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Setting George Herbert's Lyrics: A DVD Supplement

by Paulette S. Goll

Setting George Herbert's Lyrics, included in this volume of the *George Herbert Journal*, centers on the compositional process and interpretational nuances as expressed by contemporary English and American composers working with Herbert's texts. Presented in a digital, interactive format, the DVD (for computer use only) offers insights into the composers' selection of lyrics and the challenges they faced in setting the lyrics to music. It also highlights varying interpretations of particular poems. For example, Ralph Vaughan Williams's "Easter" and "The Call" (from "Mystical Songs") are contrasted with compositions by David Ashley White (Selah Music Publishers, 1993) and Barry Ferguson (*Another Music: Through the Year with George Herbert*, 2007). Additionally, a wide range of composers, including Simon Lole, David Halls, Timothy Krueger, and Jim Scott Orrick, present and discuss their new compositions. These are counterpointed by the inclusion of a digitally reformatted presentation of settings of lyrics from *The Temple* from the eighteenth through the twentieth century by the Bemerton (England) Choirs in celebration of the 400th Anniversary of Herbert's birth in 1933.

The DVD contains settings of the following poems by Herbert:

- "Aaron" (Jim Scott Orrick)
- "Antiphon" (I) (Basil Harwood)
- "Antiphon" (II) (Sir Herbert Oakeley)
- "Avarice" (Jim Scott Orrick)
- "The Call" (Ralph Vaughan Williams; David Ashley White)
- "Christmas" (Orlando Gibbons, adapted Barry Ferguson)
- "Denial" (Simon Lole)
- "Discipline" (Barry Ferguson)
- "Easter" (Ralph Vaughan Williams; Barry Ferguson)
- "The Elixir" (William B. Sandys, arr. by Sir David Willcocks; David Halls; Jim Scott Orrick)

- "Even-song" (Timothy Krueger)
- "Longing" (Barry Ferguson)
- "Love" (III) (Jim Scott Orrick)
- "Mattens" (David Halls; Timothy Krueger)
- "Praise" (II) (Henry Walford Davis; Joseph D. Jones)
- "The 23d Psalme" (Charles Collignon or John Randall)
- "The Sacrifice" (Simon Lole)
- "Vertue" (Jim Scott Orrick)
- "The Windows" (David Halls)

Biographical Notes on Contributors

Charles Collignon (1725-85), Cambridge physician and anatomist, believed to have composed "University" in B flat Major, Common Meter (http://www.cyberhymnal.org/bio/c/o/l/collignon_c.htm).

Sir Walford (Henry) Davies (1869-1941), British composer whose setting of "Praise (II)" is the hymn tune, "King of Glory, King of peace, I will love thee." He held the title Master of the King's Musick from 1934 until 1941.

Barry Ferguson (English Composer), head chorister at Exeter Cathedral and organ scholar at Peterhouse, Cambridge, became assistant organist at Peterborough Cathedral, Organist at Wimborne Minster, and Organist and Master of the Choristers at Rochester Cathedral. He studied composition with Herbert Howells, and his music is published by Novello, Oxford University Press, Cramer, Encore, Cathedral Music, Banks, Basil Ramsey, and he Royal School of Church Music. Recent commissioning bodies include The Thomas Hardy Society, the Burton Art Gallery, and St. Paul's Cathedral.

Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625), a chorister at King's College, Cambridge, later became a gentleman of the Chapel Royal, where he served as an organist; subsequently, he became the organist at Westminster Abbey. Gibbons wrote over forty anthems. The verse anthem, a peculiarly Anglican form of church music, contrasts a solo voice with passages for full choir.

David Halls is the current Director of Music at Salisbury Cathedral. He conducted the Salisbury Cathedral Choir and the Salisbury Brass Ensemble in the *Sing Choirs of Angels* DVD.

Basil Harwood (1859-1949), British composer who wrote the hymn tune “Luckington” in D Major, Meter: 10.4.6.6.6.6.10.4 as a setting for “Antiphon” (I).

