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AUGUST 2013

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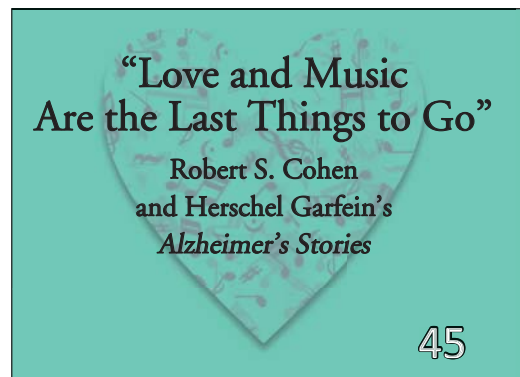
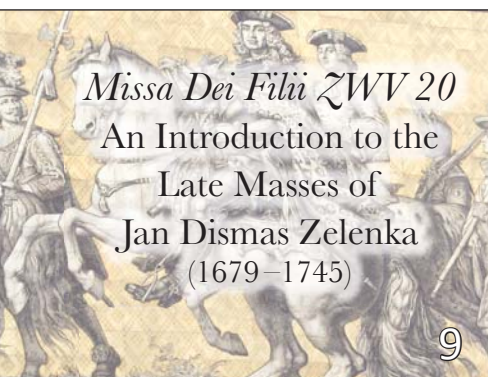
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Your World of Music

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Tim Sharp

Of the many areas of interest that overlap the attention of choral directors, lifelong singing opportunities is a topic that unites and captures all of us. Knowing that singing can be enjoyed at many levels, throughout all stages of life, motivates our profession, and keeps us searching and

learning. This motivation is true of our membership, and is absolutely reflected in the visioning, planning, and working of ACDA.

Lifelong singing experiences and opportunities emerged as a major theme in the work that resulted from our strategic planning activity over the last two years. Although much of our choral energy throughout the years has been focused on choral music making in and through traditional institutions, as we think about

singing throughout life, there are new frontiers for us to engage that will require new approaches.

One of my ongoing initiatives has been to assist our membership in creating opportunities that would make the choral experience available to all children. Two important steps toward this early singing experience initiative have begun. The first is thinking and planning currently underway by two of our Repertoire and Standards Committee children's areas toward criteria to help seed and support new and existing children's choir efforts. The simultaneous second step is the effort toward the creation of ongoing, sustainable funding sources to support new and existing children's choir efforts. As these tools and resources solidify in the coming year, we will move closer to helping the front end of the lifelong-singing journey, and one that is not necessarily fulfilled through traditional institutions.

Thanks to the thinking and working of our children and youth Repertoire and Standards leadership, I now have language for a **Project: Youth Ascend** initiative that will move us closer to seeding projects for new children's choral work. More work will be done on this initiative toward the development of criteria for funding, but for now, here is the language that has been created for this future effort:

Working toward the mission of the American Choral Directors Association, which includes inspiring excellence in choral music through education, an initiative, Project: Youth Ascend, will fund programs that empower more children and youth to sing. Funded projects will identify new ways to attract singers and serve new populations. Programs must be new projects, not existing ones, reaching children who may not experience choral music otherwise. Programs may reach underserved populations or may find new ways to attract and engage young people to experience choral artistry and community.

At the other end of the continuum, lies a new lifelong singing challenge for our work. This challenge is the creation and expansion of singing opportunities for senior adults. We are very aware of the great numbers of

individuals moving into their senior adult years, and there is strong evidence to support the idea that new choral experiences and opportunities are needed for senior adults. The needs on this other end of the lifelong-singing continuum are unique to older singers, and will present new challenges to our approaches and processes. Once again, traditional methods and traditional institutions may not be the natural point of departure for this rapidly growing choral area.

Our work with older singers is beginning to take shape as we think through pedagogical issues, literature, and other singular methods and approaches that are tailored for older and aging singers. I am encouraged that the conversation is taking place throughout our association, and articles, workshops, and interest sessions are emerging to address this choral singing opportunity and challenge.

Together we will approach engagement in choral singing, and new opportunities for choral singing, through our current tools and through new tools still under development. In the meantime, it is important for all of us to know that we have called lifelong singing a priority and worthy of our collective time and resources.

Jim Sharp

 TimothySharp

 American Choral Directors Association

The mission of the American Choral Directors Association is to inspire excellence in choral music through education, performance, composition, and advocacy.

The 12 Purposes of ACDA

- To foster and promote choral singing which will provide artistic, cultural, and spiritual experiences for the participants.
- To foster and promote the finest types of choral music to make these experiences possible.
- To foster and promote the organization and development of choral groups of all types in schools and colleges.
- To foster and promote the development of choral music in the church and synagogue.
- To foster and promote the organization and development of choral societies in cities and communities.
- To foster and promote the understanding of choral music as an important medium of contemporary artistic expression.
- To foster and promote significant research in the field of choral music.
- To foster and encourage choral composition of superior quality.
- To foster and promote International exchange programs involving performing groups, conductors, and composers.
- To foster and encourage rehearsal procedures conducive to attaining the highest possible level of musicianship and artistic performance.
- To cooperate with all organizations dedicated to the development of musical culture in America.
- To disseminate professional news and information about choral music.

—ACDA Constitution and Bylaws

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S LOG

WHAT'S ON TIM'S DAYTIMER?



- July 28 - 29 Barbershop Harmony Society
St. Joseph, MO
- July 30 - Aug 1 South Dakota ACDA
Sioux Falls, SD
- August 8-10 New Hampshire ACDA
Hanover, NH
- August 24 - 27 Association of British Choral Directors
Oxford, England
- September 6 - 8 Cathedral of the Rockies
Boise, ID

WHAT'S ON TIM'S IPAD?



Now You See It by Cathy N. Davidson

The Price of Inequality by Joseph E. Stiglitz

WHAT'S TIM LISTENING TO



Pärt's *Littlemore Tractus*,
Vox Humana, David N. Childs, conductor

Chilcott's *A Little Jazz Mass: Sanctus*
Wellensian Consort; Will Todd Trio
Christopher Finch, conductor

Gesualdo's *Gioite voi col canto*,
Delitiae Musicae, Marco Longhini, conductor

Hear more at <www.acda.org>.
Log in and Click on the First Listen icon

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



Karen Fulmer

“A Dose of Reality...”

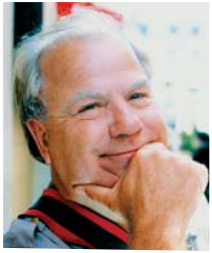
For most choral conductors, the month of August is spent perusing piles of music to determine final concert possibilities, spending several days in workshop training, preparing rehearsal space, ordering supplies, checking membership rosters, and treasuring any remaining days that can be considered “vacation.” Through the necessity of completing these tasks, there is an element of renewal and optimism for working with the singers and for the performance opportunities that are now highlighted on the calendar. No matter the age of singers or type of choir, we, as choral directors, share these common yearly rituals.

Assuming the office of national president is also a new beginning and providing background information allows me to share common interests and experiences with membership. My public school teaching career began in elementary general music (background in Orff Schulwerk), next to junior high (twenty-eight years), and then opened a new high school. All these positions were in the same school district, where professional development was encouraged and excellence was expected. Through these years, I also served as the District Music Coordinator, was elected to serve as ACDA Washington State and Northwestern Division President, and, in 1997, was named the Washington State Teacher of the Year for all subject areas. Involvement in and service to non-profit organizations from community youth choirs to adult ensembles is and has always been an important part of my life, as a singer, board member, or conductor.

Serving effectively in a leadership position requires listening to membership suggestions, brainstorming possibilities, evaluating feasibility, and working with others to create an action plan toward the vision. Over the past two years, the National Board has collected information from the national membership survey to develop initiatives, resulting in notable membership benefits. The first major accomplishment is the succinct ACDA Mission Statement that informs the world about what ACDA is and what the organization does. From the survey, the membership indicated that a mentorship program was desperately needed. A pilot online version built specifically for ACDA will be tested soon. Work continues on collaborations, both nationally and internationally, symposia, research, Web site improvements, commissions, and much more. In addition to these great offerings, I would like ACDA to lead in inspiring more elementary age children to enjoy singing with strong vocal training for their teachers and a challenge to composers to write or arrange engaging music for young voices. In a similar setting, find ways to bring music to students in urban districts where school choirs have been cut and little formal training is available. Outreach to community and lifelong opportunities to sing are the other top priorities from the membership survey. Focused projects to address the needs of our children, youth in urban settings, and singing opportunities for our senior citizens can be developed and implemented at the local and national level to meet the needs of various communities.

I am honored to serve as your National President and wish each of you relaxing final days before the beginning of your new concert season. August is truly a dose of reality!

Karen Fulmer

FROM THE
EDITOR

Carroll Gonzo

In This Issue

The opening paragraphs of Patricia Corbin's article about the life and music of Jan Dismas Zelenka (1679–1745) centers on Zelenka's early years as a composer and the nature and style of music he composed within the context of an eighteenth-century historical perspective of the Dresden court. With this background for the reader, Corbin conducts an in-depth analysis and commentary regarding Zelenka's *Missa Dei Filii* ZWV 20.

This particular Zelenka mass was one of a planned cycle of six masses that he wrote toward the end of his life. In *Missa Dei Filii* (a number mass), Zelenka demonstrates his mastery of *Stile Antico* compositional techniques, including contrapuntal procedures, plainsong quotation, and *Stile Moderno*. Moreover, this mass reflects musical trends from Italy such as a Vivaldi-style instrumental concerto and the bravura singing style of Italian opera. Corbin notes that Zelenka wrote 150 compositions, including secular and sacred works. The *Missa Dei Filii* provides an accessible introduction to the composer's late masses, even though it demands a good deal of technical skill and stamina from the soloist, chorus, and instrumentalists while providing an insight into the caliber of musicians working at the Dresden court in the middle of the eighteenth century.

Dr. Alzheimer, the first to be identified as having the symptoms of what is now called Alzheimer's disease, is a subject of great and ongoing discussion and research throughout the world. It is not surprising, therefore, that it has had its effect upon the world of music in myriad ways. This article about Robert Cohen and Herschel Garfein, "Love and Music are the Last Things to Go," weaves a true and compassionate story about an Alzheimer's patient. Robert Cohen accepted a commission and enlisted the talents of Herschel Garfein as the librettist. The composition that subsequently emerged found its textual roots in testimonials about the Alzheimer's disease from members of the chorale and community members about their personal and loved ones' experiences with Alzheimer's disease. The testimonials led not only to a multifaceted libretto that recognized the disconcerting experiences, but also incorporated other facets such as love, determination, and hope. The reader will find an interesting and definitive explanation of the text and music. The reader will learn how Cohen and Garfein transformed real-life heartache and tragedy into a joyful and uplifting musical celebration for the victims and their friends and relatives.

The article "In the Footsteps of Bach; An Interview with Georg Biller" conducted by Rod Rothlisberger, begins with the observation that Biller is the current director (*Thomaskantor*) of the St. Thomas Choir [*Thomanerchor*] in Leipzig, Germany, the same appointment held by J. S. Bach from 1723 – 1750. The year 2012 marked the 800th anniversary of the St. Thomas Choir, and Rothlisberger took this opportunity to interview Biller as a means of connect-

(Continued on next page)

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FROM THE EDITOR

(Continued from page 5)

ing Bach's seventeenth-century work with that of Biller's twenty-first century work. Prior to the interview a narrative ensues that focuses on Leipzig now and in Bach's time.

Of particular interest is the history and evolution of the twelfth-century *Thomaskirche*, which was completed in 1496. The three-aisled late Gothic hall witnessed an amazing history of events and people, not the least of which was the Reformation and the life and work of Martin Luther. There is a listing of each and every *Thomaskantor*, beginning c. 1435 – 1992. The interview touches on such

matters as:

- what is the mission of the St. Thomas Choir?
- how did you (Biller) prepare for the position?
- Biller's role in a long line of Tomaskantors? and

a variety of inquiries about the boys in the choir; their vocal and musical training and, day-to-day working and activities of the choir; and selecting music and financing the operations of the St. Thomas Choir.

Carroll Gonzo
Chiuminatto Distinguished Professor Emeritus



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2003 Brian Schmidt *Lux Eterna*

2004 Kentaro Sato *Kyrie*

2005 Dan Forrest *Selah*

2006 Dominick DiOrio *The Soul's Passing*

2007 Kristen Walker *In Monte Oliveti*

2008 Benjamin Paul May *Absalon, fili mi*

2009 Derek Myler *Psalms 100*

2010 Michael Mills *Crossing the Bar*

2011 Joshua Fishbein *Oseh Shalom*

2012 Julian Bryson *Redemption Mass*

The application and contest guidelines are available at <www.acda.org/brock>. Application Deadline October 1, 2013.





Missa Dei Filii ZWV 20

An Introduction to the
Late Masses of
Jan Dismas Zelenka
(1679–1745)

PATRICIA CORBIN

Patricia Corbin is director of choral activities
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Photo: August the Strong and his son pictured as part of the 394 foot tile mural titled Fürstenzug [Procession of Princes] in Dresden, Germany.

Historical Perspective Dresden Court

During the eighteenth century, the Dresden court of Friedrich August II, Elector of Saxony, and his son, Electoral Prince Friedrich August III, was a major cultural center of music and the arts in Europe. Dresden, also known as the “Florence of the Elbe,” is located on the banks of the Elbe River near the Bohemian (now Czech/Slovak) border. Both father and son were responsible for amassing great art treasures, the building of exquisite architecture, and establishing a courtly music scene that attracted some of the finest musicians in Europe. One of those musicians was the Bohemian composer Jan Dismas Zelenka.

In 1697, August II, better known as “August the Strong,” converted to Catholicism in order to make himself an eligible and ultimately successful candidate to be elected King of Poland. His son, August III, also converted to Catholicism a few years later. In 1708, August the Strong converted a court theatre into a Catholic chapel. He called upon the musicians in his court, many of whom were from neighboring Bohemia, to provide music for the newly established Catholic services. Jan Dismas Zelenka was one of those musicians.

Biography

Zelenka was born on October 16, 1679, in Lounovice, Bohemia, where his father was an organist in a local church. Little is known about his early life but he retained close ties with the Jesuit Collegium Clementinum in Prague throughout his career and most likely received his early musical training there.¹

In 1709, Zelenka found employment in Prague with Baron von Hartig, the

Statthalter of the Kaiser of Bohemia, who was an accomplished keyboard player and an active musical patron. Von Hartig was one of the sponsors of the Academy of Music in Prague, a musical society, where gifted amateur and professional musicians would meet for musical symposia.²

From 1710 until his death in 1745, Zelenka was employed as a violonist (double bass player) in the court orchestra of August the Strong in Dresden.

Zelenka's first choral composition for the newly established Catholic services was the *Missa Sanctae Caeciliae* ZWV 1, written in 1711 and performed for the feast of St. Cecilia. Recognizing his limitations as an inexperienced composer and his need for further study, Zelenka applied to August the Strong for travel funds in his dedication of the *Missa Sanctae Caeciliae*:

[I] may hope to continue to make delightful progress in this study and to habilitate myself more and more for the most humble service to Your Royal Highness, if, with your Royal Highness's most gracious permission and contribution, [I] should make a journey or a few years to Italy and France, in order to in the first [Italy] perfect myself in the basic church music style and in the second [France] in the *bon goust*.³

Zelenka's requests for travel funds were not immediately granted. However, he and other musicians from the court, including concertmaster Johann Pisendel (1687–1755), were granted funds to travel to Italy in 1715 as part of the entourage of the Electoral Prince.⁴ During this trip, concertmaster Pisendel studied with Antonio Vivaldi and became an ardent proponent of his music, and later established Dresden as the center of a Vivaldian "cult" in Germany.⁵ Both the Prince and his musical entourage's exposure to Italian music during this time made a great impression and would play a role in the evolution of musical taste at the Dresden court in the mid-eighteenth century.⁶

Although the precise whereabouts of Zelenka during his European travels between 1716 and 1719 has not been fully documented, there is anecdotal evidence that he spent some time in Vienna to study counterpoint with Johann Joseph Fux, and that he traveled to Venice, where he may have studied composition

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with Antonio Lotti. During this time, he amassed a large collection of music by important composers such as Palestrina, Caldara, and Fux.⁷ This collection laid the foundation for the development of Zelenka's musical style for the emerging Catholic service at Dresden.

Zelenka returned to Dresden in 1719 to resume his duties as violonist. At that time, Johann David Heinichen was Kapellmeister.⁸ As Heinichen's health slowly deteriorated, Zelenka gradually assumed greater compositional responsibilities, although without recognition or financial remuneration. In 1726, Zelenka began compiling an inventory of his collection of liturgical music. This *Inventarium*⁹ is extremely valuable, because it documents the chronology of his compositions and also shows the transmission of Catholic liturgical works throughout Italy, Austria, Bohemia, and Saxony.¹⁰

Upon Heinichen's death in 1729, the position of Kapellmeister remained vacant for several years. Zelenka was now required to take on all the responsibilities of the director; composing music for the religious services as well as rehearsing compositions by other composers, without additional compensation.¹¹

In 1733, Johann Adolf Hasse (1699–1783) was appointed Kapellmeister. Hasse was one of the leading proponents of the modern Italian opera in Europe and, in 1731, his opera *Cleofide* had been performed and enthusiastically received in Dresden. Zelenka's strict compositional style was no doubt viewed as old fashioned in comparison. Hasse's arrival in Dresden, along with his famous wife, opera singer Faustina Bordoni, provided the catalyst to make Dresden the center of court opera culture in the northern European continent.

Although Zelenka was not promoted to Kapellmeister, he eventually did

receive a modest amount of professional recognition. In 1731 and 1732, his name appears in the Court Calendar

as "Contrabassist und Compositeur"; in 1733, as "Compositeur;" and, in 1735, he received the title "Kirchencomponist."¹²



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Zelenka died in Dresden on December 23, 1745.

Performing Forces at the Dresden Court

Instrumental Forces

The Dresden court orchestra contained some of the finest musicians in Europe. It was also unique because, after about 1694, the musicians more or less specialized on one instrument, rather than being expected to be proficient

with several different instruments.¹³ J. S. Bach comments on this specialization in his memorandum to the Leipzig town council in 1730, the "Short but Most Necessary Draft for a Well-Appointed Church Music, with Certain Modest Reflections on the Decline of the Same."

[O]ne need only go to Dresden and see how the musicians there are paid by his Royal majesty, it cannot fail, since the musicians are relieved of all concern for their living, free from *chagrin* and obliged each to master but a single instrument: it must be something choice and excellent to hear¹⁴

It is difficult to determine how Zelenka's sacred music was performed because very few of the performance materials exist. In those that do exist, we find only two to three violin performance parts, and two each of the lower strings. With two players on each part, and the double bass one on a part, the string section would have the following numbers:¹⁵

- 1st Violins - 6
- 2nd Violins - 6
- Violas - 4
- Violoncellos - 4
- Double Basses - 2

The oboes are generally *colla parte*, doubling the violins or the treble voices. When oboes were called for in Zelenka's performances in Dresden, it was typical to have at least two oboes playing in unison on each part. If a piece called for oboes, the basso continuo would include a minimum of two bassoons in addition to the instruments mentioned above.¹⁶

The basso continuo group in Dresden normally consisted of organ, theorbo, violoncello, double bass (or violon), and bassoon. In his score, Zelenka

indicates which particular combination of continuo instruments should play by the markings "Solo," "Tutti," "Organo," and "Ripieno." These terms, shown below, indicate their musical function.

Solo - Soft organ registration, cello, theorbo, bassoon and double bass. Used to accompany soloists or instrumental sections

Tutti - Full organ registration, cello, theorbo, bassoon and double bass. Used to accompany full choir

Organo - Organ, cello and theorbo. Means the same as *senza Ripieno*

Ripieno - Indicates the re-entrance of the double bass and bassoon after having been omitted during an "organo" section. Also, it is an indication of their use at the beginning of a particular section or phrase.¹⁷

Vocal Forces

From the time of the opening of the new Court Chapel in 1708 until 1733, a men and boys choir known as the *Kapellknaben* had performed sacred choral music at Dresden.

At first, these boys were recruited from Bohemia, because there were few Catholic boys in the Saxon area. They were educated by Jesuits and were responsible for altar service in addition to performing liturgical music. Their numbers from 1710 through 1715 were: two to three descants, one to two altos, one to two tenors, and a bass part, probably supplied by the prefect of the choir.¹⁸ The *Kapellknaben*, was disbanded in 1733, and re-established in 1738.¹⁹

A series of Italian opera singers, including some castrati, came and left Dresden during the somewhat volatile history of the Dresden opera during the

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reign of August the Strong and his son, August III. Although August and his son hired them to perform in the opera, it is believed that they may have also joined the *Kapellknaben* for more expansive, solemn occasions.²⁰

According to the *Hof- und Staats-Calender* of 1739, there were five sopranos, three altos, one tenor and three basses employed as singers in the Dresden *Kapelle*.²¹ An average of two to three performance parts were used, and so with two singers per part, we can estimate that an average of four to six singers were on each vocal line.²² Not enough information exists to indicate if there may have been other singers who were brought in to augment the chorus.

Missa Dei Filii ZWV 20

Compositional Style

In 1740, Zelenka planned a cycle of six masses called *Missae Ultimaes*. Only three of the six masses were completed; the *Missa Dei Patris* ZWV 19 in C Major (No. 1) written in 1740, *Missa Dei Filii* ZWV 20 in C Major/G Major (No. 2)

written sometime between 1740–1741, and the *Missa Omnium Sanctorum* ZWV 21 in A Minor (No. 6), written in 1741.²³ Zelenka’s mass settings were written in the *stile misto* or “mixed” style as was common during the first half of the eighteenth century. Mass movements were divided into small sections that were either set using archaic *stile antico* procedures or the more contemporary *stile moderno* procedures.

