became a strong

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[3] Wakin, "Little Known in America."

[4] Richard George Marshall, "The career and reputation of Herbert Howells" (master's thesis, Durham University, 2005), 10, 16. In a related vein, Christopher Palmer has observed a Celtic spirit which "implies a certain dreaminess, a remoteness, a feeling for poetic nuance, for texture, for sensuous beauty of sound: we might even sum it up as an *enhanced musicality*." See Palmer, *Herbert Howells: A Centenary Celebration*, 2nd ed. (London: Thames, 1996), 136.

[5] The primary biographical studies of Howells include Palmer, *Herbert Howells: A Centenary Celebration* and his e*arlier Herbert Howells: A Study* (Sevenoaks: Novello, 1978), as well as Paul Spicer, *Herbert Howells* (Bridgend, Wales: Seren, 1998). A valuable recent collection with several new analytical insights is Phillip A. Cooke and David Maw, ed., *The Music of Herbert Howells* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2013). Other important documentary and musical studies include Paul Andrews, "Herbert Howells: A Documentary and Bibliographic Study" (PhD diss., University of Wales, Aberystwyth, 1999) and Peter Hodgson, "The Music of Herbert Howells" (PhD diss., University of Colorado, 1970).

For particular references to Howells' "Englishness" see 'The Construction of Herbert Howells' Englishness' in Marshall, "The career and reputation of Herbert Howells," 38-59.

[6] To offer one example: of his 1925 cantata *Sir Patrick Spens*, based on a Scottish ballad, Howells said that it was "absolutely British in idiom; definitely planned to make, as far as possible, an absolute union of feeling and expression between the Border Ballad and the Music." Unpublished note, undated, Howells Estate; cited in Marshall, "The career and reputation of Herbert Howells," 44.

[7] Another North American commission, for a joint American-Canadian memorial service, is the famous anthem *Take him, earth, for cherishing*, composed in 1964 to commemorate the death of John F. Kennedy and premiered at Washington Cathedral. It is not discussed in this article since it has already been studied at length in other sources. For more on the circumstances surrounding this piece see Spicer, *Herbert Howells*, pp. 172-73. For a more detailed background and analyses of this anthem, see Martin John Ward, "Analysis of Five Works by Herbert Howells with Reference to Features of the Composer's Style" (master's thesis, University of Birmingham, 2005), 106-26 and Lionel Pike, "Howells and Counterpoint," in Cooke and Maw, *The Music of Herbert Howells*, 23-36.

[8] See David A. Bower, "The Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis Settings of Herbert Howells" (master's thesis, University of Cincinnati, 1991), p. 71.

[9] Herbert Howells, *Te Deum Laudamus* (London: Novello & Co., 1992), #NOV290667. Recordings include "Praise the Lord: Music from St. Thomas's, Fifth Avenue," Choir of St. Thomas Fifth Avenue, New York, conducted by Gerre Hancock, Argo 4258002, 1990, CD; and "The Complete Morning & Evening Services of Herbert Howells, Volume 5," The Collegiate Singers, Andrew Millinger, conductor, Priory Records PRCD784, 2005, CD.

advocate of both Howells and his British contemporaries. Among other things, Wright regularly attended England's annual Three Choirs Festival—the oldest music festival in the world, and a bastion for premieres of new English choral works—which fueled his desire to program these new pieces himself in New York.[10]

His earliest interest in Howells seems to have focused on the composer's organ music.[11] A variety of correspondence, notes, and chapel service programs from Wright's personal papers suggests that Wright held an abiding interest in Howells, dating from as early as the 1940s.[12] It is natural that Wright, himself a young and ambitious organist at the time, would be introduced to Howells through his organ music. But a survey of service and concert programs from Columbia reveals that this early exposure did not immediately lead him to become a public advocate of the repertory. During Wright's early tenure at Columbia, Howells' organ music was rarely heard; those performing it were primarily visiting organists who played it in recitals. But starting in 1957 with *A Spotless Rose*, Columbia's chapel choir began singing Howells in its annual fall concerts [See Table 1]. The repertory emphasized American premieres of music by contemporary British composers, a special priority for Wright.[13] Wright conducted three American premieres by Howells, in successive seasons, including *The House of the Mind, An English Mass,* and *Coventry Antiphon*. This was part of a larger plan, including an additional annual series of spring choral concerts organized by Wright, to bring new English music to the American public, though at this point Howells was not yet being performed in the context of liturgy.

Table 1.
Performances of Howells' music at St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, 1952-71[1]

Season	**Performances** (*Liturgical presentations are in bold.)*
1954-55	*Rhapsody, Op. 17, No. 1* Joan Cartwright, Organist and Choirmaster, Church of St. James the Less, Scarsdale, NY October 26
1957-58	*Prelude on Psalm 23* John Ferris, Organist and Choirmaster, First Methodist Church, Red Bank, NJ November 14 *A Spotless Rose* Christmas Candlelight Service (lessons and carols service), The Choir of St. Paul's Chapel December 19 *Rhapsody No. 3* Allen Sever, Organist and Choirmaster, West End Collegiate Church, New York City March 18

[1] Only years with performances of Howells' music are included from this chart. All choir performances are conducted by Searle Wright.

[10] As Andrew Kotylo notes, "Wright was enthusiastic in his zeal to get some of these works before the New York public, and a good number of the American premieres that he gave at Columbia were of pieces that had seen their first performances at the Three Choirs Festival only months before." See Kotylo, "M. Searle Wright (1918-2004): A Life in Music" (DM diss., Indiana University, 2010), 184.

[11] Numerous studies (especially graduate dissertations and theses) have been devoted to Howells' organ music, including Donald James Grice, "Rhapsody in the Organ Works of Herbert Howells" (DMA thesis, University of Arizona, 2008); John Nixon McMillan, "The Organ Works of Herbert Howells (1892-1983)" (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 1997); Wadham Sutton, "The Organ Music of Herbert Howells," *Musical Times* 112 (1971): 177-78; John T. King, "Herbert Howells: A Brief Biography and Survey of the Organ Works" (DMA thesis, Manhattan School of Music, 1989); Joyce Anne Schemanske, "The Organ Music of Herbert Howells as Influenced by the English Musical Renaissance" (DM thesis, Northwestern University, 1982); David Lynn Carnell, "The Solo Organ Works of Herbert Howells" (MCM thesis, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1974); and Barbara Jeanne Yin Mei Chong, "The Organ Works of Herbert Howells" (SMM thesis, Union Theological Seminary, 1967). More focused studies include Christopher Palmer, 'The Organ Music of Herbert Howells,' *Organists Review* 57 (1972): 10, 12-15; Larry Palmer, "Herbert Howells' *Lambert's Clavichord," The Diapason* 66 (1974): 7-8; Robin Wells, "Howells' Unpublished Organ Works," *The Musical Times* 128 (1987): 455-59; and Relf Clark, "The organ music of Herbert Howells: some general considerations," *R.C.O. Journal* 2 (1994): 43-57.

