

MESSE MODALE

Upper voices music for Mass by ALAIN, FAURÉ and LANGLAIS



The Choir of Buckfast Abbey
Matthew Searles



JEHAN ALAIN (1911–1940)

“We sang a great deal in the Alain family. I remember very lively evenings when we became virtually intoxicated by music, alternating Bach cantatas, all sorts of operas, songs and sixteenth century choruses. Albert Alain, a great specialist in religious vocal music, passed his taste for the human voice, the natural voice without vibrato, to his children.”

— Marie-Claire Alain (1996)

GREGORIAN CHANT

- 1 Introitus: Gaudeamus 3' 08

GABRIEL FAURÉ (1845–1924)

- MESSE BASSE 18' 50
- 2 Kyrie..... 2' 23
- 3 Gloria *by David Davies (b.1973)* 4' 18
- 4 Sanctus 2' 24
- 5 Benedictus 2' 54
- 6 O salutaris Hostia *by André Messager (1853–1929)*... 3' 25
- 7 Agnus Dei 3' 26

GREGORIAN CHANT

- 8 Alleluia: Ave Maria 2' 59

JEHAN ALAIN (1911–1940)

- MESSE MODALE EN SEPTUOR (JA 136) †..... 10' 42
- 9 Kyrie..... 2' 21
- 10 Gloria..... 4' 08
- 11 Sanctus 2' 03
- 12 Agnus Dei..... 2' 10
- 13 Choral cistercien pour une élévation (JA 134) .. 1' 44
- 14 O quam suavis est (JA 35) 2' 20

JEAN LANGLAIS (1907–1991)

- TROIS PRIÈRES (Op. 65) * 6' 41
- 15 Ave verum..... 1' 58
- 16 Ave maris stella 2' 26
- 17 Tantum ergo 2' 17

GREGORIAN CHANT

- 18 Communio: Beata viscera..... 0' 50

JEAN LANGLAIS

- MISSA IN SIMPLICITATE..... 15' 52
- 19 Kyrie..... 3' 13
- 20 Gloria..... 2' 54
- 21 Credo 3' 59
- 22 Sanctus 2' 40
- 23 Agnus Dei..... 3' 06

DANIEL ROTH (b.1942)

- 24 Aïn Karim (Fantaisie pour flûte et orgue) † .. 11' 58

THE CHOIR OF BUCKFAST ABBEY

MATTHEW SEARLES	<i>director</i>
CHARLES MAXTONE-SMITH	<i>organ</i>
LLOYD HAMPTON †	<i>flute</i>
MAIA CARTER-OAKLEY *	<i>soprano</i>