Zelenka’s *stile antico* elements included masterful polyphonic writing that incorporated free counterpoint, fugues, motets, and plainsong (or quasi plainsong) quotations. His *stile moderno* procedures include a strong influence of instrumental *concertato* textures, and expansive vocal lines taken from Italian opera. When Hasse arrived in Dresden in 1733, he brought with him a newer, more modern style of handling the voice that exploited the long-breathed, spun-out arias characteristic of contemporary Italian opera that was enthusiastically embraced by Dresden audiences. Because of this shift in musical taste, Zelenka began incorporating similar extended, long-breathed arias into his later works.

Zelenka, as with most Baroque composers, was influenced by the linguistic discipline of rhetoric in which one tries to organize strategies to heighten the reception of the spoken word.²⁴ These strategies carried over into musical composition where composers used particular musical gestures or “figures” which they felt would arouse a specific emotion or affects from the listener. Zelenka also used the symbolism associated with musical intervals, where perfect intervals, beginning with the most perfect interval of the unison, were associated with the “perfection of God” and imperfect intervals and dissonances were considered more “earthly” in character.²⁵

Missa Dei Filii

The *Missa Dei Filii* is a mass fragment consisting of solely the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* sections of the Mass ordinary. The *Kyrie* movement was naturally tripartite, and its divisions were inherently obvious (Table 1). Zelenka had more flexibility in dividing the longer “Gloria” text in Table 2.

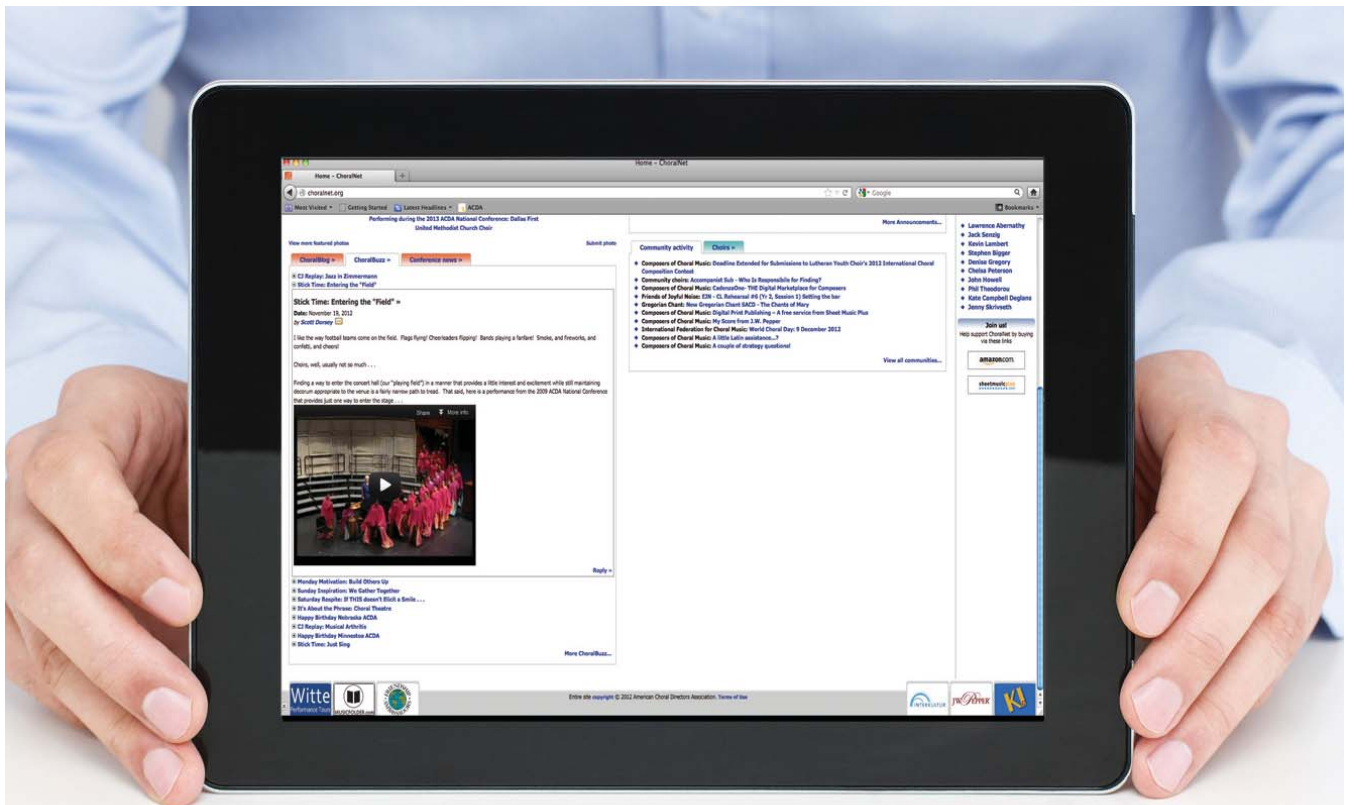
Table 1. Structure of the *Missa Dei Filii*, *Kyrie*

Text	1. Kyrie eleison (I)	2. Christe eleison	3. Kyrie eleison (I) [<i>da capo</i>]
Vocal Forces	Chorus	Soprano solo	Chorus
Time Signature	C	3 4	C
Tempo	<i>Un poco Andante</i>	<i>Larghetto</i>	<i>Un poco Andante</i>
Key	C major	A minor	C major
Length	17 measures	118 measures	17 measures

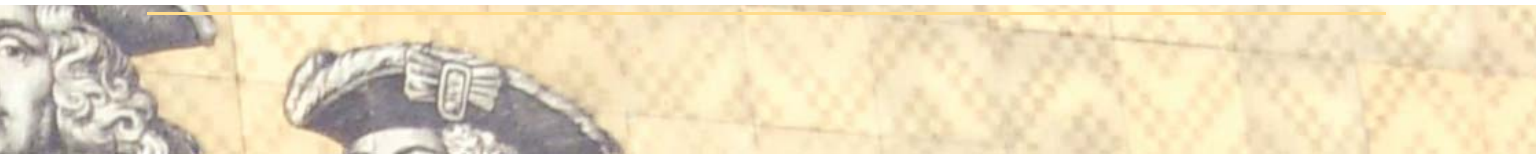


**Table 2. Structure of
Gloria**

Text	4. Gloria in excelsis	5. Qui tollis peccata mundi	6. Qui sedes ad dexteram	
Vocal Forces	Chorus & SATB soloists	Soprano & Tenor/Bass soloists	Chorus	
Time Signature	C	3 4	C	
Tempo	<i>Allegro</i>	<i>Tempo Giusto</i>	<i>Vivace</i>	
Key	G major	C minor	C major – A minor	
Length	253 measures	292 measures	28 measures	



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the *Missa Dei Filii*, Gloria

7. Quoniam tu solus (I)	8. Quoniam tu solus" (II)	9. Cum Sancto Spiritu" (I)	10. Cum Sancto Spiritu (II)
Chorus	Alto solo	Chorus	Chorus
3 4	2 4	3 4	C
<i>Allegro</i>	<i>Allegro assai</i>	<i>Allegro</i>	(<i>Allegro</i>)
A minor	D major	C major – A minor	G major
12 measures	283 measures	12 measures	182 measures

The *Kyrie* movements are modestly set while the *Gloria* settings are expansive. The ten movements of the mass are varied by style, affect, meter, tempo and vocal forces. They are unified by related tonal centers, with the mass beginning in C major and ending in G major:

Kyrie

C – a – C

Gloria

G – c – (C – a) – a – D – (d – D) – G

Although the *Missa Dei Filii* is incomplete as a Mass ordinary, it is balanced by a regular alternation of choral and solo movements of varying lengths. Zelenka rounds off this work by recapitulating thematic material from the Gloria movement in the final *Cum Sancto Spiritu* fugue. Zelenka also follows the traditions of his contemporaries by using the chorus in movements that open or close a part of a mass and by using solo voices

for interior movements.²⁶

Zelenka appears to have a strongly Trinitarian interpretation of the Mass Ordinary. Each movement seems to convey a theological association that addresses one of the three personages in the One God: a paternalistic and exalted "God the Father;" an accessible and earthly "God the Son;" and an eternal "God the Holy Spirit." These three images for God were associated with particular texts, which had specific affects and therefore called for corresponding musical procedures.

French Overture

Kyrie eleison I & I (*da capo*)

Kyrie eleison

Lord have mercy

The opening Kyrie movement is a short, homophonic statement for the

chorus and orchestra, using the dotted rhythm in the style of a French overture. The brief movement is through-composed and unified by a dotted-rhythm accompaniment, whose pattern begins in the basso continuo and is later picked up by the other strings in measure 5 through the end of the movement.

Zelenka appears to interpret the text *Kyrie eleison* as an invocation of "God the Father." His use of the dotted rhythm evokes the ceremonial pomp and majesty of the opening movements of French overtures popularized by French Baroque composer, Jean Baptiste Lully, that were played during the entrances of royalty. Additionally, Zelenka creates a mood of exultation and praise through the relatively high *tessitura* of the choir and the perfect octave leaps in the orchestral accompaniment. The chorus sings in a homophonic, declamatory style with occasional points of imitation and polyphony (Figure 1).



Un poco andante

Ob. 1 *tenuto*

Ob. 2 *tenuto*

Vln. 1 *tenuto*

Vln. 2 *tenuto*

Vla.

S *Tutti*
Ky - ri - e, ky - ri - e e -

A *Tutti*
Ky - ri - e, ky - ri - e

T *Tutti*
Ky - ri - e, ky - ri - e

B *Tutti*
Ky - ri - e, ky - ri - e,

B. C.
5 5 4 5
3 4 3 3

4

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

S
lei - - - son, e - lei - son, e - lei - - -

A
e - lei - son, e - lei - - -

T
e - lei - - - son, e - lei - - -

B
ky - ri - e e - lei - - - son, e -

B. C.
6 6 5 8 6
3 5 3 3 4
- - - - -

Figure 1. Jan Dismas Zelenka, *Missa Dei Filii*, 1. Kyrie, mm. 1-5.
Missa ultimarum secunda: Missa Dei Filii ZWV 20, ed. Paul Horn and Thomas Kohlhase,
 in *Das Erbe deutscher Musik*, Bd. 100 (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1989). Used with permission.

Ritornello Arias

Zelenka sets three of the ten movements of the *Missa Dei Fili* as *ritornello* arias that are highly influenced by the Italian operatic style that Hasse was popularizing at the court and the instrumental music of Vivaldi. Vivaldi more or less codified a modular type of *ritornello* structure, with a recurring orchestral statement of the principal thematic material made of several elements, which then might be re-quoted in whole or in part, in alteration with a smaller group

of instruments or voices (in this case a soprano soloist who states episodic material).

The principal thematic material is stated in the tonic, or a newly established key and the episodic material is generally different from the *ritornello*, modulatory in function and containing new ideas or *ritornello* fragments.

The three *ritornelli* arias are:

1. Christe eleison
2. Christe eleison
5. Qui tollis peccata mundi, for solo and tenor/bass duet

8. Quoniam tu solus Sanctus, for solo alto

Christe eleison

Christe eleison

Christ have mercy

On a theological level, the text *Christe eleison* is the first supplication of the "God the Son's" (Jesus) name during the mass. By setting this text for a soprano soloist, Zelenka is able to impart a human warmth and a more personal and

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direct supplication.²⁷

The text of this movement is an entreaty to “God the Son” for mercy and the mood of the movement is contrite and penitent. Some of the musical/rhetorical procedures Zelenka employs to create this effect are the use of descending musical lines to indicate lowly or negative emotions, the use of passing dissonances and more imperfect

intervals, chromatically altered ascending or descending melodic lines, and the use of the minor mode. Vocal phrases are long-breathed and expressive, contoured with trills and appoggiaturas that are echoed by the oboes and violins (Figures 2 and 3).

Qui tollis peccata mundi

*Qui tollis peccata mundi,
Miserere nobis
Qui tollis peccata mundi
Suscipe deprecationem nostrum*

Thou who takest away the sins of
the world

Figure 2. Jan Dismas Zelenka, *Missa Dei Filii*, *Christe eleison*, mm. 1–9.
Opening Orchestral Ritornello
Missa ultimarum secunda: Missa Dei Filii ZWV 20, ed. Paul Horn and Thomas Kohlhase,
in *Das Erbe deutscher Musik*, Bd. 100 (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1989). Used with permission.



Have mercy upon us
 Thou who takest away the sins of
 the world,
 Receive our prayer

The Qui tollis portion of the Mass is often considered by many composers to be the emotional center of the Gloria. For theologians, the penitent text asks for the forgiveness of the sins of the

world, which is a fundamental tenet of Christianity.²⁸ The “worldly” or “earthly” reference suggests that Zelenka interprets this entreaty as an offering to “God the Son” and is therefore of a more personal and intimate quality. Again, Zelenka uses the solo voice to emphasize the personal, penitential quality of the theological message, setting this movement as an aria for solo soprano,

Figure 3. Jan Dismas Zelenka, *Missa Dei Filii*, *Christe eleison*, mm. 31–38.
 Solo Soprano Entrance

Missa ultimorum secunda: Missa Dei Filii ZWV 20, ed. Paul Horn and Thomas Kohlhase, in *Das Erbe deutscher Musik*, Bd. 100 (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1989). Used with permission.



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bass, and tenor/bass duet.

The orchestral texture of this movement is reduced by the omission of the oboes and bassoons and by scoring all the violins in unison *con sordini*. It begins with a forty-four-measure orchestral *ritornello* whose themes show a wealth of musical rhetorical figures that are used to help depict the sinful and sorrowful effect of the movement, including the use of descending musical lines, dissonant or chromatic musical figures, and extensive use of imperfect intervals, especially major and minor seconds (Figures 4 and 5).

Quoniam tu solus Sanctus

*Quoniam tu solus Sanctus.
Tu solus Dominus.
Tu solus Altissimus,
Jesu Christe*

For Thou alone art the Holy One.
Thou alone art the Lord.
Thou alone art the most high,
Jesus Christ.

Quoniam tu solus Sanctus II is a bravura solo aria for alto and orchestra. It contains long-breathed phrases, coloratura figurations, and written-in trills and other vocal ornaments. The orchestral

writing is equally demanding and requires all instruments to play challenging figuration in alternation with the soloist.

In this aria, Zelenka creates a mood of exultancy and emphatic affirmation. Returning to the "God the Father" image, the composer employs a fast tempo, ascending musical passages, rapid scalar passages and melismas, conspicuous use of perfect intervals, and reiterated unisons and octaves, set in D major. Eighteenth-century composers often set this movement for a vocal soloist because of the natural connection between the solo voice and the text "Thou alone (Figure 6)."²⁹

Tempo giusto
con sord.
mf
con sord.
mf
Solo
p sempre ripieni

Figure 4. Jan Dismas Zelenka, *Missa Dei Filii*, 5. Qui tollis peccata mundi, mm. 1–16. Opening Orchestral *Ritornello*
Missa ultimarum secunda: Missa Dei Filii ZWV 20, ed. Paul Horn and Thomas Kohlhasse, in *Das Erbe deutscher Musik*, Bd. 100 (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1989). Used with permission.

Tempo giusto
44
a2 (con sord.)
Vlns. 1 2
Vla.
Sop. Solo
B. C.

Qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta, pec - ca - ta mun - di, mi - se - re -

5 6 5 5 6 6 b 6 6 6 6 6

51
Vlns. 1 2
Vla.
Sop. Solo
B. C.

(re)

5 5 b7 5 b7 6 6

Figure 5. Jan Dismas Zelenka, *Missa Dei Filii*, 5. Qui tollis peccata mundi, mm. 44–56.
Solo Soprano Entrance
Missa ultimarum secunda: Missa Dei Filii ZWV 20, ed. Paul Horn and Thomas Kohlhas, in *Das Erbe deutscher Musik*, Bd. 100 (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1989). Used with permission.

57 [Oboes doubling Violins]
a2
Vlns. 1 2
Vla.
Alto Solo
B. C.

Quo - ni - am tu so - lus Sanc - tus,

Org.
p f

5 5 f 6 3 6

64
Vlns. 1 2
Vla.
Alto Solo
B. C.

quo - ni - am tu so - lus Sanc - tus, tu so - lus Do - mi - nus

p f p f p f

Figure 6. Jan Dismas Zelenka, *Missa Dei Filii*, 8. Quoniam tu solus Sanctus, mm. 57–69.
Solo Alto Entrance
Missa ultimarum secunda: Missa Dei Filii ZWV 20, ed. Paul Horn and Thomas Kohlhas, in *Das Erbe deutscher Musik*, Bd. 100 (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1989). Used with permission.



Choral Concerto:

Gloria

Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.
Laudamus te. Benedicimus te.
Adoramus te.
Glorificamus te.
Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.
Domine Deus, Rex coelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens.
Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris

Glory to God in the highest
 And on earth peace to men of good will
 We praise thee. We bless thee.
 We worship thee.
 We glorify thee.
 We give thanks to thee according to thy great glory.

Lord God, Heavenly King, God the Father almighty.
 Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son.
 Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father:

The first movement of the Gloria portion of the *Missa Dei Filii* is Zelenka's longest setting of this text from the scores that we have available to us today. With the opening words, "Glory to God in the highest," Zelenka appears to interpret this movement as an exaltation of "God the Father." He creates an atmosphere of praise and jubilation by the use of a fast tempo, the predominance of perfect and consonant intervals, rapidly ascending scalar passages, and an opening homophonic choral statement.

The movement is structured as an expansive bravura concerto for orchestra, choir, and soloists, beginning with another modular orchestral *ritornello* that contains the principal instrumental

themes of the movement (Figure 7).

The first choral entrance, *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, is a jubilant homophonic opening fanfare (Figure 8).

Within the context of this very modern concerto, Zelenka make a *stile antico* liturgical association by having the choir quote a true liturgical plainsong intonation on the fourth tone of Mass IV in the Gregorian *Kyriale* in long note values (Figure 9).

The movement continues on with the chorus and soloists in concerted alternation with the orchestra. The vocal material is episodic and modulatory and it is answered by fragments of the orchestral *ritornello*.

Zelenka ends the movement with a tour de force coda for both the choir and orchestra. On the text *glorificamus Te*, the singers join the orchestra in rapid scale patterns, trills, and wide leaps of more than an octave (Figure 10).



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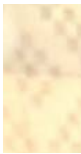
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Allegro

Ob. 1
f *staccato*

Ob. 2
f *staccato*

Vln. 1
f *staccato*

Vln. 2
f *staccato*

Vla.
f
Ripieno
Solo

B. C.
5 3 - 5 5 3 - 5 5 3 - 5 5

5

Ob. 1 *tr*

Ob. 2 *tr*

Vln. 1 *tr*

Vln. 2 *tr*

Vla.

B. C.
7 3 7 3 7 5 3 -

8

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

B. C.
5 3 - 5 3 - 6 3 - 5 3 - 6 3 - 5 3 -

Figure 7. Jan Dismas Zelenka, *Missa Dei Filii*, 4. Gloria in excelsis, mm. 1–12.

Opening Orchestral *Ritornello*

Missa ultimarum secunda: Missa Dei Filii ZWV 20, ed. Paul Horn and Thomas Kohlhasse, in *Das Erbe deutscher Musik*, Bd. 100 (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1989). Used with permission.

34 **Allegro**

Ob. 1 *f staccato*

Ob. 2 *f staccato*

Vln. 1 *f staccato*

Vln. 2 *f staccato*

Vla. *f*

S
A
T
B
Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis, glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a,
Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis, glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a,

B. C. *Tutti* *Solo* *Tutti* *Solo* *Tutti*
5 3 - 5 5 3 - 5 5 3 -

37

Ob. 1 *f*

Ob. 2 *f*

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

S
A
T
B
glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis in ex - cel - sis

B. C. *Solo* *Tutti*
5 5 7 3

Figure 8. Jan Dismas Zelenka, *Missa Dei Filii*, 4. Gloria in excelsis, mm. 34–38.
Choral Entrance

Missa ultimarum secunda: Missa Dei Filii ZWV 20, ed. Paul Horn and Thomas Kohlhas, in *Das Erbe deutscher Musik*, Bd. 100 (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1989). Used with permission.



43

Ob. 1 *f staccato*

Ob. 2 *f staccato*

Vln. 1 *f staccato* *p un poco* *f* *sim. sempre* *p*

Vln. 2 *f staccato* *p un poco* *f* *sim. sempre* *p*

Vla. *f* *p un poco* *f*

T B *unis. f*

Glo - - - - ri - a

B. C. *(Solo)* *p un poco* *f*

5 5/3 — 6 5/3 6 5/3 5 5 5 6 — 5 5 6 — 5 5 6 —

47

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Vln. 1 *f*

Vln. 2 *f*

Vla. *f*

T B in ex - cel - sis De - - - o.

B. C. *f*

5 5 6 — 5/3 — 5/3 — 5/3 — 6 — 6 6 5/3 — 5/3 —

Figure 9. Jan Dismas Zelenka, *Missa Dei Filii*, 4. Gloria in excelsis, mm. 43–50.
Choral Plainsong Quotation

Missa ultimorum secunda: Missa Dei Filii ZWV 20, ed. Paul Horn and Thomas Kohlhase,
in *Das Erbe deutscher Musik*, Bd. 100 (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1989). Used with permission.



Figure 10. Jan Dismas Zelenka, *Missa Dei Filii*, 4. Gloria in excelsis, mm. 240–246.
Missa ultimarum secunda: Missa Dei Filii ZWV 20, ed. Paul Horn and Thomas Kohlhase,
in *Das Erbe deutscher Musik*, Bd. 100 (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1989). Used with permission.



Choral Scenes

The *Qui sedes ad Dexteram Patris*, *Quoniam tu solus* [I], and *Cum Sancto Spiritu* [I] movements are what noted Zelenka scholar, Thomas Kohlhase, calls a “dramatic scene.”³⁰

These are short movements that appear in Zelenka’s later works and are found between concerted choral movements and arias or solo ensembles. These movements often function as a modulatory introduction for the subsequent movement. Moreover, they function in a manner similar to an operatic recitative in their ability to move the story (or, in this case, the liturgy) forward more quickly and directly than the formalized arias and concerted choral movements. Despite their brevity, they are filled with contrasts in character, tempo, dynamics, and tonality (Figure 11).

