

MAGNIFICAT

KVINDELIGE STUDENTERS SANGFORENING
ELLEN ANDREA WANG

MAGNIFICAT

“My soul doth magnify the Lord” is the beginning of the Latin text of the Song of Mary, which she exclaims after the archangel Gabriel reveals to her that she will give birth to Jesus. The Magnificat is from the Gospel of Luke. When Mary sings, it is because of the joy she feels knowing she will be a mother — the joy at having been chosen to carry God Himself in her womb — the joy of being able to weave Him into her lineage through her life as a mother, and be the gate through which God Himself would pass in order to come close to His creation. Thus Mary is, in Catholic theology in particular, the very icon of the Church.

In the course of music history, there has been a long line of composers who have set the Song of Mary to music. But remarkably few female composers have written music to this text, despite its portraying the experiences of a woman.

The choral work “Magnificat” consists of 10 compositions for women’s voices and double bass. Having recently become a mother myself, I had the fantastic and overwhelming experience of giving birth to a child. I desired to draw my own experiences into the creative process and unite them with the biblical text of Mary, along with writing texts based on my own interpretations of the role of Mary and her life situation. What did Mary herself feel? What kinds of feelings does an expectant or new mother have? All kinds! Love, faith, doubt, a search for strength, hope, joy, and uncertainty as to what the future will bring.

I am so very grateful for the wonderful collaboration I have had with the Women’s Choral Society of the University of Oslo (KSS) and conductor Marit Tøndel Bodsberg Weyde! It has been a memorable musical experience as I debut as choral composer.

Ellen Andrea Wang

MAGNIFICAT — MARY’S SONG

Music, lyrics and arrangements by
Ellen Andrea Wang, based on Luke 1, verses 46–56
(except where otherwise noted)

My Soul

My soul glorifies the Lord
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior

Holding On To You

Holding on to you

I’m waiting for a sign
A sign to keep me hold on
Be strong and make believe
I’m holding on to you
Through the rain and stormy weather
I’m holding on to you

I keep my faith in you
When there’s nothing I can do
Just be strong and carry on
We’re gonna make it through
Through the doubt and all our fears
I’m holding on to you

So don’t
Don’t let me go
Don’t let me go no go
Let me go
Holding on to you

I’m holding to you
When everything seems hopeless
You’re the light in my dark world
I’m holding on to you
Through the rain and stormy weather
You’re the rock on which I stand

So don’t
Don’t let me go
Don’t let me go no go
Let me go
Holding on to you

So don’t go let me go
Holding on to you

All Generations

Holy Holy
Holy Holy
Holy Holy
Holy is his name

Holy Holy
My spirit
My spirit
Spirit
Rejoices in God my Saviour

For he has been mindful
Of the humble state of his servant

From now on all generations will call
Call me blessed
They will call me blessed

From now on all generations will call
Call me blessed
They will call me blessed

For he has been mindful
Of the humble state of his servant

From now on all generations will call
Call me blessed
They will call me blessed

He will called me blessed
He will called me blessed
Call me blessed, call me blessed,
call me blessed

All generations will call me blessed
All generations will praise his name

He Has Been Mindful

He has been mindful

Guardian Angel / Holy Mary

Text based on Prayers from
the Catechism of the Catholic Church

Angel of God
My guardian dear
To whom God’s love
commits me here
Ever this day
be at my side
To light and guard
Rule and guide

Holy Mary
Pray for us
Holy Mother of God pray for us
Holy Mary
Pray for us
Holy Mother of Christ pray for us
Holy Mary
Pray for us
Holy Mother of church pray for us
Holy Mary
Pray for us
Model of motherhood pray for us

Brighter Days

Empty space
Deserted life
Lonely place
Clouded mind
A need for hope
A lighter way
A brighter day
Fill me up

With city lights
Brighter nights
A freedom high
Where all is right
Where silver dreams are worth a fight

Everyday praying
Fill her life
With meaning
Color it with glorious

Happiness
tears of joy

Forget the past
Forget the pain
Remember all the good things
Set her free so she can dance

Chorus:
She won't give up
Not this time
Even when she feels like life is falling apart
She find a new way
No, she won't stop
Waiting for someone like you
She'll keep fighting for
Brighter Days
Brighter Days

Give me a ray of light
Show me how to make it right
Color skies with neon signs
Fill me up, fill me up
With city lights
Brighter nights
trembling high
Where all is right
Where silver
dreams are worth a fight

Everyday praying
Fill her life
With meaning
Color it with glorious
Happiness, tears of joy
Forget the past
Forget the pain
Remember all the good things
Set her free so she can dance

Chorus:
She won't give up
Not this time
Even when she feels like life is falling apart
She finds a new way
No, she won't stop
Waiting for someone like you
She'll keep fighting for
Brighter Days
Brighter Days

I Need Your Love
When I close my eyes
You
You're the one I see
I'm imagining you're here with me

I will keep you safe
Until you fall asleep
You're my light
my heartbeat
I need your love

I need your love
I need your love
I need your love

You're the one I see
I'm imagining you're here with me
I need your love
I need your love...