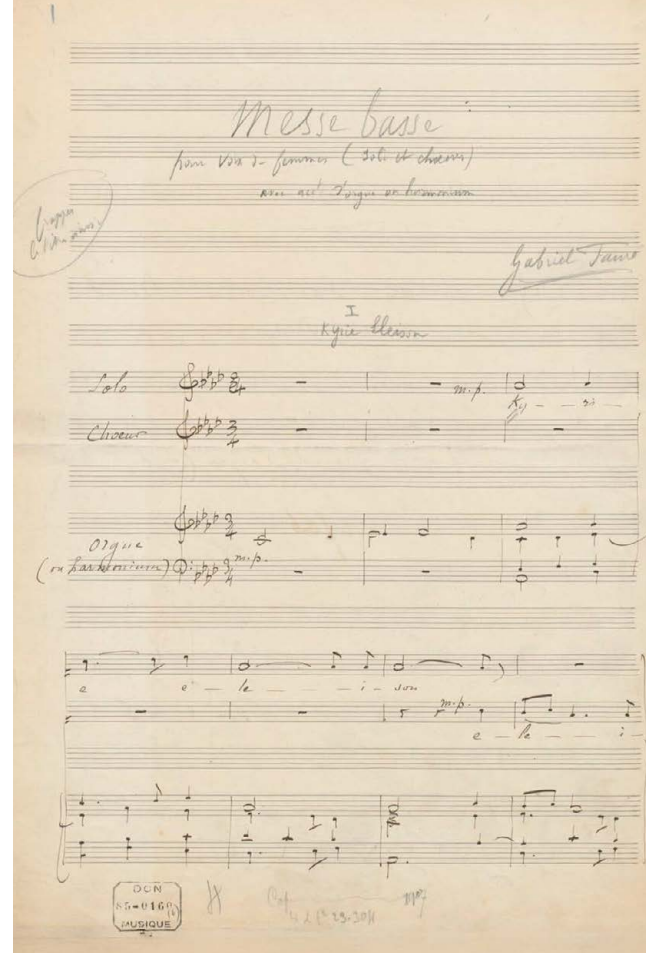
ABOUT THE MUSIC

At Buckfast Abbey it has been customary in recent years for the sopranos and altos of the Abbey Choir to occasionally sing the Sunday Solemn Mass without lower voices. This recording celebrates this, and reflects some of the repertoire that might be encountered if worshipping here on such an occasion. It is mostly taken from a relatively short, but artistically vibrant, period in early twentieth-century France, as the heady excesses of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century drifted into the distance, and a kind of music more appropriate to the beauty of holiness was restored to the churches of Paris. In keeping with the Benedictine tradition at Buckfast – restored by French monks in 1882 – these works are punctuated here by several Gregorian chants, appropriate not for a Sunday but for a Mass in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, to whom the Abbey Church is dedicated.

Gabriel Fauré spent the years following his studies at the École Niedermeyer (1865) and his appointment as the director of the Paris Conservatoire (1905) primarily engaged in church music at the fashionable parish of La Madeleine, where he was successively *Maître de chapelle* (from 1877) and *Organiste titulaire* (from 1896). His most famous choral work, the *Requiem*, was, like much of his sacred music, written with this church and its particular resources in mind, and reflects Fauré's penchant for more intimate musical forms: chamber, piano and vocal music. At a time when certain pressures prevailed concerning the type of music considered appropriate for the liturgy, Fauré overlooked the requirements of the Papacy to return to ideals of plainsong and polyphony, and ostensibly had little intention of adjusting his style, preferring to favour his own natural expressivity and charming melodicism.

The first iteration of the *Messe basse* was one of few sacred works not written for the Madeleine – in fact, it provided some light relief from its 'severe' solemnity –

The first page of
the manuscript of
Gabriel Fauré's
Messe Basse
(1906)



and was an enjoyable collaboration with Fauré's friend, André Messager. It was penned in the summer of 1881, and sung by the ladies of the village and the young girls who were on vacation in Villerville on the Normandy coast, for the benefit of the association of local fishermen. Messager wrote a *Kyrie* and *O salutaris Hostia* (sung in place of the *Benedictus* before the liturgical reforms of Pope Pius X in 1903), and Fauré the other movements. The premiere took place in the village church on 4 September 1881, in a version for harmonium and violin (solo in the *O salutaris*). A second performance with small orchestra took place in September 1882 and it then appears to have been shelved until 1906 when, under the pressure of a contract with his publisher, Fauré exclusively re-formed it into the *Messe basse* widely known today. The *Messe de l'Association des pêcheurs de Villerville* (as it was originally titled) did include a *Gloria* by Fauré, which was subsequently withdrawn on the basis that it was '*trop martial*'. On this recording, we have inserted a *Gloria* by David Davies (Organist of

Buckfast Abbey 2019–2023) which was written for the girl choristers of Exeter Cathedral Choir, but has become a firm favourite at Buckfast and is sung to complement the Fauré movements during Mass here. Not intended as a pastiche, David's *Gloria* takes us beyond the tender piety of the *Messe basse* and onwards into later Romantic realms, propelled forward by its fluid organ accompaniment. The steadier, more reflective, middle section quotes two Gregorian chants for Our Lady: *Salve Regina* and *Ave Maria*.

The centrepiece of this album is the *Messe modale en septuor* by Jehan Alain. Alain was a remarkable figure, whose life was tragically cut short at the age of 29 when, as a motorcycle dispatch rider during the Second World War, he died in action at Saumur in the Loire, and France lost a young composer of considerable achievement and even greater promise. Born into a musical family at Saint-Germain-en-Laye to the west of Paris, Alain had wide-ranging interests which shaped his distinctive,



Original sketch
by Jehan Alain

Aubus

uninhibited style, including oriental cultures, jazz, drawing and mechanics. His teachers were Paul Dukas and Jean Roger-Ducasse for composition and Marcel Dupré for organ. He was organist at the synagogue on Rue Notre-Dame-de-Nazareth, and, from 1936, at the church of Saint-Nicolas in Maisons-Laffitte; it is the influence of Gregorian chant that is immediately apparent in the *Messe modale*, which was composed for this church in 1938. Inspired by a flautist friend, the Mass is scored for soprano, alto, flute and string quartet. The *Sanctus* omits the *Benedictus* text, since Église Saint-Nicolas had a tradition of performing a motet in its place.

