



Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament



CBS Music

**Cathedral of the
Blessed Sacrament Music**

Don Whelan *Musical Director*

2 Carruthers St, Christchurch 8041, NZ

phone 64 3 358 5873 mobile 027 458 5873

don.whelan@xtra.co.nz

www.cathedral.org.nz



Catholic Pro-Cathedral

Shining Stars

“How brightly beams the morning star”, Bach’s first cantata, illuminates a concert in the Catholic Pro-Cathedral, 373 Manchester Street, at 2 pm on Sunday, 30 March, 2025, by the CBS Orchestra and Chorale. Natalia M. Lomeiko leads the orchestra, and musical director is Don Whelan. Programme admission will be \$30 and \$25.

With words offering heavenly consolation while originally facing a plague outbreak, **Cantata No.1** was written in 1725 for the Feast of the Annunciation, the angelic visitation to Mary which announced the birth of Jesus. It opens with the famous hymn tune sung slowly against scintillating instruments which depict the sparkle of the morning star, and includes colourful arias for each of the soloists: Courtney Hickmott, Theo Moolenaar, and Matthew Harris.

Angels, Mary and shining stars appear resplendent in great paintings in art galleries. Composers have responded with settings of **Ave Maris Stella** – “Hail, bright star of heaven”, a medieval Marian hymn, usually sung at Vespers. The concert begins with Monteverdi’s beautiful version from his *Vespers 1610*, which opened for church music the theatrical windows he had established for opera, and used dramatic contrast of size and volume for the wondrous architecture and sound of inspirational buildings like St Mark’s Basilica, Venice. This powerful setting is for double choir, soloists and instrumental ritornello.

Norwegian Edward Grieg portrays Mary as a star guiding mortals across the ocean of life. His romantically inspired **Ave Maris Stella**, intimate and expressive, contains some lovely echo effects. Finally, a contemporary version, written for Truro Cathedral Choir by Sir James MacMillan, will receive a NZ premiere. It offers a simple chordal treatment of the words, culminating with a soaring soprano descant.

Another first from Bach will be his **Brandenburg Concerto No.1 in F Major**. It was adapted from a secular cantata celebrating the popular pastime of the nobility: “The lively hunt is all my heart’s desire”. Accordingly, it begins with a rollicking ride for the orchestra, accompanied by two galloping French horns. There are plaintive solos for oboe and violin, and the work ends with a suite of international dances: a French minuet, Polish polacca, and a raucous German hunting trio.

The annual 8 pm Good Friday Bach **St John Passion** will be followed in June with Mozart’s **Symphony 39**, a Monteverdi **Gloria**, and Bach’s Cantata 123, **Liebster Immanuel**, with soloists including Paul Whelan. The annual Choral Festival is planned for 2 pm Sunday, 7 September, and the usual Haydn concert will be 2 pm, Sunday 21 September, featuring his **Te Deum**, **Symphony 97**, and **Harmoniemesse**. All Souls’ Day, Sunday November 2 will be marked by a Mozart Requiem at 2 pm, and the annual CBS **Messiah** will be at 1.30 pm on Sunday, December 7.

Through 2025, CBS Music continues its popular **Lunch Plus Wednesday At One** recital series, with details of each weekly artist posted on their web page - <http://www.cathedral.org.nz/>

The cathedral choir musicians maintain an extensive repertoire of masses and motets, sung each Sunday at the 11 a.m. Solemn Choral Mass. New members are welcome to the 7.30 pm Wednesday evening rehearsal at the Catholic Pro-Cathedral. Sight reading ability is expected. Those interested are invited to contact the CBS Musical Director, Don Whelan, phone 358-5873.