[12] Wright's personal papers are housed in the Searle Wright Collection of the Organ Library of the Boston chapter of the American Guild of Organists, at the School of Theology at Boston University. Looseleaf sheets of his repertory lists show organ works including the *Rhapsody* No. 1 and No. 2 and *Psalm Prelude* No. 2 and No. 3. Most of the sheets are undated, but those few containing dates are from 1944 and 1945.

[13] Kotylo, "M. Searle Wright," 116.

Season	**Performances** (*Liturgical presentations are in bold.)*
1958-59	*Six Pieces for Organ:* "Saraband—in Modo Elegiaco" (No. 5); "Preludio—Sine Nomine" (No. 1); "Paean" (No. 6) Peter Dickinson, Queens' College, Cambridge University March 19
1959-60	*The House of the Mind*, first American performance The Choir of St. Paul's Chapel and Instrumental Ensemble November 22
1960-61	*An English Mass (1955)*, first American performance The Choir of St. Paul's Chapel and String Orchestra from Juilliard and Manhattan Schools of Music November 20
1962-63	*Coventry Antiphon* The Choir of St. Paul's Chapel and Instrumental Ensemble November 18 *Paean* Joanne T. Harris, Organist-Choir Director, Bay Ridge Methodist Church, Brooklyn, NY March 28
1963-64	*Rhapsody in E* and *Master Tallis's Testament* Organ Recital by Sir William McKie November 19 *A Spotless Rose* Christmas Candlelight Service (lessons and carols service), The Choir of St. Paul's Chapel December 19
1965-66	*Master Tallis's Testament* Organ Recital by Noel Rawsthorne, Organist of Liverpool Cathedral April 6
1966-67	*Te Deum Laudamus* (Commission premiere) Choir of St. Paul's Chapel and Members of the Orchestra of Juilliard School of Music November 20 ***O, pray for the peace of Jerusalem*** **Mid-Lent Sunday, "Service of the Word" (Offertory Anthem), The Choir of St. Paul's Chapel** **March 5** ***Like as the hart*** **Ninth Sunday after Trinity, "Holy Communion and Sermon" (Offertory Anthem),** **The Choir of St. Paul's Chapel** **July 23**
1967-68	***Like as the hart*** **Eighth Sunday after Trinity (Offertory Anthem), The Choir of St. Paul's Chapel** **August 4**
1968-69	*Psalm Prelude No. 2, Set 1* Organ Recital by Searle Wright December 11 *Sing Lullaby* Christmas Candlelight Service (lessons and carols service), The Choir of St. Paul's Chapel December 19 ***Like as the hart*** **One week before Purification, two weeks before Sexagesima, "Morning Worship and Holy Communion" (Offertory Anthem)** **January 26**

Season	**Performances** (*Liturgical presentations are in bold.*)
1969-70*	*Sing Lullaby* Christmas Candlelight Service (lessons and carols service), The Choir of St. Paul's Chapel December 18 *The House of the Mind* Midwinter Concert, The Choir of St. Paul's Chapel March 8
1970-71*	*Sing Lullaby* Christmas Candlelight Service (lessons and carols service), The Choir of St. Paul's Chapel December 17

**Service bulletins were missing from the archives of Columbia University and the Searle Wright papers for 1969-70 and 1970-71, making liturgical performances of Howells' music impossible to determine.*

In a foreword to program notes from the Spring Festival Concert program of May 10, 1964, Wright addressed the cultural issue directly:

> The general aim in presenting these concerts has been to acquaint both audiences and performing forces with seldom-heard, first-rate music of a more or less direct type. That a large percentage of the works performed have been in English is not surprising when one considers that the greatest part of the liturgical music used in American Protestant churches is either borrowed from or stems quite directly from the English choral tradition. Whatever one may think or feel about the present state of English music, it cannot be seriously disputed that English composers (generally speaking) handle the choral idiom better than those of any other nationality. This fact is undoubtedly the result of the standards resulting from the long English choral tradition which stretches from the early Middle Ages in an unbroken line to this very day.[14]

Howells' music is valued not simply for its own sake, but as a representative of a vaunted cultural tradition—perhaps a classical analogue to The Beatles and the contemporaneous "British Invasion."[15]

In this context, the 1966 commission of *Te Deum Laudamus* was a watershed, culminating the existing interest in Howells and opening up opportunities for further positive reception. Wright envisioned the piece as the first in a series of commissions for St. Paul's Chapel, part of his ongoing program to raise the profile of British choral music in New York and beyond, though this series never gained momentum. Although the *Te Deum* is a cornerstone text sung in English during the Anglican service of Morning Prayer, its premiere took place in a concert rather than a service. In a letter to Howells, Wright stated, "I realize that the [*Te Deum*] is primarily liturgical music and not intended as a concert work, but I felt that this occasion would give many people an opportunity to hear it who would ordinarily not be able to attend a morning service. We shall, in due course, sing the [*Te Deum*] as you intended—at matins."[16] Wright's program note for the concert reveals that Howells wrote the piece "to fulfill a promise made to Mr. Wright over a year ago. The work was completed on September 5th of this year and (to quote Dr. Howells) is intended primarily as a setting for actual liturgical rather than concert use. The [*Te Deum*] is therefore performed at this concert in order to give many a opportunity to hear this striking music who would not ordinarily be able to be present at our service of matins."[17]

There is no evidence of the St. Paul choir ever singing the *Te Deum Laudamus* liturgically during Wright's tenure, though incomplete records of service leaflets from the early 1970s make it impossible to confirm this. Even so, the Howells commission does seem to have occasioned a change in how Columbia's chapel perceived the composer's music in terms of liturgy. An examination of the chapel's service leaflets show that on March 5, 1967, the Sunday before

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[14] Searle Wright, foreword to program notes, Spring Festival Concert program, St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, May 10, 1964.