The *Choral cistercien pour une élévation* is a brief homage to the medieval Cistercian foundation at Buckfast, when the monastery became a daughter house of Savigny in 1136. It was written for, and dedicated to, Sr Jeanne Salzani, organist at the Cistercian Abbey at Valloires, in 1934. *O quam suavis est* was composed in October 1932 for the Basilica of Saint-Ferjeux in Besançon. Many of

the hallmarks of Alain's innovative voice can be heard in this characterful music, which is imbued with elegant rhythmic floridity, and so richly suited to accompanying the sacred mysteries.

The *Trois prières* for solo voice and organ are dedicated to the soprano Marie-Louise Colozier and were given their first performance by their dedicatee on 16 August 1949 at the Parisian church of Sainte-Clotilde, where Jean Langlais was organist 1945–1987. *Ave verum* and *Ave maris stella* use French translations of the Latin texts, while the third, *Tantum ergo*, can be sung in either Latin or French (recorded here in the vernacular). It is interesting to consider that by writing these pieces in French, Langlais foreshadowed the forthcoming authorisation of the Second Vatican Council, the effects of which would come to cause him significant angst towards the end of his life.

The *Missa in simplicitate* came to life in the composer's native Brittany during the summer of 1952. In his



Paul Dukas' composition class in 1934 (Jean Langlais and Jehan Alain are in the second row, second and fourth from the left respectively)



*Jean Langlais
and Jeannine
Collard (1964)*

Souvenirs, Langlais recalls: “one day in July, the Rector of La Richardais, where I was spending my holiday, knowing we had invited Jeannine Collard of the Paris Opera to join us, came by to ask me to try to persuade her to sing at Mass on Sunday. Because she had not brought any sacred music along, she asked me to compose something. I made a *Kyrie* for her, to which she replied, “It’s really not enough to sing just the *Kyrie* at Mass!” “Alright, I’ll make you an *Agnus Dei* so you can sing a *Kyrie* at the beginning and an *Agnus Dei* at the end.” He eventually set the whole Ordinary, including the *Credo*, which in the spirit of its title, is straightforward and reserved, with the clarity of the text (often with little repetition) and chant-like expression foremost in its character. In the *Agnus Dei*, strains of the *Kyrie* return to lend unity to the five moments, each of them based on a single theme (an intricate system of Braille transcription of the first name of its dedicatee). The subtitle of the work (*pour une voix ou chœur à l’unisson avec accompagnement d’orgue ou*

harmonium) suggests a degree of discretion in terms of its performance, which may equally be given by a baritone. It is interesting to consider that the premiere of the *Missa in simplicitate*, given by its dedicatee and inspiration, Jeannine Collard (an operatic mezzo-soprano), was at odds with the 1903 *Motu proprio* on sacred music, *Tra le sollecitudini*, which both excluded lay women from exercising a role in sung liturgy and discouraged a profane style of singing. Nevertheless, Langlais' modal mysticism, coloured by his signature chromaticism, shrouds the Latin text with great spiritual integrity, and it remains a liturgically effective and practical piece in the repertoire of choirs on both sides of the Channel to this day.

Ain Karim is an extended fantasia for flute and organ written in 1995 by Daniel Roth, titular organist of the church of Saint-Sulpice from 1985 until 2023. After studying at the Paris Conservatoire with Rolande Falcinelli and Maurice Duruflé, Roth continued his organ studies with Marie-Claire Alain (sister of Jehan). *Ain*

Karim takes its name from the place near Jerusalem where Mary, the mother of Jesus, is thought to have visited her cousin Elizabeth and spoken the words of the *Magnificat*. Composed for organ and solo flute, Roth references the verse *Deposuit potentes de sede et exaltavit humiles* ('He casts the mighty from their thrones and raises the lowly') from the canticle to highlight the contrast between the 'little' flute and the 'monumental' organ.

MATTHEW SEARLES

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

- 1 Gaudeamus omnes
in Domino diem festum
celebrantes sub honore
Mariæ Virginis:
de cuius solemnitate
gaudent angeli, et
collaudant Filium Dei.

V. Eructavit cor meum
verbum bonum: dico ego
opera mea regi.

2 Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison.