Everything could change
I know
Nothing stays the same
But I know I'll find a way
To make you say
I need your love

I need your love..

My Soul II
My soul glorifies the Lord

There Is A Place
There is a place I know
Where I can rest my soul
and find peace of mind

In this place I'll find a way
A way of getting through the day
I'll find peace of mind

Under the stars
where the snowflakes fall
in between sorrow and joy
is where I belong

Under the moon
where the snow is white
in between hope and doubt
is where I belong

There is a place I know
Where I can rest my soul
and find peace of mind

Under the stars
where the snowflakes fall
in between sorrow and joy
is where I belong

Under the moon
where the snow is white
in between hope and doubt
is where I belong

I Am God's Servant
I am God's servant
I am God's servant
Mother to you
Mother to mine
A Mother like you

I am your sister
I am your sister
Sister to you
Sister to mine
A sister like you

Heavenly sunlight
Heavenly sunlight
Mercy of God
Shining on those
Who live in darkness

Words of an angel
Sent from above
Pondered in heart
Treasures from God
Glorifying

Amen

Luke 1
*from The Holy Bible,
New International Version® NIV®*

Mary's Song

- 46** And Mary said:
“My soul glorifies the Lord
- 47** and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
- 48** for he has been mindful
of the humble state of his servant.
From now on all generations
will call me blessed,
- 49** for the Mighty One has done great
things for me — holy is his name.
- 50** His mercy extends to those who fear
him, from generation to generation.
- 51** He has performed mighty deeds with
his arm; he has scattered those who are
proud in their inmost thoughts.
- 52** He has brought down rulers from their thrones
but has lifted up the humble.
- 53** He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.
- 54** He has helped his servant Israel,
remembering to be merciful
- 55** to Abraham and his descendants forever,
just as he promised our ancestors.”
- 56** Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about
three months and then returned home.



ELLEN ANDREA WANG

Ellen Andrea Wang (b. 1986) is a Norwegian bassist, vocalist and composer from Søndre Land. With her genre-crossing musical expression she has distinguished herself as an inventive artist with a unique synthesis of styles — from collaborations with Sting, Manu Katché and Marilyn Mazur, via Spellemann Prize (Norway's Grammy)-winning GURLS, to her own projects such as Pixel, Ellen Andrea Wang Closeness, and Kontrabassorkesteret (Double Bass Orchestra).

She holds a masters degree in jazz/improvised music from the Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo. Wang has received awards from TONO and NOPA for her compositions (*Call Me* and *Be mine*) and in 2022 she received the Radka Tonneff Memorial award.

Wang composed the choral work *Magnificat* whilst serving as Artist-in-Residence at Molde Jazz Festival 2021. It was premiered together with The Women's Choral Society of the University of Oslo (Kvindelige Studenters Sangforening — KSS) in Molde Cathedral as the festival's closing concert.



HANNA PAULSBERG

Hanna Paulsberg (b. 1987) is a Norwegian saxophonist and composer from Rygge. She leads several projects, among them as the initiator and songwriter for the trio GURLS, with Ellen Andrea Wang on bass. The trio won Spellemannprisen (Norway's Grammy) in 2018 for its debut album *Run Boy, Run*. Paulsberg has been a freelance musician since 2010 focusing principally on jazz and rhythmic music, and she is an active musician in the Norwegian jazz scene. In 2020 she was awarded the Oslo Jazz Festival's Ella Prize prior to her concert at the Victoria National Jazz Stage. In the preceding year she received the Rolf Gammleng Award in the category jazz.

She holds a bachelor's degree in jazz from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) in Trondheim and a master's degree from the Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo. Paulsberg was honoured as an NTNU ambassador at the 2015 Trondheim Jazz Festival.



MARIT TØNDEL BODSBERG WEYDE

Marit Tøndel Bodsberg Weyde (b. 1981) comes from Byneset in Trøndelag and has been the conductor of The Women's Choral Society of the University of Oslo (Kvindelige Studenters Sangforening — KSS) since 2008.