[15] In view of Wright's particularly close friendship with Howells, one might have expected more of his music to be performed in these Columbia concerts. To this concern Kotylo writes, "The fact remained that just a handful of pieces from Howells' sizeable choral output would have fit Wright's standard criteria of being "lesser-known concert music," inasmuch as the majority of them were unavoidably liturgical in function (such as the many sets of evening canticles) or otherwise frequently performed." Kotylo, "M. Searle Wright," pp. 209-10.

[16] Letter from Wright to Howells, October 23, 1966, in M. Searle Wright collection, Series 2, Organ Library of the Boston Chapter, American Guild of Organists.

[17] Searle Wright, program notes to St. Paul's Chapel Concert, Sunday, November 20, 1966, in M. Searle Wright collection, Series 3, Organ Library of the Boston Chapter, American Guild of Organists.

Passion Sunday, the chapel programmed Howells' anthem, *O, pray for the peace of Jerusalem,* as the offertory—the first time Howells' music was sung within an actual liturgy, rather than as a concert piece.[18] The remaining service leaflets from Wright's tenure show that Howells' choral music makes regular liturgical appearances from this point onward. After the March service, his anthem *Like as the hart* was sung in July of that year, and in successive years Howells' music appears at least once a year in the liturgy. *Like as the hart* was programmed in August 1968 for the Eighth Sunday after Trinity, and again in January 1969 for the Week before Purification. No records of the chapel's service programs exist for the academic years 1969-70 and 1970-71, but it may not be far-fetched to surmise that *Like as the hart* made further appearances during this time. *Sing Lullaby*, meanwhile, became a mainstay of Wright's December Christmas Candlelight Services (lessons and carols), appearing in 1968, 1969, and 1970. It may go too far to claim that Wright's commission directly caused this shift, but the proximity of these events seems more than coincidental.

With this first commission, some emergent signs of American interest in Howells can be observed. There is a shift from Howells being known primarily for organ music in recitals to heightened exposure via choral music, sung first in concert and then in liturgies. One can also witness the particular influence of Wright, an American friend of Howells, in bolstering his reputation, along with the further effect of a prominent American institution turning to England for new choral repertory.

The *Dallas Canticles* for St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Dallas

A decade following the Columbia commission, Larry Palmer of St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Dallas contracted his own commission from Howells, a piece that would ultimately become known as the *Dallas Canticles*.[19] Like Searle Wright, Palmer first became familiar with Howells through his keyboard music, though here the catalyst was a harpsichord work titled *Lambert's Clavichord*, which Palmer acquired in 1961.[20] After later encounters with Howells' choral music, Palmer met with the composer in July 1974 to discuss *Lambert's Clavichord* and, prompted by Howells' mentioning of various commissions, solicited a commission himself in October of that year.

After some back-and-forth correspondence, Howells delivered the piece in April 1975—not a single anthem but two paired canticles, a *Magnificat* and *Nunc dimittis*, collectively called the *Dallas Canticles*. The work coincided with the illness and passing of Howells' wife, which combined with the composer's own health issues, prevented him from attending the premiere, given on October 19, 1975 at both the morning and evening services.[21] Nonetheless, the occasion was still an extraordinary event in the parish's history. The week before the *Canticles* premieres, St. Luke's bulletin called the commission "one of the most significant announcements regarding the music at St. Luke's in its 25-year history." The *Canticles* were published in 1977 and then premiered in New York City at Church of the Epiphany that same year. Since that time, they have been regularly sung by the men and boys choir at St. Mark's School of Texas, and have also made their way back to England in numerous performances.

Two things are especially notable about the Dallas commission. First, it originated from a parish church, rather than a cathedral or large institution with support for musical endeavors. Second, the commission was initiated by a single individual who, like Wright in New York, gained his first exposure to Howells through his keyboard works.[22] In these respects, the Dallas commission of the 1970s could be seen as an extension of trends emergent in the 1960s. Though, as it happens, it failed to prompt any lasting effects in this church's musical program, as later administrative changes led to a marked reduction in the church's musical resources.[23]

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[18] Service program dated March 5, 1967, in M. Searle Wright collection, Series 3, Organ Library of the Boston Chapter, American Guild of Organists.

[19] Howells, *Magnificat & Nunc Dimittis: The Dallas Canticles* (Fenton, Mo.: Aureole Editions, 1975): #AE021. Recordings include "The Complete Morning & Evening Canticles of Herbert Howells, Volume 3," The Collegiate Singers, Andrew Millinger, conductor, Priory Records PRCD782, 2002, CD; "Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis Volume 17," The Choir of Norwich Cathedral, David Dunnett, director, Priory Records PRCD631, 2010, CD; and "Choral Music by Herbert Howells," The Rodolfus Choir, Ralph Allwood, conductor, Signum Records SIGCD190, 2010, CD. Andrews has suggested that the *Dallas Canticles* might incorporate music originally intended for Durham Cathedral, citing correspondence from this time period suggesting his desire. No further evidence seems to support this recycling, and indeed certain gestures within the pieces seem to place the work squarely in an American vein. See Andrews, Liner Notes, "The Complete Morning and Evening Canticles of Herbert Howells, Vol. 3."

[20] Palmer, currently a professor of organ and harpsichord at Southern Methodist University, published a thorough account of this commission process in 1992, and factual details from the following description are extracted from that article. See Palmer, "Herbert Howells and the *Dallas Canticles*," *The American Organist* 26:10 (1992): 60-62.

[21] Howells' commission was first presented within a morning service (for which a Magnificat/Nunc dimittis setting is not liturgically proper) before appearing in its proper liturgical place during Choral Evensong. This double presentation speaks to the particular enthusiasm with which this American congregation embraced the Howells commission.

