

GRANT PARK ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS

Carlos Kalmar Artistic Director and Principal Conductor

Christopher Bell Chorus Director



Thursday, July 19, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.
South Shore Cultural Center

Sunday, July 22, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.
Columbus Park Refectory

GRANT PARK CHORUS IN THE PARKS

Grant Park Chorus

Christopher Bell Conductor

Samuel Barber

God's Grandeur

William Henry Harris

Faire Is the Heaven

Anton Bruckner

Virga Jesse floruit

Christus factus est

Ave Maria

Benjamin Britten

Hymn to St. Cecilia, Op. 27

Michael Tippett

Spirituals from *A Child of Our Time*

Steal Away

Nobody Knows

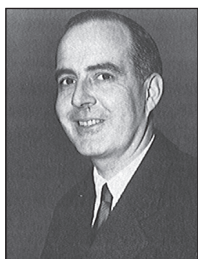
Go Down, Moses

By and By

Deep River

Kenneth Leighton

God's Grandeur



Samuel Barber (1910–1981)
***GOD'S GRANDEUR* (1938)**

Performance time: 8 minutes

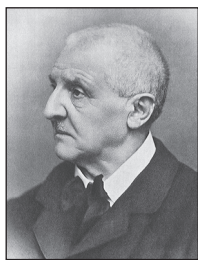
Barber composed *God's Grandeur* on a text by Gerard Manley Hopkins in January 1938 for a festival of American music that spring at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey; the work was premiered by the Westminster Choir on January 31 at the State Teachers' College in Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, on the first stop of that year's annual winter tour. During the 1930s, Barber made choral settings of a number of Biblical and religious texts, and the alternating homophonic and contrapuntal passages, full scoring and somber harmonies he adopted for those works also obtains in *God's Grandeur*.



William Henry Harris (1883–1973)
***FAIRE IS THE HEAVEN* (1925)**

Performance time: 5 minutes

William Henry Harris, born in London in 1883 and trained at the Royal College of Music, occupied a series of increasingly important positions as organist, choirmaster and composer at churches in London, Lichfield and Oxford before being named organist at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, in 1933. In addition to handling both the routine and festival duties at Windsor until his retirement in 1961, Harris also taught at the RCM, directed musical studies at the Royal School of Church Music, and conducted. The most highly regarded of his works is *Faire Is the Heaven*, composed in 1925 to a passage from Edmund Spenser's *An Hymne of Heavenly Beautie*.



Anton Bruckner (1824–1896)
***THREE MOTETS* (1861–1884)**

Performance time: 10 minutes

Though Bruckner is principally remembered as the architect of some of the 19th century's grandest symphonic edifices, his reputation as an orchestral composer was not firmly established until the success of his Fourth Symphony in 1881, when he was 57. Until then, he was largely known as a teacher and church musician who held positions at St. Florian and Linz before being appointed professor at the Vienna Conservatory and organist to the Habsburg court. To fulfill his duties and to express his profound Catholic faith, Bruckner wrote sacred vocal compositions throughout his life—perhaps the most significant body of service music by any major Romantic composer—which include six Masses, a Requiem, a Magnificat,

and a *Te Deum*, as well as some 30 smaller works for a *cappella* and accompanied chorus that show the influence of Mozart and Michael and Joseph Haydn, his exhaustive study of harmony and counterpoint in traditional idioms, the revived archaism of Palestrina and Renaissance polyphony, the massed sonorities and block harmonies suggested by the 19th-century organ (on which he was a widely recognized virtuoso) and the imposed simplicities of the Cecilian Movement.

Virga Jesse floruit, a Gradual in celebration of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, was written in 1885, when Bruckner was busy teaching and lecturing and completing his Eighth Symphony.

Bruckner wrote *Christus factus est*, a setting of the Holy Week Gradual, during the busy year of 1884, which also saw the composition of the *Te Deum*; visits to Prague, Bayreuth and Munich; the successful premiere of the Seventh Symphony; the first sketches for the Eighth Symphony; and his 60th birthday. The motet is his third setting of the text—he also used it in his Choral Mass for Maundy Thursday of 1844 and as an independent piece for chorus, three trombones and two violins in 1879.

In 1856, just before he started taking counterpoint lessons from Simon Sechter, Bruckner composed a setting of the *Ave Maria*, the supplication to the Virgin derived from the annunciation. He then refrained almost completely from creative work during the five-year course of tuition with Sechter, which he carried on by mail and occasional visits to Vienna from his post as organist in Linz. Bruckner seems to have marked the end of his study in 1861 with another version of the *Ave Maria* text, this one for unaccompanied seven-part chorus. The 1861 *Ave Maria* is generally regarded as the first masterwork among his motets, and its premiere at Linz on May 15, 1861, in which he debuted in the joint roles of conductor and composer, marked the beginning of his artistic maturity.



Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

***HYMN TO ST. CECILIA, OP. 27* (1941–1942)**

Performance time: 10 minutes

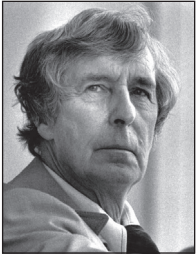
Cecilia was a Roman noblewoman in the second or third century who was martyred for her Christian beliefs. Tradition holds that she took a vow of virginity to serve her faith but was forced by her parents to marry a nobleman named Valerian. While musicians played at her wedding, she “sang in her heart to the Lord” and told Valerian that he would be punished by an angel if he violated her vow. When he demanded to see her protector, she told him that he first had to convert to Christianity and be baptized by the Pope. Valerian complied and when he returned to his bride, he saw Cecilia’s angel standing resolutely at her side.

Though Cecilia’s association with music is tenuous, she has been recognized as the divine overseer of music and musicians since at least

the 15th century; the first recorded music festival in her honor took place in Evreux, France, around 1570. (Cecilia's iconographic symbol is the organ, which she is apocryphally said to have invented.) The celebration of her feast day—November 22—was undertaken with special enthusiasm in England beginning in 1683, when the Gentlemen of the Musical Society of London began sponsoring elaborate annual church services and performances in her honor. The participation of the best poets and musicians in the land was enlisted: Dryden, Shadwell, Congreve, Pope and others turned out verses in praise of the saint and her art that were set by Purcell, Jeremiah Clarke, Handel and others.

Benjamin Britten first considered writing a tribute to St. Cecilia in 1935—he was born on her feast day—but had, he wrote in his diary, “great difficulty in finding Latin words for it.” Four years later he came to the United States, professing the need for greater artistic freedom and understanding than he perceived in England, as well as to seek a haven for his pacifist philosophy at a time when Europe was heading inexorably toward war. He shared an apartment in Brooklyn for several months in 1940 with his friend the poet W.H. Auden, who discussed the St. Cecilia piece with him and then wrote a poem for it. Britten began the work in June 1941 but was unable to complete it before he sailed for home the following March. He took his unfinished score for the *Hymn to St. Cecilia* with him, but customs officials in New York, fearful of coded messages, confiscated it. The loss, however, apparently fueled his creativity, and he was able to reconstruct the missing pages and finish the entire work before his ship landed. (On arriving home, he was called before the Tribunal of Conscientious Objectors and exempted from active military service, but ordered to perform in hospitals, shelters and bombed-out villages while continuing to compose for the rest of the war.) The *Hymn to St. Cecilia* was premiered by the BBC Singers on November 22, 1942—St. Cecilia's Day and the composer's 29th birthday.

Auden's poem is in three stanzas, each concluding with the same supplication to St. Cecilia: “*Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions/To all musicians, appear and inspire.*” Britten followed the poem's three-part structure; the setting of the refrain that ends each stanza is set to the same melody (sung in unison the first time) but elaborated on its recurrences. The *Hymn* is flowing and calm as it opens (“*In a garden shady this holy lady...poured forth her song in perfect calm*”), with female and male voices overlapping in their presentation of the text, but rises in intensity for the following lines (“*Blonde Aphrodite rose up excited/Moved to delight by the melody*”). The second section (“*I cannot grow/I have no shadow/To run away from,/I only play*”) is a feather-stitched scherzo for virtuoso choir. The theme of lost innocence runs through much of the work of both Britten and Auden, and the *Hymn to St. Cecilia* closes with thoughtful words and music that had a terrible relevance in wartime Britain—“*Lost innocence.... Weep for the lives your wishes never led.*”



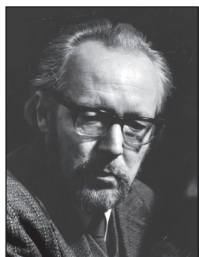
Michael Tippett (1905–1998)
SPIRITUALS FROM A CHILD OF OUR TIME
(1939–1942)

Performance time: 12 minutes

Isabel Tippett was a woman of diverse talents and enormous, passionately undertaken enthusiasms, not least her unceasing commitment to social causes—she was an active member of the Labour Party and a campaigning suffragette who once went to prison for her beliefs. Isabel's son, Michael, inherited her strong political views, aiding theater musicians unemployed by the coming of sound to the movies in the early 1930s by establishing an orchestra for them at London's Morley College, flirting briefly with the Communist Party and Trotskyism, writing an anti-war play titled *War Ramp* in 1935, and adhering so resolutely to his pacifist philosophy that he was imprisoned for three months during World War II.

