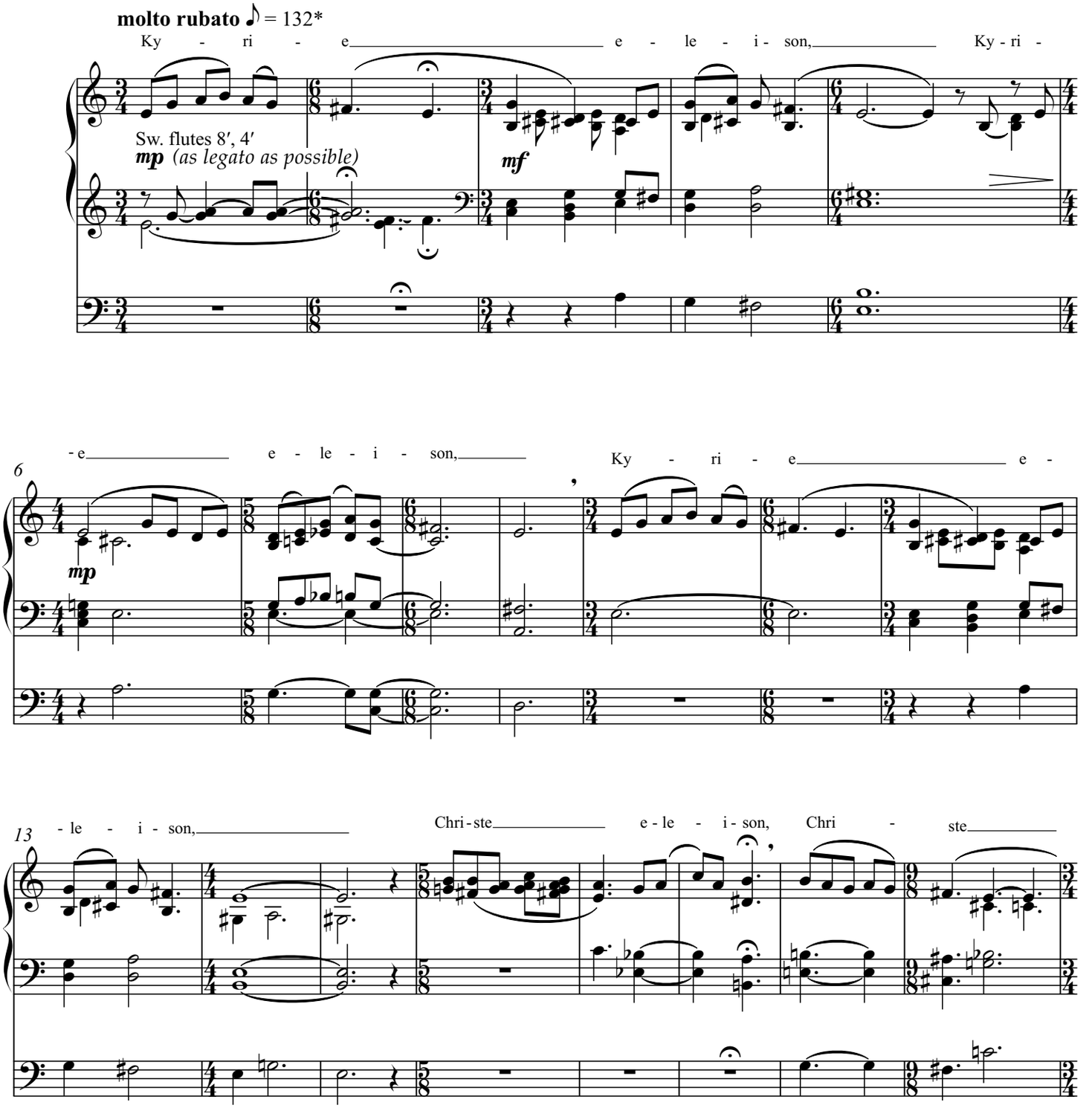
Mass for Organ ‘cum jubilo’

for Stasio Sliwka

Kyrie

(2008)