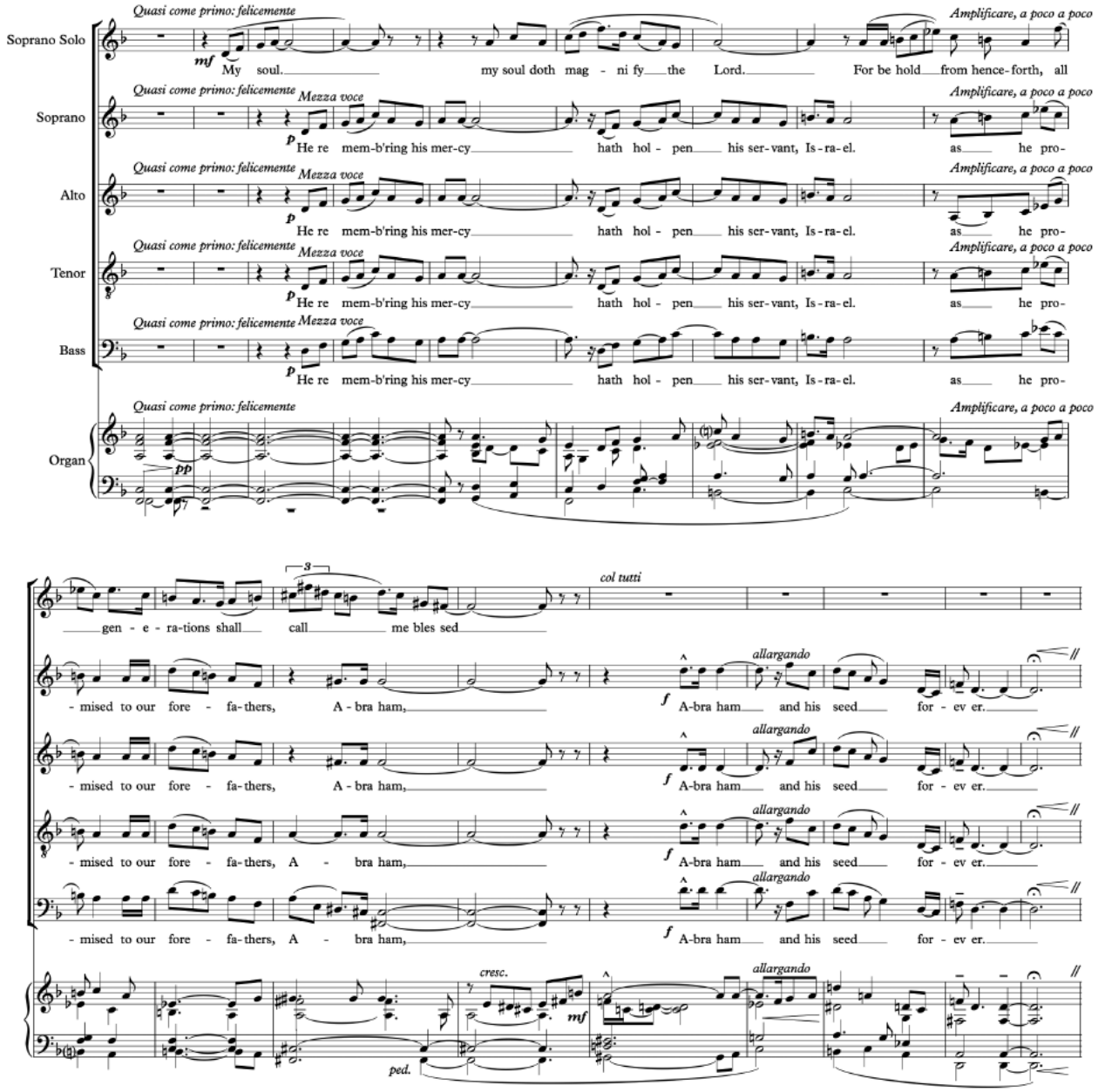
[22] Prior to acquiring the *Lambert's Clavichord* score in 1961, Palmer describes his "earliest impressions of Howells' music" in relation to his first year of harpsichord study in 1958-59, during which he learned of this piece through his teacher Isolde Ahlgrimm. Ibid., 60.

[23] Palmer relates that, after a second performance in 1980, "a new administration decided that the parish should take a different direction in music, as in other matters. The musicians employed at St. Luke's were summarily dismissed by the new rector, the choir was reconstituted as an entirely volunteer group, and music of the quality and complexity of the *Dallas Canticles* was no longer possible or desired in this parish." Ibid., 62.

Certain musical features of the Dallas Canticles deserve mention. Phillip Cooke described Howell's outlook at the time as "a composer gradually contemplating his own end and approaching it in a more serene fashion," citing aspects of its textural profile, harmonic transitions, and overall tranquil mood to create a sort of nostalgic impression.[24] Patrick Russill, Head of Choral Conducting at the Royal Academy of Music, has called them "probably the finest set … of late Howells," citing the music's sense of proportion, texture, and tonality.[25] A review of the *Dallas Canticles* by Marc Rochester in the July 1980 edition of *The Musical Times* claimed, "It is no mere conjecture to suggest that [Howells] has used American harmonic devices (particularly ones from the blues) more extensively here, and negro spiritual elements are also in evidence from the opening pentatonic theme to the beautiful section in the *Magnificat* where the solo treble leads the unison choir in a restatement of this theme with quite stunning effect."[26]

This latter passage is worth closer examination, as a distinctive American character can certainly be construed at this point—not merely in Howells' use of pentatonic gestures, but also with call and response technique and colorful "blue notes." In Example 1, a soprano solo begins with an ascending melody,

Example 1: Howells, *Dallas Canticles:* Magnificat, mm. 65-82



[24] Cooke, "Austerity, Difficulty and Retrospection," in Cooke and Maw, *The Music of Herbert Howells*: 229-30.
[25] Patrick Russill, "The Evening Canticles of Herbert Howells, 1945-1975: A Personal Survey," *The Organist* 3 (1992), n.p.
[26] Marc Rochester, "New Choral Music," *The Musical Times* 121 (1980): 466.

crafted in a distinctive pentatonic shape. The choir responds in unison, echoing the solo line and elaborating on it, reminiscent of a call and response. Rather than an exact usage of this device, however, Howells seems to be playing with the idea of call and response, both in the choir's more elaborate response and in the highly unusual gesture of presenting dual texts—the choir singing the "correct" text at this point, "He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel," while in an unusual gesture the soloist restates the opening Magnificat phrase, "My soul doth magnify the Lord." At the end of this section, after a series of chromatically inflected gestures, Howells returns to the pentatonic idiom at the bottom of the third page for the words "and his seed forever" as the choirs descend to a cadence in D major. Here, a distinctive 'blue note' is accentuated in the second-to-last measure, an F-natural in all voices contrasting against the organ's D major chord. With these gestures, the question of reception now goes both ways—perhaps Howells himself was inspired by American musical traditions, even as Americans were becoming increasingly inspired by Howells' "English" style.

The *Te Deum Laudamus* for Washington National Cathedral, Washington D.C.

