

COMMISSIONER NOTE

For more than 40 years we have listened to “A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols” sung by the world-renowned choir of King’s College, Cambridge. On December 24, 2015 we were blessed to attend this beloved service and to meet Sir Stephen Cleobury and organ scholar, Tom Etheridge.

When the King’s College choir was making its fourth visit to the Cathedral of St Paul, Minnesota on March 28, 2019 we wished to celebrate the illustrious 37-year tenure of Sir Stephen’s guardianship of the choir, and our gratitude, with a surprise encore – a Minnesota “thank you” of the hymn *O God Beyond All Praising* set to the hymn tune Thaxted. Brian Newhouse of Minnesota Public Radio invited the audience to open their hymnals, I passed out the words to the choir and cathedral organist Lawrence Lawyer led us all in glorious song.

Sir Stephen Cleobury was called to his heavenly home on St Cecilia’s Day, November 22, 2019 and this commissioned work is dedicated to the Choir of King’s College Cambridge in honour and memory of him, with gratitude to Tom Etheridge, organ scholar (KC2013). “Make a joyful noise unto the Lord and come into His presence with singing” (Psalm 100).

Cynthia Bittner
Randal Schreiner

COMPOSER NOTE

It was a great honour for me to be asked by Cindy Bittner to write a new interpretation of *O God Beyond All Praising* in commemoration of Stephen. He was an inspiration to me both as I grew up and as we made our way into the world of choral music with VOCES8. I treasure the time I spent at King’s College School learning about the art of teaching choral music. It was a key moment, I think, that set me on the path to a career sharing choral music with students the world over. While I’m sad not to be able to premiere this new work as intended, I very much hope that the work will be shared and performed by choirs all over the world in the years to come, and I’m indebted to Cindy for her drive and ambition to bring this wonderful project to life.

Paul Smith

Duration: 5’00”

Commissioned by Cindy Bittner in memory of Sir Stephen Cleobury and dedicated to the Choir of King's College, Cambridge

O God beyond all praising

Michael Perry

(Thaxted)

Gustav Holst/Paul Smith

$\text{♩} = 92$

ORGAN *f* fanfare!

PEDAL

6

12

f O God! O God!

f O God! O God!

f O God! O God!

f O God! O God!

f O God! O God!

The musical score is written for Organ, Pedal, and Choir. The Organ part begins with a fanfare in the right hand, while the left hand and Pedal play a steady bass line. The Pedal part is written on a single bass staff. The Choir part consists of five staves, each with a vocal line and the lyrics 'O God! O God!'. The music is in 3/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The tempo is marked as quarter note = 92. The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 6 and 12 indicated. The Organ part includes a dynamic marking of *f* (forte) for the fanfare. The Choir part also includes a dynamic marking of *f* for the vocal entries. The Pedal part features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.