



CANITE TUBA

Music for Advent
and Christmas

Onyx Brass

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Niall Keatley *trumpet*

Brian Thomson *trumpet*

Andrew Sutton *horn*

Amos Miller *trombone*

David Gordon Shute *tuba*

'Easily the classiest brass ensemble in Britain'

BBC Music Magazine

*'... supremely virtuoso, resplendent ... some of the most
thrilling chamber brass-playing of its kind'*

Gramophone

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)		Thomas Tallis (c.1505-1585)	
1. Deus in adiutorium meum intende	[1:54]	12. O nata lux	[1:37]
<i>(from Vespro della Beata Vergine 1610)</i>			
Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525/6-1594)		Pyotr Illyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)	
2. Canite tuba	[2:10]	13. Legenda Op. 54, No. 5	[1:51]
Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713)		Johann Sebastian Bach	
3. Concerto grosso: fatto per la notte di Natale	[6:26]	14. Nun komm, der Heiden	[4:04]
		Heiland BWV 659	
Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672)		Peter Cornelius (1824-1874)	
4. Herodes	[2:00]	15. Die Könige Op. 8, No. 3	[2:11]
<i>(from Weihnachtshistorie SWV 435)</i>			
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)		Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina	
5. Herr, wenn die stolzen Feinde schnauben	[4:22]	16. Kyrie <i>(from Missa O magnum mysterium)</i>	[2:33]
<i>(from Weihnachts Oratorium BWV 248: Am Epiphaniafest)</i>			
Gustav Holst (1874-1934)		Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)	
Four Old English Carols H82		17. L'adieu des bergers	[4:29]
6. A Babe is Born	[1:55]	<i>(from L'Enfance du Christ, Op.25)</i>	
7. Now Let us Sing	[2:47]	Jakob Handl (1550-1591)	
8. Jesu, Thou the Virgin-born	[2:51]	18. Omnes de Saba venient	[1:33]
9. The Saviour of the World is Born	[1:36]		
		Johann Sebastian Bach	
Traditional Irish (arr. Donal Bannister)		19. In dulci jubilo BWV 608	[1:13]
10. Wexford Carol	[3:30]	20. In dulci jubilo BWV 729	[2:35]
Robert Parsons (1535-1572)		Total playing time	[56:38]
11. Ave Maria	[4:47]		



Onyx Brass

Canite Tuba: Sound the Trumpet

Music written to celebrate Advent and the festival of Christmas spans many centuries with composers from all periods of western music penning works to mark this time of both preparation and joy at the mystical events surrounding the birth of Christ.

Claudio Monteverdi

Deus in adiutorium meum intende
(from *Vespro della Beata Vergine* 1610)

Published in 1610, Monteverdi's *Vespers* present a joyous and monumental piece that has become a key work of the Baroque repertoire. As a central character in the narrative of the Christmas story the dedication of this work to the Blessed Virgin Mary makes the work eminently suitable for this particular feast.

Produced while the choirmaster to Vincenzo Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua in northern Italy, this collection of psalms, hymns, motets and a mass setting was intended to be used by music directors from both court chapels and churches using a variety of instruments and voices as were available.

This flamboyant toccata that opens the work presents a dancing fanfare, which he re-worked from the introduction to his

opera *L'Orfeo* from 1607 and was originally intended as homage to his royal patron Gonzaga. By re-using this toccata, Monteverdi, once again flattering his patron, was simultaneously declaring that his *Vespers* were of a suitable stature to be used at the grandest of occasions. This singular move away from the established 'stile antico' to embrace secular musical styles in the church also marked the work out as a milestone of all church music.

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

Canite tuba

Intended for use on the fourth Sunday of Advent, Palestrina's motet was first published in 1572 in his second book of motets for five, six and eight voices. This five-part motet begins robustly with the original opening words 'Sound the trumpet in Sion, for the day of the Lord is nigh'. The piece turns to a more reflective mood before closing with a resounding chorus of 'Alleluias'.

Arcangelo Corelli

Concerto grosso: fatto per la notte di Natale

This arrangement consists of the opening movements from Corelli's celebrated concerto grosso, often referred to as known as the 'Christmas Concerto', published posthumously. The work is subtitled 'fatto

per la notte di natale’, (‘made for the night of the birth’), and is part of a set of twelve that Corelli wrote for a commission from Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni in 1690.

