

Winchester Te Deum

Called “*The most successful and well-known composer of choral music in recent British history*” by BBC Music Magazine, John Rutter’s compositions have become a standard in today’s choral literature. Born in London in 1945, Mr. Rutter studied music at Clare College, Cambridge. From 1975 to 1979, Mr. Rutter was the Director of Music for Clare College. In 1981, he formed his own choral group known as the Cambridge Singers. His compositions include choral, orchestral and instrumental music. One of the composer’s more recent works is the *Winchester Te Deum*. Seen as a bright and joyful work, this piece was written for the occasion of the installation of the new Dean of the Winchester Cathedral in March 2006. The work, which employs text from one of the oldest canticles of the church, is based on the bell tones of the great cathedral, culminating in a magnificent set of Alleluias, which ring out like jubilant bells.



John Rutter

There Shall a Star from Jacob Come Forth

Felix Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847) was a German composer, pianist, organist and conductor of the early Romantic period. Born into a notable Jewish family, Mendelssohn was initially raised without religion until his father converted the children to Christianity. Thus, sometimes the composer’s name is listed as Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. Mendelssohn blended characteristics of Bach, Handel, Mozart, and Beethoven with those of his contemporary composers. His compositions include symphonies, concertos, oratorios, and piano and chamber music. He also had an important role in the revival of interest in the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. Mendelssohn began composing an oratorio, *Christus*, which was left unfinished when he died at the age of 38 after a series of strokes. Destined to be a masterpiece on par with his other successful oratorios, *Elijah* and *St. Paul*, *Christus* is based upon biblical texts concerning the life of Jesus of Nazareth. *There Shall a Star from Jacob Come Forth* combines a lovely melody with a dramatic middle section, ending with beautiful choral harmony.



Felix Mendelssohn

All My Heart This Night Rejoices

This composition, by Z. Randall Stroope, is based on the text written by poet and clergyman Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676). Translated by Catherine Winkworth in 1858, the piece focuses on the phrase “All my heart this night rejoices, As I hear, far and near, sweetest angel voices”. Beginning with the first measure, this piece seeks musical resolution, continually propelling the singer and listener to go further in the music. Each measure propels the listener forward much like an ocean wave takes hundreds of miles to reach the shore, each wave motivating the next until it reaches its final destination. Mr. Stroope is well known as a conductor, lecturer and composer and serves as the Director of Choral Activities at Oklahoma State University.



Z. Randall Stroope

Rejoice!

Rejoice!, a work by Dr. Gwyneth Walker (b. 1947 -) is divided into three sections. Composed in the summer of 2001, the intent of this composition is to explore the dramatic character of three traditional Christmas carols or poems. The first section, based on “What Child Is This,” focuses on the question aspect of the title. The answer, “This Is Christ the King,” is delayed until after two verses. The second section, “Love Came Down at Christmas,” is a new setting of a poem by Christina Rossetti. The image of love descending or snow falling is the primary focus of this section, but the composer also hopes to portray gentleness and simplicity. As the chorale holds the final chord, a cadenza in the accompaniment is heard – perhaps a single snowflake falling at Christmas time. The final section, based on “Good Christian Friends Rejoice,” is a joyful and lilting version of the song. As a side note, the composer, a resident of a family-owned dairy farm in Vermont, often inserts “cows” into the lyrics of her compositions. Dr. Walker is a graduate of Brown University and the Hartt School of Music.



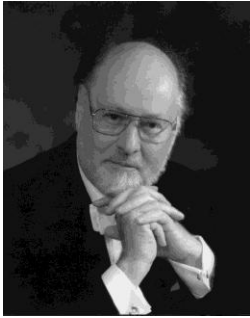
Dr. Gwyneth Walker

Somewhere In My Memory

In November 1990, the hit movie *Home Alone* was released. The movie about a little boy accidentally left alone during the Christmas holidays features music by legendary film composer John Williams. Late one Friday evening in October 1990, famous lyricist Leslie Bricusse received a phone call from John Williams stating that he was currently working on the music for *Home Alone* and that there was a theme he thought would make a charming song. By the following Monday morning, the lyrics to *Somewhere in My Memory* were completed. The lyrics refer to the importance of family and friends - especially during the holiday season, whether they are together in person or only in memory.

John Williams, one of the most popular and successful American orchestral composers of today, is best known for his film scores and ceremonial music. After studying at the Julliard School of Music, Mr. Williams began his career working in the film industry. He has composed and conducted music for nearly 80 films. His well-known film scores include the music for *Saving Private Ryan*, *Jurassic Park*, *Home Alone*, *Schindler's List*, *Star Wars*, *Indiana Jones*, *ET*, *Superman*, and *Jaws*. Mr. Williams is the former conductor of the Boston Pops and holds honorary degrees from 14 American universities.

Oscar and Grammy Award Winner Leslie Bricusse has contributed to many musical films and plays. He has also written lyrics for films such as *Scrooge*, *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, *Superman*, *Home Alone*, *Hook*, and *Santa Claus: The Movie*. He has worked alongside such musical composers as Henry Mancini, John Williams, Jerry Goldsmith, Quincy Jones and Andre Previn.



John Williams



Leslie Bricusse



Home Alone Movie Poster

O Holy Night

Originally titled *Cantique de Noel*, *O Holy Night* is considered to be one of the more widely known French Christmas carols. The text of this carol was written by part-time poet and full-time Commissionaire of Wines, Placide Cappeau (1808-1877). Cappeau presented his text to Adolphe Adam (1803-1856) through a mutual family acquaintance. Adolphe Adam, primarily a French operatic composer, wrote 39 operas, 14 ballets, and 80 stage works while also managing a theater and teaching at the Paris Conservatory. The song is often credited to Adam; Cappeau is rarely given credit for his contribution. Adam's composition of *O Holy Night* was first performed at a Christmas Eve midnight Mass in 1847 in the church of Roquemaure, France. Interestingly, church officials denounced the song for its "lack of musical taste and total absence of the spirit of religion". John Sullivan Dwight is credited with the English translation of *O Holy Night*. The English translation was published in 1855 while Dwight was editor of his *Journal of Music*.

This evening's arrangement of *O Holy Night* is by Jay Althouse. Mr. Althouse received a BS and M.Ed. in Music from Indiana University. As a composer of choral music, he has over 400 works in print for choirs of all levels. Mr. Althouse has also co-written several musicals and cantatas with his wife, Sally K. Albrecht. The couple resides in Hilton Head, SC.



Jay Althouse

Sweet Little Jesus Boy

Written by Robert MacGrimsey and based on scripture from Isaiah 53:3, *Sweet Little Jesus Boy* is a song that reflects the feelings of the composer following a walk past the crowded taverns and night clubs of New York City on Christmas Eve 1932. Just as foretold by the prophet Isaiah, Jesus, in his adulthood, would be despised and rejected by the world, a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief and the world would not recognize him. Robert MacGrimsey, was born in Pineville, Louisiana and practiced law before becoming a musician. He received his musical education from the Julliard School of Music. Tonight's arrangement is by composer and conductor Jack Schrader, (1942 -). A graduate of the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago and the University of Nebraska, Mr. Schrader is the past editor of Hope Publishing Company, a music publishing service. As the best selling choral composer for Hope Publishing, Mr. Schrader's music can be heard each Sunday in hundreds of churches across the country.



Jack Schrader