3 Gloria in excelsis Deo
et in terra pax hominibus
bonæ voluntatis.
Laudamus te,
benedicimus te,
adoramus te,
glorificamus te,

*Let us all rejoice
in the Lord, as we celebrate the
feast day in honour of the
Virgin Mary,
at whose solemnity
the Angels rejoice and
praise the Son of God.*

*My heart overflows with noble
words: to the king I must speak
the song I have made.*

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

*Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace
to people of good will.
We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,*

gratias agimus tibi propter
magnam gloriam tuam,
Domine Deus, Rex cælestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens.

Domine Fili unigenite,
Iesu Christe,
Domine Deus,
Agnus Dei, Filius Patris,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis;
qui tollis peccata mundi,
suscipe deprecationem nostram.
Qui sedes ad dexteram
Patris, miserere nobis.

Quoniam tu solus sanctus,
tu solus Dominus,
tu solus Altissimus,
Iesu Christe,
cum Sancto Spiritu,
in gloria Dei Patris.
Amen.

*we give you thanks
for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.*

*Lord Jesus Christ,
Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
Son of the Father,
you take away the sins
of the world, have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the
world, receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand
of the Father, have mercy on us.*

*For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the
glory of God the Father.
Amen.*

- 4 Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt cæli et terra
gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.
- 5 Benedictus qui venit
in nomine Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.
- 6 O salutaris Hostia,
quæ cæli pandis ostium:
bella premunt hostilia,
da robur, fer auxilium.
Amen.
- 7 Agnus Dei, qui tollis
peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis
peccata mundi,
dona nobis pacem.
- 8 Alleluia. Ave Maria, gratia
plena: Dominus tecum:
benedicta tu in mulieribus.
- Holy, holy, holy
Lord God of Hosts.
Heaven and earth are
full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.*
- Blessed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.*
- O saving Victim,
opening wide the gate of heaven:
wars oppress us,
grant us aid, your strength bestow.
Amen.*
- Lamb of God, who takes
away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, who takes
away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.*
- Alleluia. Hail Mary,
full of grace, the Lord is with you.
Blessed are you amongst women.*

For texts and translation of tracks 9–12, see tracks 2, 3, 4 and 7

- 14 O quam suavis est,
Domine, spiritus tuus,
qui ut dulcedinem tuam
in filios demonstrares
pane suavissimo de cælo
præstito, esurientes reple
bonis, fastidiosos divites
dimittens inanes.
- 15 Je vous salue, O vrai corps,
né de la Vierge Marie.
Qui avez vraiment souffert,
et êtes mort en croix pour
les hommes. Dont le côté
percé versa du sang,
et de l'eau. Soyez notre
réconfort dans
les affres du trépas.
O bon Jésus, o doux Jésus,
O Jésus fils de Marie,
ayez pitié de nous.
Ainsi soit-il.
- Oh how sweet is your spirit
Lord, you who,
to show your
sweetness to your children,
sent down the most delicious bread
from heaven, filling the hungry with
good things, sending the disdainful
rich empty away.*
- Hail to you, O true body,
born of the Virgin Mary.
Who truly suffered
and died on the cross for
humankind. Whose pierced
side poured forth blood
and water. Be our
comfort in the
trials of death.
O good Jesus, O gentle Jesus,
O Jesus, Son of Mary,
have mercy on us.
Amen.*

16 Salut étoile de la mer,
auguste mère de Dieu,
et toujours Vierge,
porte heureuse du ciel.

Vous qui avez agréé
le salut de l'Ange Gabriel,
établissez-nous dans la paix,
en changeant le nom d'Ève.

Brisez les fers des coupables,
donnez la lumière aux
aveugles, chassez au loin
nos maux, obtenez-nous
tous les biens.

Montrez-vous notre mère
et offrez nos prières à celui
qui, né pour nous,
a bien voulu être vôtre.

Vierge incomparable,
douce entre toutes les vierges,
faites que, nos fautes remises,
nous soyons doux, et chastes.

*Hail star of the sea,
merciful Mother of God,
ever a virgin,
happy door of heaven.*

*Taking this 'Ave' from the
mouth of Gabriel,
bring us to peace, reversing
the name 'Eva'.*

*Unbind the shackles of the accused,
bring light to the
blind, take away our
misfortunes and bring us
every good.*

*Show yourself as mother;
may he who was yours,
who was born for us,
receive our prayer through you.*

*Unique virgin,
gentler than all,
make us gentle and chaste,
free from the bonds of sin.*

Rendez notre vie pure,
assurez notre route, pour
que, voyant Jésus, nous nous
réjouissons éternellement.