Attuned as he was to humanitarian concerns, Tippett was deeply shaken by the Nazis' growing repression of Jews and other minorities during the late 1930s, which became focused in the infamous *Kristallnacht* of November 9, 1938. The Nazis took as an excuse for that ghastly event the assassination two days before of Ernst vom Rath, a high-ranking official at the German Embassy in Paris, by Herschel Grynszpan, a Polish Jew reacting to the inhuman treatment of his family. Tippett felt compelled to respond with the most potent weapon in his pacifist arsenal—music—and he began planning an oratorio that would embody the painful essence of the Grynszpan incident while being more “anonymous and general, in order to reach the deeper levels of our common humanity.” He created the text himself and borrowed the title—*A Child of Our Time*—from a recent novel by the German-Hungarian writer Ödön von Horváth, about a young Nazi soldier whose illusions are shattered.

In devising a formal plan for the work, Tippett turned to the Passions of Johann Sebastian Bach—with their balance of solos and choruses, narration and commentary—and found a modern analogue to the simplicity, immediacy and wide recognition of Bach's congregational chorales in the American spiritual. Tippett ordered a collection of spirituals from America and found, he said, “that it contained words and tunes for every dramatic or religious situation. I chose five spirituals which provided the congregational ‘metaphor’ for the situations in my scheme.” The work was begun on September 3, 1939, the day Britain declared war on Germany, and completed in 1942. *A Child of Our Time* was premiered in London in March 1944, and has since been recognized not only as a masterwork of the modern choral literature but also as the distillation of Tippett's belief in the necessity of drawing goodness and understanding out of trying to deal with evil, which he had the tenor express in lines at the end of the oratorio: *I would know my shadow and my light, so shall I at last be whole.*



Kenneth Leighton (1929–1988)

GOD'S GRANDEUR (1957)

Performance time: 5 minutes

Kenneth Leighton, one of Britain's most distinguished mid-20th-century composers and music teachers, studied piano and was a chorister at Wakefield Cathedral as a boy. He entered Queen's College, Oxford, in 1947 as a student of classics and music; his principal composition teacher was Bernard Rose.

Upon his graduation in 1951, Leighton won a Mendelssohn Scholarship, which enabled him to study in Rome with Goffredo Petrassi. After returning to England, Leighton taught at the Royal Naval School of Music and University of Leeds before joining the faculty of the University of Edinburgh in 1955. From 1968 to 1970, he was University Lecturer in Music and Fellow of Worcester College at Oxford; he earned his doctorate from the university in 1970. In October 1970, he was appointed Reid Professor of Music at the University of Edinburgh, a post he held until his death in 1988. Leighton's distinctions included the Royal Philharmonic Society Prize, Busoni Prize, Trieste Prize, Bernhard Sprengel Prize and Cobbett Medal, as well as an honorary doctorate from the University of St. Andrews. Leighton set Gerard Manley Hopkins' *God's Grandeur* in 1957, during the time after he had studied in Rome with Goffredo Petrassi, and the work shows the influence of the Italian serialist's teaching in its stern demeanor and dark harmonic idiom.

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Barber and Leighton: *God's Grandeur*

Text: Gerard Manley Hopkins

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reckon his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs—
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

Harris: *Faire Is the Heaven*

Text: Edmund Spenser, from *An Hymne of Heavenly Beautie*

Faire is the heaven, where happy soules have place,
 In full enjoyment of felicitie,
 Whence they doe still behold the glorious face
 Of the divine eternall Majestie.

Yet farre more faire be those bright Cherubins,
 Which all with golden wings are overdight, [to be clothed all over]
 And those eternall burning Seraphins,
 Which from their faces dart out fiery light:
 Yet fairer than they both, and much more bright
 Be th' Angels and Archangels, which attend
 On Gods owne person, without rest or end.

These then in faire each other farre excelling,
 As to the Highest they approach more neare,
 Yet is that Highest farre beyond all telling,
 Fairer than all the rest which there appeare,
 Though all their beauties joynd together were;
 How then can mortall tongue hope to expresse
 The image of such endlesse perfectnesse?

Bruckner: *Virga Jesse*

Text: Gradual from the Mass of the Immaculate Conception

Virga Jesse floruit:	Now hath blossomed Jesse's rod:
Virgo Deum et hominem genuit:	a Virgin bears both man and God:
pacem Deus reddidit,	God restoreth peace to men:
in se reconcilians ima summis.	high and low are one again.
Alleluja.	Alleluia.

Bruckner: *Christus factus est*

Text: Gradual for Holy Week

Christus factus est pro nobis	Christ for us became obedient
obediens usque ad mortem,	unto death,
mortem autem crucis.	even the death of the cross.
Propter quod et Deus exaltavit	Wherefore God also hath highly
illum et dedit illi nomen,	exalted him and given him a name
quod est super omne nomen.	which is above every name.