Quoniam tu solus

*Quoniam tu solus Sanctus,
Tu solus Dominus.
Tu solus Altissimus,
Jesu Christe*

For Thou alone art the Holy One.
Thou alone art the Lord.
Thou alone art the most high,
Jesus Christ.

Fugue:

Cum Sancto Spiritu II

*Cum Sancto Spiritu
In gloria Dei Patris. Amen
[Laudamus te. Benedicimus te.
Adoramus te.
Glorificamus te.]*

With the Holy Spirit
In the glory of God the Father:
Amen.

[We praise thee. We bless thee.
We worship thee.
We glorify thee.]

It is in the last *Cum Sancto Spiritu* II movement that Zelenka addresses the image of “God the Holy Spirit.” By using the archaic musical procedure of the fugue, he portrays the timeless religious concept of the eternal glory of God,³¹ and creates an emphatic sense of closure.

The fugal subject is based upon a steadfast reiterated unison. By emphasizing this most perfect interval, he emphasizes the “oneness” of God (Figure 12).

The movement ends with an unusual recapitulation of portions of the Gloria. During the first part of the eighteenth century, composers traditionally unified Gloria movements through related tonal centers. The restatement of musical material from the end of the Gloria movement into the *Cum Sancto* movement was rarely used to provide cohesiveness in multi-movement settings of the Mass Ordinary.³² In this case, Zelenka’s inclusion of this material does round out the *Missa Dei Filii* into a cohesive unit with a satisfactory ending, although the mass now ends in G major, after beginning in C major (Figure 13).

The orchestra doubles the voices with the occasional addition of some embellished chordal figurations. The movement ends with a restatement of the coda flourish found at the end of the Gloria (Figure 14).

Summary

During the first half of the eighteenth century, Bohemian musician, Jan Dismas Zelenka, was employed for most of his professional career as a musician in the Dresden court of August the Strong

and his son, August II. When August the Strong converted to Catholicism for political reasons and opened a Catholic chapel in the Dresden court, he called upon Zelenka and other court musicians to provide music for the newly established services.

The *Missa Dei Filii* ZWV 20 was one of a planned cycle of six masses that Zelenka wrote toward the end of his life. It is a “number” mass, containing only the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* portions of the Mass Ordinary, with the text divided into concerted choral movements, solo and duet arias, and motet choral settings.

In this mass, Zelenka shows his mastery of *stile antico* compositional techniques, including contrapuntal procedures and plainsong quotation, as well as the influence of contemporary, *stile moderno* techniques, including musical trends emanating from Italy, such as the Vivaldi-style instrumental concerto, and the bravura vocal singing style of Italian opera that became so popular at Dresden after the arrival of opera composer Johann Hasse in 1731.

Although most of his sacred choral music shows evidence of both *stile antico* and *stile moderno* influences, his later works show the *stile moderno* practices to a much more intense and expansive degree, reflecting the changes in music taste at the Dresden court. Each movement appears to have a distinct Trinitarian theological message, addressing either “God the Father” with grand choral settings, “God the Son” with penitent and personal solo arias, and “God the Holy Spirit” in the final *stile antico* fugue.

Zelenka wrote 150 compositions from 1709 to 1744. His secular compositions include six trio sonatas, nine concertante overtures, symphonies or suites, the *Sub olea pacis: Melodrama de Sancto Wenceslao*, the secular oratorio *Serenata*, and some operatic arias. His sacred music makes up the largest part



Allegro

Obs. 1 ^{a2}
2 *f*

Vlns. 1 ^{a2}
2 *f*

Vla. *f*
Tutti

S
A
T
B
Tutti

Quo - ni - am tu so - lus, tu so - lus
Quo - ni - am tu so - lus, tu so - lus

B. C. *Ripieno*
Tutti

6
4+
b

4

Obs. 1
2

Vlns. 1
2

Vla.

S
A
T
B

Sanc - tus, tu so - lus Do - mi - nus,
Sanc - tus, tu so - lus Do - mi - nus,

B. C.

6 — 6 — 6 5 — 6 5 —
4 3 # —

Figure 11. Jan Dismas Zelenka, *Missa Dei Filii*, 7. Quoniam tu solus I, mm. 1–6.
Missa ultimarum secunda: Missa Dei Filii ZWV 20, ed. Paul Horn and Thomas Kohlhasse,
 in *Das Erbe deutscher Musik*, Bd. 100 (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1989). Used with permission.

146

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

S

A

T

B

Vlc.

Cum Sanc - to Spi - ri - tu in glo - ri - a De - i Pa - - - tris. A - men.

Cum Sanc - to Spi - ri - tu in glo - ri - a De - i Pa - - - tris. A - men.

Cum Sanc - to Spi - ri - tu in glo - ri - a De - i Pa - - - tris. A - men.

Cum Sanc - to Spi - ri - tu in glo - ri - a De - i Pa - - - tris. A - men.

152

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

S

A

T

B

Vlc.

Lau - da - mus_ te, be - ne - di - ci - mus te, a - do - ra - mus_ te, glo - ri - fi -

Lau - da - mus te, be - ne - di - ci - mus te, a - do - ra - mus te, glo - ri - fi -

Lau - da - mus_ te, be - ne - di - ci - mus te, a - do - ra - mus_ te, glo - ri - fi - ca - mus.

Lau - da - mus te, be - ne - di - ci - mus te, a - do - ra - mus te, glo - ri - fi - ca - mus.

Figure 13. Jan Dismas Zelenka, *Missa Dei Filii*, 10. Cum Sancto Spiritu, mm. 146–155.
 Recapitulation of *Gloria*
Missa ultimarum secunda: Missa Dei Filii ZWV 20, ed. Paul Horn and Thomas Kohlhase,
 in *Das Erbe deutscher Musik*, Bd. 100 (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1989). Used with permission.



179 (Allegro)

Obs. 1 2 *ff*

Vlns. 1 2 *ff*

Vla. *ff*

S *ff*
men, a - - - - - men, a - men, a - men, a - men.

A *ff*
men, a - - - - - men, a - men, a - men, a - men.

T *ff*
men, a - - - - - men, a - men, a - men, a - men.

B *ff*
men, a - - - - - men, a - men, a - men, a - men.

B. C. *ff*

Figure 14. Jan Dismas Zelenka, *Missa Dei Filii*, 10. Cum Sancto Spiritu, mm. 179–182.
Missa ultimorum secunda: Missa Dei Filii ZWV 20, ed. Paul Horn and Thomas Kohlhase,
 in *Das Erbe deutscher Musik*, Bd. 100 (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1989). Used with permission.

of his compositional output, including three sacred cantatas, over twenty masses (and single and fragmentary mass items), two requiem settings, music for the Office of the Dead, over thirty psalm cantatas, thirty graduals, various offertories, hymns, sequences and small scale solo cantatas, two settings of the *Lamentationes Jeremiae Prophetae*, eighteen settings of Marian antiphons, and nine litanies.

Zelenka managed to write a body of compositions that are remarkable not only for their mixture of old and new styles, but for their virtuosic technical demands. By its relatively smaller scale, the *Missa Dei Filii* provides an accessible introduction to Zelenka's late masses. It demands a great deal of technical skill

and stamina from the soloists, chorus, and instrumentalists, and gives us an insight into the caliber of musicians working at the Dresden court in the middle of the eighteenth century.

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- ² Rosa Newmarch, *The Music of Czechoslovakia* (New York: J. & J. Harper Editions, 1969), 14.
- ³ Wolfgang Horn, *Die Dresdner Hofkirchenmusik 1720–1745: Studien zu ihren Voraussetzungen und ihrem Repertoire* (Stuttgart: Carus Verlag, 1986), 55. Translation by Sonya Ristau and Ulrich Struve.
- ⁴ Stockigt, *Bohemian Musician*, 39.

- ⁵ Michael Talbot, *Vivaldi* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1992), 46–47.
- ⁶ Wolfgang Horn, "Das Repertoire der Dresdner Hofkirchenmusik um 1720–1730 und die Werke Antonio Caldaras," in *Antonio Caldara: Essays on His Life and Times*, ed. Brian Pritchard (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1987), 280.
- ⁷ Stockigt, *Bohemian Musician*, 39–43.
- ⁸ Melvin P. Unger, *The German Choral Church Compositions of Johan David Heinichen (1683–1729)* (New York: Peter Lang, 1990), 26–28.
- ⁹ Zelenka's Inventarium may be found in Wolfgang Horn's *Die Dresdner Hofkirchenmusik*, 150–153.
- ¹⁰ Janice B. Stockigt, "Zelenka's Contribution to the Polychoral Repertoire of the Catholic Church, Dresden (1719–1745)," *Miscellanea Musicologica* 16 (1989): 35–36.
- ¹¹ The Saxon court was notorious for delaying payment of musicians' wages, sometimes



- for years. There was also a great disparity between the wages of the highly paid Italian musicians in comparison to the German musicians. See Richard Petzoldt, "The Economic Conditions of the Eighteenth Century Musician," in *The Social Status of the Professional Musician from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Walter Salmen (New York: Pendragon Press), 165–170.
- ¹² Janice Stockigt, "Zelenka and the Dresden Court Orchestra, 1735: A Study," *Studies in Music* 21 (1987): 76.
- ¹³ Ortrun Landmann, "The Dresden Hofkapelle during the lifetime of Johann Sebastian Bach," *Early Music* 17, no. 1 (February, 1989): 20.
- ¹⁴ Robert L. Marshall, *The Music of Johann Sebastian Bach: The Sources, the Style, the Significance* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1989): 25.
- ¹⁵ Thomas Kohlhasse, foreword to *Missa Gratias Agimus Tibi*, by Jan Dismas Zelenka (Stuttgart: Carus-Verlag, 1983), vi.
- ¹⁶ John Floreen, foreword to *Haec Dies ZV 169*, by Jan Dismas Zelenka (Stuttgart: Carus-Verlag, 1987), 3. The heavier wind sound of the Dresden orchestra resulting from these extra wind parts is discussed by Karl Heller in his article "Zwei 'Vivaldi-Orchester' in Dresden und Venedig," *Musikzentren-Konzertschaffen im 18. Jahrhundert*, 1979, 56–63.
- ¹⁷ Jan Dismas Zelenka, *Missa ultimarum secunda: Missa Dei Filii*, ed. Paul Horn, and Thomas Kohlhasse, in *Das Erbe deutscher Musik*, Bd. 100 (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1989), 189.
- ¹⁸ Janice Stockigt, "The Kapellknaben of the Catholic Court Church in Dresden, 1722–1733," *Studies in Music* 23 (1989) 14.
- ¹⁹ Stockigt, *Bohemian Musician*, 238.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, 68.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, 72, 206, 239.
- ²² Kohlhasse, *Missa Gratias agimus tibi*, vi.
- ²³ Stockigt, *Bohemian Musician*, 224.
- ²⁴ *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music*, 1986 ed., s.v. "Rhetoric," by Christopher C. Hill.
- ²⁵ Dietrich Bartel, *Musica Poetica: Musical-Rhetorical Figures in German Baroque Music*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 13–15.
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- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, 295.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*
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In the
Footsteps of
Bach
An Interview
with
Georg
Christoph
Biller

Rod Rothlisberger



Georg Christoph Biller—Director of the St. Thomas Choir

Rod Rothlisberger, DMA, is Professor of Music Emeritus at Minnesota State University Moorhead, Moorhead, Minnesota. He holds degrees from St. Olaf College, the Eastman School of Music, and the University of Colorado, Boulder. Thomas Richter, Leipzig, and James Gurney, Moorhead, assisted with the translation of this interview. <rothlisb@mnstate.edu>

Georg Christoph Biller is the current director (*Thomaskantor*) of the St. Thomas Choir (*Thomanerchor*) in Leipzig, Germany, the same choir which Bach conducted from 1723 until his death in 1750. Biller was born in 1955 in Nebra, Germany, was appointed *Thomaskantor* in 1992, and is the sixteenth *Thomaskantor* since Bach.

Significantly, 2012 marked the 800th year of the *Thomanerchor*, thus this interview, which was conducted in German during the author's sabbatical leave in Leipzig. This 800th anniversary was observed with a year-long celebration by three entities whose histories have been intertwined for eight centuries: the *Thomaskirche* [St. Thomas Church], *Thomasschule* [St. Thomas School], and the *Thomanerchor*. As an introduction to the interview, the following is a brief history and description of these institutions and their relationship with each other and the city of Leipzig.

In the Footsteps of Bach: An Interview with



Leipzig c. 1750. The third steeple from the left is *Thomaskirche*.

Leipzig

The city of Leipzig is situated about ninety miles southwest of Berlin and currently has a population of approximately 530,000. First documented as “*urbs Libzi*” [city of lime trees] in 1015,¹ Leipzig was granted a city charter around 1165. Therefore, it was already well established when, on March 20,

1212, Margrave Dietrich of Meissen (1162–1221) founded St. Thomas’s priory for the Augustinian order. An accompanying school (*schola thomana*) was intended to train boys for liturgical singing, making the school the oldest public school in Germany, and the choir one of the oldest in the world.

And so, for over eight centuries, the

city of Leipzig has been a center of commerce, learning, and culture in Germany. Being at a commercial crossroads in central Europe, the city was an international trade fair center from its earliest days so that by 1710 it was “the premier trade fair locale in the German lands.”²

Leipzig was unique in Germany: it was not only one of the three main mercantile centers, along with Hamburg and Frankfurt,³ but also by the eighteenth century had become Germany’s intellectual center. This is evidenced by the very early appearance of the *Thomasschule* and by the founding of the University of Leipzig at *Thomaskirche* in 1409, making it the second oldest university in Germany after Heidelberg. The great German author, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, wrote in his *Faust*: “You can’t beat Leipzig! It’s a little Paris and educates its people.”⁴

Upon the introduction of movable-type printing to Europe by Gutenberg in 1439 in Mainz, Germany, Leipzig became a leading center of the book trade (publishing, printing, binding, and engraving) with as many as fifty-six publishers and book sellers by 1765.⁵ Breitkopf & Härtel, the oldest existing music publisher

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Charter for Augustinian Monastery at Thomaskirche in 1212.

in the world, was founded there by Bernhard Christoph Breitkopf in 1719, followed by C. F. Peters in 1800. (For more about Leipzig's cultural stature, see *Leipzig, Germany*; F. Melius Christiansen; and the *St. Olaf Choir* on page 69.)

Thomaskirche

Although there is evidence of church buildings on this site beginning in the twelfth century, the extant sanctuary was completed in 1496. However, shortly after Martin Luther brought the Reformation to Leipzig in 1539, the Augustinian monastery was closed. At this point the school and the choir became the responsibility of the city, in terms of financial support and of administration,

but they remained connected to the church physically and spiritually. The close connection of these institutions helps explain their survival over the centuries, more or less intact, despite, for example, the attempt of the Nazi government (1933–1945) to politicize them and the communist administration (1945–1989) to secularize them.

Architecture aficionados know the church as a three-aisled late Gothic hall church whose basic structure has remained intact, but with many cosmetic alterations over the centuries, including galleries, lofts, and organs. However, the rear gallery continues to be the site of musical activities with a nineteenth-century organ and space for choristers and instrumentalists. A second organ resides in the north balcony. This "Bach organ"

was installed in observation of the 250th anniversary of the death of J. S. Bach and is visually and tonally reminiscent of the organs of the early eighteenth century.

That music and musicians have been, and continue to be, revered as part of the church's history is evidenced by the presence of the remains of J. S. Bach. Upon his death in 1750, Bach was buried in *Johanneskirche*, but after its destruction during World War II, he was reinterred in the chancel of St. Thomas in 1950, the 200th anniversary of his death.

Thomasschule zu Leipzig

While students could attend at their own expense (*externi*), the school was established for poor students (*schola pauperum*) who earned their posi-

In the Footsteps of Bach: An Interview with



Thomaskirche in 1735; the expanded *Thomasschule* is in the center; the Bach family quarters were on lower three floors in the left side of the school.⁶



Thomasschule today.

tions by serving as choristers. Located in the courtyard of the *Thomaskirche* for several centuries, the *Thomasschule* was eventually relocated to its present campus, a few irregular blocks from the church, in 1877, followed shortly by the residential quarters for the choir (*Thomasalumnat*) in 1881. During World War II, danger and destruction motivated other relocations, and it was not until the year 2000 that the *Thomasschule* and *Thomasalumnat* were back together at the nineteenth-century site.

The school, due to its functional origins, was, from the beginning, musical in nature with an emphasis on languages and faith. While music and foreign languages, classical (primarily Latin) and modern (primarily English), are still stressed, the now co-educational school also offers the usual secondary school curriculum including science and mathematics, along with a wide variety of extra-curricular activities, to its nearly

500 students.

Since the school was, and is, a major institution in Leipzig, the city council has monitored it with great care and attention to detail. In 1723 (Bach's first year in Leipzig), a voluminous set of rules (*Schulordnung*) was printed. This was apparently a revision, in German, of the Latin school statutes from 1634⁷ and laid out how the school was to be administered. The document included detailed instructions regarding, among other things, the following: (1) responsibilities of the Rector (Principal), the Cantor (Choirmaster), teachers, and prefects (student leaders); (2) distribution of funds from special services (funerals and weddings, for example) to instructors and students; (3) student behavior, including piety, obedience, punctuality, manners, grooming, and etiquette at meals and in church, down to such details as: no bare feet at funerals, the prohibition of dice and cards, and the care of chamber pots!

That the school was important to the city council is indicated by the provision for run-away students—the council members would be notified to assist in the search.⁸

The administrative hierarchy was headed by a Supervisor (*Vorsteher*) appointed from the ranks of the city council to oversee the institutions (school and choir), the Rector (Principal) as the head of the school and the Cantor (Choirmaster). This seems simple enough, but the church hierarchy in the person of a Superintendent (*Kirchen-Vorsteher*) and the Pastor of St. Thomas Church also had input.

Today, the positions of Superintendent and Principal remain, as, of course, does that of Cantor. The more than ninety boys (*alumni*) in the choir live in the *Thomasalumnat* across the street from the *Thomasschule*. The *Alumnat*, currently being renovated for reoccupation this year, serves as a dormitory, but also includes a gymnasium, a dining

Georg Christoph Biller



The *Thomanerchor* with Biller in *Thomaskirche*.

hall, a rehearsal hall, and recreation facilities. In the past, the *Alumnat* consisted of *Stuben* (rooms), each housing several boys of various ages. It is thus not only a living arrangement, but an administrative one, as well, with older boys supervising and mentoring younger choristers. This developed leadership skills among students and precluded extensive adult staffing. Since the remodeled building provides for fewer students per room, administrative adjustments will be necessary.

Thomanerchor

The *Thomanerchor*, from its beginnings, was primarily a choir for worship. While today, the weekly Friday *Motette*,⁹ Saturday *Cantate*,¹⁰ and Sunday *Gottesdienst*¹¹ all contain prayers and sermons, the first two, at least, tend to be a showcase for the great choral music of the church, with everything from medieval chant to twenty-first-century motets. The choir has grown from merely twelve singers in its early years to about twenty-two at the

time of the Reformation.¹² During the Bach era, approximately fifty-five resident students were divided among four churches, and today, nearly one hundred students participate in the choir program. These singers are assigned as follows: the soprano and alto parts are sung by boys with unchanged voices; youths in their teens sing tenor and bass. For choral/orchestral works, the choir is accompanied in the loft by the world-renowned *Gewandhaus* Orchestra.

Over the centuries the choir has generated many well-known musicians, most notably several of Bach's famous sons, and in the nineteenth century, Richard Wagner of opera fame. The choir has also produced several other German composers, some of whom have also served as *Thomaskantors* (see list of cantors).

Thomaskantor

Although musicians celebrate the city because Johann Sebastian Bach served as *Thomaskantor* during the first half of the eighteenth century,

Thomaskantors

c. 1435	Johann Steffani de Orba
c. 1470	Martin Klotztsch
c. 1480	M. Ludwig Götze
1519–1520	Georg Rhau
1520–1525	Johannes Gallicus
1526–1530	Valerian Hüffeler
1531–1536	Johannes Hermann
1536–1539	Wolfgang Jünger
1539–1540	Johannes Bruckner
1540–1549	Ulrich Lange
1549–1551	Wolfgang Figulus
1553–1564	Melchior Heger
1564–1594	Valentin Otto
1594–1615	Sethus Calvisius
1616–1630	Johann Hermann Schein
1631–1657	Tobias Michael
1657–1676	Sebastian Knüpfer
1677–1701	Johann Schelle
1701–1722	Johann Kuhnau
1723–1750	Johann Sebastian Bach
1750–1755	Johann Gottlob Harrer
1756–1789	Johann Friedrich Doles
1789–1800	Johann Adam Hiller
1801–1810	August Eberhard Müller
1810–1823	Johann Gottfried Schicht
1823–1842	Christian Theodor Weinlig
1842–1868	Moritz Hauptmann
1868–1879	Ernst Friedrich Richter
1880–1892	Wilhelm Rust
1893–1918	Gustav Schreck
1918–1939	Karl Straube
1939–1956	Günther Ramin
1957–1960	Kurt Thomas
1961–1972	Erhard Mauersberger
1972–1991	Hans-Joachim Rotzsch
1992–	Georg Christoph Biller

In the Footsteps of Bach: An Interview with

there was already a long and strong musical tradition generations before Bach. When the position of Cantor opened with the death of Johann Kuhnau in 1722, it was the leading cantorate in Protestant Germany.¹³ The city council was eager to appoint Georg Telemann to the position. He had founded a *collegium musicum* at the University in 1701, directed the opera (founded in 1683) and was a prime candidate. He, however, got a better offer in Hamburg and accepted it. Johann Christoph Graupner, a former *Thomaner*, was the second choice, but he was unable to obtain a release from his position in Darmstadt. This left Bach, who, as the third choice, had been unable to drive as hard a bargain regarding his job description as had the other two and initially agreed to teach some Latin. Though technically able to do so, he managed to obtain release from this obligation and was allowed to hire a substitute for that part of the position.¹⁴

The musical responsibilities included providing worship music for the four main churches: St. Thomas, St. Nicholas (*Nikolaikirche*), New Church (*Neukirche*) and St. Peter's (*Peterskirche*); and music for weddings, funerals, academic celebrations, and formal city functions, and for certain annual festive occasions at



J. S. Bach, 1746,
by Elias Gottlob Haussman

St. Paul's (*Paulinerkirche*), the university church. As the old *Peterskirche* was demolished in the late nineteenth century and *Neukirche* (later *Mathiaskirche*) was lost in the war, only the *Thomaskirche* and the *Nikolaikirche* remain today, after the razing of *Paulinerkircher* by the communist regime in 1968.¹⁵

The cantor and his family lived on the premises and Bach's many male children attended the school. This latter fact, along with the presence of a local university of quality, was one of the attractions the position had for him—already reputable educational institutions available for his offspring.

forum thomanum

As Georg Christoph Biller notes at the end of the accompanying interview, the *forum thomanum* is a grand plan to enlarge and enhance the mission of the



*Lutherkirche at
forum thomanum*

Thomasschule and the *Thomanerchor*. The return of the *Thomasschule* to the campus in 2000 led, in 2002, to the planning of the *forum thomanum* project.

