

SATB

CM9734

A Basque Carol / Traditional Carol / arr. Chris Thomas

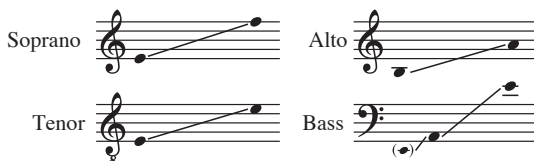
SATB Voices with Piano or Orchestra

Duration: 2:37

A Basque Carol

Traditional Carol

Arranged by Chris Thomas



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CARL FISCHER

Celebrating 150 Years

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Notes

A Basque Carol (also known as *Gabriel's Message*) holds a special place in Western music. The carol originates from Basque country around the 13th century, based on the Latin hymn, "Angelus ad Virginem" (likely of Franciscan origin). The tune quickly spread throughout Europe, finding popularity in Britain where it was even referenced in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*: "Playing so sweetly that the chamber rang; / and Angelus ad virginem he sang. . .".

Interestingly, the melody we know and love today is derived from the original Basque version. In my view, this tune is a perfect example of melody-crafting. It is at once hauntingly beautiful, yet warm and joyous. Its contours are complex, dramatic, yet singable. I believe this melodic accessibility is the key to the song's lasting popularity. I would also attribute *A Basque Carol's* continued popularity to its elegant translation into English (by Sabine Baring-Gould, who rediscovered the original Basque tune). Translations often risk sounding unimaginative, coarse, and blunt. This translation is strikingly different. It was graced with an especially poetic translation including lines such as "his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame."

I am very excited to offer a new perspective on this classic carol, joining the tradition of composers preserving and reimagining a priceless medieval melody. My first goal was to create a flowing, richly-textured, even cinematic string accompaniment for the choir. This approach was very much inspired by the dense, string-writing style of English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams. My second goal was to make the arrangement flexible enough to be performed with only choir, only strings, or (best of all) both ensembles combined. To further complement this approach, I've added an obligato line for a solo recorder (solo flute or violin work just as well). If you listen carefully, you will hear a quote from my other favorite holiday carol, *Jesu Bambino*.

I hope you enjoy performing *A Basque Carol*. I especially hope that you sense the ancient magic cast into this tune, hearing the ineffable qualities that have compelled us to sustain it for nearly a millennium. Whether you're a choir, a string orchestra, or a combined ensemble, this arrangement of *A Basque Carol* will surely be a haunting and lovely addition to your next holiday program!

About the Arranger

Chris Thomas is a composer for film, television, and theme parks and has been a featured TEDx speaker. His scores have been nominated for film and television music awards; he won a Gold Medal for Excellence at the Park City Film Music Festival and Best Film & TV Music award at eWorld Music Awards. Chris has written music for several Emmy-nominated films as well as for *Woman Rebel*, which was shortlisted for an Academy Award. In television, he works as a composer, orchestrator, and conductor on networks such as ABC, FOX, CBS, and HBO.

Chris' work can be heard in theme parks all over the world. He has written music for the Evermore Adventure Park, Knott's Berry Farm, Queen Mary Chill, Dreamland Theme Park (U.K.), Los Angeles Haunted Hayride and many more. Chris' works for the concert hall have been performed from Carnegie Hall and the Sydney Opera House to the Hollywood Bowl. He recently premiered a series of concert works in France, Belgium, and Germany. His Symphony No. 1 ("Malheur") was the subject of his TED Talk in 2019.

A Basque Carol

for SATB Voices with Piano or Orchestra*

Traditional Carol
Arranged by Chris Thomas

Andantino ♩ = 60 *mp*

Soprano: The an - gel Gab - ri - el from

Alto: Ooo

Tenor: Ooo

Bass: Ooo

Piano: *mp*

3

hea - ven came; His wings as drif - ted snow, his

* This choral may be performed with string orchestra (CAS147).