Roxanna Panufnik



* all changes between compound and triple times are ♪ = ♪

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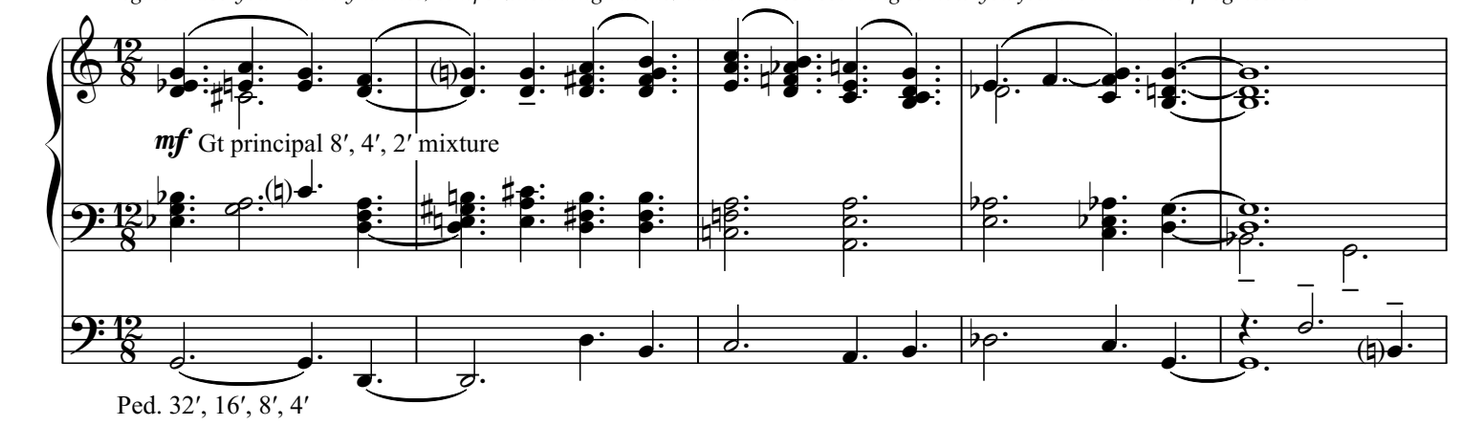
Gloria

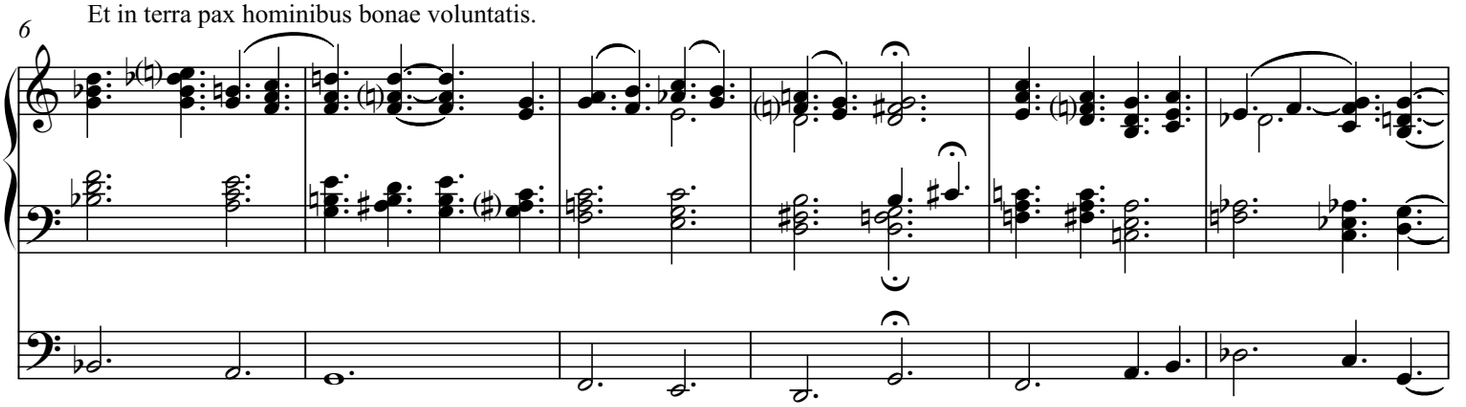
Angelic Hymn - with great peace and warmth

