

**HERBERT HOWELLS**  
**1892-1983**

**Master Tallis's Testament**

This ravishing piece is essentially a long theme with two variations. It is full of all manner of rhythmic complexity, melodic beauty, and an ever-increasing crescendo until the very end, where the entire weight of the piece drops away to a serene ending. This piece is an homage of sorts, written by one English composer during the reign of George VI, self-consciously imitating the work of another English composer who worked for Henry VIII and Elizabeth I.

**Psalm Prelude #6 (Psalm 33:3)**

Howells was a prolific composer in many genres and remains a giant in Anglican choral music. He wrote six *Psalm Preludes*, each based on a verse or two from the Psalter. The piece based on Psalm 33:3 is essentially an extended fanfare, joyous and rhapsodic yet resolute. It certainly delivers the thrilling text, as Howells quotes it on the title page: "Sing unto Him a new song: play skilfully [*sic*] with a loud noise." Although the piece exhibits a definite formal structure (ABA), the rhapsodic writing and the composer's characteristically colorful harmonic forays keep the musical tension high throughout, even in the final measures, where Howells comes to an abrupt halt and turns to G-sharp minor before suddenly settling back on the home chord of C major.

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