In addition to the *Thomasschule*, the *Thomasalumnat*, and the *Lutherkirche* (Luther Church-1886) which have been located in the same vicinity since the late nineteenth century, the campus is being expanded to include several more buildings and services. Beginning with the opening in 2008 of a musically- and linguistically-oriented day-care center, the opening of an elementary school in 2010, and the renovation of a local mansion house now called the *villa thomana*, plans call for the construction of a middle school and an international arts academy along with the renovation of the *Lutherkirche* in time for the 500th anniversary of Luther's Reformation in 2017.

The bilingual day-care center has places for about 100 children, with emphasis on music, languages, and religion. The capacity of the renovated *Alumnat* will be increased to about 120 boys. The

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Georg Christoph Biller



villa thomanum now accommodates a chamber music hall, lounge, classrooms, music library, and office space for the *Thomaskantor* and staff. The *Lutherkirche*, with restored organ, will serve as a place of worship, as well as school auditorium and concert venue.

In total, the self-contained educational campus is expected to offer a general education to more than 1200 children and young people, with special emphasis on music, languages, and at the same time serving the community, the nation, and, ultimately, the world.

Interview

Rothlisberger What is the mission of the St. Thomas Choir?

Biller I say very simply: it's singing in honor of God. This is the St. Thomas Church (*Thomaskirche*). However, the *Thomanerchor* is a city choir; not a part of the St. Thomas church, by law, ever since the Reformation. A lot of institutions [of this sort] were ended after the Reformation, but the people of Leipzig said "we will take over the choir and the school, and it will perform music for the church and for the city."

Rothlisberger How were you selected for the position of *Thomaskantor*?

Biller There was a special process. They wanted to preserve tradition in appointing the *Thomaskantor*. Therefore, after three candidates were chosen, each had an "audition week" with the *Thomanerchor*. After the first round, the first-choice candidate refused. After a second round, I was chosen.

Rothlisberger How did you prepare for this position?

Biller First, I was a *Thomaner* (St.

Thomas Choirboy) for nine years! Then I studied orchestral conducting here in Leipzig. I always knew that I wanted to be a choral conductor. However, after those nine years in the *Thomanerchor*, I wanted further musical experience, and so I studied orchestral conducting here at the Conservatory,¹⁶ where I now teach, as well.

Thereafter, I was the choir director at the *Gewandhaus*¹⁷ from 1980–1991, at the same time serving as lecturer in choral conducting at the Conservatory of Church Music in Halle. Then I was a choral professor at the conservatories of Frankfurt am Main and Detmold. In addition, I founded the *Leipziger VocalEnsemble*. Altogether, these experiences enhanced my preparation to be *Thomaskantor* and instructor at the Conservatory.

Rothlisberger What do you see as your role in the long line of *Thomaskantors*? Traditional or something new?

Biller Tradition is very influential: to preserve and protect the tradition means to give it new life. This is my credo. I bring all my competence to the preservation of tradition, some of which I test whether it has viability for the future. Thus, the revitalization of the tradition is a continuing process: using much new music, new understandings of styles, and new perspectives on the music of Bach, for example; in other words, addressing new views of the past in order to preserve the past. Some traditionalists believe that you must keep it as it was, but that disallows the maintenance of true tradition. To preserve tradition, you must revitalize it.

Rothlisberger What is the most exciting aspect of your work?

Biller That we are constantly challenged, that we sing in the *Thomaskirche*

three times a week. In addition, we sing other places, and on radio and CDs. There's much pressure, but a positive pressure. We can't pull back and relax, and wait to have a performance in three months, it's in three days! It's very difficult, but it's positive. Human beings can be somewhat lazy, but, for us, that's impossible. During holidays, it's possible, but not so during performance season. During the season we are very busy.

Rothlisberger What is the most challenging aspect of your work?

Biller We are dealing with the highest form of art, which in this case is attached to an institution, namely Bach, and the *Thomanerchor* is measured by that standard. As *Thomaskantor*, I am also measured by the standard of Bach; that is the most difficult.

Rothlisberger What is a typical day for you?

Biller A typical day begins at 9:00 a.m.: teaching students; then I have meetings, rehearsals, and maybe performance at night. In between, interviews....(smile).

Rothlisberger How are the boys chosen for the *Thomanerchor*?

Biller There is an aptitude test; that is, they present themselves for the first time. Then there is an entrance examination. They sing a more or less sophisticated song or two, maybe a small aria. They sight sing and have an aural memory test. They must have a basic knowledge in music theory, and they must play an instrument.

A school for the very young has been established because we have determined, after many years, that the quality of music in families and experience with music on the whole, here in Germany and in other countries, as well,

In the Footsteps of Bach: An Interview with

is diminishing.

That is why the boys are brought here much earlier, during Kindergarten, and they attend first grade with us, having lessons everyday, playful, but goal-oriented. They have three years of training before they take the entrance exam. Therefore, the youngest in the school is six or seven and the youngest in the choir is nine or ten.

We take boys from elsewhere, but they must be very good. The focus of the future will be on the Leipzig boys who will begin very early.

Rothlisberger How many boys are in the *Thomanerchor*?

Biller Ninety.

Rothlisberger Do the boys have private lessons?

Biller They study instruments (piano, violin, cello, wind instruments), music theory, and, of course, voice.

Rothlisberger What is a typical day for the boys in the *Thomanerchor*?

Biller We start classes at 7:30. The amount of time in classes increases from grade 5 through grade 12. After lunch, they do homework, and some have classes. At the same time there are voice lessons, song classes, or instrumental lessons. And then from 3:00 to 6:45 come the rehearsals. Every day it varies according to a rehearsal plan which includes sectional rehearsals and full rehearsals, increasingly the latter as the week progresses, preparing for Friday's *Motette*, Saturday's *Cantate*, and Sunday services.

Rothlisberger What do you do with the changing voice?

Biller The changing voice happens early;

thirteen is late these days. Twelve is now common, and it's a problem. We can't start the boys much earlier in the choir, and if the voices change early, they have only one or two years in the choir, which is a very short time.

During the change, they must take a break. They remain here in the school and study, among other things, more advanced music theory. And because they have the time for it, they perform assignments for choir: sell programs, buy treats for the choir. And take an interest in girls! (Another smile.)

Rothlisberger Are there special problems using boy altos?

Biller From time-to-time we use counter-tenors. The young men have to want and be able to do this. Some are able to keep their "head voice" completely after the voice change, but there is the psychological question about whether they want to or not. However, some are willing to sing together with the smaller boys (unchanged), but only some. It makes for a different kind of sound.

Rothlisberger What are your criteria for selecting music for the *Thomanerchor*?

Biller Well, every day there is Bach. Every week there is a Bach cantata; somehow, there's Bach every day. Except yesterday! We were rehearsing a new piece that is taking more work than we thought. I should have rehearsed Bach yesterday, but I didn't. We rehearsed the new piece the entire afternoon. The new piece was written for the *Thomanerchor*. Many composers write for the *Thomanerchor*, but it means that the works are often very difficult. We don't do all of the works, but we do many.

The history of the *Thomanerchor* is so rich that performing the music of *Thomaskantors* would be enough. It begins with Calvisius, Schein, Schelle, Kuhnau,

Knüpfer, Michael—they all wrote great music. Then there are gaps after Bach, except for Gottlob Harrer, Doles, Hiller and perhaps Schicht and August Eberhard Müller.

Rothlisberger How is it possible to perform two large works¹⁸ during an eight-day period?

Biller Daily, daily. Every day they work. Naturally, I have to plan things well enough to succeed. I push the choristers, but without them wanting to do it, it would not happen. Sometimes I am very strict, but they understand that.

Rothlisberger Does the *Thomanerchor* tour?

Biller Yes, within Germany, throughout Europe and even to America. In 1998, we sang with the New York Philharmonic with Masur conducting, which is an exception. Usually, the *Thomaskantor* conducts, as I did in 2000, again with the New York Philharmonic performing Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*.¹⁹

Rothlisberger How is the *Thomanerchor* financed?

Biller The City of Leipzig, using funds from taxes.... It is getting more and more difficult as the city provides less and less funding. We will need more external help in the future, including international!

Rothlisberger Since 2012 marks the 800th anniversary of the *Thomanerchor*, are there plans and projects? How can we in America help?

Biller The *forum thomanum* will be the next important thing. Returning to an earlier question, we need to preserve the tradition by opening it for many. Therefore, lest we work in an exclusive

Georg Christoph Biller



way here, we want to include young people from the world-at-large. We want to demonstrate that concentrating on great themes, such as Bach and other excellent music, as well as religion, we are actively experiencing, and not simply passively conserving, a tradition.

NOTES

¹ David A. Warner, trans., *Ottonian Germany: The Chronicon of Thietmar of Merseburg* (Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 2001), 323.

² Christoph Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach, The Learned Musician* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 238.

³ *Ibid.*, 238.

⁴ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke, Band I* (Hamburg: Deutscher Literaturhaus-Verlag, 2011), 332.

⁵ Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 491.

⁶ Stefan Altner, *Thomanerchor und Thomaskirche: Historisches und Gegenwärtiges in Bildern* (Leipzig: Tauchaer Verlag, 1998), 60.

⁷ Thomas Braatz, trans., *The Leipzig City*

Council's Statutes for St. Thomas School (Leipzig: Immanuel Tietzen, 1723), 2.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁹ *Motette*—a service consisting mostly of unaccompanied sacred choral music.

¹⁰ *Cantate*—a service consisting of concerted sacred choral music often accompanied by the *Gewandhaus* Orchestra.

¹¹ *Gottesdienst*—a liturgical service in the Lutheran tradition including sung liturgies, hymns and anthems, with incidental organ music.

¹² Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 246.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 253.

¹⁴ Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel, *The Bach Reader* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1966), 95.

¹⁵ This demolition proved highly unpopular and so, after the reunification of the two Germanys in 1990, a new university church was completed in 2009, the 600th anniversary of the University.

¹⁶ The Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy Hochschule für Musik und Theater was founded in 1843 by Mendelssohn and is the oldest music conservatory in Germany.

¹⁷ The *Gewandhaus* is the home of the oldest

civic orchestra in Germany (1743), the *Gewandhausorchester*, whose recordings are universally distributed. Older German orchestras have their roots in the courts of the aristocracy.

¹⁸ During a recent Bachfest, the *Thomanerchor* performed Bach's *Mass in B Minor* and Mozart's *Requiem* within eight days of one another.

¹⁹ In late February and early March of 2012, the *Thomanerchor* and the *Gewandhaus* Orchestra of Leipzig presented seven performances of J. S. Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* in South Korea and Japan, followed by two in England.



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See also *Die Thomaner*, a 2012 feature-length film about the *Thomanerchor*.

“Love and Music Are the Last Things to Go”

Robert S. Cohen and Herschel Garfein’s
Alzheimer’s Stories

Bonnie Cutsforth-Huber



Bonnie Cutsforth-Huber currently serves as assistant professor of music at Penn State Altoona. She is also a professional contralto, and maintains an active performing career in recital, operatic, concert, and oratorio circuits. <bbc10@psu.edu>

The term “Alzheimer’s Disease” is one that frequently illicit fear and trepidation—certainly not an obvious topic to initiate an inspirational musical composition. Yet, in 2007, New Jersey composer Robert S. Cohen and New York librettist Herschel Garfein were faced with this very task. Despite the typically grim subject matter, what resulted was an uplifting composition for chorus, orchestra, and baritone and mezzo-soprano soloists that acknowledges the devastating effects of the disease, but also focuses on hope and the strength of the human spirit.¹

The Inception of *Alzheimer’s Stories*²

The catalyst for the work began in 2007 within Lewisburg, Pennsylvania’s Susquehanna Valley Chorale, under the direction of William Payn. An anonymous member of the group presented a financial gift to the Chorale with a specific request—that the money be used to begin a fund that

would ultimately be used to commission a work about Alzheimer’s Disease, which had taken the lives of both of the donor’s parents.³ A member of the Chorale’s board subsequently met Robert S. Cohen at a conference, and immediately forwarded recordings of the composer’s work to William Payn. Payn was not only intrigued by the composer’s experience in both classical and theatre genres, but also declared, “I really like what this man is about. I liked his philosophy.”⁴ Indeed, in a 2009 interview, Cohen describes aspects of his compositional process that reveal him as an excellent choice for tackling such a daunting and sensitive subject.

I’m character or story-driven.... If I’m going to write something, I have to really think about a character or a story or some concept that has almost a physicality to it. And, I’m also aware that, what’s important to me at least as a composer, is connecting with an audience.⁵



“Love and Music are the Last Things to Go”



Premiere of *Alzheimer's Stories*, October 9, 2009.

Left to right: Robert S. Cohen, William Payn, Bonnie Cutsforth-Huber, Ted Keegan, Herschel Garfein.

Once Cohen accepted the commission, he immediately requested Grammy Award winner Herschel Garfein as his librettist. The pair had previously collaborated on Cohen's *Edison Events*, for which Garfein had served as librettist and director.⁶ Garfein and Cohen, along with William Payn and the president of the Susquehanna Valley Chorale, Jean Hormell, decided on an ingenious plan for the libretto—a weblog was set up on the Chorale's Web site to which chorale and community members could submit testimonials about their personal and their loved ones' experiences with Alzheimer's Disease. Garfein read all seventy submissions to the blog, and although it was impossible to use all the material in the libretto, he acknowledged, "Even the ones that I didn't actually use, I learned something from them and they influenced the way I shaped the piece and the way I used

the accounts literally as well."⁷

Both Garfein and Cohen were determined not to solely focus on the devastating aspects of the disease and the resulting pathos. Indeed, Garfein admitted "we felt a little restraint would go a long way."⁸ The pair was thrilled to find humor in several of the weblog submissions, an aspect with which Cohen could personally identify. After experiencing his stepmother's battle with the disease, he admitted, "The way that we keep ourselves from facing the grim reaper is humor"—sometimes, he just had to laugh.⁹

After reading the weblog submissions and considering different points of view, from victims to caregivers and family members, the pair agreed on a multi-faceted libretto that recognized the disconcerting experiences, but also incorporated other facets, such as love, determination, and hope, which were

equally prevalent in the weblog testimonials. From Garfein's perspective, "Taken together, these accounts [from the weblog] form a moving testimonial to all that is best in human beings: qualities of compassion, love, tirelessness, humor; and an inspiring resilience..."¹⁰

Alzheimer's Stories ultimately evolved into a three-movement work. The power of the text, coupled with Cohen's score, had an immediate, visceral effect on William Payn when he saw the completed work for the first time.

I was totally taken when I saw the score for the first time. That's when I was emotionally taken by the piece ... it just really threw me. I was speechless. I called Bob and I said, 'I can't even talk.'¹¹

Each movement of *Alzheimer's Stories* looks at the disease from a different angle. The text unfolds in a very natural

Robert S. Cohen and Herschel Garfein's *Alzheimer's Stories*

way in that it is conversational; it is not bound by typical poetic structures such as rhyme and regular meter. Garfein admits that writing text in an informal way is a significant part of his art:

I find that if there's a theme that runs through all of my work, I'm very, very attracted to the way that people talk and the way that they tell their own stories in a sense.... I'm looking for the sort of inadvertent poetry in what they say. It's not formulated the way a poet would formulate it to be poetic and beautiful, and yet it is.¹²

The movements of *Alzheimer's Stories* follow a progression. Part I, "The Numbers," deals with the facts and the statistics of Alzheimer's disease, from Alois Alzheimer's discovery of the condition in 1901 to the number of future victims it is projected to claim. Cohen and Garfein keep the movement from being too objective by also featuring conversations between Dr. Alzheimer and the first documented victim of the disease, Auguste Deter. Part II, "The Stories," moves from facts to the perspective of patients and family members—the human side of the disease—through excerpts from the weblog testimonials. The focus is on two specific patients: a woman who is convinced she is still a child on a boat to Panama, and the other who believes he is still in the United States Navy in WW II, and has the bawdy stories to prove it. Finally, part three, "For the Caregivers," is dedicated to those who are caring for Alzheimer's patients and inspires and encourages them to hold on to hope. Cohen admits that this movement proved to be the most challenging:

The most difficult part of writing a work about such a terrible and ultimately hopeless disease was how to end the work with some semblance of hope. The clue came in a recollection by one of the chorus members about a visit to a nursing

home when a patient asked them to sing. When asked what, the patient replied: 'Sing anything.'¹³

Ultimately, these words became part of an uplifting, triumphant anthem that brings the work to a thrilling close:

Find those you love in the dark and light.

Help them through the days and nights.

Keep faith. They sense what they cannot show.

Love and music are the last things to go.

Sing anything.

Part I

The Numbers

The movement begins with percussion, brass, and piano; since this movement concentrates on the statistics and facts, rather than emotional reaction, about Alzheimer's Disease, the orchestral material is rhythmically driven with very little dynamic contrast. The relentless rhythm reminds the listener of a ticker tape running at the bottom of a newscast: an unstoppable stream of information where one fact blends into the next. The meter shifts constantly, through syncopation, off-beat accents, and changes in time signature, even when the chorus enters. This absence of a regular pulse enhances the constant bombardment of facts, but perhaps also represents the feeling of confusion and



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“Love and Music are the Last Things to Go”

unsteadiness that consumes Alzheimer’s victims (Figure 1).¹⁴

The entrance of the chorus adds to the aforementioned mood by immediately stating cold, hard facts: “Here are the numbers. 1901. 1906. 1911.”¹⁵ The pitches are confined to a narrow range, and both pitches and melodic contours are repeated. The interval of a perfect fifth is liberally used. Indeed, just as the text “sticks to the facts” and does not elaborate with subjective details, the music is also focused on a few select

elements (Figure 2).

The story soon switches to the human side of the disease with the mezzo soloist assuming the role of Auguste Deter and the baritone soloist that of Dr. Alois Alzheimer. Dr. Alzheimer asks his patient seemingly simple questions, yet Auguste gives the same answer for everything: “Auguste.” The percussiveness and shifting meter give way to a more lyrical and string-dominated approach with the descending perfect fifth ever present in Auguste’s melody (Figure

3a). Her claim on the perfect fifth that was featured in the previous “factual” section is dramatically significant, being the first documented patient of the disease, all of the facts stem from her. As Auguste finally declares “I have lost myself. *Ich hab mich verloren*,” the music suddenly becomes more chromatic. Strings of seventh, eleventh, and thirteenth chords help to paint a picture of aimlessness—Auguste is truly lost. Her declaration is immediately followed by a section that is unaccompanied and



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Robert S. Cohen and Herschel Garfein's *Alzheimer's Stories*

Allegretto giusto ♩ = 108

The piano accompaniment consists of two staves. The right hand plays a series of chords in a 4/4 time signature, with a tempo of 108 beats per minute. The left hand plays a simple bass line with quarter notes. The music is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic.

Figure 1. *Alzheimer's Stories*, "Part I: The Numbers," mm. 1–10.
Music by Robert S. Cohen, Libretto by Herschel Garfein
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The vocal parts (Tenor and Bass) and piano accompaniment are shown for measures 36-41. The vocal lines are in a 4/4 time signature and feature lyrics about numbers. The piano accompaniment is in a 4/4 time signature and features a steady chordal accompaniment. The music is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic.

T
8
p
Here are the num - bers. Nine - teen - oh - one. Nine -

B
p
Here are the num - bers. Nine - teen - oh - one. Nine -

Piano accompaniment

T
8
teen - oh - six. Nine - - - teen e - lev - en.

B
teen - oh - six. Nine - - - teen e - lev - en.

Piano accompaniment

mp

Figure 2. *Alzheimer's Stories*, "Part I: The Numbers," mm. 36–41.
Music by Robert S. Cohen, Libretto by Herschel Garfein
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“Love and Music are the Last Things to Go”

G Very freely (♩ = 60) *rit.* *a tempo*

123

M-S Solo *p* Au - gus - te,

Bar. Solo *p simply* 3 What is your name? *pp simply* 3 What is your

S *p simply* 3 Doc - tor Alz - heim - er's ques - tion:

A *p simply* 3 Doc - tor Alz - heim - er's ques - tion:

T *pp simply* Ques - tion:

B *pp simply* Ques - tion:

G Very freely (♩ = 60) *rit.* *a tempo*

Pno. *pp*

126

M-S Solo *(unsure)* 3 Au - gus - te, I think. Au - gus - te,

Bar. Solo hus - band's name? *3* How long have you been here? How

Pno.

