

*The Mass
Unordinary*



*Ad Astra
Music Festival*

July 15 ~ 31, 2016

Russell, Kansas

This concert is underwritten by an anonymous donor and Nancy Holland

The Mass Unordinary

Ad Astra Chamber Choir

Max Holman, conductor



St. Mary Queen of Angels Catholic Church
Friday, July 15 | 7:30pm

The Mass Unordinary

Kyrie
Chichester Mass (1974)

William Albright
(1944-1998)

Gloria
Pope Marcellus Mass (1562)

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina
(c. 1525-1594)

Erin Schwab, soprano
Michael Miller, alto
Francis Williams, tenor
Michael Davidson, tenor
John Irving, bass
Davone Tines, bass

He Has a Dwelling (2016)
St. Patrick's Creed

Michael Gilbertson
(b. 1987)
2016 Ad Astra Music Festival Commissioned Composer

Sanctus, Benedictus, Hosanna
Mass in G minor (1921)

Ralph Vaughan Williams
(1872-1958)

Aani Bourassa, soprano
Jessica Kerler, alto
Francis Williams, tenor
Andrew Padgett, bass

Agnus Dei
Mass for Double Choir in E Flat, op. 109 (1878)

Joseph Rheinberger
(1839-1901)

Please hold your applause until the entire mass is finished.

Ad Astra Chamber Choir

Soprano

Aani Bourassa
Shelby Matlock
Nini Marchese*
Erin Schwab

Alto

Katie Bruton
Jessica Kerler*
Katelyn Mattson-Levy
Michael Miller

Tenor

Michael Davidson
Christopher Hilger
Nathan Hilger
Alex Underwood
Francis Williams*

Bass

John Bitsas*
John Irving
Johnny Matlock
Andrew Padgett
Davone Tines

*Ad Astra Young Artist

The Mass Unordinary

The mass *ordinary* (from Latin: *ordinarium*) refers to the texts of the Roman Catholic Mass that are consistent from week to week: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus (with Benedictus and Hosanna) and Agnus Dei. The consistency of the mass ordinary, then - in addition to its ability to be performed both within a service and as a concert piece - has long granted composers an ideal text to be set to music. Further, it seemed appropriate to program a mass in accordance with the rest of Ad Astra's 2016 season, including a new Liturgical Music Series, Duruflé *Requiem* and Bach Cantata 94.

Tonight's mass isn't really that out of the ordinary, since each movement is accounted for and presented in order. What makes this mass unordinary is that each movement comes from the pen of a different composer, whose lives span an array of time periods, nationalities and styles. Each *a cappella* (Italian: literally in the "chapel style," meaning without accompaniment) setting was chosen for its unique power to represent its text. Despite their eclectic origins, the movements are unified by their harmonies which allow them to be sung in succession.

The Mass Unordinary opens with an ethereal setting of the Kyrie, set by American composer William Albright. These three short lines of text—the only Greek in the otherwise Latin setting—are heightened by a translucent chordal texture. Taken from Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina's *Pope Marcellus Mass*, this spritely exaltation epitomizes sacred music from the Italian Renaissance. Its many lines jump out in contrast to Albright's smoky Kyrie. Its ending is particularly remarkable, in which the baritones are rewarded an epic final descension that shines through the bright Amen.

Michael Gilbertson, the 2016 Ad Astra Music Festival Commissioned Composer, substituted "text that is freely adapted from St. Patrick's Creed" for the traditional Credo. The keystone of the mass, the Credo proclaims the central faith of the Roman Catholic Church. St. Patrick's Creed paraphrases the Credo, lending the singers a vernacular prayer with a Celtic flare. Intended to sound "crisp, with urgency," Gilbertson's repeated use of the words "He has," balanced with an effective use of silence, leads the listener through the peaks of each phrase.

The crystalline melismas (a group of notes sung on the same syllable) of Ralph Vaughan Williams's Sanctus immediately contrast the syllabic Credo. Barry Creasy, Chairman of Collegium Musicum of London, writes: "[the Mass in G minor's] musical link with [Vaughan Williams's] pastoral works is unmissable, as the piece is full of the rich harmonies associated with the composer in his most 'English summertime' moments." Finally, Josef Rheinberger's *Mass for Double Choir in E flat*, op. 109 (also referred to as *Cantus Missae*) not only features one of the most compelling Agnus Dei settings, but it also represents the great German Romantic composers who preceded him: Bach, Mendelssohn, and Brahms. Through a world of expressive writing and call-and-response between the two choirs, the culminating *Dona nobis pacem* (Latin: Grant us peace) grows with undeniable persistence, as the two choirs come together to implore the ultimate desire of this mass: peace.

Program notes by Max Holman



Max Holman is quickly gaining recognition for his collaborations spanning early music, ballet, opera, choral and orchestral works, and new music. He is the assistant conductor of Madrid-based Coro Talía and a member of the chamber choir Salix Cantor. Max has conducted in collaboration with New Music New Haven, Yale Glee Club, New Haven

Ballet Orchestra and Yale Alumni

Chorus, and prepared the chorus of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 for the late Maestro Lorin Maazel. An avid ballet accompanist and improviser, Max has played for American Repertory Ballet, New Haven Ballet, Lustig Dance Theatre and Mason Gross School of the Arts. Max received his master's in choral conducting from the Yale School of Music and Yale Institute of Sacred Music, where he was awarded the Hugh Porter Scholarship and the Hugh Giles Prize, and his bachelor's in music education from Rutgers University. Visit www.maxholman.net to learn more.



The works of **Michael Gilbertson** have been described as “elegant” and “particularly beautiful” by The New York Times, “vivid, tightly woven” and “delectably subtle” by the Baltimore Sun, and “genuinely moving” by the Washington Post. His music has been performed by the Minnesota Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony, Washington

National Opera, and the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra. A graduate of Juilliard and Yale, Gilbertson serves as artistic director of ChamberFest Dubuque, an annual summer music festival he founded in 2009.

Acknowledgements

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Ad Astra Music Festival

Main Stage Performances

The Mass Unordinary

July 15 | 7:30pm
St. Mary Queen of Angels Catholic
Church

Chamber Music at the Deines

July 23 | 7:30pm
Deines Cultural Center

Jazz at the Barn

July 16 | 7:30pm
Granny Mae's Barn

#humansofrussell

July 24 | 2:00pm
Deines Cultural Center

Schumann Song Cycle

July 17 | 2:00pm
Deines Cultural Center

Handel's *Jephtha*

July 30 | 7:30pm
Trinity United Methodist Church

Durufié and His Organ

July 22 | 7:30pm
Trinity United Methodist Church

Encore: Handel's *Jephtha*

July 31 | 7:30pm
First Presbyterian Church in Hays, KS

Liturgical Music Series

Byrd Mass for 3 Voices

July 17 | 10:30am
St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Hays, KS

Bach Cantata 94

July 24 | 10:30am
St. John Lutheran Church

Josquin Missa De beata virgine

July 31 | 10:30am
Basilica of St. Fidelis, Victoria, KS