



WOMAN COMPOSER SUNDAY

**Society of Women Organists (SWO)
Woman Composer Sunday
March 10 2024**

RECOMMENDED PIECES

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Introduction

As it marks its fourth anniversary, Women Composers Sunday is now a firmly established institution, celebrated internationally. From the start SWO has provided an annual Recommended Repertoire list, helping organists and singers to consider a selection of women's music from the enormous range available. .

This year Anne Marsden Thomas and Ghislaine Reece-Trapp, current and former SWO co-chairs respectively, highlight a few pieces from their recent publication *The Oxford Book of Organ Music by Women Composers*. The book presents 42 pieces from the 16th century to the present day, many of which are liturgically appropriate.

The other additions to our 2024 list include recent discoveries by the SWO Research Group on Women Composers and SWO members' recommendations. A huge amount of music awaits discovery and exploration, but we have limited ourselves to pieces which reflect the diversity of repertoire available: a Suite for Organ based on Taiwanese folk songs; two selected hymns from the North American and Canadian Hymn Society's Collection of Hymns by Women Composers; modern choral pieces and music inspired by spirituals.

We wish you lots of joy when exploring women composers' wonderful works and in preparing for Women Composers Sunday 2024.

Anne Marsden Thomas and Hannah Gill, SWO Co – Chairs

Alana Brook and Helene Albrecht, Research Group Officers

January 2024

The Oxford Book of Organ Music by Women Composers
Oxford University Press 2023
ISBN 978-0-19-356272-1

Anne Marsden Thomas (co-editor with Ghislaine Reece-Trapp) suggests the following pieces for
Woman Composer Sunday 2024

Okoye, Nkeiru (1972-) Dusk

Easy. 3min

An evocative and unusual meditation on quiet stops, suitable for a liturgical prelude. As it is an arrangement of a piano piece, the suggested registration can be ignored or adapted without compromising the composer's intention, so it suits any organ with pedals, however limited.

Carpinetti, Miriam (1954-) Erbarm' dich mein, o Herre Gott

Easy/medium difficulty. 2 min

An intense setting of a penitential chorale: RH plays the melody with alto a 4th below; slow double pedals underpin a LH counter-melody. This expressive miniature is ideal as a Lenten prelude.

Von Martinez, Marianna (1744-1812) Allegro brillante

Medium difficulty. 5 min (2.5min without repeats)

A lively, engaging manuals-only postlude arranged from piano. Two manuals are suggested but it could be played on one. Any player with neat fingerwork will find this accessible and rewarding.

Farrenc, Louise (1804-75) Fugue on Two Subjects

Medium difficulty. 3.5min

This is a superb composition by a fine composer. It was originally for piano, but it benefits from the organ's sustaining power and the chance to register it as a crescendo. Its serious content would make an ideal Lenten postlude.

Reece-Trapp, Ghislaine (1992-) Toccata

Medium difficulty. 2.5min

A sprightly, witty dance movement with minimal pedals. The registration is mostly loud but with a short section on Flute 4'. This would be a joyful postlude to any service which is not too sombre.

New recommendations compiled by the SWO Research Group¹

Organ works

Anna -Amélie de Brunswick (1739 – 1807) Trio for organ in C-Major

Two manuals and pedals.

Easy to medium. 3.11min

Edited by Maurizio Macella

Public domain

A beautiful example of the Princess's mastery of contrapuntal writing which also points towards the towards Classical Style.

¹ Please also refer to our previous WCS Recommended Repertoire lists on
<https://www.societyofwomenorganists.co.uk/women-composers>

Beate Leibe (b. 1954) Pastorale (1921)

Easy. 4.5min

In “Spiel mich” – Collection of Preludes and Postludes

Strube Verlag

Item No. 1013518 Producer No. VS 3627

As all her works this Pastorale has been informed by Baroque and Classical Style; a pleasant piece for Entry, Offertory or Communion.

Chang, Pei-lun Vicky (b. 1966) Suite for Organ

Easy to medium. Ca. 10min

Leupold

Four pieces composed for a concert and a solo recital in 1995 and 2000 respectively that are all based on Taiwanese folk songs.

Harmon, Christina (b.1944) Joyful Joyful

Medium to difficult. 2.15min/ 3.19min/2.05min.