mf 6

eyes as flame: "All hail," said he, "thou low - ly maid - en

mf

"All hail," said he, "thou lov - ly maid - en

mf

"All hail," said he, "thou lov - ly maid - en

mf

div. "All hail," said he, "thou lov - ly maid - en

6

mf

7

p *mf*

Ma - ry, Most high - ly fa-voured la - dy" Glo - ri -

p *mf*

Ma - ry, Most high - ly fa-voured la - dy" Glo - ri -

p *mf*

Ma - ry, Most high - ly fa-voured la - dy" Glo - ri -

unis. *p* *mf*

Ma - ry, Most high - ly fa-voured la - dy" Glo - ri -

p *mf*

16

f

ho - nour thee; Thy Son shall be Em-man - u - el, by

ho - nour thee; Thy Son shall be Em-man - u - el, by

ho - nour thee; Thy Son shall be Em-man - u - el, by

unis. div. *f*

ho - nour thee; Thy Son shall be Em-man - u - el, by

16

f

17

p *f*

seers fore - told, Most high - ly fa-voured la - dy," Glo - ri -

p *f*

seers fore - told, Most high - ly fa-voured la - dy," Glo - ri -

p *f*

seers fore - told, Most high - ly fa-voured la - dy," Glo - ri -

unis. *p* *f*

seers fore - told, Most high - ly fa-voured la - dy," Glo - ri -

p *f*

20 *mp* *p* *mp* **22**

a!

Ooo

mp *p* *mp*

a!

Ooo

mp *p* (Melody) *mf*

a!
div.

Then gen - tle Ma - ry meek - ly

mp *p* (Melody) *mf*

a!

Then gen - tle Ma - ry meek - ly

mp *p* *mp* *mf* **22**

23

div.

bowed her head, "To me be as it pleas - eth

bowed her head, "To me be as it pleas - eth

“My soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy his
 “My soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy his
 God,” she said, “My soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy his
 God,” she said, “My soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy his

ho - ly name.” Most high - ly fa - voured la - dy,
 ho - ly name.” Most high - ly fa - voured la - dy,
 ho - ly name.” Most high - ly fa - voured la - dy,
 ho - ly name.” Most high - ly fa - voured la - dy,

ho - ly name.” Most high - ly fa - voured la - dy,
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ho - ly name.” Most high - ly fa - voured la - dy,
 ho - ly name.” Most high - ly fa - voured la - dy,

29

f *p*

Glo - - - ri - a!

f *p*

Glo - - - ri - a!

f *p*

Glo - - - ri - a!

f *p*

Glo - - - ri - a!

f *p*

31

mf

33

37

mp

Of her, Em-man - u-el, the Son was born _____ In
(Christ)

Of her, Em-man - u-el, the Son was born _____ In
(Christ)

Of her, Em-man - u-el, the Son was born _____ In
(Christ)

Of her, Em-man - u-el, the Son was born _____ In
(Christ)

37

mp

(Piano accompaniment for measures 37-40)

(Melody)

Beth - le - hem, all on a Christ - mas morn; _____ And
f

Beth - le - hem, all on a Christ - mas morn; _____ And
f

Beth - le - hem, all on a Christ - mas morn; _____ And
div. *f*

Beth - le hem, all on a Christ - mas morn; _____ And
f

(Piano accompaniment for measures 39-40)

41 41

Chris - tian folk through-out the world will e - ver say; "Most
 Chris - tian folk through-out the world will e - ver say "Most
 Chris - tian folk through-out the world will e - ver say "Most
 Chris - tian folk through-out the world will e - ver say "Most

unis.

p

41

41

p

43

high - ly fa - voured la - dy," Glo - - - ri -
 high - ly fa - voured la - dy," Glo - - - ri -
 high - ly fa - voured la - dy," Glo - - - ri -
 high - ly fa - voured la - dy," Glo - - - ri -

f

12 rit.

46 meno mosso

45 div. *mp* unis. *p* *mp*

a! "Most high-ly favoured la - dy," Glo - -

a! "Most high-ly favoured la - dy," Glo - -

a! "Most high-ly favoured la - dy," Glo - -

a! "Most high-ly favoured la - dy," Glo - -

mp *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

rit.

46 meno mosso

mp *p* *mp*

48 molto rit.

p div. *p*

- - ri - a! *p*

- - ri - a! *p*

- - ri - a! *p*

div. *p*

- - ri - a! *p*

molto rit.

p