Louange à Dieu le Père,
Gloire au Christ souverain,
ainsi qu'au Saint-Esprit,
aux trois, même honneur,
ainsil soit-il.

17 Devant un si grand
sacrement courbons-nous
pleins de respect.
Que la figure antique fasse
place au rite nouveau.
Et que la foi supplée
au défaut des sens.

À Dieu le Père et
au fils, louange et chants
d'allégresse. Salut, honneur,
puissance et bénédiction.
À celui qui procède des deux
égal tribut de louanges.
Ainsi soit-il.

*Bring us a pure life,
prepare the true way,
so that, seeing Jesus,
we may rejoice for ever.*

*Praise be to God the Father,
to the most high Christ be glory.
to the Holy Spirit,
to all three one honour.
Amen.*

*Before so great a
Sacrament, let us
bow with deep respect.
Let the old covenant
give way to a new rite.
Let faith stand forth as substitute
for defect of the senses.*

*Glory let us give and blessing
to the Father, and the Son,
honour, might and praise
addressing while eternal ages run;
ever too his love confessing,
who, from both, with both is one.
Amen.*

18 Beata viscera Mariæ Virginis,
quæ portaverunt æterni
Patris Filium.

*Blessed is the womb of the Virgin
Mary, which bore the Son of the
eternal Father.*

For texts and translation of tracks 19–20, see tracks 2–3

21 Credo in unum Deum,
Patrem omnipotentem,
factorem cæli et terræ,
visibilia omnium
et invisibilia.
Et in unum Dominum
Iesum Christum,
Filium Dei unigenitum.
Et ex Patre natum
ante omnia sæcula.
Deum de Deo,
lumen de lumine,
Deum verum de Deo vero.
Genitum, non factum,
consubstantialem Patri,
per quem omnia facta sunt.
Qui propter nos homines,
et propter nostram salutem
descendit de cælis.

*I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible
and invisible.
I believe in one Lord
Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father
before all ages.
God from God,
Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men
and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,*

Et incarnatus est
de Spiritu Sancto
ex Maria Virgine:
et homo factus est.
Crucifixus etiam pro nobis
sub Pontio Pilato,
passus et sepultus est.
Et resurrexit tertia die,
secundum Scripturas.
Et ascendit in cælum:
sedet ad dexteram Patris.
Et iterum venturus est
cum gloria, iudicare vivos
et mortuos:
cuius regni non erit finis.
Et in Spiritum Sanctum,
Dominum et vivificantem:
qui ex Patre Filioque procedit.
Qui cum Patre et Filio simul
adoratur et conglorificatur:
qui locutus est per Prophetas.
Et unam sanctam catholicam
et apostolicam Ecclesiam.
Confiteor unum baptisma

*and by the Holy Spirit
was incarnate
of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.
For our sake he was crucified
under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of
the Father. He will come again
in glory to judge the living
and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and
the Son, who with the Father and the
Son is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
I believe in one holy, catholic
and apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism*

in remissionem peccatorum. *for the forgiveness of sins*
Et exspecto *and I look forward to the*
resurrectionem mortuorum, *resurrection of the dead,*
et vitam venturi sæculi. *and the life of the world to come.*
Amen. *Amen.*

For texts and translation of tracks 22–23, see tracks 4, 5 and 7

THE CHOIR OF BUCKFAST ABBEY

The present incarnation of the Abbey Choir was founded in 2009 and has since established a broad liturgical repertoire, embracing polyphony of the sixteenth century and great Viennese Masses, music of the French Romantic tradition and contemporary works by James MacMillan, Matthew Martin and Dom Sebastian Wolff OSB. In recent years, the choir has commissioned a set of eight fauxbourdon Magnificats from Andrew Reid, and given the premiere of a new Mass by Martin Baker.

At the heart of its work, the choir sings Solemn Mass and Vespers each Sunday, together with Mass on Holy Days of Obligation during the week. A smaller schola supports the singing of the Monastic Community during choir holidays. Alongside its liturgical commitments, the Abbey Choir gives regular concert performances, with highlights including the Bach *Magnificat* with Noxwode Baroque and the Duruflé *Requiem* with the Southern Sinfonia.