Bruckner: *Ave Maria*

Text: Supplication to the Virgin

Ave Maria gratia plena	Hail, Mary, full of grace;
Dominus tecum.	the Lord is with thee.
Benedicta tu in mulieribus	Blessed art thou amongst women,
et benedictus fructus ventris tui,	and blessed is the fruit of thy womb,
Jesus.	Jesus.
Sancta Maria, mater Dei,	Holy Mary, Mother of God,
ora pro nobis peccatoribus,	pray for us sinners,
nunc et in hora mortis nostrae.	now and at the hour of our death.
Amen.	Amen.

Britten: *Hymn to St. Cecilia*

Text: W.H. Auden

I.

In a garden shady this holy lady
With reverent cadence and subtle psalm,
Like a black swan as death came on
Poured forth her song in perfect calm:
And by ocean's margin this innocent virgin
Constructed an organ to enlarge her prayer,
And notes tremendous from her great engine
Thundered out on the Roman air.

Blonde Aphrodite rose up excited,
Moved to delight by the melody,
White as an orchid she rode quite naked
In an oyster shell on top of the sea;
At sounds so entrancing the angels dancing
Came out of their trance into time again,
And around the wicked in Hell's abysses
The huge flame flickered and eased their pain.

Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire:
Translated Daughter, come down and startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.

II.

I cannot grow;
I have no shadow
To run away from,
I only play.
I cannot err;
There is no creature
Whom I belong to,
Whom I could wrong.

I am defeat
When it knows it
Can now do nothing
By suffering.

All you lived through,
Dancing because you
No longer need it
For any deed.

I shall never be
Different. Love me.

Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire:
Translated Daughter, come down and startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.

III.

O ear whose creatures cannot wish to fall,
 O calm of spaces unafraid of weight,
 Where Sorrow is herself, forgetting all
 The gaucheness of her adolescent state,
 Where Hope within the altogether strange
 From every outworn image is released,
 And Dread born whole and normal like a beast
 Into a world of truths that never change:
 Restore our fallen day; O re-arrange.

O dear white children casual as birds,
 Playing among the ruined languages,
 So small beside their large confusing words,
 So gay against the greater silences
 Of dreadful things you did: O hang the head,
 Impetuous child with the tremendous brain,
 O weep, child, weep, O weep away the stain,
 Lost innocence who wished your lover dead,
 Weep for the lives your wishes never led.

O cry created as the bow of sin
 Is drawn across our trembling violin.

O weep, child, weep,
 O weep away the stain.

O law drummed out by hearts against the still
 Long winter of our intellectual will.

That what has been may never be again.

O flute that throbs with the thanksgiving breath
 Of convalescents on the shores of death.

O bless the freedom that you never chose.

O trumpets that unguarded children blow
 About the fortress of their inner foe.

O wear your tribulation like a rose.

Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
 To all musicians, appear and inspire:
 Translated Daughter, come down and startle
 Composing mortals with immortal fire.

Tippett: *Spirituals from A Child of Our Time*

Text: Traditional

Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus;
 Steal away, steal away home,
 I ain't got long to stay here.
 My Lord, He calls me, He calls me by the thunder,
 The trumpet sounds within a my soul,

I ain't got long to stay here.
Steal away, etc.
Green trees a-bending, poor sinner stands a-trembling,
The trumpet sounds within a my soul,
I ain't got long to stay here.
Steal away, etc.

Nobody knows the trouble I see, Lord,
Nobody knows like Jesus.
O brothers, pray for me,
O brothers, pray for me,
And help me to drive
Old Satan away.
Nobody knows, etc.
O mothers, pray for me,
O mothers, pray for me,
And help me to drive
Old Satan away.
Nobody knows, etc.

Go down, Moses, 'way down in Egypt land;
Tell old Pharaoh, to let my people go.
When Israel was in Egypt's land,
Let my people go,
Oppressed so hard they could not stand,
Let my people go,
"Thus spake the Lord," bold Moses said,
Let my people go,
"If not, I'll smite your first born dead,"
Let my people go.
Go down, Moses, 'way down in Egypt land;
Tell old Pharaoh, to let my people go.

O, by and by, by and by,
I'm gonna lay down my heavy load.
I know my robe's going to fit me well,
I've tried it on at the gates of hell.
O, hell is deep and a dark despair,
O, stop, poor sinner, and don't go there!
O, by and by, by and by,
I'm gonna lay down my heavy load.

Deep river, my home is over Jordan,
Deep river, Lord,
I want to cross over into camp ground.
O, chillun! O, don't you want to go,
To that gospel feast,
That promised land,
That land where all is peace?
Walk into heaven, and take my seat,
And cast my crown at Jesus' feet.
Deep river, my home is over Jordan,
I want to cross over into camp ground, Lord!