The third Howells commission is another setting of the *Te Deum*, composed for the National Cathedral in Washington D.C.[27] It is dedicated to Dr. Paul Callaway, organist and choirmaster of the cathedral from 1939 to 1977. Thomas Pratt, one of the cathedral's singers, requested the commission on behalf of his choir on the occasion of Callaway's retirement. Having met Howells on a trip to England in summer 1976, Pratt wasted little time in asking for the commission:

> We believe that no other composer could lend greater prestige to this tribute or provide greater personal satisfaction to the choir and Dr. Callaway than you. Your music holds a special place in the repertoire of the choir … including ten of your evening services, two morning services and many, many anthems. Your great arching phrases soar to fill the high vaulting of our cathedral, your richly inventive accompaniments ideally displayed by the orchestral resources, your sensitive communication of texts adding immensely to the liturgy.[28]

Trends that were developing in New York during the 1960s seem to have blossomed in Washington by this time, judging by Pratt's enumeration of services and anthems in the choir's repertory. Service leaflets from National Cathedral show somewhat more frequent performance of Howells' music throughout the 1960s and 1970s [See Table 2 next page]. Unlike at Columbia, where the commission seems to have developed from a single person's agenda toward broadening the institutional musical profile, the National Cathedral's commission reflects greater familiarity with Howells among its musicians and congregants. This is not surprising, for like Wright in New York, Callaway knew Howells personally and actively programmed his music. Besides introducing many Howells works into the National Cathedral repertory, he conducted the American premiere of the oratorio *Hymnus Paradisi*, widely regarded as Howells' masterpiece.[29]

Howells could not complete this commission, a product of his advancing age and a slowing of his creative energy. But his sketches still offered enough material for John Buttrey, another cathedral singer, to cobble them together into a finished composition.[30] In this form, the *Te Deum Laudamus* premiered on September 30, 1990, at the cathedral's official consecration. The ceremony took place on a Sunday alongside two other events, a "Litany of Thanksgiving" and a "Celebration of the Holy Eucharist," and was preceded by three days of additional services and ceremonies.[31] It is illuminating to note where Howells' music was positioned within this liturgy: immediately after the consecration had occurred, giving it a celebratory role as an expression of praise upon the consecration act.[32] In the midst of a three-day event that encompassed three other ceremonies, this posthumous completion and premiere was, undeniably, a musical centerpiece.

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[27] Herbert Howells, ed. John Buttrey, *Te Deum Laudamus* (for Washington Cathedral) (London: Novello & Co., 1990), #NOV290662. Recordings include "The Complete Morning & Evening Canticles of Herbert Howells, Volume 4," The Collegiate Singers, Andrew Millinger, conductor, Priory Records PRCD782, 2003, CD and "Herbert Howells: Choral Music," Gloria Dei Cantores, Elizabeth C. Patterson, director, Gloria Dei Cantores GDCD053, 2012, CD.

[28] Cited in Andrews, Liner Notes, "The Complete Morning and Evening Canticles of Herbert Howells, Vol. 4."

[29] According to the Cathedral singer John Buttrey, Callaway "had always felt great affection for the music of Herbert Howells; he introduced much of it into the Cathedral repertoire." See Buttrey, "The Washington Canticles: Herbert Howells' Last Service," *The Musical Times* 132 (1991): 363-65.

[30] Ibid.

[31] These included a Thursday night celebration dinner "in recognition of friends of the Cathedral"; a Festival Evensong and a Litany of Thanksgiving for the Founders and Builders of the Washington National Cathedral on Friday; The Raising and Setting of the Final Stone and the Dedication of The National Cathedral Association Great Pinnacle on Saturday at noon; as well as the concert "Sursum Corda/Lift Up Your Hearts: A Musical Offering in Thanksgiving for the Consecration of the Cathedral / Dedication of the Angel Band Sculptures on the West Towers" on Saturday evening.

[32] Consecration program, "Consecration of the Cathedral Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul in the City and Diocese of Washington … Saturday, September thirtieth, nineteen hundred and ninety at eleven o'clock," in Washington National Cathedral Archives.

Table 2.

Performances of Howells' Music at Washington National Cathedral, 1960-77[1]

Year	Compositions Performed	Performances
1960	*Magnificat/Nunc dimittis* (Collegium Regale, 1945)	1
1961	*Magnificat/Nunc dimittis* (Collegium Regale)	1
1962	*Psalm-Prelude III; Jubilate Deo*	2
1963	*Te Deum/Jubilate Deo* (Collegium Regale, 1944); *Magnificat/Nunc dimittis* (Collegium Regale); *A Spotless Rose*	3
1964	*Jubilate Deo* (Collegium Regale, 1944); *Magnificat/Nunc dimittis* (setting unspecified); *Master Tallis' Testament; A Spotless Rose*	4
1965	*Psalm-Prelude on "De profundis"; When first thine eies unveil; Like as the hart; Psalm-Prelude No. 3; Jubilate Deo,* (Collegium Regale) (2); *Magnificat/Nunc dimittis* (Collegium Sancti Johannis Cantabrigiense, 1957); *Magnificat/Nunc dimittis* (Collegium Regale)	8
1966	*When first thine eies unveil; Psalm Prelude No. 1; Magnificat/Nunc dimittis* (Collegium Regale)	3
1967	*Magnificat/Nunc dimittis* (Collegium Regale); *When first thine eies unveil; Magnificat/Nunc dimittis* (Collegium Sancti Johannis Cantabrigiense, 1957), *Magnificat/Nunc dimittis in E*[2]	4
1968	*Te Deum/Jubilate Deo* (Collegium Regale); *Psalm-Prelude No. 3; Magnificat/Nunc dimittis* (Collegium Regale)	3
1969	*Behold O God our Defender; Like as the hart; Magnificat/Nunc dimittis in E-flat*	3
1970	*Behold O God our Defender; My eyes for beauty pine* (3); *Psalm-Prelude No. 1; Psalm-Prelude No. 3; Magnificat/Nunc dimittis* (St. Paul's Cathedral)	7
1971	*A Spotless Rose*	1
1972	*Magnificat/Nunc dimittis* (Collegium Regale); *My eyes for beauty pine* (3); *Saraband (In Modo Elegiaco); Jubilate Deo* (Collegium Regale)*; Magnificat/Nunc dimittis in E; When first thine eies unveil; Benedictus es, Domine; Psalm-Prelude No. 3s*	11
1973	*Behold O God our Defender; Magnificat/Nunc dimittis* (Winchester Service)	2
1974	*Responses (2); Take him, earth for cherishing (2); Psalm-Prelude No. 3; Saraband for the morning of Easter; Te Deum/Jubilate Deo* (Collegium Regale); *Jubilate Deo in E-flat; My house shall be called an house of prayer*	9
1975	*Paean; Responses (3); My eyes for beauty pine; Jubilate Deo; When first thine eies unveil; Like as the hart*	8
1976	*Magnificat/Nunc dimittis* (Winchester Service); *Magnificat/Nunc dimittis in E-flat; Magnificat/Nunc dimittis* (setting unspecified); *Benedictus/Jubilate Deo* (setting unspecified); *Magnificat/Nunc dimittis in E; Behold O God our Defender*	6
1977	*Magnificat/Nunc dimittis in G minor;* Commissioned music by Herbert Howells in honor of Dr. Paul Callaway (repertory unspecified)	2
	Total Performances	**78**

[1] The name of the service and composition date appears in parentheses. Where none was indicated in the archives, it is *unspecified*. Parenthetical numbers indicate repeated performances within the same calendar year.