129 *rit.* *mp* 3 *rubato* *rit.* *pp*

M-S Solo I have lost my - self. Ich hab mich ver - lor - - - - en

Bar. Solo long have you been here? *rit.* *rubato* *rit.* *p* *pp*

Pno. *rit.* *rubato* *rit.* *p* *pp*

Figure 3a. *Alzheimer's Stories*, “Part I: The Numbers,” mm. 123–131.
Music by Robert S. Cohen, Libretto by Herschel Garfein
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Robert S. Cohen and Herschel Garfein's *Alzheimer's Stories*

hymn-like, as if the chorus is mourning the death of Auguste's memory. Thereafter, the tenors inherit Auguste's *ich hab mich verloren* declaration in a soaring, heartfelt melody that is then passed to

the sopranos (Figure 3b).

As the Alzheimer/Deter conversation continues, the latter's confusion once again becomes apparent. The undulating orchestra, with its pedal and 3/2

meter, become almost mesmerizing, nothing juts out of the texture, and no clear memory emerges in Auguste's mind. The choir then begins another incessant barrage of facts underneath

The image displays a musical score for a choral piece. It consists of two systems of music. The first system covers measures 156 to 159, and the second system covers measures 160 to 163. Each system includes four vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment (Pno.). The vocal parts are written in German, with the lyrics: "Ich hab mich verloren Ich hab mich verloren". The piano accompaniment features a steady, undulating melody in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand. The score is marked with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a time signature of 3/2. The dynamics are marked as *mp* (mezzo-piano). The first system begins with a rehearsal mark 'K' at measure 156. The second system begins at measure 160. The lyrics are: "Ich hab mich verloren Ich hab mich verloren" for measures 156-159, and "Ich hab mich verloren verloren en At" for measures 160-163.

Figure 3b. *Alzheimer's Stories*, "Part I: The Numbers," mm. 156–163.

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“Love and Music are the Last Things to Go”

the conversation. The singers' texture climbs incessantly higher; the staccatos and off-beat accents return, and the texture becomes thicker due to the fact that the three main melodic motives of the movement are presented in counterpoint. All these elements help to illustrate Auguste's growing frustration and confusion. They seem to consume her vocal line, which has up to this point been clear and unclouded by competing lines of melody and text.

As the movement comes to a close,

the choir joins in Auguste's "ich hab mich verloren," and the vocal line in each part seems to be on "auto pilot" as it repeats the same text and melody over and over again (Figure 4). The same phenomenon can be seen in the instrumental accompaniment, which becomes increasingly fragmented and atonal. Once again, the sea of confusion in Auguste's mind is represented by the music. The movement suddenly cuts off without a resolution, as with an interrupted thought.

Part II

The Stories

As previously discussed, this movement is based upon the weblog testimonials. The soloists assume the roles of different patients, while the chorus tells the story from the family members' perspective. Once again, the bewilderment that accompanies Alzheimer's Disease is illustrated musically in the opening of the movement. Shifting meters are once again used, and the texture

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Robert S. Cohen and Herschel Garfein's *Alzheimer's Stories*

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Part I: The Numbers" from the opera *Alzheimer's Stories*. The score is written for a vocal soloist (M-S Solo), a baritone soloist (Bar. Solo), four vocalists (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass), and piano (Pno.).

Measures 210-216:

- M-S Solo:** "Ich hab mich ver - lor - en Au - gus - te, I think." Dynamics: *mf*, *f*.
- Bar. Solo:** "How long have you been here?" Dynamics: *f*.
- Soprano (S):** "en - Ich hab mich ver - lor - en" Dynamics: *mf*, *f*, *ff ppp sub.*, *pp*.
- Alto (A):** "lor - en Ich hab mich ver - lor - en" Dynamics: *mf*, *f*, *ff ppp sub.*.
- Tenor (T):** "en ver - lor - en ver -" Dynamics: *mf*, *f*, *ff ppp sub.*.
- Bass (B):** "en ver - lor - en ver -" Dynamics: *mf*, *f*, *ff ppp sub.*.
- Piano (Pno.):** Accompanying piano with dynamics *mf*, *f*, and *ppp sub.*.

Measures 213-216:

- Soprano (S):** "Ich hab mich ver - lor - en en Ich hab mich ver - lor - en" Dynamics: *p*, *pp*, *p*. Marking: *non ritardando*. Ending: G. P.
- Alto (A):** "Ich hab mich ver - lor - en mich ver - lor - en" Dynamics: *pp*, *p*, *pp*, *p*. Ending: G. P.
- Tenor (T):** "lor - en" Dynamics: *pp*, *ppp*, *pp*. Ending: G. P.
- Bass (B):** "lor - en" Dynamics: *pp*, *ppp*, *pp*. Ending: G. P.
- Piano (Pno.):** Accompanying piano with dynamics *pp* and *ppp*. Marking: *non ritardando*. Ending: G. P.

Figure 4. *Alzheimer's Stories*, "Part I: The Numbers," mm. 210–216.

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“Love and Music are the Last Things to Go”

becomes quite thick in places with the use of simultaneous repetitive melodies.

Despite the frequently thick choral texture, however, the statement “This is

my story” is quite emphatic and clear; the texture becomes homophonic and

the meter clearly in 4/4. The statement is heard three times throughout the movement, and has its own melodic motive that is expanded in the latter two appearances (Figure 5).

The main character assumed by the mezzo soloist in this movement is a woman in a nursing home who believes she is still a child on a boat to Panama. The character’s initial entrance is introduced by an undulating figure in the piano and strings. The soloist’s melodic contour, with its constant ebb and flow, is reminiscent of waves on the ocean. The orchestra shares

Figure 5 shows a vocal quartet (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. The vocal parts enter with the lyrics "star - ing. This is my stor - y. This is my stor - y." The piano accompaniment features a melodic line in the right hand and a more rhythmic bass line in the left hand. The music is in 4/4 time and has a key signature of two sharps (D major).

Figure 5. *Alzheimer’s Stories*, “Part II: The Stories,” mm. 22–25.
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Figure 6 shows a mezzo-soprano soloist, soprano, alto, and piano accompaniment. The mezzo-soprano soloist has the lyrics "Are we on the boat... Are we on the boat to... Pa - a - ma." The soprano and alto parts have the lyrics "Mom, you’re in a nurs - ing home..." The piano accompaniment features a prominent undulating melodic line in the right hand. The music is in 4/4 time and has a key signature of two sharps (D major).

Figure 6. *Alzheimer’s Stories*, “Part II: The Stories,” mm. 113–116.
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Robert S. Cohen and Herschel Garfein's *Alzheimer's Stories*

this role. The same rhythmic germ is incessantly repeated, which, on one hand, gives the impression of gentle waves or the rocking of a boat, while on the other hand, it also illustrates how the woman is trapped inside of herself—her mind plays the same story over and over again. Even the attempts of her loved ones, which are assumed by the sopranos and altos, are not enough to

interrupt the woman's reverie and bring her back to the present (Figure 6).

The baritone soloist's primary character; that of a WWII Navy sailor, provides the comic relief of the movement. As the man recalls the wild antics of his navy days, both the orchestra and the vocal lines become more raucous. The brass dominates here in a jaunting 6/8 rhythm that reminds one of a naval

band, while the sweeping soloist line is reminiscent of a boisterous drinking song. Cohen even quotes nautical references in the orchestra with snatches of *Popeye the Sailor Man*, *Sailing, Sailing*, and *Gilligan's Island*. The man's exasperated loved ones, who are represented by the chorus, have clearly heard this story far too many times before (Figure 7).

Following the baritone's showcase,

The image displays a musical score for measures 183-192 of *Alzheimer's Stories*. It features four staves: Baritone Solo (Bar. Solo), Soprano (S), Alto (A), and Tenor (T), and Piano (Pno.).

Measure 183: The Baritone Soloist begins with the lyrics "Have I told you a-bout the Nav - y oh! we". The vocal parts for Soprano and Alto are marked "spoken (with weary resignation)" and sing "Here we go." The Tenor part also sings "Here we go." The piano accompaniment is marked *mp*.

Measure 188: The Baritone Soloist sings "raised some hell!". The Soprano and Alto parts are marked "unis. *mp* listlessly" and sing "Yes, you raised some hell!". The Tenor part also sings "Yes, you raised some". The piano accompaniment is marked *mf* and *mp*.

Figure 7. *Alzheimer's Stories*, "Part II: The Stories," mm. 183–192.
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“Love and Music are the Last Things to Go”

the texture thickens once again. The mezzo soloist is still lost in the past, the baritone soloist mourns the loss of his memory, and the chorus features poignant anecdotes from the weblog testimonials. The orchestra also exhibits a slow harmonic rhythm and a continuous rhythmic motive—similar to the mind of an Alzheimer’s victim, it never progresses anywhere. The movement ends on an almost magical note with the mezzo soloist once again lost in a happy memory. The orchestra sustains an eleventh chord built on E as the mezzo tells her story in a recitative-like

fashion—she is free to follow wherever her mind takes her (Figure 8).

Part III - For the Caregivers

This inspirational movement begins in the unlikely key of d minor; which is reinforced by a constant d-pedal tone in the orchestra. The opening makes clever use of the marimba in a recurring triplet rhythm which, in Cohen’s words, “marks the passing of time.”¹⁶ The chorus’s text is based on more testimonials about loved ones’ final moments; the end of

their battle. The pedal tone reminds one of the steady drone of a heart rate monitor; but is also indicative of one of the key themes of the movement—love never dies. Additionally, it is representative of the chorus’s constant encouragement of “keep faith” and “find those you love in the dark and light.” In spite of the sorrow and darkness, aptly represented by the d-minor and then c-minor tonality, the pedal is the one constant—the light amid the darkness, and the hope that pulls loved ones and caregivers through their difficult journeys.

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Robert S. Cohen and Herschel Garfein's *Alzheimer's Stories*

The image displays a musical score for three systems of music, each featuring a vocal line (M-S Solo) and a piano accompaniment (Pno.).

System 1 (Measures 259-262): The tempo is marked "Very freely" with a quarter note equal to 76 (♩ = 76). The vocal line begins with a rest, followed by the lyrics "Look at this pho - to - graph! Oh, I re - mem - ber". The piano accompaniment is marked *pp* and features sustained chords with a tremolo effect.

System 2 (Measures 263-266): The tempo remains "Very freely" (♩ = 76). The vocal line has the lyrics "this! I'm in an ev' - ning gown, de - scend - ing a gleam - ing". The piano accompaniment is marked *pp* and includes a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand. A *rit. poco a poco* marking is present above the system.

System 3 (Measures 267-270): The vocal line has the lyrics "cir - cu - lar stair. cir - cu - lar stair...". The piano accompaniment is marked *p* and *pp* *morendo*. A *rit. poco a poco* marking is present above the system.

Figure 8. *Alzheimer's Stories*, "Part II: The Stories," mm. 259–270.

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“Love and Music are the Last Things to Go”

movement actually begins from a testimonial featured in part two, first featured in the alto line (Figure 9a). The text “sing anything” re-appears throughout part three, along with key melodic and rhythmic properties found in the original musical material that accompanies it. This music and text become the end of one of the major motives in part three (Figure 9b). Here, in the soprano line, one can find the same pitches that were

used in the original “sing anything” statement, except the F# becomes F^{natural}, and the melodic motive descends rather than ascends (Figure 9b).

As alluded to above, the music that accompanies the initial statement of each line of Garfein’s original text (discussed previously in this article) returns throughout the movement in re-statements, transposition and in fragmentation. The repetition of pitches,

rhythms, and intervals, therefore, along with the static accompaniment of the orchestra, can be said to represent the endurance of faith, love, and hope.

Just as Cohen uses different musical representations of persistence, so, too, does his use of key serve a symbolic purpose. As previously discussed, part three begins in d minor, and then moves to c minor; it is dominated by repeated material, from melodies to pedal tones.

As the movement progresses, however, Garfein’s original text is fragmented, and the music eases into F major, as if darkness is slowly giving way to light. Finally, on the word “sing,” the movement bursts into the key of D major on a triumphant tonic chord (Figure 10). Garfein’s original text is presented one last time, but instead of encouragement, the D-major key gives it an air of joyousness. The work is then brought to a close with an exultant A-major chord, once again on the word “sing.” Music, therefore, literally has the last word—it is indeed “the last thing to go” (Figures 11a and b).

Cohen and Garfein’s *Alzheimer’s Stories* is a moving testament to the victims of Alzheimer’s disease, as well as to their families and caregivers. Although it justly addresses the dark and devastating side of the disease, it also successfully and movingly acknowledges other facets—from humor

Figure 9a. *Alzheimer’s Stories*, “Part II: The Stories,” mm. 231–232.

Music by Robert S. Cohen, Libretto by Herschel Garfein
Original “Sing Anything” statement

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Figure 9b. *Alzheimer’s Stories*, “Part III: The Caregivers,” mm. 20–23.

Music by Robert S. Cohen, Libretto by Herschel Garfein
“Love and Music” motive

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Robert S. Cohen and Herschel Garfein's *Alzheimer's Stories*

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Part III: The Caregivers" from the opera *Alzheimer's Stories*. The score is written for a vocal ensemble (M-S Solo, Bar. Solo, S, A, T, B) and piano (Pno.).

Measures 113-114: The vocalists sing the lyrics "Love and music Love and music Love and music". The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and block chords in the left hand.

Measures 115-116: The tempo changes to *a tempo* and the dynamics to *ff* (fortissimo). The vocalists sing "Love and music Love and music sing!". The piano accompaniment becomes more rhythmic, featuring sixteenth-note patterns in the right hand and block chords in the left hand.

The score includes various performance instructions such as *allarg.* (allargando) and *ff* (fortissimo). The lyrics for the vocal parts are:

M-S Solo: Love and music Love and music Love and music
Bar. Solo: Love and music Love and music Love and music
S: sing... and sing and
A: Sing an - y - thing. Sing an - y - thing. and sing... and sing...
T: Love and music Keep faith. Keep faith. Keep
B: Love and music Love and music Love and music

Figure 10. *Alzheimer's Stories*, "Part III: The Caregivers," mm. 113–116.

Music by Robert S. Cohen, Libretto by Herschel Garfein

Movement from F major to D major

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“Love and Music are the Last Things to Go”

134

M-S Solo

Bar. Solo

S A

T B

Pno.

Keep faith. Sing

136

M-S Solo

Bar. Solo

S A

T B

Pno.

Sing Sing Sing

Figure 11a. *Alzheimer's Stories*, “Part III: The Caregivers,” mm. 134–137.

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Robert S. Cohen and Herschel Garfein's *Alzheimer's Stories*

The image shows a musical score for measures 138-139 of "Part III: The Caregivers" from the opera *Alzheimer's Stories*. The score is arranged for a full orchestra and a vocal ensemble. The instruments and voices are listed on the left: M-S Solo (Male Soprano), Bar. Solo (Baritone), S A (Soprano Alto), T B (Tenor Bass), and Pno. (Piano). The music is in 4/4 time and the key signature has one sharp (F#). The score features a piano introduction with a repeating eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The vocal parts enter with a melodic line, marked with a forte (*fff*) dynamic and a *mf* marking. The piano part includes sixteenth-note chords and a bass line with a '6' marking, indicating a sixth finger. The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat signs.

Figure 11b. *Alzheimer's Stories*, "Part III: The Caregivers," mm. 138–139.
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to hope and endurance. This wide array of emotions is sensitively and successfully portrayed in both the music and the text, a union that serves as a beacon of light and hope to both performers and audiences.

NOTES

- ¹ To date, *Alzheimer's Stories* has been performed eight times: Susquehanna Valley Chorale, Lewisburg, PA, October 9, 2009; San Antonio MasterSingers, San Antonio, TX, November 19 and 20, 2010; Wayne State College, Wayne, NE, February 27, 2012; Angeles Chorale, Pasadena, CA, June 9, 2012; Bach Choir of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA, October 13 and 14, 2012; Chamber Choir of Grand Rapids, Grand Rapids, IA, October 28, 2012; Minnesota Chorale, Minneapolis, MN November 11, 2012; Choral Arts Society of Cleveland, Cleveland, OH, November 18, 2012. The work will receive its European premiere in Fall 2013 by the Bel Canto Schola Cantorum, Vienna, Austria.
- ² *Alzheimer's Stories* was premiered October 9, 2009, by the Susquehanna Valley Chorale and Chamber Orchestra at the Weis Center for Performing Arts,

Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA under the direction of William Payn. Mezzo-soprano Bonnie Cutsforth-Huber and baritone Ted Keegan served as the soloists. The work was the feature of the evening's concert titled "A Monument to Memory," which also celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Susquehanna Valley Chorale.

- ³ Robert S. Cohen, "The Story," <www.robertscohen.com/alzheimers.htm>, 1. Accessed 7/17/2012.
- ⁴ Fiona Powell, interview of Dr. William Payn for WVIA, 2009.
- ⁵ Fiona Powell, interview of Robert S. Cohen for WVIA, 2009.
- ⁶ *Edison Events* was the result of a commission from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation. It is a musical theatre work for baritone and orchestra, and was premiered by Ron Bohmer and the Westfield Symphony in the spring of 2005.
- ⁷ Fiona Powell, interview of Herschel Garfein for WVIA, 2009.
- ⁸ Powell, Garfein interview, 2009.
- ⁹ Powell, Cohen interview, 2009.
- ¹⁰ Herschel Garfein, program notes from A Monument to Memory concert program October 9, 2009, 14.
- ¹¹ Powell, Payn interview, 2009.

¹² Powell, Garfein interview, 2009.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ The author wishes to thank Robert S. Cohen for preparing the music examples used in this article. All music examples are taken from the piano/vocal reduction of the score. Copyright © 2010 by Henmar Press Inc. All rights reserved. Used by kind permission. The score is available for purchase through C.F. Peters. A recording of the work can be heard on the composer's website www.robertscohen.com.

¹⁵ As the movement progresses, the significance of these dates is revealed: 1901: Alois Alzheimer discovers the disease. 1906: Auguste Deter, the first documented patient, dies from the disease. 1911: The disease is officially named.

¹⁶ Bonnie Cutsforth-Huber, phone interview of Robert S. Cohen, September 28, 2012.



Notice of Vote on the ACDA Constitution and Bylaws

A membership vote is required for pending wording changes to the ACDA constitution and bylaws. These changes have been approved by the ACDA Board of Directors, and will be posted for review on the ACDA Web site <www.acda.org> in September, along with online voting procedures.



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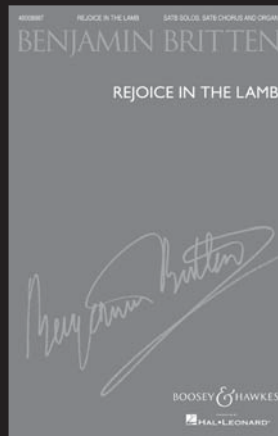
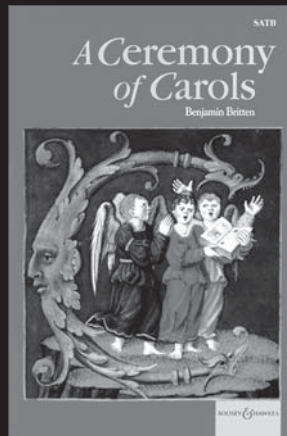
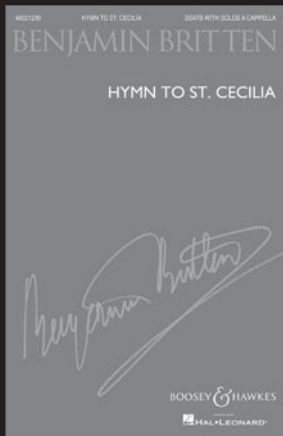
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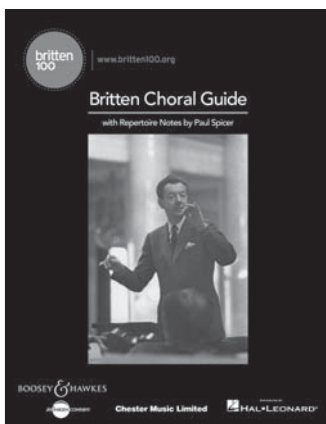
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Treble Repertoire from Latin America and the Caribbean

by
Cristian Grases

Selecting literature for choral ensembles remains one of the most difficult aspects of the conducting profession. It is essential for the functioning and development of the group. In his book, *The Choral Rehearsal*, James Jordan explores the subject and states that "[t]he decisions we make concerning the music we choose to teach, rehearse, and live with are some of the most important decisions we make for the vocal health, musical growth, and human growth of

Cristian Grases obtained his MM in choral conducting under Alberto Grau and María Guinand in Caracas, Venezuela; and his DMA in choral conducting at the University of Miami. He is a Board Member for IFCM and the chair of the Ethnic and Multicultural Perspectives Committee for ACDA's Western Division. He is currently an assistant professor at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles.

our ensembles." This process is never simple. The criteria by which conductors select repertoire: vocal abilities of the ensemble, musical difficulties present in the score, educational purposes that will allow the musical abilities of the group to develop, length of the work, thematic ideas in the program (including, perhaps, the presence of many different periods and styles, or a theme reflected in the texts of all works), the overall flow of the program using contrasts (slow vs. up-tempo, sad vs. happy, unaccompanied vs. accompanied, etc.), length of the set, acoustical considerations of the venue, personal taste, and even the make-up of the audience. However, all of these criteria are subject to one common reality: the conductor needs to have a large group of works from which to appropriately select. The more works with which we become acquainted, the larger our personal choral library becomes, and thus our selections are made from a richer and wider source. In other words, every conductor should eagerly search for opportunities to get to know more repertoire because it allows the conductor to choose from a larger collection.

The purpose of this repertoire is to offer our readers the possibility of becoming acquainted with an assortment of published works; in this case, specifically originating from Latin America and the Caribbean, and written for treble ensembles. Argentina is one of the countries that has produced more choral music for treble choirs in Latin America. The most important catalog is

held by Ediciones GCC <www.gcc.org.ar>. They have fifty-five arrangements of folk songs from all over Latin America, specifically written for treble voices by some of the most impressive composers of the nation. Additionally, their catalog of original compositions for such ensembles is very rich and offers music of various levels. Some of my favorite works have been written by Antonio Russo (*Canción de las Siete Doncellas*, *Venite Exultemus Domino*, *Canto al Sol*, and *Cuatro Canciones para Niños*). Russo has the ability of writing music of many different levels of difficulty. Marcelo Valva's *Pedronianas* and Dante Andreó's *Cuatro Alondras* are beautiful four-song suites that are not too challenging and capture the regional flavor.

