

Music at a glance...

Angels of Creation Commissions

Various publishers – see review

Chostakovich Deux pièces originales pour orgue

Chant du Monde, €9.83

Cooman Organ Music Volume IX

Wayne Leupold, \$37

Corelli ad. John Marsh Voluntaries or Pieces for the Organ

Fitzjohn Music Publications, £12

Decker Faneuil Hall

Wayne Leupold, \$30

Decker The Freese Collection

Wayne Leupold, \$32

Dinda It's all about the dog

Wayne Leupold, \$15

Dinda Seasonal Hymn Preludes, Volume 8

Wayne Leupold, \$18

Fedak A Carol Nativity

Wayne Leupold, \$15

Fryklöf Symphonic Piece

Fitzjohn Music Publication, £8

Glière Russian Sailor's Dance

Wayne Leupold, \$16.50

Janzer Suite Semplice

Wayne Leupold, \$16

Janzer With Majesty Resounding

Wayne Leupold, \$17

Karosi Symphony no.1 for solo organ on a chorale by Béla Bartók

Wayne Leupold, \$45

King The Organ Music

Wayne Leupold, \$66

Laurin Douze Courtes Pièces, Volume 3

Wayne Leupold, \$49

Laurin Épilogue

Wayne Leupold, \$29

Oxford Hymn Settings for Organists Volumes 3&4

Oxford University Press, £18.95 each

Rousseau Fantaisie & Double Thème Varié

Fitzjohn Music Publications, £12

Sanders Jesus heals the lame man

Wayne Leupold, \$14

The Keyboard Manuscript of Francis Hopkinson, Volume 3

Wayne Leupold, \$37

The Organ Music of Phillip Barnette McIntyre

Wayne Leupold, \$28

The Voice for Life Guide to Musicianship

RSCM, £25

Wammes Interludes

Boosey & Hawkes, £10.99

Boosey & Hawkes choral leaflets

Piazzolla *The Road to Bethlehem*, £2.75

Todd *O Lux Beata*, £2.75

Todd *Three more jazz carols*, £3.15

Rachmaninoff *Magnificat & Nunc Dimittis*, £3.50

Music Sales choral leaflets

McCabe *Peace Carol*, £2.25

Mealor *The shadow of thy Cross*, £2.75

Muhly *Let all the world in every corner sing*, £2.95

Whitbourn *Video caelos apertos*, £2.75

Music

Reviews

The Angels of Creation Commissions

David Briggs *Toccata for St Matthew's Day* (2008); David Bednall *Rhapsody* (2010); Simon Whalley *Festal Paeon* (2012); Thomas Hewitt Jones *Angels of Creation* (2013); Neil Cox *Laudate* (2014)

Thomas Hewitt Jones *Angels of Creation* is published by Encore, www.encorepublications.com, and the other pieces are all published separately. Enquiries should be addressed to Sebastian Thomson via www.sebastianthomson.co.uk where also sound recordings may be sampled.

For some years Sebastian Thomson has been commissioning and premiering organ pieces, one per year. The virtuoso *Toccata* by Briggs was paid for by the Walter Hussey Fund, and was written to celebrate the restoration of the Walker organ in St Matthew's, Northampton. This noisy, Dupré-style *toccata* is formulaic (but in a good way) and is based on a free theme (unmemorable) in the pedals with mainly $1\frac{2}{2}$ figuration in the manuals. It lasts about 7 minutes.

Bednall's virtuosic and anguished *Rhapsody* was Thomson's own first commission. It is reminiscent of Howells, and was premiered at St Paul's Cathedral, London. There is a dramatic conflict between the keys of B \flat and E which remains unresolved throughout. The main theme is turbulent. A second, contrasting theme is heard before a return of the opening material and a dramatic ending. The printed font size is uncomfortably small.

The celebratory *Festal Paeon* by Simon Whalley was written to demonstrate the huge variety of colours available in the organ of Keble

College, Oxford. A fanfare introduces a loose *rondo* with contrasting episodes, the chorale, *Gaudeamus igitur*, and a rhythmically jagged section. The various musical ideas are finally combined above the chorale theme in the pedals. This is energetic, and noisy, a piece in G major of about grade 7+ standard.

Thomas Hewitt Jones's rousing, and jubilant *Angels of Creation* (c.7 minutes) was also first performed at Keble. In a grand Romantic style with often-sharpened 4th degree of the scale, there is a mood of great anticipation and excitement. A triple-motif is developed throughout, culminating in a rhapsodic climax that, in the words of the composer "aims to evoke an irresistible sense of optimistic resolve". The review copy of this virtuoso and relentless piece, was just about legible, although at least one note and other information fell outside the margins of the printer. An organ with 61-note manuals is required.

Laudate by Neil Cox was inspired by Marc Chagall's Psalm 150 window in Chichester Cathedral. This virtuoso, joyful, celebratory music (just over 6 minutes) reflects spiralling energy and movement in a blaze of colours, and in dancing irregular time-signatures. The style is distinctive, accessible, and refreshing, with a fine sense of organic development. Large hands would be an advantage.

Without exception these are all very well written, substantial and worthwhile additions to contemporary organ repertoire. There is an *Angels of Creation* Facebook page.

Michael Overbury