Heinrich Schütz

Herodes

(from *Weihnachtshistorie* SWV 435)

Considered to be among the most important composers of the 17th century, Heinrich Schütz was German by birth but worked extensively as a composer and organist throughout Germany, Italy and Denmark. Retiring from his regular responsibilities in 1657, Schütz began composing his *Weihnachtshistorie* (or Christmas Story) in 1660, aged 75. This innovative work led the way in setting the Christmas story using the new ‘recitative’ style, and indeed is widely considered to be one of the finest examples of Evangelist narrative prior to J.S. Bach.

In between the recitative narration, Schütz employs ‘intermedii’ – dramatic interludes depicting the main characters of the story. The Intermedium featured here (number six) is entitled ‘Herodes’. In this arrangement the tune is placed in the trombone to represent the voice of Herod with the high trumpets reminding us of his regal standing as he tries to fool the Wise Men into betraying where

he might discover Jesus that he ‘might go and worship him’.

Johann Sebastian Bach

Herr, wenn die stolzen Feinde schnauben
(from *Weinachts Oratorium* BWV 248:
Am Epiphaniastag)

This track features the opening chorus from the sixth and final part of J.S. Bach’s celebrated Christmas Oratorio, ‘Am Epiphaniastag’ (‘For the Feast of the Epiphany’). Written in Leipzig in 1734, this oratorio was intended to be performed over the six services of Christmas and Epiphany and utilises music written for previous works including a number of secular cantatas (BWV213-5) and the lost sacred cantata BWV 248a.

Gustav Holst

Four Old English Carols H82

I. A Babe is Born

II. Now Let us Sing

III. Jesu, Thou the Virgin-born

IV. The Saviour of the World is Born

Holst’s Four Old English Carols were early works, composed in 1907, some ten years before the composer was to become a popular success, cementing his reputation in history.

In 1905, just two years before the composition of this set of carols, Holst had been appointed Director of Music at St Paul's Girls' School in Hammersmith, London – a post he would keep until his death in 1934. It was also around this time that English composers were enjoying the revival of folk-song, and it was with this music that he felt he had discovered English music at its zenith. The four carols, which he sets here are from the 15th-century and captured his imagination with their modal qualities.

Traditional Irish (arr. Donal Bannister)
Wexford Carol

The Wexford Carol stands as one of the oldest extant carols in Europe. Originally thought to date from as far back as the 12th-century, this Irish tune from County Wexford was brought into the popular Christmas canon due to the work of William Grattan Ford (1859 – 1928), who transcribed the carol from a local singer. It first appeared in print in the Oxford Book of Carols.

Robert Parsons
Ave Maria

Born in 1530, Robert Parsons became a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal in 1563. During his tenure there he wrote this five-

part motet, which stands as his most impressive composition of his short life which ended prematurely when he tragically drowned in the River Trent.

As one of the very few settings of this Roman Catholic text from this period in England, it is suspected that Parsons was among the ranks of recusant composers and writers of the English Reformation.

Thomas Tallis
O nata lux

Tallis, along with his contemporary Elizabethan composer, William Byrd, was among the first to be given permission by the Queen to print music. Tallis's 1575 motet, *O nata lux de lumine* (O light born of light), sets the first two verses of a hymn for the Feast of the Transfiguration. False relations are used in a skilled and delicate manner and it is the slight indeterminate nature of the tonality that makes this work so remarkable.

Pyotr Illyich Tchaikovsky
Legenda Op. 54, No. 5

'Legenda' (also known as 'Crown of Roses') appears as number five of Tchaikovsky's *Chansons pour la jeunesse*, which were published in Moscow in 1883. The text was penned by Plechtchéev and this evocative

work tells the story of Jesus' youth to illustrate the story of the Crucifixion as seen in the Russian tradition.

Johann Sebastian Bach

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland BWV 659

This particular chorale prelude is one of three based on the chorale 'Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland' found in the collection of eighteen organ chorale preludes contained in Bach's Leipzig manuscripts. Written in the latter part of Bach's life this chorale prelude was composed in a typical German ornamental style, where the chorale itself appears in a highly decorated version alongside a more simple accompaniment.

Peter Cornelius

The Kings (Die Könige) Op. 8, No. 3

Dating from 1856, this piece is the third from Cornelius's *Weihnachtslieder*. Cornelius was fascinated by the work of J.S. Bach as were many composers of that time. The influence of the famous Baroque composer can be clearly seen in this work as Cornelius sets a lyrical, flowing melody over the chorale tune 'Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern' ('How brightly shines the morning star') in true Lutheran style.