[2] Also known as the Magnificat and Nunc dimittis for men's voices and organ (1941), and arranged for ATB by Buttrey.

The vaunted position of the premiere seems to be a natural outgrowth of Howells' steadily increasing reputation at the Cathedral, in view of other performances of his work. For example, a special Evensong service honoring Callaway's retirement on November 27, 1977, reportedly featured newly commissioned music by Howells, but the repertory performed cannot be ascertained, as the program is no longer in the Cathedral's archives.[33] An Evensong dedicated to the memory of Howells was given on April 24, 1983, two months after his death. The music included his organ prelude, *Paean,* the hymn *Michael,* the Magnificat and Nunc dimittis from *Collegium Regale*, and the cathedral choir's first performance of the anthem *Exultate Deo.*[34] These latter events suggest that interest in Howells has come a long way in a relatively short timespan. Just two decades on from 1960, when this composer's music was just starting to find liturgical usage at Columbia, Howells has now become an important figure in the musical life of America's national cathedral.

On a fundamental level, the commissions discussed here present a working outline of how Americans—or at least Episcopalians—came to be familiar with Howells' music. From the 1940s to the 1960s a gradual awareness of Howells' church music took place, first for organ and then for chorus and organ, through performances in concerts and increasingly in liturgies. American commissions from the 1960s and 1970s demonstrate, both directly and indirectly, a deeper engagement with Howells' music in frequency of performance, diversity of repertory, and familiarity with his compositional style. Central to all the commissions is the importance of individual advocates raising awareness of Howells' music. However, as the *New York Times* article suggested, interest in Howells has yet to penetrate many corners of American musical life. Howells essentially remains a niche composer, whose work continues to deserve more widespread attention in America.[35] Those that know and love his music, however, can attest wholeheartedly to its richness, depth and enduring beauty

Joseph Sargent is Assistant Professor of Music at the University of Montevallo (Alabama). His articles and reviews appear or are forthcoming in Early Music History, The Musical Times, Sacred Music, NOTES: Journal of the Music Library Association, Fontes Artis Musicae, Grove Music Online*, and A-R Editions, Inc.'s* Online Music Anthology*, as well as in several edited collections. His critical edition of service music by the English Renaissance composer Nathaniel Giles is forthcoming in The British Academy's Early English Church Music series.*

[33] A notation from the Cathedral's music list indicates "Commissioned music by Herbert Howells in honor of Dr. Paul Callaway," but offers no further details.

[34] Service program dated April 24, 1983, in Washington National Cathedral Archives. The program mentions that *Exultate Deo* "here receives its cathedral choir premiere" but gives no further information about the piece's prior performances, in America or elsewhere.

[35] Even in England, Howells' vast body of secular music remains virtually ignored despite a rising trend among scholars toward advocating this repertory. The most significant recent volume in this respect is Cooke and Maw, ed., *The Music of Herbert Howells*, containing several studies of little-known concert music.

Concert Report from the new *Elbphilharmonie*, Hamburg: a Performer's Review

Timothy Newton

Dr. Alfred Mann, this journal's first Editor, maintained a practice of filing reports on significant concerts and conference performances throughout North America, and occasionally abroad. Editors William Weinert and James John maintained this practice, and in this tradition, I offer a report from Europe's newest, large concert hall.

On January 17, 2017, I had the privilege of singing at the opening festival of Hamburg's highly anticipated *Elbphilharmonie*, a largely glass concert hall resembling a vast sailing ship poised on the docks of the fabled Elb River. I am a member of the bass section of London's Philharmonia Chorus[1], which consisted of nearly 130 singers for this event, prepared by Berlin-based Chorus Master Stefan Bevier. We were accompanied by the Hamburg Symphony, conducted by Sir Jeffrey Tate, as the third orchestral concert of the opening festival, preceded by the resident *Norddeutscher Rundfunk Orchester* (now renamed the *NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester*) conducted by Thomas Hengelbrock, and a second concert by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Hamburg's sister city, led by

[1] <www.philharmoniachorus.co.uk>

Ricardo Muti. (The NDREO opening concert is posted on YouTube, and is an eclectic program of shorter works and movements intending to demonstrate the hall's acoustic, filmed in 360-degree video.[2])

In the run-up to the opening festival, many of the world's leading newspapers and magazines reported the construction setbacks and massive budget overruns that beset the concert hall. Finally completed at nearly $800 million Euros, ten times over budget and seven years late, the *Elbphilharmonie* is poised to become a jewel in the crown of the city's 21st century cultural renaissance, and is now reported to be sold out through August. Early promotion on the hall's website claimed that it has "the most advanced acoustic in the world", whatever that is supposed to mean. We rehearsed the previous day in the Hamburg Symphony's home, *Laieszhalle*, a 1904 majestic structure that is generous to romantic choral-orchestral masterworks, where the Chorus has previously sung Elgar's *Geronitius* and Brahms' *Requiem* to critical acclaim, prompting this invitation. Acoustical comparison from one rehearsal and concert hall to the next was not difficult.