Jessica Victoria [Horton] Elliott was awarded Doctor of Music from The Florida State University College of Music in 2006. Portions of her dissertation, “A Joyous Synchrony: Ralph Vaughan Williams’ Setting of George Herbert’s Poetry in Mystical Songs,” are included on the dvd.

Joseph D. Jones (1827-1870), Welsh composer of “Gwalchmai” in G Major, Meter: 7 4.7 4.D as a setting for “Praise” (II), derived from Johann Sebastian Bach’s harmonization of “Jesu, meines Herzens Freud” [“Jesus, my heart’s joy”], which he used for Cantata 473, arranged by W.H. Harris for his version of “King of Glory, King of Peace.”

Timothy Krueger, founder and Artistic Director of St. Martin’s Chamber Choir, studied musicology at the University of Colorado-Boulder, the University of Hamburg, Germany, and the University of London’s Royal Holloway College. He is choirmaster of St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, Denver, chorus master for the Colorado Music Festival and the Boulder Bach Festival, and a part-time faculty member at Metropolitan State College of Denver.

Simon Lole served as the Director of Music at Salisbury Cathedral from 1995-2005 and has published over forty works. He is a contributor to and presenter on BBC Radio, working on shows like “The Early Music Show,” “The Choir,” and “Pause for Thought.” An internationally acclaimed organist, he has performed in many of the major venues in England as well as giving concerts across the United States, South Africa, Sweden, France, Holland, and Spain.

Sir Herbert Oakeley (1830-1903), English composer and organist. He studied at Oxford and in Leipzig and Dresden. As Reid Professor of Music at Edinburgh University (1865-91), he instituted reforms and

founded the University Musical Society. He was music critic of *The Manchester Guardian* (1858-66) and composed church music, including a setting for "Antiphon" (II).

Jim Scott Orrick received his Ph.D. from Ohio University and is Professor of Literature and Culture at Boyce College in Louisville, Kentucky. His *Baptist Catechism Set to Music* and *Singing the Psalms and Catechism* CDs are available from Founder's Press (Founders.org).

John Randall (1715?-99), Cambridge organist and composer, who is listed as the probable composer of "University" in C Major, Common Meter, in *The Book of Common Praise* #547c.

Rev. Canon Judy Rees was brought up in South Wales and has spent all her adult life in church ministry in England. She was among the first women to be ordained a priest in England in 1994, and has worked in urban, suburban and rural ministry. An honorary canon of Christ Church, Oxford, she is now retired and lives in Bemerton, Salisbury, where she works with a local group to promote the life and work of George Herbert.

William B. Sandys (1792-1874) published *Christmas Carols, Ancient and Modern* (London: Richard Beckley, 1833). The book contains a traditional English tune that was arranged by Sir David Willcocks in Short Meter as a setting for "The Elixir" ("Teach Me, My God and King"). The classification "From Sandys" or "Sandys" is a common feature for eighteen tunes from the 1833 collection found in modern hymnbooks.

David Ashley White is currently resident composer for the Houston Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Holding a B.M. (oboe performance) and M.M. (composition) from the University of Houston, White received the D.M.A in composition from the University of Texas at Austin. He is the new director of the University of Houston's Moores School of Music, where he is also professor of composition and theory.

Sir David Willcocks (b. 1919) is the Director of Music Emeritus at Kings College, Cambridge, and is well known for his arrangement of Christmas carols in the five *Carols for Choirs* anthologies (1961-1987).

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) was among the first at the turn of the twentieth century to travel into the countryside to collect folk-songs and carols from singers, notating them for future generations to enjoy. As musical editor of *The English Hymnal*, he composed several hymns that are now worldwide favorites, “For all the Saints,” and “Come down O love Divine.”

Setting George Herbert's Lyrics is presented in an interactive Flash-based multimedia platform. Supported by Case Western Reserve University's Media Vision and Instructional Technology and Academic Computing (ITAC), the project models technology developed for the Pachyderm 2.0 Project, a partnership led by NMC: The New Media Consortium and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. *Setting George Herbert's Lyrics* was supported by a grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services and the Case Western Reserve University's Baker-Nord Center for the Humanities. The DVD is available online at <http://www.case.edu/its/itac/poster/2009/goll/>

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