

Montgomery Philharmonic 2016 - 17 Our 11th Season – Inspired by...

Concert 2, December 4th, 2016 with the Central Maryland Chorale

Vaughan Williams | Bass

About Randol Alan Bass

Mr. Bass has achieved an impressive array of performances and commissions by highly respected and prestigious ensembles. These include the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the National Symphony of Washington, DC, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, and the Boston Pops Orchestra. His *Gloria* setting was premiered at Carnegie Hall in 1990 by the New York Pops under Skitch Henderson. His arrangement *Joy to the World – A Fanfare for Christmas Day* has been recorded by the Boston Pops under the direction of Keith Lockhart, and can be heard on their current CD release, *Sleigh Ride*.

Born in Fort Worth, Texas, in 1953, Mr. Bass was raised in Midland, studying piano, working in community theater, playing various instruments, and singing with local ensembles, including the Midland-Odessa Symphony. A longtime student of choral music, Mr. Bass earned his Bachelor's Degree in 1976 from the University of Texas at Austin, a Master of Music degree in Choral Conducting in 1980 from the College-Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati, and pursued doctoral studies in choral and wind conducting at both Ohio State University's Robert Shaw Institute and UT-Austin.

Mr. Bass has worked actively in his various communities to further non-professional musicians' understanding of and appreciation for the musical arts. He has helmed a number of civic performing groups during his career, working to help provide opportunities similar to those he enjoyed as a young performer in amateur musical and theater groups. He founded the Austin Symphonic Band in 1982 and was its Music Director and Conductor for three years; the group continues to perform as an official musical ensemble for the City of Austin

- **Born:** 1953 – Fort Worth, Texas
- **Compositions:** 10 work centering around American Music for choir, orchestra, and band; 13 choral medleys of Christmas Music; 13 sacred choral works; 13 secular choral works; 9 instrumental works

A Feast of Carols – Randol Alan Bass (1872–1958)

This arrangement was written for the Dallas Symphony Orchestra in 1985 and has been included extensively in holiday programs throughout the United States and in Europe.

The piece uses these six carols, in sequence –

- **Gloucester Wassail**
- **Il est née, le divin enfant** (*French / English*)
- **Come, O Come Emanuel** (*Latin / English*)
- **The Holly and the Ivy**
- **God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen**
- **We Wish You a Merry Christmas**

Published in 1985, *A Feast of Carols* is a popular work performed often by choruses and orchestras worldwide. The work begins with the Gloucestershire *Wassail* – one of several English songs celebrating the drink of that name and the seasonal custom of going from house to house seeking good cheer. This is followed by the French carol, *Il Est Ne (He Is Born)*. The third course of the Feast is *Veni Emmanuel*. The melody originated as plainsong, but has been traced to a 15th-century Franciscan processional for the dead. The Latin text was originally a 6th- or 7th-century antiphon, and here the music again returns to English via 20th-century translations. The *Feast* proceeds to *The Holly and the Ivy*. The text was used as early as 1710, and its symbolism may embed pagan beliefs, where the holly and ivy represented, respectively, masculine and feminine elements. The melody was collected in Gloucestershire in the late 19th century. The *Feast* concludes with two more English songs – *God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen* (the pre-1848 tune is from London, and the text was written before 1770) and *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*.

Instrumentation – Three flutes (3rd doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contra bassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, 3 percussionists, harp, strings

Artifact –

Recording of *Gloria* by Randol Alan Bass

<https://soundcloud.com/sdnotesman/gloria-randol-alan-bass>



A Feast of Carols