

## **THE CANTUS ENSEMBLE**

### CHORAL COMPOSITION COMPETITION 2017

This competition aims to identify talented composers and support them in the performance of a new work for chamber choir to be premiered by The Cantus Ensemble. A selection of the best entries will be rehearsed, prepared, and integrated into the Cantus Ensemble's summer concert on Saturday 8th July 2017.

Performances of the selected new works will be judged by a panel of choral music & composition experts during the concert and an overall winner will be announced and awarded a £500 prize. All shortlisted works will be professionally recorded during the summer concert and copies provided to their respective composers, without cost.

The Cantus Ensemble is a highly-skilled, auditioned choir made up of 38 members (10 sopranos, 8 altos, 8 tenors, 10 basses). Applicants are encouraged to consult past programmes and audio samples to learn more about what might be appropriate for the ensemble. These are available on the choir's website: [www.thecantusensemble.com](http://www.thecantusensemble.com).

The Ensemble is seeking proposals for unaccompanied setting of the Magnificat, a key component of choral evensong in the Anglican tradition. Compositions should be between 3 and 8 minutes in length. The composition should be a musical response to Arvo Pärt's Nunc Dimittis and should complement the piece; as both the candidate's Magnificat and Arvo Pärt's Nunc Dimittis will be performed together by the choir as part of choral evensong, as well as during the July 8th concert.

Details of the competition may be found below. Applicants with further questions are encouraged to contact the choir's director, Dominic Brennan, via [director@thecantusensemble.com](mailto:director@thecantusensemble.com).

- Candidate Eligibility
- Parameters of the New Work
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- Deadline and Process for Submission
- Competition Prize
- Return of Materials
- Accommodation and Travel
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- Public Disclosure
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#### **CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY**

This competition is open to all composers. The following groups are ineligible to enter the competition:

- Current Cantus Ensemble members
- Current Cantus Ensemble committee members

## **PARAMETERS OF NEW WORK**

If shortlisted to be performed at the competition concert on Saturday 8th July, the commissioned piece will meet the following criteria:

### **Essentials**

- Written for unaccompanied voices (SATB).
- Between 3 and 8 minutes in length.
- The work may split into SSAATTBB or SATB double choir. Similarly, voice parts are capable of splitting in up to no more than four parts each, but these instances can be discussed with the director.
- Solo material is acceptable but must be written for singers from within the choir. Extensive coloratura or expanded range should therefore be avoided.
- The work must not have been performed in any public setting, recorded, promised to another group for first performance or first recording.

### **Desirable**

The submitted work must be a musical response to Arvo Pärt's own setting of the Nunc Dimittis, the other key component of choral evensong. Whilst how it complements or echoes Pärt's own composition is up for interpretation (melodically, stylistically, emotionally, structurally etc.), some clarifying explanation should be provided to the shortlisting panel on how the candidate has responded to the brief and to Arvo Pärt's own work.

### **Texts**

Composers must compose a Magnificat, or song of Mary, which can be found in the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. For the avoidance of doubt, the full text of the Magnificat can be found below:

MY soul doth magnify the Lord :  
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.  
For he hath regarded :  
the lowliness of his hand-maiden.  
For behold, from henceforth :  
all generations shall call me blessed.  
For he that is mighty hath magnified me :  
and holy is his Name.  
And his mercy is on them that fear him :  
throughout all generations.  
He hath shewed strength with his arm :  
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
He hath put down the mighty from their seat :  
and hath exalted the humble and meek.  
He hath filled the hungry with good things :  
and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel :  
as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed, for ever.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son :  
and to the Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be :  
world without end. Amen.

## **ITEMS TO SUBMIT**

A completed online application form including:

1. A short biography (about 250 words) - PDF files only.
2. Two work samples that demonstrate current compositional activity.
  - It is recommended that composers include a work that indicates skills appropriate to write for an unaccompanied choral ensemble.
  - Recordings of the submitted work samples.
  - PDF files only. Please combine ancillary materials—such as notes, texts, instructions—into a single PDF per work.
3. A PDF of the final score.
4. A recording (MP3 or MP4) of the finished work. A Sibelius file will also suffice.

## **DEADLINE AND PROCESS FOR SUBMISSIONS**

Materials must be submitted to [director@thecantusensemble.com](mailto:director@thecantusensemble.com) on or before Friday 26 May, 2017. Questions should be directed to the same email address. Late applications will not be considered.

## **COMPETITION PRIZE**

The winner will receive a prize of £500. Prize monies will be subject to applicable tax laws and it is the responsibility of the winner to properly report the prize. The performance in concert of the newly-composed work will be recorded on CD and/or DVD. One copy of any such recording will be given to each shortlisted entrant, including the winner.

## **RETURN OF MATERIALS**

No materials submitted for this competition will be returned.

## **ACCOMMODATION AND TRAVEL**

The shortlisted entrants are encouraged to attend the final concert as well as any rehearsals for this event. Unfortunately, travel and accommodation expenses for the winner will not be covered by the Cantus Ensemble.

## **JUDGING**

The applications will be examined by a 3-4 person Jury chosen by The Cantus Ensemble and will include the director and two or three professional musicians not otherwise affiliated with The Cantus Ensemble. The Jury will select a winner and identify any applicants deserving of an "honorable mention". The Cantus Ensemble, at the advice of the Jury, reserves the right not to award the prize. The Jury's decision is final and may not be appealed.

## **RIGHTS TO EACH PARTY**

The following rights will be given to The Cantus Ensemble before disbursement of prize monies:

1. The Cantus Ensemble will have exclusive performance rights through until January 1st 2018.
2. The Cantus Ensemble reserves the right to perform the work in perpetuity.
3. The Cantus Ensemble will have exclusive recording rights through July 8, 2018.
4. The Cantus Ensemble reserves the right to record the work in perpetuity.
5. The following dedication must appear just above or below the title of the work in all manuscript and published editions:

*Commissioned by The Cantus Ensemble, London, as part of the 2017 Composition Competition*

—  
*Premiered [Date to be inserted]*  
*Dominic Brennan, Director of Music*

6. The Cantus Ensemble will have the right to make copies for distribution to the choir.
7. The winning composer will be asked to provide biographical information and a photograph for publicity purposes. The Cantus Ensemble will have the right to use the composer's photo, name, and composition title in future Cantus Ensemble communications without fees.

The following rights are retained by the winning composer:

1. Copyright ownership
2. Publication rights, however, the composition may not be published prior to January 1, 2018.

In the event that a sponsor is found for the Competition, and consequently the name of the prize is changed, the composer agrees to use the new name, as above.

## **LIABILITY**

Although every effort will be made to protect and safeguard all manuscripts and recordings, neither The Cantus Ensemble nor anyone connected with this contest will assume responsibility for loss, damage, or disclosure. It is strongly recommended that contestants keep the original copies of their scores and recordings.