Since releasing its first commercial recording in 2014, the choir has developed an emerging discography on the Abbey's in-house label, Ad Fontes. Its most recent album – a sequence of music for Corpus Christi – was described as 'a taste of heaven' in a five-star review by *Choir & Organ*. In 2018, at the conclusion of Buckfast's millennium year, the Abbey Choir sang Midnight Mass which was televised live on BBC One, and several services of choral Vespers have been broadcast on BBC Radio 3.



CHOIR

Rachel Bennett
Maia Carter-Oakley
Lizzie Coldrick
Bel Joshi-Hartley
Denise Kehoe
Nellie Lofthouse
Becka McClaughry
Hattie Pecksmith
Alice Risdon
Hermione Ruck Keene
Jane Suckling
Alicia Stolliday
Sophie-Dominique Waddie
Elle Williams
Jessie Woodhouse

STRINGS

Hannah Brooks-Hughes
Leon Sturdee
Maya de Souza
Butterfly Paterson

FLUTE

Lloyd Hampton



MATTHEW SEARLES

Matthew Searles is Master of the Music at Buckfast Abbey. He oversees the Abbey's wide-ranging music programme, including the daily Mass and Office, direction of the Abbey Choir and a popular concert series. He is also Executive Producer of Buckfast's in-house record label, Ad Fontes. During his tenure as Master of the Music, the Abbey Choir has broadcast Vespers on BBC Radio 3 and recorded several albums. They have also collaborated with the Southern Sinfonia, Onyx Brass, and period instrument ensembles 'in Echo' and Noxwode, both in the liturgy and in concert. Prior to moving to Buckfast, Matthew was Sub-Organist of Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral. He is a prizewinning graduate of Royal Holloway, University of London, where he received First Class Honours. Matthew continued his studies at the Conservatoire à Rayonnement Régional de Poitiers, France. He holds fellowships of the Royal College of Organists and the Royal Society of Arts.

CHARLES MAXTONE-SMITH

Charles Maxtone-Smith is Organist of Buckfast Abbey. He graduated from the Royal Academy of Music in 2023 with the Advanced Diploma, MA with distinction and the DipRAM award, as a student of David Titterington, Bine Bryndorf, and Richard Pinel. He won the Musicians' Company Award for Organists in 2023, which provides generous funding for two years of further study. He currently takes lessons with Christophe Mantoux at Saint-Séverin, Paris, studying French Baroque and Romantic literature. He successively held organ scholarships at Hereford Cathedral, New College, Oxford, Westminster Abbey, Royal Hospital Chelsea, and Kings College, London. Since 2014 he has been one of the Festival Organists at the annual Edington Festival of Music within the Liturgy, and has played for several BBC Radio 3 broadcasts.





Recorded at BUCKFAST ABBEY, 3–5 October 2025

Recording Engineers DAVID HINITT &
CAITLIN PITTOL-NEVILLE

Recording Producer DAVID DAVIES

Editing & Mastering DAVID HINITT

Executive Producer MATTHEW SEARLES

Booklet Proofreader AARON KIELY

Organ maintained by GARY OWENS

*Front illustration: Silhouettes of Fauré, Alain and Langlais
atop the floor of the Lady Chapel of Buckfast Abbey*

Photography © Buckfast Abbey (pages 8, 34, 37 and 40–41),
Bibliothèque nationale de France (page 11), Marie-Louise Langlais
(pages 17 and 18) and Matthew Searles (page 38).

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*The Choir of Buckfast Abbey
during a recording session*

MESSE MODALE

Upper voices music for Mass by Alain, Fauré and Langlais

The Choir of Buckfast Abbey

Matthew Searles *director* | Charles Maxtone-Smith *organ*

This recording from the sopranos and altos of Buckfast Abbey Choir captures the unique sound world of upper voices for the Mass. Drawing on repertoire from a short, yet vibrant, period in early twentieth-century France, the programme showcases Masses by Gabriel Fauré, Jehan Alain, and Jean Langlais, three significant figures in the evolving tradition of French church music. These works are interspersed with Gregorian chants in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, patron of the Abbey Church at Buckfast, in whose radiant acoustic this album was recorded. Fauré's *Messe basse*, with its intimate lyricism, is paired with a contemporary Gloria by David Davies. Alain's *Messe modale en septuor* reveals his rhythmic vitality and chant-inspired style, while Langlais' *Missa in simplicitate* embodies an effortless spiritual purity. Rooted in the Benedictine tradition – restored at Buckfast by French monks in 1882 – and French inspiration, this album offers music of beauty, simplicity, and prayerful intensity.



Total running time: 75' 14

www.adfontes.org.uk