As a conductor, flautist and church musician she has worked with a number of Norway's leading choirs and ensembles. In addition to KSS, she is the conductor and artistic director of the professional vocal ensemble Kilden Vokalensemble in Kristiansand and the Norwegian Student Choral Society. She teaches conducting at the Norwegian Academy of Music and has served as jury member at competitions in Norway and abroad, and she offers seminars, workshops and master classes on a regular basis for both conductors and singers.

Bodsberg Weyde has contributed to a long list of recordings, and she has won numerous national and international competitions. In the autumn of 2012, she received the Conductor Prize for KSS's performance at Norway's national choral competi-



THE WOMEN'S CHORAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OSLO

tion, and in 2015 and 2019 she led KSS to victory in two classifications during the European Choir Games and Grand Prix of Nations. All the choir's releases with Bodsberg Weyde as conductor have received glowing reviews. Critics laud her attention to text and phrasing and emphasize her ability to create a really listener-friendly album. She was awarded the Conductor Prize in the autumn of 2015, whilst competing with the Vestopland Chamber Choir at the Canta al Mar Barcelona competition, and in 2017 she won two first places and a Conductor Prize whilst conducting the Norwegian Student Choral Society at the Sixth International Anton Bruckner Choir Competition.

The Women's Choral Society of the University of Oslo (Kvindelige Studenters Sangforening — KSS) was founded in 1895 and is the official female choir of the University of Oslo. As the world's oldest academic choir for women, it can look back on 128 years and the creation of traditions that are still alive today. The choir has played an important role for the university and for the feminist movement, whilst at the same time securing its place in music history through its musical accomplishments and premiere performances of works for female choir.

KSS is an organisation with lofty ambitions and a high level of achievement. In 2006 the choir was awarded First Prize for female choirs at the Musica Mundi International Competition in Riva del Garda, Italy. In 2015 and 2019 the choir participated in the European Choir Games and Grand Prix of Nations in Magdeburg and Gothenburg, respectively, and emerged victorious both times in the category "Folklore" and in "Open Competition". These ac-

complishments have led to KSS's ranking since 2015 as the world's best female choir by the music organisation Interkultur, in addition to a third place in "Folklore" and a 21st place independent of class (as of 2023). During the Tolosa Choral Contest in Basque Country, Spain in 2017, KSS achieved a second place in the category "Folklore", and in the spring of 2019 the choir won a third place in the prestigious Fleischmann International Trophy Competition in Cork, Ireland.

Magnificat is the choir's sixth release on the LAWO Classics label, all under the direction of conductor Marit Tøndel Bodsberg Weyde. The Christmas album *Arme jord ha jolefred* (LWC1009) came first in 2009, and the associated music video *Folkefrelser* won a second place in the European Choral Video Awards in 2012. *Brahms* (LWC1054), a selection of Johannes Brahms's compositions for female choir, was released in 2013, followed by *Kom regn* (LWC1134), a collection of Norwegian contem-

porary music, in 2017, and, one year later, *Som den gyldne sol frembryter* (LWC1144), featuring Norwegian National Romantic music and traditional folk music. The choir's second Christmas album, *Stille som sne* (LWC1209), was released in 2020 to good reviews, including a rating '6' (of 6) by 'NRK Klassisk' (The Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation's classical music station). "Wow, this is a true gem! *Stille som sne* is without a doubt this year's best Christmas album." (Eystein Sandvik, 30 November 2020)

ELLEN ANDREA WANG
(*1986)

MAGNIFICAT — MARY'S SONG

01	<u>My Soul</u>	<u>04:25</u>
02	<u>Holding On To You</u> Choir arrangement by Kjetil Bjerkestrand	<u>05:31</u>
03	<u>All Generations</u>	<u>02:56</u>
04	<u>He Has Been Mindful</u>	<u>02:36</u>
05	<u>Guardian Angel / Holy Mary</u>	<u>05:42</u>
06	<u>Brighter Days</u>	<u>04:54</u>
07	<u>I Need Your Love</u> Choir arrangement by Kjetil Bjerkestrand and Ellen Andrea Wang	<u>04:27</u>
08	<u>My Soul II</u>	<u>03:20</u>
09	<u>There Is A Place</u> Choir arrangement by Kjetil Bjerkestrand	<u>04:28</u>
10	<u>I Am God's Servant</u>	<u>04:50</u>

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