Recently, GCC has published award-winning original works by María Paula Gómez, Oscar Llobet, and Federico Neimark. In the United States, Neil A. Kjos Music Company <www.kjos.com> has published some titles for treble voices in their Latin American Series edited by Oscar Escalada. *Libertango* and *Guachi Torito* are two of Escalada's most popular arrangements.

Another important nation with a significant output of choral music is Venezuela. Here, composer Alberto Grau has dedicated immense efforts to create a new and extensive catalog of works for treble choirs of diverse levels of difficulties. His works are published by GGM Ediciones <http://alberto.fundacionscholacantorum.org.ve/Obras> and distributed by Earthsongs



Repertoire & Standards

<www.earthsongschoralmusic.com>. Among his numerous arrangements and compositions for treble voices, I would recommend *Cruje-Silba; Como Compongo Poco, Yo Toy Loco; Rumex Crispus; Kasar Mie La Gaji* (ssa version); *A un Panal de Rica Miel; La Flor de la Miel; La Balada del Retorno* with orchestral accompaniment, and his complex and energetic *Como Tú*. He also has published three important suites: *Opereta Ecológica en Cuatro Actos, Los Duendes, and El San Pedro*. Additionally, his compositions based on texts by Jesús Rosas Marcano are particularly

appropriate for children's choirs.

Finally, the French publishing house Editions A Coeur Joie <<http://edacj.musicanet.org>> published *Pata Pa 'ca*, which was a collaboration between Alberto Grau and Cristian Grases. Grases has published some popular arrangements through Earthsongs (*María Pancha and Los Dos Gavilanes*), Walton Publications <www.waltonmusic.com/index.php> (*La Paloma*), and Pavane Publishing <www.pavanepublishing.com> (*Canto de Pilón*); and has recently created a Latin American Series with Gentry Publica-

tions <<http://gentrypublications.com>> in which his fun *Tottoyo* is included.

Other important Venezuelan works are included in María Guinand's Latin American series with Earthsongs. Some of the most important are *Mata del Anima Sola* by Antonio Estévez, *Duerme Negrito* by Emilio Solé, and *El Romantón* by Francisco Muro and arranged by Miguel Astor.

Finally, it is important to mention this opportunity to mention the large and important catalog of arrangements and compositions for children's chorus by Modesta Bor, which unfortunately has not been published as of this writing.

Brazil is a nation of many treble choirs and a long choral tradition. Heitor Villa-Lobos' *As Costureiras*, one of the classic Brazilian works for treble voices, is published by G. Schirmer <www.schirmer.com>. Ernani Aguiar's *Sine Nomine et Sine Sensu* and *Salmo 150* are great selections for more advanced ensembles and are published by Earthsongs, which also has Carlos Alberto Pinto Fonseca's lovely arrangement of *Muie Rendera*. Also, Santa Barbara Music Publishing <www.sbmp.com> has J. Edmund Hughes's arrangement of *Eu e Voce*. I would like to mention composer Eduardo Lakschevitz who works in Rio de Janeiro and has numerous arrangements. One of his most popular (and unfortunately yet unpublished) tunes is *Sambalele*. In the Pacific coast, Colombia's Julián Gómez Giraldo has published some of his works through Hal Leonard <www.halleonard.com>. *Maquerule, Maximina, Juego a Que Me Quemo, and A Belén Pastores* are all very fun and filled with the dance-like spirit of the Caribbean.

Speaking of the Caribbean, Larry Farrow's *Jamaican Market Place* (Gentry Publications) remains a classic and beloved West Indies song. Boosey & Hawkes (www.boosey.com) published

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Chanflín and the catchy *El Pambiche Lento* by Tony Guzmán from the Dominican Republic, and also some of the works by Francisco Nuñez—originally from Puerto Rico—such as *Misa Pequeña Para Niños*, *Cantan*, and *Four Spanish Lullabies*.

Haiti's young composer Sidney Guillaume has been very active in past years, and he has seven works for treble choirs of which *Koudjay*, *Plakatap*, and *La Providence* stand out. Finally, Cuba has a very active choral movement and has

a very important choral output written by some of the finest composers in Latin America. Unfortunately, access to such works is very limited. The only publications I know of are Eleco Silva's *Cinq Chansons Folkloriques D'Guadeloupe* edited by Kjos, and Carlos Abril's arrangements of *El Mambi* and *Ogguer* published by World Music Press <www.worldmusicpress.com>.

With time, the choral community will have more access to quality repertoire from Latin America and the Caribbean.

In the mean time, I hope this list provides the reader with new resources and titles that can enrich their programming in years to come.



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Rehearsal Breaks

Leipzig, Germany; F. Melius Christiansen; and the St. Olaf Choir

by

Rod Rothlisberger

Leipzig is still the most important city, and I would advise every young talent to go where so much good music is heard.

—Robert Schumann

Two anniversaries significant to the world of choral music occurred in 2012: In Germany, the Leipzig *Thomanerchor* (St. Thomas Choir) observed its 800th anniversary; and in the United States, the St. Olaf Choir celebrated its 100th year.

The significance of the *Thomanerchor* lies partly in the fact that the director from 1723 to 1750 was Johann Sebastian Bach himself and that a very old tradition of excellence in choral singing has been maintained consistently down through the centuries. The connection between the two institutions lies in the fact that the former apparently had profound influences on the latter in

the person of F. Melius Christiansen (1871–1955), the founder of the St. Olaf Choir.

Prior to 1912,¹ Christiansen twice spent time in Leipzig, first studying piano, violin, and composition for two years (1897–1899) at the Conservatory of Music, now the Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy *Hochschule für Musik und Theater*. Later (1906–07), while on sabbatical from St. Olaf, he studied composition with Gustav Schreck, then conductor (*Thomaskantor*) of the St. Thomas Choir and professor of composition at the Conservatory.

It is now just a little over one hundred years since F. Melius Christiansen lived and studied in Leipzig. In that time, the city has seen many changes, the most violent of which was the destruction of World War II. Indeed, almost the entire



F. Melius Christiansen,
c. 1926

twentieth century has been traumatic for the people: World War I (1914–1918), economic upheaval during the 1920s, the Nazi regime between 1933 and 1945, and then Soviet influence until 1989. As a result, F. Melius Christiansen would not recognize much of the city. However, despite these hardships and changes, the people of Leipzig have perpetuated a cultural life perhaps as active as it was a century ago, or even more so.

For example, the choir of St. Thomas Church (*Thomaskirche*), with its 800-year tradition (the *schola thomana* was founded along with the collegiate church of St. Thomas on March 20, 1212) maintains a standard of excellence which was already notable long before Bach took the reins in 1723 upon the death of Johann Kuhnau in 1722.

The opera, founded in 1693 and conducted at one point by Georg Telemann, is the third oldest opera company in Europe (after Venice and Hamburg) and maintains a season of thirty productions in the only new opera house built in East Germany during the communist regime. The *Hochschule für Musik und Theater* (the conservatory) is the oldest in Germany, having been established by Felix Mendelssohn in 1843.

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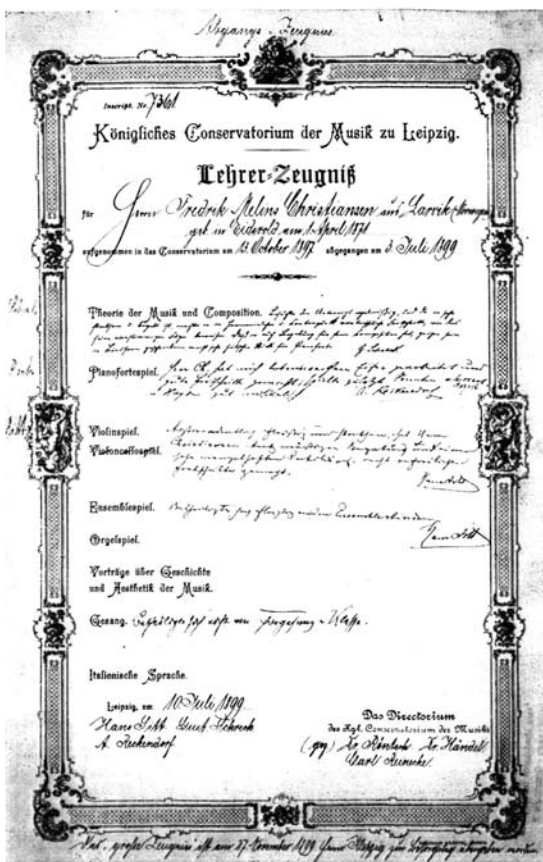


Rehearsal Breaks

The *Gewandhaus Orchestra*² is the oldest civic orchestra in Germany (1743), older German orchestras having their roots in the courts of the aristocracy. Its conductors (*Kapellmeisters*) over the centuries have included, among others, Mendelssohn, Arthur Nikisch, Wilhelm Furtwängler, Bruno Walter, and Kurt Masur. It continues to maintain a reputation as a world-class orchestra as it fulfills three important and unifying roles in Leipzig: as a concert orchestra, in the opera pit, and in the *Thomaskirche* choir loft with the *Thomanerchor*.³

The international reputations of these institutions had reached F. Melius Christiansen well before he arrived for his first stay. In fact, Oscar Hansen, his teacher and mentor in Larvik, Norway,⁴ spent a part of a year at the Conservatory in Leipzig, as had the great Norwegian composer, Edvard Grieg, before that.⁵

Though Christiansen was not particularly interested in choral music during his first stay there and confessed to having missed virtually all of his classes in vocal music,⁶ he certainly would have heard the *Thomanerchor* at *Thomaskirche*, his apartment at 26 *Alexanderstrasse* (destroyed during WW II) being only a 10-minute walk away. During his second visit, the influences of Gustav Schreck in terms of compositional style and in choral ideals were profound. Under Schreck's tutelage, Christiansen arranged about seventy Lutheran chorales in contrapuntal style.⁷ Moreover, the tone quality of the *Thomanerchor* with unchanged boys' voices singing soprano and alto and teenage boys singing tenor and bass must have resonated in Christiansen's ears and mind. In fact, therein lies a controversy:



1889 Conservatory Grade Report for Fredrick Melius Christiansen

did Christiansen seek to imitate the boy soprano sound, thereby being accused of desiring a “straight tone” from his female sopranos?

In any case, this “Leipzig style”⁸ continues to consist of exacting attention to detail: extraordinary precision of pitch and intonation, blended pure vowels, elegant phrasing, and intensity of tone, all qualities that St. Olaf Choirs have been pursuing in varying degrees for over a century.

In addition, there is the centuries-long tradition of performing sacred unaccompanied motets. Although the *Thomanerchor* currently sings Bach's motets, cantatas, Passions, and the *B-Minor Mass* accompanied by the *Gewandhaus Orchestra* at Saturday's *Cantate*, the

bulk of the repertoire at the Friday evening *Motette* and Sunday morning *Gottesdienst* consists of unaccompanied motets. Many of these have their origins in Leipzig (by former *Thomaskantors*, especially), but other German composers are also performed, notably Heinrich Schütz from nearby Dresden and Heinz Zimmermann and Hugo Distler of twentieth-century note. The Latin motet from the Renaissance makes a regular appearance, as well. Much of this repertoire has been performed on St. Olaf Choir programs throughout the twentieth century.

Interestingly, Christiansen not only emulated the tonal ideal, choral style, and repertoire of the *Thomanerchor*, but also he may have borrowed two systemic elements as well: (a) today, at least, the choir rehearses in the late afternoon, has a thirty to forty-five minute sectional rehearsal, and then convenes for a full rehearsal of an hour or more. Some Lutheran college choirs maintain a similar schedule even today. (b) much as there are choristers-in-training at the St. Thomas School (*Thomasschule*), there have been “feeder” choirs at St. Olaf for much of the last century.

Finally, a demanding performance schedule in Leipzig, in Germany and abroad are a part of the *Thomanerchor* experience. Besides the three weekly Friday, Saturday, and Sunday performances, during a recent Spring, the choir performed Bach's *B-Minor Mass* and Mozart's *Requiem* within eight days of each other. The choir also hosts festivals which in the Spring of 2012 included a visit by the choir of King's College, Cambridge, England, a relatively “new” ensemble founded in 1441. Also that spring, the choir toured to South Korea, Japan, and England with the *Gewandhaus*



Thomaskirche, c. 1723

Orchestra for several performances of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*.

At least today, touring is an integral part of the choir's performance life. Likewise, the St. Olaf Choir has been touring nationally and internationally since its inception in 1912. The motivation for such tours has traditionally been: the dissemination of unaccompanied choral literature of the Church; the opportunity to hone artistic skills through repeated performances; publicizing the institution; broadening students' horizons through travel; and a reward for diligent efforts.

So we can understand that the vibrant cultural life in Leipzig, which has endured even until the present, especially the *Thomanerchor* and the Conservatory, most certainly made lasting impressions on F. Melius Chris-

tiansen. He and his successors, in turn, have made a lasting impression on American choral music through touring, choral arrangements and compositions, recordings, broadcasts, and choral students placed in high schools, colleges, and universities nationwide. The Leipzig legacy continues not only in Germany but here in America, as well.

NOTES

¹ While there was choral singing at St. Olaf as early as 1875, more than a quarter century before FMC arrived in 1903, and though he was hired, in part, to conduct the band, he directed the choir at St. John's Lutheran Church, the church of St. Olaf students and faculty. This then evolved into the St. Olaf Lutheran Choir in 1912 in time for a tour of several communities in the Midwest.

² The title *Gewandhaus* has an interesting origin: the venue used by the orchestra from 1781 was a hall built and used by the garment (*Gewand*) trade. The name stuck even when the building burned and was replaced by a new auditorium in 1886. When this building was destroyed in World War II, the third and current *Gewandhaus* replaced it in 1981.

³ In addition to its musical depths, Leipzig has always been a city of learning, letters, and publishing: The University of Leipzig was founded at St. Thomas in 1409 and is the second oldest in Germany after Heidelberg; in 1660 the first daily

newspaper in Europe was established; Germany's most noted authors Friedrich Schiller and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, lived there for a time: Goethe entered the University in 1765 and referred to a local pub, Auerbachs Keller; in his *Faust*; Schiller wrote the first draft of his *Ode to Joy* (of Beethoven fame) there in 1785. Finally, the world's oldest music publishing house, Breitkopf & Härtel, was founded in Leipzig in 1719, followed by C. F. Peters in 1800.

⁴ From whence FMC emigrated to America in 1888.

⁵ Many other major composers had connections with Leipzig: Richard Wagner was born there in 1813 and sang in the *Thomanerchor*; Clara and Robert Schumann were married there (1840) while Robert taught somewhat unsuccessfully at the Conservatory; Max Reger taught there until his death in 1916, as did Sigfrid Karg-Elert in 1933.

⁶ Leola Nelson Bergman, *Music Master of the Middle West*, (New York: Da Capo Press, 1968), 75.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 105.

⁸ Several adult choirs in Leipzig currently adhere to this same tonal ideal.



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Children's Choir

Ann R. Small, Editor <asmall@stetson.edu>

On High Alert: Protecting Our Charges

by
Ann Small

Editor's note: Ironically, this column was written on the same day, but without knowledge of the events of the Boston Marathon.

Children's Choirs: the most trusting of choral ensembles! You know that fact if you have conducted even one. In their eyes, you are the expert! They will do whatever you ask. And you, the children's choir conductor, care that the children sing the most excellent music, enjoy musical experiences, including traveling, commissioning new composers, singing a variety of cultural offerings, and working with the most renowned and gifted artists. You make certain the vowels become unified, the consonants crisp, the phrases rise and fall. Your mantra: music excellence for excellent children (emphasis on excellent children) because of who they are! Most of all, you love these children deeply and care intensely what happens to them. Am I wrong?

Of late, we have been assaulted by the most oppressive thoughts: that these dear children could fall prey to some unimaginable fate. Newtown, Aurora, Toronto, Columbine, Pearl, Jonesboro: all events of violence cutting short those

precious lives that perhaps you did, or would have, loved beyond belief. Someone did! Most children's choir directors I know and love would have thrown themselves over the children in their care without a second thought. Have we come to this? Such unimaginable horror? The tennis world watched Andy Murray win Wimbledon and remembered that, as a child, he survived the tragic events in his elementary school in Dunblane, Scotland.

What would you do if confronted in a moment's notice with a threat such as those that have captured our attention and tormented our thoughts? Do you have a plan for saving the lives of children and young people that you labor over musically every week? Where do you rehearse: in a church, a school, a community center? No armed guards there! Would you manage to shove the piano against the door? Turn off the lights? Lock the doors? (Do you have keys to the rehearsal doors?)

My dear colleagues, I thought long and hard about so oppressive a column for "Children's Choirs" in the *Choral Journal*. I abhor having to address this issue, but I had to realize that the children's safety comes above their music or choral education. Am I wrong? When

the children are in my care, they are my responsibility: if not legally, then morally. I imagine that you would agree, and, I also imagine many of you have thought about these troubling times and your choirs' safety. What would you do to protect them? We really must plan for the care of those in our charge.

May we never, ever, have to deal with these circumstances! But, I felt that as an editor of a column that addresses choral directors of children and young people, especially in communities outside the school, I had to remind us all that we must have a plan.

On a much brighter note: continue to teach Bach and Mendelssohn, Handel and Bernstein, Betty Bertaux, Stephen Hatfield, Emma Lou Deimer, and Benjamin Britten. Keep those young minds, hearts, and voices centered on things far above the realities of a sore and damaged world. Those high and noble thoughts, musical moments, and divine poetry embody reality too!



In Memoriam

Buryl Red *1936 – 2013*



Buryl Red died April 1, 2013, after suffering from cancer. He was 77. Red entered Baylor University in Waco, Texas, as an undergraduate in 1959, where he majored in Sacred Music. After Baylor, he received his MMus. from Yale University in music theory/composition studying under Paul Hindemith.

Red was the founder and conductor of the Baptist men's chorus, The CenturyMen, and composer of several twentieth-century church music favorites. He was best known for his collaborations with Ragan Courtney, including the 1970s pulpit-musical *Celebrate Life!*, which sold a million copies in 25 years, according to Courtney.

His work has been heard in such places as Carnegie Hall, *Saturday Night Live*, and thousands of churches, schools, and theaters (including Broadway and Radio City Music Hall) around the world. His output includes 2,500 published compositions and arrangements, production of 4,000 CDs, author/editor of 50 college/school music textbooks, and the musical supervision, composition, and/or arranging for several hundred shows, documentaries, and music specials for network and cable television. Several of his choral works including *Celebrate Life* (with lyrics by Ragan Courtney), *It's Cool in the Furnace* (with lyrics by Grace Hawthorne) and the first performing edition of Pergolesi's *Magnificat* (with Virginia Red) are considered landmarks. He has been the executive record producer, or consulting producer, for all of the most widely used school music textbooks in the United States including the recent Silver Burdett Ginn "Making Music" series.

Book Reviews

Stephen Town, Editor
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Yoga for Singing: A Developmental Tool for Technique and Performance

Judith E. Carman

New York:

Oxford University Press, 2012.

Paper, xix, 292 pp., \$27.95

ISBN 978-0-19-975941-5

<www.oup.com/us/yogaforsinging>

In our fast-paced world of the twenty-first century, finding a balanced, inner calm is increasingly difficult. Judith Carman's book *Yoga for Singing* explains how the practice of yoga can integrate, mind, body, and soul to benefit the singer and the singer's art. In the preface, Carman shares her own discovery of yoga in her search for answers to life's deeper questions and purpose. These questions are "only answered on the inside, one must find a way to focus inward, to be quiet, to be at rest, and to become acquainted with oneself." An experienced voice and yoga teacher, Carman became aware of the many ways that yoga can benefit singers and she has designed a yoga course specifically for singers. Yoga, she explains "is a complete system of tools called 'practices' that address every facet of the whole person"—body, mind, and heart.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part contains 56 postures (āsanas) that promote strength and flexibility in every part of a singer's body from the spine and torso, to the abdominal and intercostal muscles, arms, shoulders, face, neck, jaw, etc. Carman uses the vinyoga approach to yoga that places much emphasis on the breath. Some practices include humming and spoken vowel sounds. Each āsana con-

tains photographs at various stages of the posture, instructions for moving in and out of the posture, benefits to the singer, common mistakes, risks, and the general difficulty level of the posture. There is also a companion Web site that includes videos and illustrations.

The focus on breath, explains Carman, is also important in the mental practices of yoga. The book contains concentration techniques that train the mind of the singer to be "one-pointed," to ignore distractions and negative thoughts and feelings and be in the present moment. This can also help with performance anxiety. "It takes discipline to control the unruly mind and come back to the breath," explains Carman. The ability to be in the moment is the "hallmark [of] all truly great performers." Relaxation techniques and meditation practices help the singer with "openness of heart" and expression of the soul and spirit for singing and can also lead to "self-knowledge and empowerment," says Carman. Meditation is the practice of "entering into inner stillness and silence."

In part two of the book, there is a numbered chart of postures for quick reference, practices for various areas of the body, a guide to a complete daily practice, practices for specific vocal problems and specific situations, and a section on weight control. In the appendix, Carman includes an outline of lesson plans for two semesters of yoga classes for voice students in a university setting or a series of yoga classes in a non-university setting.

Yoga for Singing provides a systematic approach to yoga that can assist singers in their development. Judith Carman's

book shows the connections between yoga and singing and how the practices and teachings of yoga can help singers on every level.

