

# “MAGNIFICENT BACH”

## TIMELINE



### 354-430 — THE LIFE OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Saint Augustine wrote the words featured in Elaine Hagenberg’s Alleluia.

### THE LIFE OF ST. COSMAS OF MAIUMA — 8<sup>th</sup> C.

Saint Cosmas of Maiuma (known as the Melodist) wrote the first known version of the hymn Virga Jesse.



### 13<sup>th</sup> C. — ZNAMENNY CHANTS EMERGED



Znamenny chants are one type of music that inspired Rachmaninoff’s Vespers.

### THE LIFE OF MARTIN LUTHER — 1483-1546

In addition to being the father of Lutheranism, he penned several hymn tunes that feature prominently in Baroque music and beyond. Two of these can be found in cantus firmus movements of Bach’s Magnificat.



### 1617 — A SWEDISH VERSION OF LUTHER’S 1532 VOM HIMMEL HOCH EMERGED



...called Ett barn är fött på denna dag. Vom Himmel hoch was one of the Lutheran tunes that Bach used in his Magnificat – specifically one of the Christmas interpolations of the original E-flat version.

### THE BIRTH OF JS BACH — 1685

GF Handel and JS Bach were born the same year (and eventually suffered at the hands of the same immoral and unskilled eye doctor), but the two titans of the Baroque era never met.





## 1723 — AN IMPORTANT YEAR FOR JS BACH



300 years ago this year, Bach penned his Magnificat (in the original E-flat version), and landed his iconic job in Leipzig at the St. Thomaskirche.

## BACH REWORKED HIS MAGNIFICAT INTO THE MORE FREQUENTLY PERFORMED D-MAJOR VERSION — 1733

Not only did Bach lower the key to D Major and change small details of orchestration, but he removed the Christmas interpolations so the piece could be performed throughout the year.



## 1750 — THE DEATH OF JS BACH



Bach was such an influential figure that several musicologists mark 1750 as the end of the Baroque era.

## IN THIS YEAR, A REVISED EDITION OF THE TRADITIONAL SWEDISH ETT BARN ÄR FÖTT PÅ DENNA DAG EMERGED — 1817

This is the version that serves as the basis for Eva Toller's arrangement.



## 1824 — THE BIRTH OF ANTON BRUCKNER



Although known for his large symphonic works, Bruckner composed multiple a cappella motets (and a few with small brass ensemble). This list includes his Virga Jesse, which uses the same text as one of the Christmas interpolations of the Bach E-flat Magnificat.



## THE BIRTH OF SERGEI RACHMANINOFF — 1783

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We're so grateful to join the worldwide celebration of Rachmaninoff's 150th birthday with his stunning Bogoroditse Devo.



## 1885 — BRUCKNER FINISHED VIRGA JESSE

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This stunning a cappella motet by Bruckner juxtaposes powerful organ-like chords with more intimate piano moments.

## THE DEATH OF ANTON BRUCKNER — 1896

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Bruckner specified in which crypt he would be buried – and outlined exactly how he should be embalmed! In 2002, TCCW Artistic Director Emeritus Robert Shafer led now-members of City Choir on a tour to Austria where they sang Locus Iste at Bruckner's tomb.



## 1915 — RACHMANINOFF'S ALL NIGHT VIGIL PREMIERED AT THE HEIGHT OF WORLD WAR I

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The lowest note of the movement that City Choir is performing (#6: Bogoroditse Devo) is the C two octaves below middle C, but that's not the lowest note in the entire work. That honor goes to the low B-flat in the 5th movement, the Song of Simeon.

## THE BIRTH OF JAN SANDSTRÖM — 1954

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In addition to several choral works, Sandström also wrote a work for trombone and orchestra, known as the Motorbike Concerto.





## 1959 — THE BIRTH OF EVA TOLLER

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Toller identifies as an autodidact, and prefers to keep the attention on the music. Her self-description can be found [here](#).

## THE BIRTH OF ELAINE HAGENBERG — 1979

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Composer Elaine Hagenberg lives next door to City Choir alto Meta Miller's parents in Des Moines, Iowa—their dogs are best friends!



## 1995 — SANDSTRÖM COMPOSES THE FIRST VERSION OF HIS GLORIA (LONG VERSION)

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Using the Gloria in Excelsis Deo text, Sandström creates a contemplative mood, meant to offer solace during troubled times. It was originally composed as part of a complete mass dedicated to an orphanage in Bogota, Colombia.

## TOLLER COMPLETED ETT BARN ÄR FÖTT PÅ DENNA DAG — 2004

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Eva Toller arranged the traditional Swedish hymn in the version City Choir is performing. It is straightforward, and offers a true nod to the Lutheran chorale tradition from which it is descended.





# 2020 — ALLELUIA COMPOSED



Elaine Hagenberg composed her joyous Alleluia. In the midst of some pretty complex rhythms for the words Alleluia, there is a chorale using text by St. Augustine.

# SANDSTRÖM RECOMPOSED HIS GLORIA — 2021

Just like Bach shortened his Magnificat in its second iteration, Sandström shortened his Gloria. City Choir will be performing this truncated version, but don't worry, it has all the beauty and inspiration as the original!



# 2023 — THE CITY CHOIR OF WASHINGTON PERFORMS 'MAGNIFICENT BACH'



Under the baton of Erin Freeman, the City Choir of Washington will bring this magnificent music to life on November 19 at the historic Church of the Epiphany in Washington, DC.

## TICKETS

### Images appearing in this timeline:

St. Augustine, by Philippe de Champaigne – Los Angeles County Museum of Art

St. Cosmas of Maiuma, by Anonymous

Znameny chant, author unknown

Martin Luther, by Lucas Cranach the Elder

J.S. Bach, portrait by Elias Gottlob Haussmann. The work is in the public domain.

Thomas Church, Leipzig, by Johann Gottfried Krüger

Anton Bruckner, portrait by Josef Büche. The work is in the public domain.

Igor Stravinsky, photo by Kubey-Rembrandt Studios (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

Ceiling of St. Florian Abbey (2002). Photo courtesy of Glenda Finley.

Robert Shafer conducting at Bruckner's tomb (2002). Photo courtesy of Elaine Wunderlich.

Photo of Jan Sandström: visit <https://jansandstrom.com>

Photo of Elaine Hagenberg : visit <https://www.elainehagenberg.com/>

Vom Himmel hoch illustration: Aus dem Straßburger Gesangbuch 1541: "Kinderliede auff die Weihenachten". The work is in the public domain.

Adoration of the Magi, by Domenico Ghirlandaio

St. Augustine, author unknown

The Adoration of the Shepherds with Catherine of Alexandria by Cigoli (1599). Public domain usage permitted courtesy of Metropolitan Museum of Art

