

[1] C. Hubert H. PARRY (1848-1918): Blest Pair of Sirens (1887)*John Milton (1608-74): At a Solemn Musick (1645)*

Blest pair of Sirens, pledges of Heaven's joy,
 Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
 Wed your divine sounds, and mixt power employ,
 Dead things with inbreathed sense able to pierce;
 And to our high-raised phantasy present
 That undisturbed song of pure consent,
 Aye sung before the sapphire-coloured throne
 To him that sits thereon,
 With saintly shout and solemn jubilee;
 Where the bright Seraphim, in burning row,
 Their loud, uplifted angel-trumpets blow,
 And the Cherubic host in thousand quires
 Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
 With those just spirits, that wear victorious palms,

Hymns devout and holy psalms
 Singing everlastingly.
 That we on Earth with undiscording voice,
 May rightly answer that melodious noise;
 As once we did, till disproportioned sin
 Jarr'd against Nature's chime, and with harsh din
 Broke the fair music that all creatures made
 To their great Lord, whose love their motion swayed
 In perfect diapason, whilst they stood
 In first obedience, and their state of good.
 O may we soon again renew that song
 And keep in tune with Heaven, till God ere long
 To his celestial consort us unite,
 To live with him and sing in endless morn of light.

[2] Charles Villiers STANFORD (1852-1924): Magnificat for double choir in B flat (1918)*Gospel according to St Luke, Chapter 1, Verses 46-55*

*Magnificat anima mea Dominum,
 et exsultavit spiritus meus in Deo salvatore meo,
 quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae.
 Ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes,
 quia fecit mihi magna,
 qui potens est,
 et sanctum nomen eius,
 et misericordia eius in progenies et progenies
 timentibus eum.
 Fecit potentiam in brachio suo,
 dispersit superbos mente cordis sui;
 deposuit potentes de sede
 et exaltavit humiles;
 esurientes implevit bonis
 et divites dimisit inanes.
 Suscepit Israel puerum suum,
 recordatus misericordiae,
 sicut locutus est ad patres nostros,
 Abraham et semini eius in saecula.*

*Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto.
 Sicut erat in principio,
 et nunc, et semper,
 et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.*

My soul doth magnify the Lord.
 and my spirit hath rejoiced
 in God my saviour.
 For he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden:
 for behold from henceforth all people shall call me blessed.
 For he that is mighty hath magnified me,
 and holy is his name.
 And his mercy is on them that fear him,
 throughout all generations.
 He hath shewed strength with his arm;
 he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
 He hath put down the mighty from their seat,
 and hath exalted the humble.
 He hath filled the hungry with good things,
 and the rich he hath sent empty away.
 He, remembering his mercy, hath holpen his servant Israel,
 as he promised to our forefathers,
 Abraham and his seed for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
 As it was in the beginning,
 is now, and ever shall be,
 world without end, Amen.

[3] John STAINER (1840-1901): I saw the Lord (c.1856)*Isaiah, Chapter 6, Verses 1-4, and anonymous 11th-century Latin hymn Ave colenda Trinitas, translated by John David Chambers (1803-93)*

I saw the Lord, sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up,
 and his train filled the temple.
 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings;
 with twain he covered his face,
 and with twain he covered his feet,
 and with twain he did fly.
 And one cried unto another,
 Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts:

the whole earth is full of his glory.
 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried,
 and the house was filled with smoke.
 O Trinity! O Unity!
 Be present as we worship Thee,
 And with the songs that angels sing
 Unite the hymns of praise we bring.
 Amen.

[4] E. W. NAYLOR (1867-1934): Vox Dicentis: Clama (1911)*Isaiah, Chapter 40, Verses 6-11*

*Vox dicentis: Clama: et dixi: Quid clamabo?
 Omnis caro foenum, et omnis gloria eius quasi flos agri.
 Vere foenum est populus.
 Exsiccatum est foenum, et cecidit flos:
 verbum autem Domini nostri manet in aeternum.*

The voice said, Cry; and I said, What shall I cry?
 All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field.
 Truly the people is as grass.
 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth:
 but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

*Super montem excelsum ascende tu, qui evangelizas Sion:
exalta in fortitudine vocem tuam, qui evangelizas Jerusalem:
exalta, noli timere.
Dic civitatibus Judae: Ecce Deus vester.*

*Ecce Dominus Deus in fortitudine veniet,
et brachium eius dominabitur:
ecce merces eius cum eo, et opus illius coram illo.*

*Sicut pastor gregem suum pascet,
in brachio suo congregabit agnos,
et in sinu suo levabit, foetas ipse portabit.*

[5] William WALTON (1902-83): The Twelve (1965)

W. H. Auden (1907–73), written in 1964

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[6] Gustav HOLST (1874-1934): Nunc Dimittis (1915)

Gospel according to St Luke, Chapter 2, Verses 29-32

*Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Domine, secundum verbum tuum in pace:
Quia viderunt oculi mei salutem tuam
Quod parasti ante faciem omnium populorum:
Lumen ad revelationem gentium, et gloriam plebis tuae Israel.*

*Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper,
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.*

[7] Gerald FINZI (1901-56): Lo, the full final sacrifice (1946)

Richard Crashaw's (1613-49) versions of the Hymns of St Thomas Aquinas (c.1225-74),

Adoro Te and Lauda Sion Salvatorem.

Lo, the full, final, Sacrifice
On which all figures fix't their eyes.
The ransomed Isaac, and his ram;
The Manna, and the Paschal Lamb.

Jesu Master, just and true!
Our Food, and faithful Shepherd too!
O let that love which thus makes thee
Mix with our low Mortality,
Lift our lean Souls, and set us up
Convictors of thine own full cup,

Coheirs of Saints. That so all may
Drink the same wine; and the same way.
Nor change the Pasture, but the Place
To feed of Thee in thine own Face.

O dear Memorial of that Death
Which lives still, and allows us breath!
Rich, Royal food! Bountiful Bread!
Whose use denies us to the dead!

Live ever Bread of loves, and be
My life, my soul, my surer self to me.

Help Lord, my Faith, my Hope increase;
And fill my portion in thy peace.
Give love for life; nor let my days
Grow, but in new powers to thy name and praise.

O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountains:
O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength:
lift it up, be not afraid.
Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God.

Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand,
and his arm shall rule for him:
behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd,
he shall gather the lambs with his arm,
and shall gently lead those that are with young.

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:
for mine eyes have seen thy salvation
which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;
to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end, Amen.

Rise, Royal Sion! rise and sing
Thy soul's kind shepherd, thy heart's King.
Stretch all thy powers; call if you can
Harps of heaven to hands of man.
This sovereign subject sits above
The best ambition of thy love.

Lo the Bread of Life, this day's
Triumphant Text provokes thy praise.
The living and life-giving bread,
To the great twelve distributed
When Life, himself, at point to die
Of love, was his own Legacy.

O soft self-wounding Pelican!
Whose breast weeps Balm for wounded man.
All this way bend thy benign flood
To a bleeding Heart that gasps for blood.
That blood, whose least drops sovereign be
To wash my worlds of sins from me.
Come love! Come Lord! and that long day
For which I languish, come away.
When this dry soul those eyes shall see,
And drink the unseal'd source of thee.
When Glory's sun faith's shades shall chase,
And for thy veil give me thy Face.
Amen.