Pamela Shannon,
Maryville, Missouri

A Guide to Ospedali Research

(Annotated Reference Tools
in Music, No. 7)

Jane L. Baldauf Berdes, PhD, and

Joan Whittimore, CSJ, DMA

Hillsdale, New York: Pendragon Press,

2012. Vols. I, II. 831 pp. \$86.

ISBN: 978-1-57647-174-6

(Hard cover)

Introduction: Ospedali Research

This two-volume research guide, unprecedented in its scope and detail, genuinely provides "keys to the city." The city is Venice. The subject is ospedali research related to the four Venetian *ospedali grandi* for girls (*Derelitti, Incurabili, Mendicanti and Pietà*) and the repertoire composed and performed therein between approximately 1525 and 1855. This extraordinary guide offers access to primary sources from Venice's *ospedali grandi* that served variously as orphanages, charities, schools, and conservatories, and that throughout their years of operation, yielded vast amounts of music primarily for treble solo voices and treble choir, along with some for mixed voices. The authors do not regard this major publication as a *fait accompli*. Rather, the purpose of *A Guide to Ospedali Research* is to facilitate ongo-

Book Reviews

ing research by other scholars.

Both Volumes I and II are contained within a single book with one CD, and are the appendices and tables that originally were to accompany *Women Musicians of Venice: Musical Foundations, 1525–1855* (Oxford University Press, 1993), by Jane Berdes (d. 1993). Berdes doubtless would have completed this vast study herself had she not died of cancer when she was quite young. Fortunately, Whittemore has accomplished what Berdes was unable to finish.

Volume I consists of nine appendices (pp iv–511), and Volume II (on the accompanying CD) contains 33 tables (pp 512–831). In addition to consulting the singularly important Berdes *Women Musicians of Venice* and the Berdes-Whittemore *A Guide to Ospedali Research*, those who study the *ospedali grandi* will want to refer to other research by Joan Whittemore, i.e., *Music of the Venetian Ospedali Composers: A Thematic Catalogue*, (Thematic Catalogue No. 21, Pendragon Press, 1995); and “The

Revision Repertoire of the *Ospedali Veneziani*,” *Choral Journal*, March, 1994.

Since *A Guide to Ospedali Research*, I and II, is the companion volume to Berdes’ splendid book, *Women Musicians of Venice*, having all three allows one to understand, “identify, locate, and cross-reference music manuscript collections, external and internal musicians, their functions, and tenures, liturgical calendar and ceremonies, iconography...” (p. vii).

To complete *A Guide to Ospedali Research*, Whittemore, who has studied music of the *ospedali grandi* for decades, organized, formatted and expanded on prodigious research by Jane Berdes. That Berdes was able to amass so much detailed information in her available years is a vivid testimonial to her own zealous commitment as a scholar and her dedication to the subject, made possible by her exhaustive research in Venice, and her unflagging labors and focus on her topic. The work accomplished by Berdes and Whittemore encompasses a distinctive and vast project. In fact, Venetian *ospedali* produced so much repertoire and so many related documents that the authors say on several occasions that only a part of the available documentation has been consulted in the preparation of this study.

Volume I: Appendices

Like most musicologists today, Berdes’ priority was to understand the historical and social context of the music of the *ospedali*. Like Berdes, Whittemore also believes in understanding the complex elements, both macro- and micro, in order to integrate them and understand the entire picture of *ospedali* research. As a result of this expansive goal, the study of the institutions that housed and educated hundreds of young women music students is far-reaching and complex. The appendices and tables of

A Guide to Ospedali Research surround our understanding of the music with an ocean of information that defines the music, its place in history, the milieu that supported it, and its current location.

In organizing, adding to and presenting Berdes’ work, Whittemore has made Berdes’ insights and guidance available to today’s conductors and scholars. Specifically, *A Guide to Ospedali Research* opens doors to study of many facets of *ospedali*: the repertoire itself, i.e., 2,346 sacred, secular and instrumental compositions sung and played by the *figlie del coro* (“daughters of the chorus”); the performers, i.e., names and known dates of 845 *figlie del coro*; a useful brief history and chronology of the four *ospedali*; commentaries by various visitors who heard *ospedali* concerts; liturgical calendars and appropriate music to be sung for each obligation; bio-bibliography of composers and teachers of the *cori*, and bio-bibliography of the *figlie del coro*. And that is just Volume I, the Appendices.

Volume II: Tables

Volume II, 33 Tables on the accompanying CD, yields greater detail on many related topics, such as *ospedali* administrative systems and personnel; history of Venice itself; procedures for governing and educating girls and young women students (*figlie*) entrusted to them; an index of artists, composers, musicians and instrument makers associated with the *ospedali*; instruments played at *ospedali grandi*; teaching materials; plainchant manuscripts; an extensive review of the iconography of the *ospedali*; position of the *ospedali* in Venetian society; Venetian governmental structure; officials who ruled Venice during years the *ospedali* were active; names of administrators at *ospedali*; names of Venetian patrician families who supported the *ospedali*; other

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churches, monasteries and convents of Venice; related religious congregations in *ospedali grandi*; temporal and sanctoral cycles of liturgies; principal dates in the church year observed at *ospedali grandi*; a salary scale of those employed at the *ospedali grandi*; chronological chart of internal (female) teachers and conductors, or *Maestre*, at the *ospedali*; names of external (male) teachers and conductors, or *Maestri*, at the *ospedali* (a bio-bibliography); "*Ospedali Research Ideas*;" and glossary.

The Repertoire (Appendix 5)
The *Figlie* (Appendix 9)

Each of the appendices in Volume I and tables in Volume II serves a different purpose, and each sheds light on the nature of the *ospedali* and the life of the girls and women within. The two largest and most important Volume I appendices are 5 (p. 162) and 9 (p. 432). Appendix 5, identifies, describes and locates 2,346 manuscripts of compositions composed and performed at the *ospedali grandi*. This appendix is entitled "Provisional Inventory of Liturgical and Non-Liturgical Sacred, Secular, and Instrumental Music Composed and Performed at the Ospedali Grandi 1598–1855." Appendix 5 lists, for each of the 2,346 works, text and/or liturgical function (e.g., Mass, Mass sections, *Missa brevis*, Requiem, Propers of the Mass, Office of the Hours, etc.); composer and approximate date of composition; at which *ospedale* the work was performed; voicing and instrumentation where available; and archival location(s) of the primary source. For example, the entry for item 71 of the 2,346 compositions, a setting of *In convertendo* by Nicola Porpora, reads, "D" (for Derelitti, where Porpora was employed), "MdC" (Maestro di Coro), "1744–1747" (the years Porpora was employed), "GB-Lb Add. 14126, ff. 124–45," (the location of

the manuscript in Great Britain, London, British Library), "B" major; autograph score: *In convertendo*, [SSAA/ssaa, vn I, II, va, b, o]."

Appendix 9, an alphabetical list of 845 known *figlie del coro* at the four *ospedali grandi* (probably not a complete list of all who ever studied at *Derelitti*, *Incurabili*, *Mendicanti*, and *Pieta*), provides a personal glimpse into the makeup of the *ospedali* clientele. Appendix 9 also identifies the roles of most of the listed *figlie*, such as "Singer," "Violinist," "Cembalist," "Cellist," "*figlia del coro*," "*Maestra*," "Theorbist," "Prioress," "Copyist," or "Zia" (Aunt).

Revision Repertoire

Whittemore added to Volume II a section entitled "Revision Repertoire" (Table 15), one of her areas of specialization. *Maestri di coro* were paid for compositions written for the *ospedale*, which then became the property of the *ospedale*. As a result, if a composer wished to use elsewhere a composition that legally belonged to an *ospedale*, he had to revise the work by giving it different voicing or, perhaps, by replacing entire sections. SATB music might be rewritten for SSAA, or SSAB, or TTBB. When questioned by Governors of *Derelitti* about recycling a composition, Porpora vehemently denied the charge. Clearly, *ospedale* Governors were aware of the practice of revising, which also existed in the world of opera. Galuppi, simultaneously *Maestro di cappella* at basilica of San Marco and *Maestro di coro* at *Mendicanti*, presumably could have made voicing adjustments to his choral works or replaced a movement or two to make a composition usable for both situations. For example, Galuppi's *Dixit Dominus* (SSAA) written for *Mendicanti* in 1775 was revised for basilica of San Marco (SATB) in 1781. Whittemore also cites a *Hasse Miserere* in C Minor

originally written for treble voices at the *Incurabili* later revised with SATB voicing. Another work, Vivaldi's *Magnificat*, today exists in four different versions.

Voice Ranges

The issue of voice ranges invariably arises when discussing *ospedale* repertoire, and is related to "Revision Repertoire." The Vivaldi SATB *Gloria* is a case in point. Could this SATB work have been sung by girls and women? Perhaps. The bass line does not go very low and might have been sung by just one or two women able to sing a low D. However, that bass line and, on occasion, the tenor line would have been doubled by viola, cello, keyboard, and perhaps other continuo instruments as well. Doubtless such instrumental doubling would have solved balance issues between the voices. But composers tried other solutions both to accommodate voice ranges and to adapt an SATB work for an SSAA choir, such as employing octave transposition. Whittemore discusses these revision procedures in her March, 1994, *Choral Journal* article, in which she writes of names of specific singers written above various voice parts.

Iconography

Many pages in Volume II are dedicated to indices of iconography and to iconography itself. Here, one sees images associated with the *ospedali*, such as historic paintings of the four *ospedali* and modern photographs as they appear today; extant instruments played by the *figlie* (including precise measurements of each string instrument and each instrument's provenance); composer portraits; index of illuminations; identifications of 138 paintings; depictions of performance venues; floor plans of the *ospedali*; maps; and locations in some floor plans of wall paintings by, for example, the artist



Book Reviews

Giovanni Battista Tiepolo. Paintings of *figlie* in performance are particularly helpful. Usually, portrayals of performing *figlie del coro* show them positioned at a remove from the audience, in a balcony, for example. Not all *figlie* performances took place at *ospedali*; reproductions of palatial venues, including large, gracious rooms with balconies, demonstrate the elegance and grandeur of some sites in Venice where *figlie* performed.

Famous Figlie of the Ospedali

A very few *figlie del coro* rose to great prominence as performers, composers, or both. The most famous *figlia del coro* singer to achieve great success was the acclaimed Faustina Bordoni, who had a distinguished operatic career and married composer Johann Adolf Hasse. Indeed, Bordoni's remarkable success earned its own verb: to wildly succeed was to "*faustinare*."

In addition to her *ospedale* research, Berdes singled out one *ospedale*

performer-composer for special examination: Maddalena Laura Lombardini (Sirmen), 1745–1818. Volume II ends with a list of publications by Sirmen, who entered *Ospedale Mendicanti* as a seven-year old, later studied violin with Tartini, toured major capitals of Europe as violinist, singer and harpsichordist, and composed and published violin concerti and chamber music. Sirmen is mentioned in *Women Making Music* (1987) and, under the name 'Lombardini,' is discussed in the 1995 *Norton/Grove Dictionary of Women Composers*. Sirmen had been studied as long ago as 1933 by Marion Scott in *Music and Letters* 14, and A-R Editions published three Sirmen concerti in 1991. But Berdes also had researched Sirmen in great depth. After Berdes' death, musicologist Elsie Arnold completed Berdes' book, *Maddalena Laura Lombardini (Sirmen), Eighteenth-century Composer, Violinist, and Business Woman*, Scarecrow Press, 2002. (N.B.: The above-mentioned *Norton/Grove* lists numerous women composers contemporary

with but not necessarily affiliated with Venetian *ospedali*. Scholars interested in seeking unstudied women composers might consult *Norton/Grove* for many who deserve recognition, just a few of whom are other early Italian women composers Maddalena Casulana, Raffaella Aleotti, Laura Quinciani, Lucrezia Vizzana, Barbara Strozzi, Marietta Priuli, and Michelina Della Pieta).

Commentary by Ospedali Visitors

Volume I, Appendix 2, provides valuable visitor commentaries in original languages. These contemporary accounts of *ospedale* performances date from 1522 to 1859 and later. Emperor Joseph II of Austria visited more than once. Besides the emperor, the most famous guests to visit the *ospedale* included the future Czar Nicholas, Gustavus III-King of Sweden, and the Holy Roman Emperor Francis I in 1838, who became the newly crowned King of Italy. Other famed visitors who wrote of hearing *ospedale* concerts include George Sand, Louis Spohr (who was disappointed), Goethe ("The *Frauenzimmer* presented an oratorio from behind a grille in the church, which was filled with listeners; the music was beautiful and the voices were magnificent."), Romain Rolland, Thomas Coryat (1611) and Charles Burney (1770). The latter two wrote glowing accounts of *ospedale* concerts, and the Coryat commentary, in particular, is carefully read by students of early music performance practice. Appendix 2 also includes commentary by some twentieth-century visitors, such as Sophie Drinker.

Teachers at Ospedali

Today, the most readily recognized names associated with *ospedale* are not performers, with the exception of Bordoni and Sirmen. To today's readers,

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the greatest and most familiar stars of *ospedali grandi* are teachers, i.e., the 312 external *maestri* [males] who included, among many others, composers Albini, Banchieri, Caldara, Cesti, Cimarosa, Croce, Donati, Galuppi, Hasse, Jommelli, Legrenzi, Lotti, Giovanni Battista Martini, Pergolesi, Pleyel, Perti, Porpora, Sammartini, Domenico Scarlatti, Tartini and Vivaldi. Haydn, Mozart and Salieri also are listed as teachers (Vol. I, Appendix 8 and Vol. II, Table 27). Many composers simultaneously were employed at basilica of San Marco and at an *ospedale grande*. Giovanni Rovetta, for example, was employed at *Derehitti* while he also assisted Monteverdi at basilica of San Marco. The complete choral *oeuvre* written for *ospedali* by these and many other composers still awaits full discovery.

Topics for Further Research

Since *A Guide to Ospedali Research* leads the researcher to primary sources, one aspect of *A Guide* will particularly interest those who wish to pursue further study, or those who work with graduate students. In Volume II, Table 31, Berdes lists more than 200 related topics for further *ospedale* research. Berdes' suggested areas of study are to be taken seriously because she knew of primary source documents to support the many subjects on her list. This list of topics, on the accompanying CD, is wide-ranging in scope. Berdes always stressed the need for interdisciplinary study in *ospedale* research, so her proposed topics for further research include such diverse areas as "Sociology of Music," "Women's Studies," "Music Criticism in the Eighteenth Century," "Welfare and Charity in Music," or "Women Musicians: *Figlie del coro*," to name a paltry few of her many ideas for further research (p. 792ff). Similarly, from Table 17 in Volume II, "A List of Teaching Materials from the *Pieta*, Now Preserved in the *Biblioteca del Con-*

servatoio di Musica Benedetto Marcello, Venice," could lead a researcher today to do a comparative historical study of choral music education.

Locations of the Primary Sources

Most of Berdes' collection of research notes and materials is housed at Duke University, although that collection is not completely catalogued, and is stored off-site. *A Guide to Ospedali Research* reveals locations of other *ospedali* materials distributed throughout the western world, in Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States. The largest collections outside of Italy are in Germany and the United States (Duke, the University of Michigan, Boston University, Boston Public Library, Newberry Library, Moravian Foundation, the University of Minnesota, New York Library for the Performing Arts, Pierpont Morgan Library (NYC), San Francisco State University, University of Illinois-Champaign-Urbana, and Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.). Readers can see the manuscript location listed with each entry in Volume I, Appendix 5, and can identify the name of the location via *Library Sigla*, Volume II, p. 823.

In addition to Berdes' intriguing list of topics for further study, *A Guide to Ospedale Research* remains first and foremost an extraordinarily important repository of repertoire awaiting the attention of editors, conductors and choral researchers. Scholars, professors of graduate students, and graduate students in choral music will want to own *A Guide* by Jane Berdes and Joan Whittemore. Researchers and editors of women's repertoire will find this guide an invaluable resource. Similarly, anyone who studies liturgy will be interested in the interrelatedness of Venetian *ospedali*

repertoire and Roman worship, in contrast to the Venetian rite practiced at the basilica of San Marco. And anyone who ever has been tempted to research any topic less than thoroughly will be humbled and chastised by the Herculean research efforts of the combined team of Jane Berdes and Joan Whittemore.

Berdes sought to produce "not only a repository of information and references for those working in various aspects of Venetian studies but also a tool for expanding the study of the repertoire commissioned for and first performed by the musicians of the *cori*" (p. vii).

Whittemore completed and added to the Berdes work so that future scholars can more easily navigate *ospedali* research. Fortunately, *A Guide to Ospedali Research* provides the archive location(s) of each of the 2,346 score manuscripts and other materials listed in Volume I, Appendix 5, and archive locations easily are identified through *Library Sigla*, Volume II. *A Guide* reveals, for example, that there are 97 manuscripts by Porpora in the Venice *Biblioteca Conservatorio di Musica Benedetto Marcello* and/or in the Genoa *Archivium Historicum Genuense Clerici Regolari a Somascha*. Or, consider that there are 46 manuscripts by Hasse at the Venice *Biblioteca Civico Museo Correr* alone. Thanks to *A Guide to Ospedali*



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Book Reviews

Research, we now know where these hundreds of manuscripts and related documents are located. There is so much work yet to be done! What are we waiting for?

Joan Catoni Conlon
Boulder, Colorado

Conducting Women's Choirs: Strategies for Success

(Book with companion DVD)

Edited and compiled

by Debra Spurgeon

Chicago

GIA Publications, Inc. 2012

340 pp. \$43.95

ISBN: 978 – 57999 – 927 – 8

There is a surfeit of choral conducting/method books that have been published during the twentieth and twenty-first century. Many of these books tend to follow a similar format and include precious little detailed information about the historical background of and repertoire for women's choirs. Similarly, of equally concern is the minimal attention—if at all—given to the philosophical beliefs, conducting methods, teaching strategies, and technical issues *apropos* to women's choirs. *Conducting Women's Choirs: Strategies for Success* is a seminal work that addresses the aforementioned areas in a singular, profound, and substantive manner, filling a long-standing void that, over time, constitutes the women's choir genera and culture.

Debra Spurgeon, editor and compiler of *Conducting Women's Choirs*, has assembled fourteen authors who represent a veritable female who's who in the field of women's choir music, scholarship, and pedagogy. This book is rooted in the experience, literature, and research of this diverse ensemble of choral conductor/author contributors. Not surprisingly

therefore, many of the book's chapters encompass subjective, experienced-based narratives while other chapter narratives draw from the literature and research sources to lend credence to the authors' heady assertions. The happy circumstance of the intended authorial variety is the strength of the book's contents. In addition to the preeminence of the authors represented in this book, twenty-two contributors provide their expertise (to name a few) i.e., David Brunner, Eleanor Daley, Stephen Hatfield, Z Randall Stroope, Joan Szymko, and Gwyneth Walker share their unequivocal professional expertise based upon seasoned years of teaching, conducting, composing, and scholarly writing.

The book's opening foray into the historical background begins with the medieval period and addresses the silence of women's voices and their music in the church. And, although not allowed to sing in church, women in Judaism and Christianity sang in their own religious communities, i.e., the Jewish monastic community of men sang in the so-called *Therapeutae* and Jewish women sang in the *Therapeutrides*, while Christian women sang in the medieval convents. In the Renaissance Period, women continued to be excluded from singing in the Catholic Mass but were allowed to sing in the newly organized Protestant churches and, with increased frequency, in the secular world. In The Baroque era, the *ospedali* [Venetian orphanages] became famous as music conservatories that produced highly skilled female singers, instrumentalists, and a large body of vocal repertoire, which is presented in great detail in this book. Women also gained more solo performance opportunities, and singing in ensembles that musically flourished in the schools. Regrettably, women continued to be excluded from singing in the church, and it wasn't until the Romantic Period that women were singing in mu-

sic societies, clubs, and women's choirs. The authors aver that by the twentieth and twenty-first century, women's choirs and conductors continued to flourish in all aspects of the choral art. Beginning in the mid- to late-twentieth century and continuing into the twentieth-first century, women composers, drawing on women's poetry and texts, blossomed and today grace the choral repertoire and performing venues throughout the world.

The second section of *Conducting Women's Choirs* takes a philosophical turn regarding today's female singers: texts for women's choral repertoire; women composers and conductors; and what women musically value, taking into account the feminist archetype. Philosophical and sociological issues, concerning the relationship between teachers/conductors and their singers in the choral rehearsal are examined, and matters that bear on the nature and evolution—over time—of the female voice. When women sang in any public forum in centuries past, they sang literature containing text and music written by men. Therefore, it should come as no epiphany that the authors of this section of the book introduce the reader to choral works for women composed by women. Moreover, a discussion ensues that is an exploration of the nature and purpose of choral texts written by women that have meaningful significance for women vis-à-vis stereotypical subject matter that many male composers imagine women should and want to sing.

Conducting and teaching strategies comprise the third and final section of *Conducting Women's Choirs*. The linear cast of this section is refreshing and compelling because the contents flow from author/conductor pens of women conductors/teachers/professors whose rich experience and success in this domain are made manifest. Myriad strat-

egies that must take into account the audition process, voicing, seating, arranging singers' person-to-person listening and singing, varying formations, mentoring through repertoire, and much more, all require understanding and proven experiential success in laying the vocal foundation of nascent and seasoned choirs. The vast subjects of repertoire selection, warm-ups, the young female voice, and women's community choirs are thoroughly explored and explained.

The companion DVD to *Conducting Women's Choirs* includes demonstrations of voicing, listening, and seating for a women's choir presented by Sandra Peter and Aurora—Luther College's Women's Choir. Additionally, Lori Hetzel, Elizabeth Arnold, and the University of Kentucky Women's Choir present demonstrations of warm-ups. The contents of the DVD are replete with beautiful examples of turning theory about the above-listed strategies into practice. The two conductors and a voice teacher confect the logic and need of a given strategy with its kinesthetic, aural/oral, and intellectual and emotional properties and outcomes, all of which are laced with abundant imagistic language. Of equal importance to the viewers of the DVD: they will visually and aurally witness the teachers/conductors introduce a concept, explain the appropriate strategies *apropos* to the concept, and then have the choirs turn the concept into vocal action first as choirs, in small groups, and then as individual singers. The overarching value of the DVD, in addition to serving as a complement to the book, is seeing and hearing materialize into evolving learning and understanding, as the three ensemble entities mentioned above listen and vocally respond.