The interior of the *Elbphilharmonie Grosse Saal* reminded me of a Gaudi-inspired world where no straight surfaces or sharp angles exist. The water of the Elb River, passing at the base of the hall some 20 stories below, seems to influence this building from its outer glass shape, to the hall's interior designed by the Swiss firm Herzog & de Meuron. Captivating videos released online leave you with an impression of ascending through ocean caves as you make your way up to this larger of the two concert halls.[3] The "vineyard" style seating plan accommodating 2,100 people, modeled after Berlin's famed *Philharmonie*, claims to permit no more than 100 feet between any seat and the front of the stage. It is an evenly terraced, cylindrical shape reminiscent of an 18th-century Italian opera house or as London's *Guardian* put it, Shakespeare's Globe. The "orchestra" or "stalls" seating is relatively small and shallow, creating a sense of immediacy and participation with whatever style of music is taking place—as one *Los Angeles Times* critic recently wrote, even closer than at Disney Hall. The stage is not large, though ample. With the Hamburg Symphony, Philharmonia Chorus, and four soloists, we were a full stage.[4] In spite of these limitations, the Hamburg Philharmonic—or State Opera—Orchestra managed to perform Mahler's Symphony No. 8 ("Symphony of a Thousand") under Eliahu Inbal, with the two choruses in the audience seating behind the stage.

Acclaimed Japanese acoustician Yasuhisa Toyota engineered the sonic structure in this no-expense-spared hall, having designed numerous spaces across the globe including the new *Philharmonie de Paris Grande Salle Pierre Boulez*, Berlin's new Gehry-designed chamber music hall, the *Pierre Boulez Saal*, opened in February 2017, and spaces familiar to many including Tokyo's Suntory Hall, Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, Kansas City's Kauffman Center, Bing Concert Hall at Stanford University, and Bard College's Gehry-designed Performing Arts Centre. Quoting from the *Elbphilharmonie* website, Toyota has said, "I know that I have done my job as an acoustician well when audiences no longer perceive the large distances to the music."

I believe Mr. Toyota is true to his word. From the moment we set foot in the space, we sensed the immediate, almost abrasive potential of our large performing forces required for Beethoven's towering essay. As Forbes reviewer, Jens Laurson, stated during the initial NDR performance just nights before, during Messiaen's *Turangalîla Symphony*, "the loudness of the…orchestra started to become uncomfortable. Instead of feeling like a wholesome mass of grand sound, I felt pummeled by a loud assembly of individual parts, all differently projected. Hearing (almost) everything suddenly felt like not hearing the whole." The Philharmonia Chorus' *fortissimos* were so present in the hall during our dress rehearsal that Daniel Kühnel, the Symphony's Intendant, was concerned that we would cover the orchestra during the performance. While the vibrant *pianissimos* and resonant *fortissimos* of the chorus have often been reviewed in London as remarkably noteworthy, the hall didn't seem to be able to process large masses of sound, especially with that many able singers. After some careful rehearsing, and pleasant admonition from Sir Jeffrey to the chorus, we were sensitized to the surgical precision of the sound in the hall. Vocal soloists stood at the back of the orchestra, in front of the chorus, for fear that they would be too loud at the edge of the stage, virtually on top of the small section slightly below, and immediately in front of, the stage. In the bass section, we had a sense of the immediate sound around us (there is no choral balcony), yet could also hear the amplified orchestra and upper voices as they resonated off the hundreds of individually, computer generated acoustical panels and the circular cloud suspended near the roof over the stage.

The performance acoustic was even more antiseptic than the rehearsal. Every seat was filled, and audience

[2] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=__4EmRRYbO8>

[3] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hL0urjtRPwQ&utm_source=critsend&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=mailing-46575>

[4] In spite of these limitations, the Hamburg Philharmonic (State Opera) Orchestra managed to perform Mahler's Symphony No. 8 ("Symphony of a Thousand") under Eliahu Inbal, with the two choruses in the audience seating behind the stage.

members flowed from balconies which wrapped in five stories above and behind the performers. In the bass section, we felt very close to the first level balcony members behind and to our side. In fact, there was a sense of engagement with them during and after the performance, rarely experienced in halls with choral balconies isolated behind the stage. It did seem to be closer to the oratorio performances of Handel and Haydn, when the chorus was seated in front of the orchestra, permitting unhindered communication with the audience. With soloists Camilla Nylund, Sarah Connolly, Klaus Florian Voigt, and Luca Pisaroni, Sir Jeffrey Tate elicited a measured, profound and searching performance from the orchestra and chorus. He is one of the rare symphonic conductors who has an obvious love for the act of singing, and an understanding and respect for serious choristers. He is a remarkable human, a master of large-scale form, with a sense of commitment to profound depth and weight, and the ability to unleash the great potential of his performers. Perhaps due to the surgical precision of the acoustic in a capacity hall, and the heightened anticipation for audience and performers, the focus for rhythmic precision from every performer seemed on a level rarely experienced in romantic repertory. In fact, rhythmic clarity is one of the hall's greatest strengths, provided the forces don't exceed its ability to process the sound. The violin solo throughout the *Benedictus* was lucid, almost stark, in the acoustic. In that way, the *Elbphilharmonie* is quite impressive. Many reviews were favorable toward the performance, though with criticism that our large performing force overwhelmed the acoustic in louder dynamics. The Hamburg *Abendblatt* reviewer used the word "tinnitus" describing the sopranos in the loudest passages.

While chamber choruses, period and modern classical orchestras, and contemporary music ensembles will be best suited for the transparency of the hall's acoustic, large orchestral and choral-orchestral works may be better suited for Hamburg's now antique *Laeiszhalle*. Missing from the *Elbphilharmonie*, in my opinion, is a warm, resonant acoustic that permits the sound to take wing before it is captured by the ear. There is a suggestion that the acoustic may be altered slightly in the future, but at this point, nothing has been announced. Our present obsession with immediacy in communication seems to be determining the way of the live concert acoustic. It will be interesting to observe if this trend will manifest itself in projects like the David Geffen Hall. Risking the obvious pun, stay tuned.

Recent Recordings

The Wonder of Christmas (2014). **Elora Festival Singers**, directed by Noel Edison, with Michael Bloss, Organ. Naxos (USA) 8.573421

Reviewed by Cindy L. Bell, Hofstra University

From beginning to end, this is a wonderful recording for the Christmas season! Bookended by two traditional carols, *Once in Royal David's City* (OUP, Willcocks' descant and organ arr.) and *The First Noel* (Pelagos Music, arr. Paul Halley), the substance of this CD is a perfect exploration of many beautiful settings of both traditional and non-traditional texts. Jean Mouton's quadruple canon, *Nesciens mater virgo virum,* and Jan Sandström's arrangement of Praetorius' *Lo How a Rose E'er Blooming* (GIA), give nod to the glorious choral works from the Renaissance and Baroque eras. Bob Chilcott's lilting SSA arrangement of *My Dancing Day* and *Away in a Manger* (traditional English melody) twists the melody a bit, but the gentle performance is beautifully sensitive.

