Beyond the Double Bar

Many listeners will hear a piece of music in concert and think “That’s great! I wonder if there are other pieces like it that I might enjoy.” Beyond the Double Bar suggests further listening based on the music of each Masterworks and Small Stage concert, along with links to YouTube videos of recommended performances. If you have questions, comments, or suggestions about Beyond the Double Bar, please e-mail Dr. David Cole at dccole@swflso.org.

Masterworks III – February 3, 2018

If you enjoyed Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s Ave Verum Corpus, you might like:

- Josquin des Prez: Ave Maria
  Martin Luther once said of Josquin (c. 1440 – 1521), “The notes are bound to do as he wills; as for other composers, they must do as the notes will.” Ave Maria, one of Josquin’s approximately 100 motet settings, is full of masterful (and sublimely beautiful) imitative counterpoint, but it is the touching final bars where the choir sings in a simple chorale texture that reveal Josquin’s true genius.
  Josquin des Prez: Ave Maria – Chanticleer
  Josquin des Prez: Ave Maria

- Benjamin Britten: Hymn to St. Cecelia
  Set to a text by W. H. Auden, Britten’s beautiful choral work commemorates the patron saint of music, whose feast day (November 22) is also Britten’s birthday. While Britten’s setting eschews the ceremonial pomp of similar works by Purcell, Handel, and others, his masterful choral writing and response to the text make this a profoundly moving experience.
  Britten: Hymn to St. Cecilia – Tenebrae, Nigel Short
  Britten: Hymn to St. Cecilia

- György Ligeti: Lux Aeterna
  Best known from its appearance in the soundtrack of Stanley Kubrick’s 2001: A Space Odyssey, Ligeti’s Lux Aeterna employs slowly shifting harmonies and clusters to create a hypnotic soundscape where traditional elements of rhythm, harmony, and even pitch lose their structural significance. Ligeti’s ethereal choral textures are akin to observing the slow rotation of a gas giant in another solar system bathed in the otherworldly light of an unknown star.
  Ligeti: Lux Aeterna -- A Cappella Amsterdam, Daniel Reuss, Susanne Van Els

If you enjoyed Gustav Mahler’s Adagietto from Symphony No. 5, you might like:

- Josef Suk: Meditation on the Chorale St. Wenceslas, Op. 35
  Yes, it’s that St. (King) Wenceslas, but the chorale in question is not the familiar Christmas hymn. St. Wenceslas is also the patron saint of Bohemia, and Suk’s Meditation, written during the opening months of the First World War, is a heartfelt supplication for salvation from the horrors of war. Suk wrote one of the chorale’s lines in the score: “Let us not perish, nor the generations to come.”
  Suk: Meditation on the Chorale St. Wenceslas – Prague Symphony Orchestra, Marek Šedivý
  Suk: Meditation on the Chorale St. Wenceslas
Alan Jay Kernis: *Musica Celestis* for string orchestra
Arranged from the slow movement of his String Quartet No. 1, Kernis’s *Musica celestis* was inspired by the medieval idea of angels singing and praising God without ceasing. The work’s colorful string textures create an atmosphere of ethereal beauty.


Pēteris Vasks: *Musica dolorosa* for string orchestra
Vasks’s heartfelt lament in memory of his sister fuses lushly romantic string writing with elements of aleatoric (chance) music. The relentlessly ticking *pizzicato* and disturbing downward *glissandi* add a nightmarish element to this outpouring of sorrow, evoking the spirit of late Shostakovich.

Vasks: *Musica dolorosa* – Riga Philharmonic, Kriss Rusmanis

If you enjoyed Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s *Requiem* in D minor, you might like:

A Mass for the Dead to make Cecil B. DeMille proud. Berlioz’s gargantuan creation asks for 16 timpani, 10 sets of crash cymbals, and four brass bands stationed at the four corners of the performance space in addition to an already enormous orchestra and choir. While the full ensemble numbers pack an enormous wallop (sample the end of the *Lacrymosa* for a Phil Spector wall-of-sound experience), the moments of peace and reflection are equally as memorable.

Berlioz: *Grand Messe des Morts* – Stuart Neal, Guildhall School of Music and Paris Conservatoire Orchestras, Sir Colin Davis

Herbert Howells: *Hymnus Paradisi*
Written as a memorial to Howell’s son, *Hymnus Paradisi* incorporates texts from the Psalms, the Requiem Mass, and the Book of Common Prayer. Howells reshaped music he had written for an earlier unaccompanied *Requiem* into this work for soprano and tenor soloists, chorus, and orchestra, creating a meditation on death and life similar in spirit to Brahms’ *German Requiem*.

Howells: *Hymnus Paradisi* – Miah Persson, Andrew Kennedy, BBC Symphony Chorus, London Philharmonic Choir, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Martyn Brabbins

Benjamin Britten: *War Requiem*, Op. 66
Commissioned for the consecration of the new Coventry Cathedral (the old was destroyed in a German air raid), Britten’s *War Requiem* juxtaposes the traditional text of the Mass for the Dead with the anti-war poetry of Wilfred Owen, killed in battle one week before the November 11 armistice in 1918. Britten unflinchingly portrays the horrors of war – the *Dies Irae* graphically depicts machine guns and artillery – but also offers the hope that mankind will finally learn from his own folly.

Britten: *War Requiem* -- Natalia Tanasiicuic, Ben Johnson, Johannes Kammler, National Youth Choir, Royal Academy of Music Choir, London Philharmonic, Marin Alsop

Britten: *War Requiem*