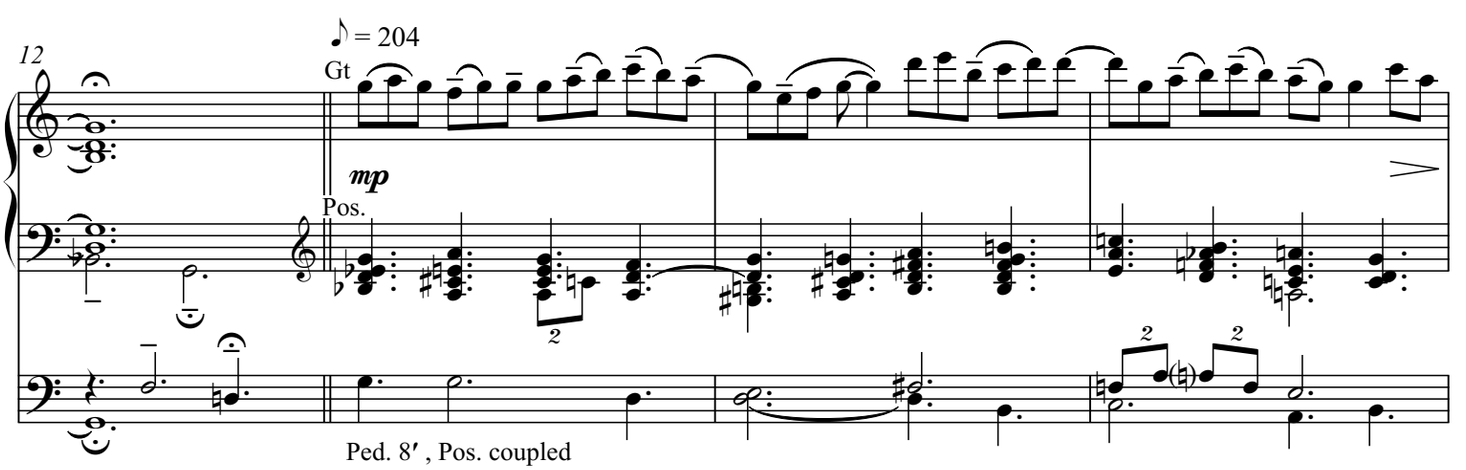
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

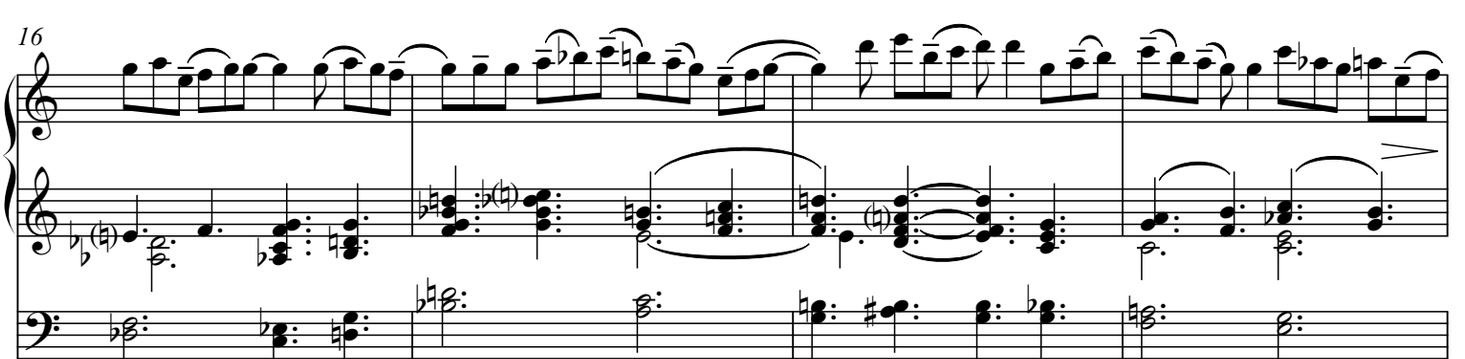
Legato – use your own dynamics, tempo (including rubato) and timbres according to how you feel the harmonic progressions



Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.







