The Peter Tranchell Foundation

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https://peter-tranchell.uk

Dear Director of Music

I'm writing to encourage you to consider the music of Peter Tranchell as you plan future services and concert programmes.

2022 is the centenary of Tranchell's birth and The Peter Tranchell Foundation is keen to use this to help musicians discover and perform his music. We are sending the enclosed pack of samples of his choral music to Directors of Music around the country. Full scores of these and many other works can be accessed (free of charge) via the Foundation's website (https://peter-tranchell.uk)

Tranchell's music is currently little known or performed other than by musicians who came across it during their time at Cambridge. But it is always interesting, and much of it is fun and rewarding, and of immediate appeal to performers and audiences – as demonstrated by the growing popularity of the two carols "If ye would hear the Angels sing" and "People, look East". We believe many of his works are worthy of addition to service music lists and concert programmes.

The short Biographical Note below provides more information about Tranchell's life and work. Further detail is available on the website, and the Facebook *Peter Tranchell appreciation group* is open to all and has regular updates of news and gossip.

A few more physical copies of this pack are available on application, or the whole set can be downloaded from https://peter-tranchell.uk/2022-the-centenary

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about Tranchell's music or you would like to discuss ways in which the Foundation might be able to help you explore and programme it.

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Notes on the samples enclosed

It should be noted that all of Tranchell's music is © Cambridge University Library and they reserve the rights in commercial performance and recording; they have granted a non-exclusive licence to the Foundation to provide typeset copies for download and unlimited copying at no charge. Three of the works are published by Oxford University Press on behalf of the Church Music Society and may be purchased from their catalogue at https://global.oup.com/academic/ or through retailers – OUP has given permission for some front pages of these to be included in this sampler.

Libran Responses
Tranchell wrote several sets of responses for the Caius Chapel choir, named after the astrological period when they were composed. This version has been arranged for SATB.

Responsorial Psalms
These were prompted by a former Dean of Caius who wanted psalm settings suitable for congregational participation, and most of them have a simple recurrent refrain. Tranchell's gift for melody is particularly apparent in many of these. Three of the most attractive and popular examples were selected by CMS and the front page of the very popular Psalm 133 is included here – there is further sample material (two pages of each psalm) available on the OUP website. There are many more on the Tranchell website and three are included here: 121, 141 & 150.

Anglican Chant
At most chapel services psalms were sung to Anglican chant, and Tranchell wrote a few for the college Psalter. There is some information about the quadruple chant 'for Psalm 12' on the website; it was chosen by John Scott for the St Paul's Cathedral Psalter set to Psalm 103 and appears on their CD *Psalms from St Paul's, Vol. 8*
Chant 21A from the Caius Psalter is by "M.W. Scot-Higson", an anagram of Moscow Nights.

Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis Tone 4 is a simple but effective faux-bourdon setting for men's voices in five parts, and has appeared regularly on the music lists at St John's College, Cambridge and St George's Chapel, Windsor. There are similar settings based on Tone 3 and Tone 8 (Magnificat only) as well as some quite challenging accompanied choral settings of the canticles.

People, look East (**Carol of the Advent**) was composed in 1982 for the Caius Choir, originally scored for AATBrBB. The version performed by St. John's College Choir in the 2015 Advent Carol Service, and subsequently recorded on their 2016 Christmas CD, was arranged for SATB by Peter Marchbank in 2013. This carol also appears on the new Christmas CD from Truro Cathedral.

If ye would hear the angels sing was published by OUP for CMS in 2008 and has proved a very popular carol, featuring regularly in the Christmas Eve service from King's College Cambridge and appearing on their 2012 CD *Nine Lessons & Carols.*

Fortunare Nos was composed in 1986 for the wedding of one of Tranchell's students. It incorporates the hymn tune Wish Road originally written for Eastbourne College in 1950. The words are by Henry J. Buckoll (1803-71) and the Latin opening is a translation of Verse 1, starting 'Lord, dismiss us with thy blessing' – which used to be a favourite tear-jerking end-of-term hymn in school chapels. There are several other full anthems, of some complexity and difficulty, available on the website.

Bread of the world in mercy broken is an attractive simple communion motet, published by OUP with two versions: the original unison version, and an arrangement for SATB.

O that our faith, from 1971, is another straightforward short anthem.

Short Note on Peter Tranchell's life and work

The Foundation's website provides a wealth of information about Peter. He was a University Lecturer in the Music Faculty from 1952 to 1989, and Precentor (Director of Chapel Music) and Fellow of Caius from 1960 until his retirement 1989. He died in 1993. In the 1950s he was highly regarded as a rising star of British music: his opera *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, produced in Cambridge in 1951 and revived there in 1959 was very well-received and thought to indicate great promise; his musical *Zuleika* was first performed in Cambridge in 1954 and taken up by commercial promoters for a national tour in 1957. Tranchell's last appearance on the national musical scene was with the score for *Images of Love*, a ballet featuring Rudolf Nureyev performed at Covent Garden in 1964.

For various complex reasons he never became the national musical figure many thought he ought to have been (see his entry in *Grove's Dictionary*), and increasingly his horizons narrowed to Cambridge and particularly his college, where he threw his considerable energies into writing music for the chapel choir to sing at services as well as highly-acclaimed 'Entertainments' for college concerts.

So while little of his music is now known, much of what he wrote is enjoyable and rewarding to perform, and we encourage you to spend a little time exploring it through the enclosed samples and the wider resources on the website, where links to these and many other pieces are available via the Find out more about the Peter Tranchell Centenary year link on the opening page at https://peter-tranchell.uk.

Organists may be interested in the Organ Sonata of 1958, and the Thackeray Ditties (1962) are excellent (though quite demanding) pieces for a secular choral concert (as a complete set, or individual movements).