Founded by Artistic Director and Conductor Noel Edison in 1980, the Festival is a summer festival of classical and contemporary music, with an emphasis on choral works. The Singers have been nominated for both Grammy and JUNO Awards with nine releases on the NAXOS label. A description from their website understates the magnificent treasures to be revealed on this recording: "The Elora Festival Singers are known for their rich, warm sound and clarity of texture."

Stuart Thompson's arrangement of *The Holly and the Ivy,* winner of the The Times (London) Christmas Carol Competition, is memorable and fun, a somewhat haunting, modally-mixed choral play with a new, soaring melody, accompanied by nifty organ licks. I found myself humming the tune incessantly. A favorite hymn tune, *Who is He in Yonder Stall,* is sung here in the luscious TTBB arrangement (Plymouth Music) by long-time Baylor University choral director, Robert Young. And, oh, to have these men in your choir!

Two more arrangements by Paul Halley (Pelagos Music) incorporate unusual harmonizations of familiar melodies. This fresh coloring is stunning, and the exciting performances augment the already great choral writing. *What Child is This* begins with a brief *Ave Maria* quotation, before plunging into a

dynamically expanding arrangement that eventually returns to the subtlety of the opening. The soprano descant floats over the organ part. Paul Halley's Grammy-award-winning work with the Paul Winter Consort and as Director of Music at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine (NY) is well known. He is now director of music at the Cathedral Church of All Saints, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The choral sound of the Elora Festival Singers is polished yet enchanting. Shades of the Anglican choral tradition are evident on each track: seamless blending of voices, dynamic exploration, and clear articulation of texts. The gentle expansion of long notes (notably the word "fall" in *O Holy Night*) the beautifully rendered tapering of phrases, and near perfect phrasing of lines (listen to the phrasing of the word "Gloria" from the refrain of *Ding, Dong! Merrily on High*) all contribute to the recording's allure. The ladies are equally as stunning as the men, not in the full choral sound, but also in executing high descants (*The First Nowell*, arr. Halley). This surely is choral singing excellence.

The ABC's of Russian Diction (2015). **Musica Russica**, MRDVD-1 (2015) Format: DVD

Reviewed by Andrea Goodman, D. M. A.

Musica Russica, a leading publisher of Russian choral music, has released a DVD entitled, "The ABCs of Russian Diction," an hour-long training video that demonstrates, aurally and visually, how to pronounce the sounds of Russian, Church Slavonic, and Ukrainian. The DVD is intended to help solo and choral singers, conductors, voice instructors and opera coaches negotiate the sounds of the language with confidence, accuracy, and authenticity. "Reading about it on the page is not the same as hearing it and watching someone form the sounds with their mouth," explains its creator, Dr. Vladimir Morosan, an American scholar and publisher of Russian descent, and a bi-lingual speaker of both Russian and English. Growing up in the Russian Orthodox Church, he learned to pronounce Church Slavonic from early childhood.

The video includes an introduction to the Musica Russica transliteration system followed by a step-by-step guide to Russian pronunciation with seven chapters on vowel sounds and ten chapters on consonants. Morosan, also a trained conductor, provides the practical side of pronunciation and how it applies to singing (rather than only speaking). Highlights include how Russian vowels and consonants compare to English and an explanation of the Cyrillic alphabet. Morosan shows how he transliterates the Russian Cyrillic alphabet by "phoneticizing" it to the Roman alphabet. The DVD covers all the sounds of the Russian language and displays them in Cyrillic, transliteration and IPA symbols, and each chapter includes a helpful summary.

Morosan tells us why good pronunciation is important: one thousand years of development formed this vocal culture.

Three basic rules must be followed:
1) All vowels are pure without diphthongs.
2) Extra energy is required to produce Russian consonants.
3) Clear distinctions must be made between hard Russian consonants and soft Russian consonants.

For those who perform both folk music and Russian Church music, both modern Russian and Church Slavonic are demonstrated here. Morosan tells us that the unstressed "o" is in modern Russian but not Church Slavonic, and he provides useful demonstrations on the differences in singing each.

As the video goes through each of the vowel sounds in depth, Morosan demonstrates how each vowel is sustained for singing—something one doesn't find in an ordinary pronunciation guide. Again, unlike English vowels, Russian vowels have no diphthongs. For example, the Russian vowel "o" doesn't close at the end as in the English word "go" whereby the lips form a "w" to close the vowel. We also observe that some vowels are "iotized," meaning that when one sees the letter "e" as in "be" and "te" there is a preceding "y" before it, so it is pronounced "byeh" and "tyeh" (but not "tee-yeh"). In the Russica system, the consonant before the "eh" vowel will appear with a tilde over it.

The elusive "i" vowel is taught in depth. The Russica transliteration system shows this as an "i" with two dots over it rather than one. It is the most difficult to sing and demonstrate as it has no English or European language counterpart. Here, it is most helpful to actually watch someone form the vowel.

For the Russian consonants, we can see which muscles are used in their formation, which consonants are voiced and unvoiced, hard and soft, and what they look like in transliteration. Consonants include the plosives B and P, the dentals consonants D and T, the fricatives V and F, the sibilants Z and S, nasals M and N, the guttural G, H and GH and the rolled the Russian R. We learn how to make the rolled "r" sound, as there is no place for the American R in Russian! Yet it is the Russian L that challenges singers the most as shown in the video. When not done correctly, it is a sure sign that the singer is not Russian!

Finally, the video shows a guide to websites that have published editions of Russian music, including Musica Russica and Earthsongs. A coaching track is available for every work published by Musica Russica. The DVD is packaged with a page of printed chapter headings and sample words covered in each. Highly recommended.

Multiple back issues of the AMERICAN CHORAL REVIEW and RESEARCH MEMORANDUM SERIES are available through Chorus America. Back issues of the AMERICAN CHORAL REVIEW are available to members at $7.50; back issues of the RESEARCH MEMORANDUM SERIES at $2.00. Bulk prices will be quoted on request. All requests for back issues and index listings should be made to the American Choral Foundation, c/o Chorus America, 1156 15th Street NW, Suite 310, Washington, D.C. 20005. (202) 331-7577. An index to all volumes of the American Choral Review can be found at <chorusamerica.org>. Proposals for articles may be addressed to Dr. Timothy Newton, Associate Professor of Music, SUNY Oneonta, <http://www.oneonta.edu/academics/music/faculty.asp>, email: ACR@ChorusAmerica.org.