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Organ Mass 'cum jubilo'

1. Kyrie cum Jubilo (2008)

In 2008, Downe House School asked me to write a short organ piece for a much loved departing teacher, to 'do something with' his favourite plainsong: the Kyrie from a twelfth-century mass 'In solemnities and feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary', otherwise known as 'cum jubilo'. *Kyrie cum Jubilo* is what transpired and since then I have longed to incorporate it into a whole mass for organ solo. In the Kyrie, I kept the beautiful melody as it is, playing around with the rhythmic and harmonic implications.

2. Gloria cum Jubilo (2021)

I was thrilled, when St Albans International Organ Festival asked me to write a work for the 2021 Interpretation Competition, that they agreed the commissioned work could form the Gloria in my nascent Mass 'cum jubilo'. My brief was to compose something that would essentially test the competitors on both an interpretative and technical level, whilst allowing them the freedom to colour and register the piece according to their own response to the music. Therefore, direction of pitch, tempo and registration are kept to a minimum.

The Gloria starts, in a chorale-like texture 'with great peace and warmth', as the Angelic Hymn leads into a quiet but intense rendering of 'We praise you, we bless you'. The following section, 'We glorify you' starts 'with anticipation' that becomes 'ecstatic' by the time we reach 'We give you thanks for your great glory'. There is a complete change of mood for 'Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.' I have layered the chant in a 3-part canon – it harmonizes beautifully with itself and the gentle swing of cross-rhythms from each line's independent phrasing and syllabic stresses can be heard. 'Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father' is quiet and penitential in mood with each note of the chant held to create harmonic clusters in the left hand, and are answered bitonally, in the right hand.

Another anticipatory section follows, 'For You alone are the most holy', which again builds into an ecstatic tempo by the time it reaches 'For You alone are the most high, Jesus Christ'. This leads into a highly spirited final section where the left hand plays the entire Gloria plainsong in a fiendish Bulgarian folk rhythm of 11/16 (2+2+3+2+2) and, in turn, the right hand and the pedal repeats and endorses 'For You alone' in units of four semiquavers under and over it. The driving rhythm is enforced by the pedal notes, then by chords, on the strong beats of the bar. Finally, the pedals play, in octaves, the 'Amen' under a chromatic rising and swirling figuration, concluding the piece with reiterations of 'Jesu Christe'.

3. Sanctus cum Jubilo (2025)

The opening three notes of the original plainsong, on the word 'Sanctus/Holy' fall in a pronounced 5/8 rhythm (2+2+1), so I have composed the whole movement in this time signature. Starting high in the heavens, angels descend, at first mysteriously, but becoming more playful as they transpose lower. 'Dominus Deus Sabbath/Lord God of hosts' provides a more solemn chordal accompaniment to this. In 'Pleni sunt caeli et terra/Heaven and earth are full of…' and "…gloria tua/ your glory" the angels have reached the ground and the tone becomes more celebratory as the chords are fuller, grander and faster.

The pedals have the plainsong in our first 'Hosanna in excelsis/Hosanna in the highest', but there is a hint of the slightly crazy exuberance that comes with this text, as it reappears at the end. The original plainsong for 'Benedictus qui venit un nomine Domini/Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord' contains gentle but excited pealing bells, which slowly crescendo – the playful angels returning as it becomes louder and brighter. The ascending scale of the final 'Hosanna' plainsong starts in both manuals and pedals until 'in excelsis/in the highest' becomes a descending runaway train (I'm envisaging torrents of angels descending rapidly here) and culminating in a Maestoso finish as I imagine those angels saying: 'We're here, we're staying always by your side, forever!'

I am hugely grateful to Glasgow Cathedral Festival and Andrew Forbes, who not only commissioned this movement but also brought in Richard Yarr and the Northern Ireland International Organ Competition to the project (NIIOC commissioned the Agnus Dei).