

Liturgy Alive: Basilica Schola Composition Competition 2023

With this competition, the University of Notre Dame Basilica Schola aims to encourage composers to write new works for mixed voices for use in the liturgy. We are looking specifically for music that serves well in a Roman Catholic context but also across the wider church, and therefore in various years will be drawing on Biblical texts as well as hymn texts.

This year's competition will give special consideration to composers who incorporate the given text, new musical material, *and* musical material (including tunes) borrowed from jazz or popular music idioms. Composers are welcome to indicate via notes in the submitted score the ways in which their composition reflects that directive.



About the choir

The Basilica Schola is a select vocal ensemble specializing in unaccompanied sacred choral music, with a special focus on Renaissance polyphony. The choir sings for Sunday Vespers in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, special Masses, and other services throughout the academic year. The Schola comprises a select group of around 16 singers, including members of the faculty, staff, and student populations. Membership in the choir is by audition only. <http://basilicaschola.nd.edu>.

Text

The composer must set **two or more stanzas** of the following metrical psalm text for consideration in the competition. Composers choose to set the entire text, as long as it fits within the time limits listed below. The hymn text must be exactly the same as the versions that appear here.

“Salvation is for ever nigh” (Psalm 85, Part II)

Isaac Watts, as found in *Melody and Songs: hymns from the Psalm versions of Isaac Watts*

Salvation is forever nigh
the ones who trust in God's great care;
let grace, descending from on high
bless all with hope and glory here.

Let earth know truth and mercy met
when Christ the Lord came down from heaven.
By his obedience, so complete,
is justice pleased, and peace is given.

Now truth and honor shall abound,
devotions fill the earth again,
and heavenly influence bless the ground
in our Redeemer's gentle reign.

His righteous ways will lead before,
to give us free approach to God;
our wandering feet shall stray no more;
we'll mark his steps, and keep his road.

Voicing

The work submitted for the composition should be written in 4 parts with the voicing Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass. Limited instances of further *divisi* may occur if necessary, up to 8 parts.

Accompaniment

The composition must be for unaccompanied voices.

Difficulty level/style

The Basilica Schola is a highly skilled ensemble with many members holding undergraduate or graduate degrees in music. However, we operate primarily as a liturgical choir and thus typically are learning a great deal of music very quickly. Composers should bear that in mind when considering the difficulty level of their submission. Compositions should not be of such great difficulty that they cannot be learned within a matter of several weeks.

As with previous years' competitions, submissions will be particularly welcome if they use techniques based in imitative polyphony but which also utilize both new musical material and musical material (including tunes) borrowed from jazz or popular music idioms. Pieces which primarily utilize twelve-tone rows for melodic material will not be considered.

For reference, below is a list of several pieces sung recently by the Basilica Schola. (Entries need not conform strictly to the styles represented by this list, as noted above.)

Jean Titelouze, *Missa in Ecclesia* (complete)
William Byrd, "Beati Mundo Corde"
attr. Richard Farrant, "Hide Not Thou Thy Face"
G.P. da Palestrina "Ego Sum Panis Vivus"
Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington, arr. Hehn, "Come Sunday"
Joseph Rheinberger "Abendlied"
Paul Mealor "Ubi Caritas et Amor"
John Rutter "God Be in My Head"
T.L. de Victoria "Ave Maria à 8"
Alec Roth "Night Prayer"
Juan de Lienas "Coenantibus Autem Illis"
Manuel de Zumaya "La Bella Incorrupta"

Length of piece

The winning piece will be premiered during the celebration of Sunday Vespers in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. It must be no longer than 4 1/2 minutes in length in order to comfortably fit within that liturgy.

Eligibility

All United States residents in the 50 states over the age of 18 are eligible to enter the competition. Entry is free of charge.

The following individuals are not eligible: employees, collaborators, directors, officers and contractors of the Sponsor, its advertising, fulfillment and public relations agencies and any other agencies involved in the administration, development and fulfillment of this Contest, and the immediate family members and those living in the same households of each.

Submissions, score format, and recording

Each entry must be typeset using a music software program such as Finale or Sibelius. A PDF of the score along with an MP3 recording should be sent to basilica@nd.edu. The **email subject line** should read "Basilica Schola Liturgy Alive Composition Competition 2023." Your name should NOT appear on the score itself since a blind jury will judge the competition. Please include your name and contact information in the body of the email.

The MP3 recording may be an informal play-through at the piano/organ or midi recording produced by a music software program. It does NOT need to be an actual performance of the piece with a choir.

The winning composition must be dedicated to the Notre Dame Basilica Schola with the text, "Commissioned by the Notre Dame Basilica Schola; Dr. Jonathan Hehn, OSL, Director," appearing on the cover page of the score.

Deadline

Entries will be accepted between 8:00 AM EST on July 1, 2022 and 11:59 PM EST on January 2, 2023. The winner(s) will be contacted by January 30, signed affidavits from the winners will be due by February 3, and the winner(s) will be publicly announced by February 6, 2023.

Prizes

Only one prize is to be awarded for this competition. The panel reserves the right not to award any prize.

1st prize: \$1000

The winning entry/entries will be sung by the Notre Dame Basilica Schola in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart during a Vespers liturgy at the University of Notre Dame, and the work will be considered for other performances in concerts, tours, and recording projects.

Evaluation

The winner will be selected by a panel of judges from within and outside the University of Notre Dame. Selection criteria will include: artistic merit, singability, adherence to the submission guidelines, creativity, and similar criteria.

Judges

- Dr. Jonathan Hehn, *Director of the Notre Dame Basilica Schola*
- Hussein Janmohamed, *Independent Choral Conductor, Composer, and Music Educator. Ph.D. Candidate, University of Toronto.*
- Dr. Nancy Menk, *Chair and Professor of Music, St. Mary's College; Director of the St. Mary's College Women's Choir*
- Dr. José Rivera, *Associate Professor and Choral Music Coordinator of the Music Education Program, University of North Carolina Pembroke.*

Questions: Questions regarding the Basilica Schola's competition may be sent to Jonathan Hehn at jhehn@nd.edu.