In the preface of *Conducting Women's Choirs: Strategies for Success*, Debra Spurgeon writes,

It was never my intention to make

this book comprehensive, but rather to provide a starting place for conductors who want to learn new conducting/teaching techniques, and, as a consequence, better understand the dynamics of conducting all-female choirs.

The contents of this book comprehensively and substantively capture and express her intention. This book is for all choral conductors, teachers, and students of conducting, and for voice teachers who have an interest in supporting and promoting healthy singing habits in the choral setting. For readers who may think they know all there is to know about conducting women's

choirs and the culture that encompasses it, they might find—after reading *Conducting Women's Choir: Strategies for Success*—that a slice of humble pie may be in order.

Carroll Gonzo
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Recorded Sound Reviews

J. S. Bach: *St. John Passion*, BWV 245

The Monteverdi Choir
English Baroque Soloists
John Eliot Gardiner, conductor
Soli Deo Gloria SDG712 (2011; 114:47
[2 discs])

British conductor John Eliot Gardiner is no stranger to Johann Sebastian Bach's *St. John Passion*, BWV 245. He first recorded this work in 1986 with the Monteverdi Choir and the English Baroque Soloists, a performance that continues to receive much attention and airtime. However, this 2011 live release demonstrates an effective improvement over its predecessor.

In this new recording, Gardiner maintains the high standard of technical mastery for which his ensembles have become known. However, he opts for a warmer, richer palette than previously attributed to the well-known Gardiner sound. Perhaps this is, in part, due to the live recording at the Benedictine monastery (*Kaiserdom*) in Königslutter am Elm (Germany) or to the newer line-up of singers and players in the Monteverdi Choir and the English Baroque Soloists. In any case, the usual brightness that is omnipresent in Gardiner's sound palette is augmented by a depth of sound and space that has been hitherto rare in his relatively large discography of Bach's works.

The ominous opening chorus "Herr, unser Herrscher" is taken at a perfectly balanced tempo: not too fast, but not so slow that it becomes a *marche*

funèbre. Rather, the pacing maintains the air of foreboding of the events to come. The chorus is precise and crisp in its urgency, yet it manages to fill the imposing space of the *Kaiserdom*. Excellent microphone placement allows the size of the space to come across in the recording. This tangible sense of space, when contrasted with the intimacy of the recitatives, heightens the drama intrinsic in the work. The chorales, such as the well-known "O grosse Lieb," provide the introverted commentary that is a hallmark of the *Passion* according to John (rather than the extroverted, demonstrative nature of Matthew's telling). These work well to counterbalance the demanding urgency of the *turba* choruses such as "Jesum von Nazareth" and "Bist du nicht?"

The soloists provide a spectacular complement to the choir's dramatic commentary. British tenor Mark Padmore rises admirably to the monumental challenge that is Bach's Evangelist. His recitatives, while at times slightly overdramatized, are still beautifully sung; his bright yet powerful tone rises above the action and makes for an overall thrilling performance. German bass-baritone Hanno Müller-Brachmann gives Jesus the Bernarda depth required for the role. Alto Bernarda Fink's "Von den Stricken" is appropriately dark and commanding. Soprano Joanne Lunn's "Ich folge dir gleichfalls," however, is perhaps the standout solo aria performance of the album. From a lightness that is nonetheless ultra-precise to immaculate phras-

ing and clear diction, not to mention incredible breath management, Ms. Lunn makes this delightful gem of an aria into a technical masterpiece while infusing it with the highest musicality.

The English Baroque Soloists' playing is excellent, never too loud and overpowering, but at the same time always conspicuous. The players manage to bring out the nuances in each movement that can easily overwhelm a lesser orchestra in a work as long or loaded as the *St. John Passion*. The strings, in particular, are the most versatile, transitioning smoothly from tense sections, such as the opening chorus, to the softness of the chorales and arias. The continuo section, including an organ and lute plus the usual cello, complemented the soloists (especially the Evangelist) with much taste, despite a fair dose of restraint.

In many ways, this recording illuminates a much less formulaic, more organic, approach than Gardiner's previous attempt over twenty-five years ago, for it takes advantage of the space to bring the text to life; without this, any performance of a piece of such nuance as BWV 245 fails in its role as a passion setting. Whatever new path Gardiner appears to be taking, one can only hope he stays on it if it will bring us such top-notch performances as this one.

Vicente Chavarria
Los Angeles, California

François Couperin:

Exultent superi; Motets choisis

Soloists of New College Oxford and Collegium Novum

Edward Higginbottom, director

Novum NCRI 384 (2011; 61:55)

The principal selling point of this fine recording is Edward Higginbottom's reconstruction of three Couperin *petits motets*: *Resonant organa*, *Ornate aras*, and *Exultent superi*. The CD notes clearly and pithily explain the provenance of the three works and the incomplete state of the surviving sources, which consist of vocal parts and figured bass only. Higginbottom, an accomplished French Baroque scholar as well as keyboardist and conductor, also explains his general procedure for composing new upper string parts to conform to both the existing parts and his understanding of the Couperin style.

Far from an academic exercise, however, the three reconstructed works, as well as the disc's six other motets, are

performed in an outstanding manner. The four instrumentalists—two *dessus de violins*, a *basse de viole*, and Higginbottom on organ—play stylishly and sensitively, with impeccable phrasing and ornamentation. The seven singers, with no more than three on any one piece, commit fully to the changeability of Couperin's music, giving it the flexible treatment it deserves. The longer motets, in particular, are highly sectionalized, with dramatically variable scansion and affect, and the singers tailor their singing closely to the mood of the moment while never sacrificing vocal technique or musical ensemble.

Of particular note is the singing of thirteen year-old *dessus* Jonty Ward, who is in his final chorister year at New College. Not just accurate and assured, which would be accomplishment enough for a boy soprano performing such subtle repertoire, Ward sings with deep emotional expressivity and consummate artistry. The other six singers distinguish themselves as well; Guy Cutting's graceful management of the Couperin's challenging *haut-contre* lines deserves special note.

David Rentz
Claremont, California

tion with the sorrows of the Virgin Mary as she stood in tears beneath the cross on which her son Jesus Christ was sacrificed. Dvorák began sketching the *Stabat Mater* between February and May 1876. Then, in August 1877, tragedy struck again when Dvorák's eleven month-old daughter Růžena died from accidentally drinking a solution of phosphorus intended for making matches. One month later, his first-born son Otakar caught smallpox and died on Dvorák's birthday. After that final catastrophe, Dvorák returned to the *Stabat Mater* and worked swiftly, dating the completed manuscript November 13, 1877.

As a response to the deep sorrow of threefold child mortality, the musical material within Dvorák's *Stabat Mater* reveals the sense of profound hope encountered within the thirteenth-century Franciscan text. A devout Roman Catholic, Dvorák succeeds in combining his fervent spiritual conviction with genuine human emotion, yielding an authentic masterpiece.

In terms of the recording itself, Estonian conductor Neeme Järvi tastefully paces Dvorák's *Stabat Mater*, honoring the composer's notated tempi and avoiding excessive *ritardando* at cadence points. Järvi's attention to phrasing nuances within every single melody merits praise, as does his attention to balance between the vocal and instrumental forces. As one would expect, the London Philharmonic Orchestra plays at the highest professional standard and the four soloists offer stellar performances. Janice Watson's sumptuous tone and masterful execution of dynamics throughout all ranges and Peter Rose's brilliant resonance and pitch clarity are particularly exceptional. Exquisitely prepared by Neville Creed, the London Philharmonic Choir consistently delivers a compelling performance, especially the glistening tone of the soprano section. In short, this is a first-rate live recording

Antonín Dvorák: *Stabat Mater*

London Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir

Neeme Järvi, conductor

Janice Watson, soprano

Dagmar Pecková, *mezzo* soprano

Peter Auty, tenor

Peter Rose, bass

LPO – 0062; (2012; 67:08)

The genesis of Antonín Dvorák's *Stabat Mater* lies in personal tragedy. The composer's infant daughter Josefa died two days after her birth in September 1875, which led to Dvorák's preoccupa-



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From the Land of Sky Blue Waters

VocalEssence

Philip Brunelle, conductor

Clarion CLCD-942 (2011; 57:40)

Philip Brunelle and VocalEssence have done it again, creating yet another must-have recording with their most recent release, *From the Land of Sky Blue Waters*. This CD features an eclectic smattering of music that pays homage to the grand legacy of choral music in Minnesota. Dominick Argento, Libby Larsen, Stephen Paulus and Randall Thompson are just a few of the composers whose works you will hear on this exceptional recording.

From the *Land of Sky Blue Waters* features sixteen tracks, each with its own unique flavor and style. There are traditional folk songs such as Joseph Flummerfelt's beautiful arrangement of *Danny Boy*, as well as spirituals like Moses Hogan's wonderfully energetic *My Soul's Been Anchored in the Lord*. Brunelle's chorus sings with precise intonation, perfect diction and heartfelt passion. The recording itself is very clean with little to no processing, lending itself to a true and pure listening experience.

Of particular note is the fourth track, *Songs of Our Grandparents*, arranged by Paul Gerike. Gerike has created many wonderful arrangements for VocalEssence, many of them recently performed on Garrison Keillor's *A Prairie Home Companion*. *Songs of Our Grandparents* is a joyful medley revealing the great diversity of Minnesota's musical heritage. Songs such as Cahn's *Envoyons De L'Avant*, *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, and *There Is No Beer* are just a few of the songs that appear in this entertaining

and filling arrangement. The collection ends with a touching rendition of *Beautiful Savior*.

There is something for everyone on this recording: folk music; spirituals; compositions in French, German, and Spanish; and even a medley of Native American songs. Brunelle masterfully navigates his chorus through this varied repertoire, each song prepared and performed to its utmost. I highly recommend this recording to anyone seeking a beautiful, simple, and elegant representation of some of Minnesota's best singers,

composers, and compositions.

Brian Katona
Princeton Junction, New Jersey



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- To foster and promote the organization and development of choral societies in cities and communities.
- To foster and promote the understanding of choral music as an important medium of contemporary artistic expression.
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- To disseminate professional news and information about choral music.



Choral Reviews

Steven Grives, editor <sgrives@depaul.edu>

Psalm 8 (Adonai, Adonenu)

Dan Forrest (b. 1978; 2010)

ed. Henry Leck

SSA, piano,

Optional Violin and Djembe (5:00)



Hal Leonard, HL 08752512, \$2.25

<www.halleonard.com>

(Enter title in search box.)

Psalm 8: 1, 3–4

Commissioned by ACDA, *Psalm 8 (Adonai, Adonenu)* was premiered by the 2011 National Children's Honor Choir in Chicago with Henry Leck, conductor. Though commissioned for an advanced children's choir, the piece is appropriate for middle school through adult treble choirs.

Composer Dan Forrest describes the opening eight measures of the piece as creating space in the mind's ear and stretching out the expanse of the heavens to invoke a sense of mystery and awe. He depicts the single notes of an octatonic scale (eight-note scale constructed from alternating half and whole steps) in the treble range of the piano like points of light in space, or stars, shining in various corners of the universe.

From the introduction unfolds lyrical melodies that are supported with ar-

peggiated triplets in the piano accompaniment. The music begins in D Major; modulates to F[♯] Major; and then again to A Major. With each modulation the richness and brightness of tonal color increases. The piece closes in D major with music that is reminiscent of the beginning material.

The soprano parts sing a comfortable tessitura of f[♯]4 to d⁵ and the alto part, a narrower tessitura of d⁴ to a⁴. The chant-like, repeated Hebrew text "Adonai, Adonenu," translated "O Lord, our Lord," serves as a unifying element of the work and contributes to the global perspective. The optional instrumentation of a violin *obbligato* is notated throughout the score and separately; the djembe notation provides a framework for the subtle percussion part, which adds a "world music" feel to the overall performance.

To create the most aesthetic performance possible, one that evokes wonder and majesty, the composer provides many expressive markings, ranging from subtle tempo and dynamic changes, to descriptions of style and mood. Forrest gives careful attention to text alignment of important words and stressed syllables to the meter and rhythmic patterns of the piece as well. A slightly asymmetrical arch best represents the general ABA form, with introductory motives woven throughout the piece. The pinnacle of the work occurs in the return of the text, "How majestic is your name

in all the earth." This ethereal setting of *Psalm 8 (Adonai, Adonenu)* is for a liturgical or concert setting; it is also available in SATB voicing (HL 08754043).

LuAnn Holden

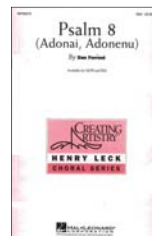
Cleveland, Tennessee

Connections: <www.danforrest.com>

R&S: Children's and Community Youth, Jr. High / Middle School Choirs, Music in Worship, Women's Choir, Ethnic and Multicultural, Senior High School Choirs, Honor Choir: ACDA 2011

Keywords: Old Testament text, Psalm 8, Adonai, majestic, sacred, world music

Links: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HY83r_Tdk_g> (2011 ACDA National Children's Honor Choir Rehearsal, Henry Leck, Conductor) <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kd7uslewV4g>> (Sing A Mile High International Children's Choral Festival, David L. Brunner, conductor)



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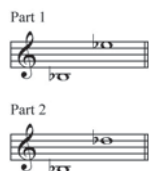
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Choral Reviews

Wexford Carol

Traditional Irish Carol (12th c.)
Ken Berg (arr.) 2011, ed. Henry Leck
Two-Part Treble, Piano,
Optional Horn in F (3:25)



Hal Leonard, HL 08752685, \$1.80

<www.halleonard.com>

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<<http://worldmusic.about.com/od/instrumentation/a/TheWexfordCarol.htm>>

Ken Berg, music director and resident composer of the Birmingham

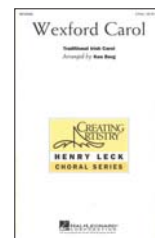
Boys Choir, has created a flexible and interesting arrangement of the twelfth-century sacred Irish Christmas carol from County Wexford. The carol, sometimes known as "Good People All This Christmastime," was rejuvenated through the work of Grattan Flood (1859–1928), organist and music director of St. Aidan's Cathedral in Enniscorthy. After transcribing the carol from a local singer, Flood had it published in the Oxford Book of Carols (1928).

The optional part for Horn in F, scored above the vocal lines and separately, introduces the theme before the singers enter in unison. The piano accompaniment, written in supportive block chords, enters at the conclusion of the first stanza. The carol, in its original form, is strophic; however, Berg's op-

tional harmonic lines create a theme and variation format. A counter melody with voice crossing is provided on the second stanza while a descant is notated for stanza three.

The arrangement is set in E^b Major for the mid-range of treble voices, and the *tessitura* spans the dominant octave. The opening melodic line centers on the tonic and then ascends to create a well-structured four-measure phrase. Thereafter, the tune incorporates the lowered third and seventh scale degrees, creating a modal quality in the melody.

The carol is set in 3/2 meter in a *larghetto* tempo. The peaceful character of the piece is achieved through the haunting melody, the sonorous solo instrument, and the sensitive nuances of tempo, dynamics, and phrasing. This arrangement easily facilitates the teaching of phrase lines, form and 3/2 meter. The optional parts (even substituting English horn or cello for the Horn in F) allow flexibility in performance configurations, making it appealing for any treble ensemble.



LuAnn Holden
Cleveland, Tennessee

Connections: <<http://worldmusic.about.com/od/instrumentation/a/TheWexfordCarol.htm>>

R&S: Boychoirs, Children's and Community Youth, Jr. High/Middle School Choirs, Music in Worship, Women's Choir, Ethnic and Multicultural

Keywords: Irish Christmas carol, County Wexford, Good People All this Christmastime, E^b Major (lowered 3rd and 7th scale degrees for modal quality), The Enniscorthy Carol, Grattan Flood, Oxford Book of Carols (1928).



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Links: <<http://www.birmingham-boyschoir.com>> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxDZjg_lgoc> (Yo-Yo Ma; Alison Krauss)

Hope Is the Thing with Feathers,

Susan LaBarr (b. 1981: 2012)
SA, piano (3:50)



Santa Barbara Music Publishing,
SBMP 1071, \$1.95

e-address: <www.sbmp.com>

score: <<http://www.sbmp.com/SR2.php?CatalogNumber=1071>>

text: <<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/171619>>

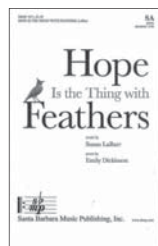
Emily Dickinson, "Hope is the Thing with Feathers" from *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*, edited by Thomas H. Johnson. Copyright 1945, 1951, 8 1955, 1979, 1983 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College. Reprinted with the permission of The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Source: The Poems of Emily Dickinson Edited by R. W. Franklin (Harvard University Press, 1999)

The poem, "Hope Is the Thing with Feathers" by Emily Dickinson (1830–1886) serves as a meaningful text for this treble voice choral setting by Susan LaBarr. The metaphor of comparing hope to a bird is sensed in the first four measures as the treble piano accompaniment simulates a feather flowing through the air then coming to rest. An *adagio* tempo is established for the unison statement of the opening poetic stanza. The text is presented again, this time in two-part writing, with consonant

harmonies and occasional suspensions.

A different melody in a faster tempo (*andantino*) and a *divisi* of the soprano line provide a contrasting section for the second and third stanzas of the poem. The pinnacle of the piece occurs as LaBarr returns to the opening and closing line of the first stanza: "Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul; hope never stops at all." The phrase returns to the original tempo and proclaims the text "hope" at a *fortissimo* dynamic level in octaves of f^{#4} and f^{#5} before it continues in very singable two-part harmonies, then briefly divides into four-part writing. One further statement of the same text in softer dynamics and slower tempo concludes the piece with thoughtful and reflective emotion. The general outline of the form could be described as ABA'.



Several qualities of this piece make it especially suitable for a middle or high school treble choir. The *tessitura* lies very comfortably between f^{#4} and d⁵, and the melodic lines are predominantly scalar or tonic skips. There is interesting and accessible part writing with occasions of one part sustaining a pitch while the other part moves in step-wise motion to resolution. The tempo and dynamic changes, along with the composer's careful attention to the text setting in the 4/4 meter, contribute to the sensitive and artful setting of this inspirational poem.

LuAnn Holden
Cleveland, Tennessee

Connections: <<http://www.susanlabarr-music.com>> <<http://www.sparknotes.com/poetry/dickinson/section2.rhtml>>

R&S: Children's and Community Youth,

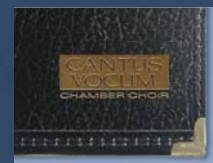


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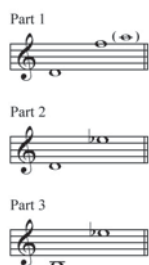
Junior High/Middle School Choirs, Music in Worship, Women's Choir, Boychoir, Senior High School Choirs

Keywords: Emily Dickinson, New England, metaphor, hope, D Major, Susan LaBarr

Links: <<http://www.sbmp.com/SR2.php?CatalogNumber=1071>>

How Can I Keep from Singing

Robert Lowry (1826–1899: 1869)
Penny Downs Tullock (arr.) 2012
Three-part treble, solo, piano (3:15)



Choristers Guild, CGA 1304, \$1.95
<http://www.choristersguild.org>

(Enter title in the search box.)

<<http://www.hymnary.org/hymn/BJSS1869/16>>

(as published in Bright Jewels, 1869)

"How Can I Keep from Singing" first appeared in the 1869 publication, *Bright Jewels for the Sunday School*. The music was attributed to Rev. Robert Lowry; however, the author of the text was not noted. After discovering this piece in 1956, American folk singer, Pete Seeger added it to his repertoire and popularized the title. A Christian theology ("The Lord My Savior Liveth,") reflected in the poetic stanzas of the earliest publication, has been replaced with metaphors such as "I Know That Truth is Living" and "Since Love (original:Christ) is Lord."

This setting, in triple meter, follows the outline of the three-stanza strophic form of the original piece; however, greater interest is achieved through the voicing and part-writing variations of each stanza. The piece opens with the monophonic texture of an unaccompanied solo to be sung as if the soloist is alone with thoughts of the text. A simple and *pianissimo* treble accompaniment enhances the third phrase of the solo stanza while maintaining the folk-like timbre.

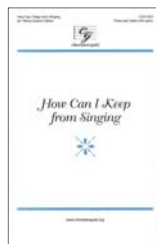
After an arpeggiated piano interlude, Part I voices introduce the second stanza. One beat later, the text is reiterated with the melodic counter-melody of Part II. The part singing is easily achieved.

After the second stanza, the piano interlude incorporates arpeggiated sixteenth notes in the treble over the flowing eighth-note patterns in the bass line, and this continues to near the end. The piece modulates from G major (as in the

earliest publication) to A^b major for the third stanza. As the tempo slows, unison voices proclaim the text "I lift my eyes" at a forte dynamic level. Near the end of this final stanza the two-part voices divide briefly into four-part writing, then three-part. The piece concludes with the simple and reflective unaccompanied solo line—like it began—providing the arrangement with a sense of unification.

This arrangement offers a comfortable *tessitura* of d⁴ to d⁵ for a treble choir, and the text is suitable for a school or church setting. The musical lines and rhythmic flow of the melody provide opportunity to teach sensitive phrasing and artistic expression, variation of strophic form, and to develop part-singing skills. The striking qualities of this arrangement are also present in the SATB setting (CGA 1305).

LuAnn Holden
Cleveland, Tennessee



Connections: <<http://www.hymnary.org/hymn/BJSS1869/16>>

R&S: Children's and Community Youth, Junior High / Middle School Choirs, Music in Worship, Women's Choir, Boyschoir, Senior High School Choirs
Keywords: Rev. Robert Lowry, Bright Jewels, My life flows on in endless song, Pete Seeger, G major with modulation to A^b major.

Links: <<http://www.choristersguild.org>> (Enter title in the search box.)



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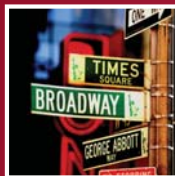
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