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

Kyrie (*from Missa O magnum mysterium*)

Standing amongst the 105 Masses written by Palestrina, and dating from 1582 this work, based around the plainchant 'O magnum mysterium' ('O great mystery'), is consistent with his distinctive musical language with its long flowing lines and the avoidance of emphasis on the stronger beats, giving a sense of timelessness and serenity. The arrangement featured on this album is the first movement from the Ordinary of the Mass, 'Kyrie eleison' the Greek text that implores forgiveness.

Hector Berlioz

The Shepherds' Farewell (L'adieu des bergers)
(*from L'Enfance du Christ*, Op.25)

Arguably the most famous piece from his choral work *L'Enfance du Christ*, Berlioz's carol The Shepherds' Farewell was originally written in 1850, four years before the rest of the work was completed. The simple carol was originally an organ piece written for his friend Joseph-Louis Duc and was later premiered as a choral work in November of that year. However, Berlioz refused to attach his name to it instead claiming it was written by an imaginary 17th-century composer, Pierre Ducré. The critics that had previously shunned

Berlioz's work loved the piece and claimed that Berlioz himself could never have written such a beautiful and simple tune. After writing several more additional sections, *L'Enfance du Christ* was finally completed and premiered in its entirety in December 1855.

Jakob Handl

Omnes de Saba venient

The 16th-century Slovenian composer Jakob Handl worked and resided in Austria and Bohemia over the course of his musical career, finding work in both royal chapels and Benedictine abbeys. Demonstrating intricate contrapuntal writing throughout the five parts, this motet was written to celebrate the Feast of Epiphany.

Johann Sebastian Bach

In dulci jubilo BWV 608

J.S. Bach set this traditional carol several times during his career including this work numbered BWV 608. Originally scored for the organ in 1713, the piece was published in Bach's *Orgelbüchlein* (Little Organ Book), during his time as court organist in Weimar. Originally intended as a collection of 164 chorale preludes that would span the liturgical year, Bach only

managed to complete forty-six.

Johann Sebastian Bach

In dulci jubilo BWV 729

This second setting of the joyous carol *In dulci jubilo* by J.S. Bach was written earlier in 1708 perhaps to accompany the congregational singing at St Boniface's church in Arnstadt where he was working as organist, but its length may suggest that it was rather intended as a recital show piece. This setting alternates a chordal harmonization of the main chorale tune with lavish interludes that suggest an improvised style. Indeed, it may have been the case that these sections weren't written out in full leaving the organist to embellish the statement of each chorale phrase.

Onyx Brass

Since its formation in 1993, Onyx Brass has been dominating the international brass chamber music world. Dubbed 'easily the classiest brass ensemble in Britain' by *BBC Music Magazine*, Onyx was conceived as a uniquely approachable yet serious brass chamber ensemble and has since performed at festivals all over Europe and the USA to huge critical acclaim, as well as performing regularly on BBC Radios 2 and 3.

Individual members of the group hold permanent, principal positions in The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Orchestra of English National Opera, the English Chamber Orchestra, and the Royal Ballet Sinfonia.

As part of a wide ranging repertoire, the commissioning of new music is of particular importance to Onyx and, to this end, they have performed and recorded world premieres of music by Jonathan Dove, Bob Chilcott, John Tavener, John McCabe, Judith Bingham, Joe Duddell and Michael Nyman.

Work with choirs forms a vital part of Onyx's work, and in recent times the group has worked with the BBC Singers, the Brighton Festival Chorus, the Choir of St Brides, Fleet Street as well as superb amateur choirs including the choir of Selwyn College,

Cambridge. The John Armitage Memorial trust forms the backbone of this work and, also, provides a platform for composers to submit works for inclusion in to each year's series of concerts.

The group are also highly active in the field of music education, having conducted a great number of workshops and master classes, including educational days at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and with the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain. In the USA they have carried out masterclasses at the Juilliard School in New York and the Boston Conservatory. Onyx have several times toured around Britain with Bob Chilcott's educational work *A Sporting Chance* for brass quintet, school choir, actors and dancers. The group is also ensemble-in-residence at both Westminster Abbey Choir School and Imperial College, University of London.

Onyx have recorded several discs, including *Fugue* a recording of fugues by Bach and Shostakovich (Chandos Records) and two titles for Meridian Records - *Pavans Fantasias Variations* and *Time to Time*.

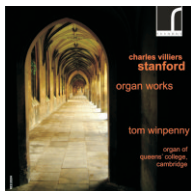
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