Lorenz Corporation

Also available as digital download

Three powerful organ arrangements based on hymns of praise (Leoni, Hymn to Joy, Ein feste Burg) which will ignite the conclusion of any festival service with enthusiasm and fervour.

Kraft – Cross, Angela (b. 1958) Tree of Life (2013)

Advanced – concert. 5.31min

Lorenz Corporation

UPC: 9780787763534 Publisher ID: 70/2138S

Written to dedicate the new art glass windows of a church in San Mateo which represent five seasons (winter, spring, summer, fall, winter) interconnected by a metallic oak trunk and the season-appropriate foliage in each window. A passacaglia bass connects the seasonal sections of this work.

Okpoti, Rebekah (b. 1993) The John Ruskin Organ Sonata (2023)

Grade 5

Tim Knight Music

SKU: TKM887

The five movements of the Sonata which is dedicated to the Victorian polymath and art critic John Ruskin can be performed individually and are suitable for services and as concert fillers.

Sauvrezis, Alice (1866 – 1946) Choral pour l’Offertoire (1914)

Easy/medium difficulty. 3.10 – 4min

Organ or harmonium

Public domain

A calm choral in E-Major by César Franck’s student that invites a subtle registration. Although it is designated for organ or harmonium, the wide stretches and legato style will be easier to achieve by playing the bass part on the pedals.

Choral and vocal works

Arakelyan, Kristina (b. 1994) You know me

SA with piano accompaniment.

Medium.

Selah Publishing Co. (2022)

Cat. No. 410-838

This setting of Psalm 139 is a beautifully flowing anthem with a varied texture including unison to homophonic and contrapuntal sections. Suitable for adult trebles or children’s and youth choirs.

Bonds, Margret (1913 - 1972) Lord, I can't keep from crying (1946)

Voice and piano.

In "Art Songs and Spirituals by African-American Women Composers"

Hildegard Publishing

SKU 491-00494

Joseph, Jane M. (1894 – 1929) A Festival "Venite" (first performance in 1922)

SSA with organ or piano accompaniment.

Medium. 6.50min

Stainer & Bell

Ref: 42248

A powerful choral setting suitable for the time of Lent by an associate and student of Gustav Holst who enjoyed much fame in the 1920s.

Olive, Vivienne (b. 1950) Stabat Mater (1986)

Women Choir, Soprano and Mezzo-Soprano.

Advanced. 5.11min

Furore Edition 539

An intensive and captivating serial piece of music which keeps the soprano line of Palestrina's Stabat Mater. Singers are instructed to sing in the style of a spiritual.

Parker, Alice (1925 – 2023) The Common Ground

SATB/Soloist. 2.50min

EC Schirmer Catalog #8995

This final piece of the composer was written in 2000 and is a prayer for a less divided U.S.A.

Hymns

Farrell, Bernadette (b. 1957) Christ, Be Our Light - O God, You Search Me

Laudate – A Hymn Book for the Liturgy

Decani Music

Recommended by our reader and SWO member Peter Thomas:

One feature of Bernadette Farrell's hymns is that the composer of the music is also the author of the words. As a result, the words (which are contemporary and relevant) are perfectly matched to the music. Although there is nothing particularly complex about the music, there is a freshness which gives it an immediate appeal. One reason for this is its rhythmic interest. In 'Christ be our light' the lilting rhythm in 3/4 time conveys energy and a sense of movement. Similarly, in 'O God you search me and you know me', various note lengths are employed to match the flow of the words, thereby giving vitality to the piece. The triplet on the fourth beat of the bar near the end of the piece is particularly effective.

Fernández, Ana How deep the silence – Morning Meditation

Words by Sylvia Dunstan

Unison with piano accompaniment

From the collection "Resounding Voices" (2023), The Hymn Society in the US and Canada

Accessible on <https://thehymnsociety.org/resources/resounding-voices/>

Please carefully study the instructions on copyrights!

A beautiful and calmly flowing tune that invites one to explore the comfortability and beauty of a 6/4 metre.

Reece – Trapp, Ghislaine (b. 1992) Beyond the hopes and dreams of all creation

Words by Robert Easton (b.1962)

From the collection "Resounding Voices" (2023), The Hymn Society in the US and Canada

Accessible on <https://thehymnsociety.org/resources/resounding-voices/>

Please carefully study the notes on copyrights!

A complex and uplifting hymn tune that in words and music reflect Jesus' presence on earth from birth to resurrection.