**DISCOVERIES**

**Ronald Arnatt**

One of the finest living composers of excellent church music (choral, organ and brass) is the English-born Ronald Arnatt, who turns 85 in 2015. Dr. Arnatt emigrated to this country in 1954, serving at Christ Church Cathedral (Episcopal), St. Louis, until 1980. His impact and influence on the St. Louis sacred music scene extended well beyond his position at the Cathedral. You will find a short bio and a fairly recent video of Arnatt in his home studio playing a lyrical, unnamed piano piece (perhaps an improvisation), apparently unaware he was being recorded: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L3UKtUXmW0Y>

His delightful “Fanfare” for organ was published by Concordia in the early ‘70s but is now out of print. Here’s a link to a YouTube recording performed by his one-time student and assistant, Douglas Major, formerly organist/choirmaster at the Washington National Cathedral. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E9WENE3iS74>

But it his exquisite choral music (published by ECS and available from Canticle Distributing) to which I’d especially like to draw your attention. His settings of Psalm 15 and Psalm 17 (subtitled *Keep Me As the Apple of Your Eye*) are two of the most sublime choral settings I’ve ever used—musical filet mignons! Regrettably, Psalm 17 is not included in the LC–MS three-year lectionary though it is found in the ELCA three-year lectionary. With a bit of finesse and imagination, though, it could certainly be programmed as a musical offering or communion anthem.

Sound files and partial PDFs are available at the URL listed for each piece. Some of these go beyond the resources of the average church choir, but all are very much worth the effort and likely will be some of the most worthy pieces your choir will ever attempt. This is not a comprehensive list of his output but it will get you started. Your time spent on the Canticle website to discover the breadth of Dr. Arnatt’s output will be its own reward.

**Psalm 1, ECS 5463**

Unison Voices or Cantor, Congregation, opt. Sop. Descant, Keyboard

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/psalm-4116.html>

**Psalm 8, ECS 5413**

Congregation, SATB, Keyboard

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/psalm-8.html>

**Psalm 15, ECS 5414**

Solo Voice, SATB, Congregation, Organ

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/psalm-15.html>

**Psalm 17, ECS 5415**

Congregation, SATB, opt. Cantor, Organ

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/psalm-17.html>

**Psalm 23, ECS 4847**

Soprano/Bass soli, 2-pt. Trebles/TB (SA/TB), Congregation, Organ

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/psalm-4081.html>

**Psalm 24, ECS 5416**

Soprano Solo, SATB, Congregation

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/psalm-24.html>

**I Waited Patiently for the Lord (Psalm 40:1-7, 10, 19-21), ECS 1.3239**

SATB, Organ

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/i-waited-patiently-for-the-lord.html>

**Psalm 50, ECS 5403**

Congregation, Opt. Descant, Keyboard (Organ or Piano)

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/psalm-50.html>

**Psalm 67, ECS 5457**

Congregation, SATB, Organ

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/psalm-67.html>

**Psalm 100 (Be Joyful in the Lord), ECS 5460**

SATB, Congregation, Organ

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/psalm-100-br-be-joyful-in-the-lord.html>

**Psalm 121 (I Lift My Eyes), ECS 5475**

Sop. Solo, SATB, Organ

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/psalm-121-br-i-lift-my-eyes.html>

**Psalm 126, ECS 5406**

Congregation, Opt. SATB, Opt. Descant, Organ

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/psalm-4113.html>

**Psalm 128, ECS 5417**

Cantor, Congregation, Choir, Keyboard

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/catalogsearch/advanced/result/?composer_list%5B0%5D=10264&p=2&show_composer_list=on>

**Psalm 130, ECS 5418**

Cantor, Congregation Choir, Organ

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/psalm-4115.html>

**Psalm 148, ECS 5674**

SATB, Congregation, Organ

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/psalm-148.html>

**Psalm 149, ECS 5407**

SATB, Keyboard

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/catalogsearch/advanced/result/?composer_list%5B0%5D=10264&p=2&show_composer_list=on>

Beyond his psalm settings,I would guide your attention to some other choral compositions by Dr. Arnatt, who is a past president of the American Guild of Organists. Notice that none of these recommendations requires SATB voices.

**A Great and Mighty Wonder, ECS 7068**

SAB & Organ

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/a-great-and-mighty-wonder.html>

**All Things Bright and Beautiful, 5748**

SAB, Keyboard; opt. descant, children’s chorus, violin

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/all-things-bright-and-beautiful-26678.html>

**Magnificat, ECS 4844**

Unison voices, Organ

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/the-song-of-mary-magnificat.html>

**On Christmas Night (The Sussex Carol), ECS 7041**

SAB unaccompanied

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/on-christmas-night-br-sussex-carol.html>

**This Joyful Eastertide**

SAB, organ

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/this-joyful-eastertide-33157.html>

Two final mentions: If you’re looking for a great hymnic Gloria to replace the anemic HYMN TO JOY setting in ELW’s liturgical Setting Ten or simply want to learn a lively, syncopated

liturgical piece, consider LADUE CHAPEL, a brilliant Arnatt hymn tune from the ‘60s (. You can find it in *Christian Worship* (WELS) at #264 with a solid text by Michael Perry. However, I recommend strongly, using Arnatt’s original harmonization found in the accompaniment books for *Worship, Third and Fourth editions* (GIA). It can also be found in *The Worshipbook, Westminster Press, 1970*, at #603 paired with a different text. See also

<http://www.hymnary.org/text/glory_be_to_god_in_heaven> and <http://www.hymnary.org/tune/ladue_chapel_arnatt>.)

I’ve used this pairing with four different congregations and it has always been well received!

Dr. Arnatt’s *Fantasia, Aria & Fugue*, dedicated to Marilyn Keiser, was originally published in CPH’s *Music for A Sunday Morning* Series, Volume 3, in 1977. Now it has been re-released by ECS and offers another fine example of his writing craft.

<http://www.canticledistributing.com/fantasie-aria-and-fugue.html>

*Tom Leeseberg-Lange*