



2013 HAWAII UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES
ARTS, HUMANITIES, & SOCIAL SCIENCES
JANUARY 6TH TO JANUARY 8TH
ALA MOANA HOTEL
HONOLULU, HAWAII

“NEBUCHADNEZZAR BY GEORGE DYSON
AND THE INFLUENCE OF PARRY,
STANFORD, AND WALTON”

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“*Nebuchadnezzar* by George Dyson and the Influence of Parry, Stanford, and Walton”

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Abstract:

George Dyson’s oratorio, *Nebuchadnezzar*, a commission for the 1935 Three Choir Festival at Worcester (UK), followed by four years William Walton’s *Belshazzar’s Feast*, the latter of which premiered at the 1931 Leeds Festival. Because of their textual matter and the proximity of their creation, the works were destined for comparison, which began immediately and continued over the years. Yet Charles Stanford composed an oratorio on the same topic, called *The Three Holy Children*, and Dyson remembered this attractive and clever setting while attempting to revive an older tradition of oratorio as exemplified by Hubert Parry’s *Job*. Indeed, Dyson’s *Nebuchadnezzar* is indebted to Parry’s *Job*, the progenitor of new explorations in oratorio, with its motifs and four-scene design, and to Stanford’s *The Three Holy Children*, with its exciting and viable text; but it is *Belshazzar’s Feast*, with its dramatic intensity and revolutionary orchestral effects, which it most resembles. In summary, this presentation will discuss Dyson’s *Nebuchadnezzar* vis-à-vis the works of Parry, Stanford, and Walton, identifying the instances of similarity and imitation, continuities and connections among them.