

MASTERS IN MINIATURE

REPERTOIRE BY GREAT COMPOSERS
FOR SMALLER CHOIRS
DAVID C. RAYL AND ZEBULON M. HIGHBEN

David C. Rayl
Professor of Music, Director of
Choral Programs, and Associate
Dean for Graduate Studies and
Research, Michigan State University
College of Music.
rayld@msu.edu

Zebulon M. Highben
Assistant Professor of Music and
Director of Choral Activities,
Muskingum University.
zhighben@muskingum.edu

As conductors, we are all aware of the canon of historical composers whose choral works are worthy of performance. Yet many of us direct ensembles for whom the typical Renaissance madrigal or sacred Baroque concerto seems out of reach. The age of our singers, the size of our forces, the instrumentation available—all of these factors may lead us to believe that the rich repertoire by the great composers of the past is inaccessible to our singers (unless that repertoire has been rearranged or reduced in some fashion by a contemporary editor).

The authors of this article contend that almost every great composer has written at least one piece that is achievable by choirs with fewer singers and limited resources but is still well crafted, worthy of performance, and typical of its genre and style period. This article highlights some of these authentic, little-known works by well-known composers. The repertoire discussed here includes both sacred and secular pieces, some available in published editions and others via the Choral Public Domain Library and IMSLP. Where appropriate, suggestions for performance and programming are included. Throughout this article, a single published edition or URL for each piece is typically referenced, though in many cases numerous editions are available. Performing editions should always be examined carefully for accuracy and editorial changes. Frequently cited in the following pages are: GIA's *Ars Antiqua Choralis*¹ octavo series and two Augsburg Fortress anthologies: the *Chantry Choirbook: Sacred Music for All Seasons*² and the *Augsburg Motet Book*.³ These are well-edited sources of useful editions and are highly recommended for readers interested in this literature.

MASTERS IN MINIATURE

Renaissance

The vast trove of Renaissance music is a wonderful resource for choirs of all types. The conductor who wishes to introduce Renaissance polyphony should consider early Tudor anthems such as Richard Farrant's *Call to Remembrance*⁴ and Thomas Tallis's *If Ye Love Me*.⁵ These have the advantages of an English text, repeating sections, and eminently singable diatonic lines with appropriately limited ranges. Hans Leo Hassler's *Dixit Maria* is another motet with the same attributes but a simple Latin text.⁶ Its opening melodic motive, initially sung by the tenors, is directly echoed in the succeeding voices, making it a perfect piece for teaching points of imitation



Figure 1. Hans Leo Hassler, *Dixit Maria*, Opening Motive.
(Tenor mm. 1–4, Soprano mm. 5–8, Bass mm. 7–10)

(Figure 1). One should also consider the Kyrie from Hassler's parody mass based on this motet.⁷

Tenors are sometimes in short supply, making repertoire with a single men's part desirable. Yet most published SAB works from the Renaissance are arrangements that eliminate one or

more lines from a thicker vocal texture. Several readily accessible exceptions can be found in the *Ars Antiqua Series* published by GIA Publications. Jacob Obrecht's *Parce, Domine* is an evocative SAB motet with challenging soprano and alto lines but a simple *cantus firmus* in half notes for the baritones (the part

Get Listed...Be Found!
www.AllThingsMusical.com
"The Music Directory"

List Your Music Organization, Business,
School, Media, Venue or Conference on the new
ALL THINGS MUSICAL ONLINE (ATMO) now "live!"

Join "The Nation's #1 Music & Education Directory"
ATMO connects and promotes you to thousands of musicians & educators!

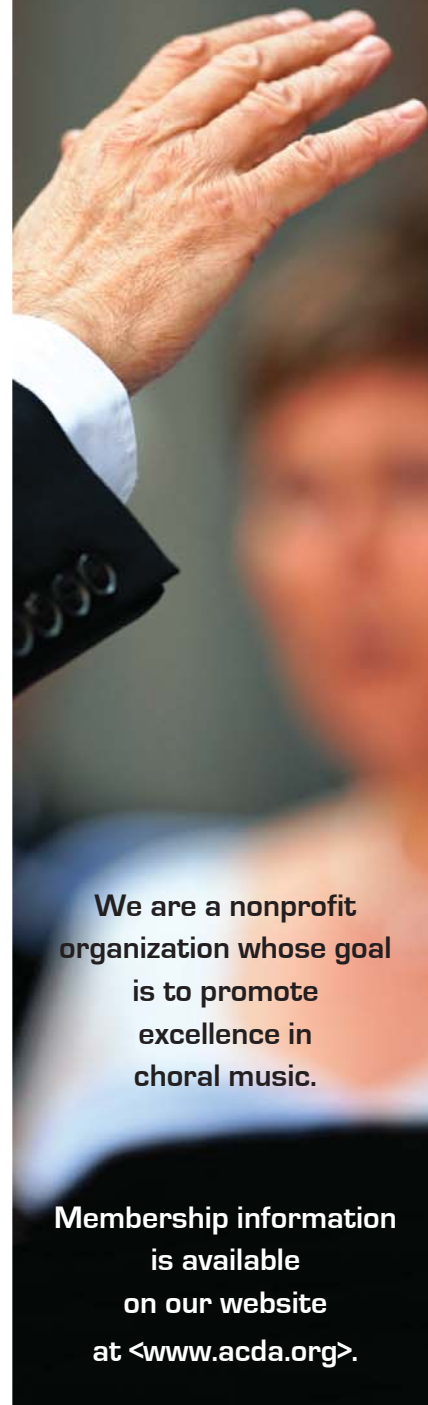
Enjoy the following when you join:

- Receive a complete "mini-website" with Searchable Business Listing(s)
- Your ATMO "page" is found in Google Search!
- Super Easy Set-up - no "tech" degree required
- Feature Your Photo Gallery and YouTube Videos
- Place Your Music Events on the ATMO Calendar
- Your News Posted and Shared on Social Media
- Your PDF can be Downloaded and Shared
- Push Visitors & Traffic to your Main Website!
- Weekly ATMO Newsletter Promotion included
- Leads & Referrals Service Available
- Plus Much More!

Check out ATMO today! Go to: www.allthingsmusical.com
Search and Browse the Site -- then Sign Up FREE as a BASIC MEMBER
or Get "All The Bells & Whistles" as a paid SILVER or GOLD MEMBER!

Questions? Email Sally Russell at: allthingsmusical@aol.com
Toll Free 1-888-803-6287 • 812-878-7800

What is the American Choral Directors Association?



We are a nonprofit organization whose goal is to promote excellence in choral music.

Membership information is available on our website at <www.acda.org>.

Figure 2. Guillaume Dufay, *Conditio alme siderum*, mm. 1–9.

Edition © Copyright 2014, Zebulon Highben/Choral Public Domain Library. Reprinted by permission.

lies a bit high).⁸ Tenors can either double the baritones or sing the alto line in a light head voice. Another authentic, though much livelier, SAB work from this series is Thomas Morley's *Sound Forth the Trumpet in Zion*.⁹ This music was originally a textless example from Morley's *A Plaine and Easy Introduction to Practicall Musicke*; editor Richard Proulx added a text adapted from Joel 2:1.

Any conductor who leads a program with multiple ensembles should consider the various alternatim settings by Guillaume Dufay. Both *Conditio alme siderum* and *Kyrie Orbis factor* consist of verses of unison Gregorian chant alternating with three-part (ATB) writing in Dufay's *fauxbourdon* style (Figure 2).¹⁰ These works can be effectively performed with treble voices (children, unchanged middle school voices, adult sopranos, etc.) singing the chant and a small group of more skilled singers on the ATB verses. Some spatial separation of the choirs would be appropriate. The GIA edition of *Kyrie Orbis Factor* suggests doubling the ATB parts with solo strings or singing only

the uppermost part while instruments perform the other parts.

Performing forces for many Renaissance works are quite flexible both in terms of voices and doubling instruments. Consider pieces like Dowland's lute song *Come Again, Sweet Love Doth Now Invite*, which can be sung by unaccompanied SATB choir, like an English madrigal, or accompanied by a classical guitar.¹¹ (Alternatively, but less desirable, one might use the harpsichord stop on an electronic keyboard.) Treble choirs, such as a seventh- or eighth-grade female ensemble, may sing only the soprano line with this accompaniment. Because these lute songs are strophic, another performance option is the alternation of stanzas between an SATB ensemble and treble voices with accompaniment. These lute songs have another advantage over the "typical" madrigal by Morley and his contemporaries: the poetry is much stronger.

Other works from the Renaissance have similar flexibility in terms of performing forces. For example, chansons

such as cello or bassoon can double or replace the *cantus firmus*, making these pieces feasible for treble groups or choirs with few male voices. Treble choirs should also investigate Schein's *Eight Chorale Settings from Opella Nova (Part 1)* edited by Ludwig Lenel.¹⁸ These settings break the chorale tunes into short motivic fragments that are then imitated, chromaticized, and rhythmically varied within the two voice parts over the framework of the continuo.

Not every Baroque choral work is polyphonic in nature. Heinrich Schütz's four-part settings of the Becker Psalter, written when his choirs were diminished by the ravages of the Thirty Years' War, are homophonic and accessible, though not without harmonic and rhythmic interest.¹⁹ Chorales set in the *cantional* style—like the closing chorales in many of J. S. Bach's church cantatas—are also homophonic, deriving musical interest from their harmonies and (sometimes) independent instrumental parts. This is the case in Johann Crüger's *Auf, auf, mein Herz*, in which two treble instruments joyfully dance around the chorale melody in the soprano line.²⁰ Likewise, Dietrich Buxtehude's chorale cantatas (such as *Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort*²¹ and *In dulci jubilo*²²) are frequently homophonic in their choral parts with intricate instrumental *ritornelli* separating the phrases of the chorale. At roughly eight to ten minutes in length, these pieces provide small choruses with excellent introductions to the longer concerted repertoire.²³

When a Baroque work with a secular text is desirable, consider John Blow's *Sing, Sing Ye Muses*.²⁴ Scored for SATB choir with two violins and continuo, *Sing, Sing Ye Muses* features many of the style characteristics outlined above. Its text, energy, and buoyancy make it a wonderful opening work for a high school or community chorus concert.

Classical and Romantic

There are a number of works that provide smaller choirs with a musically satisfying introduction to the Viennese Classical style. The Kyrie, Gloria, and Ag-

nus Dei from Haydn's *Little Organ Mass* come immediately to mind.²⁵ A less well-known but equally charming piece in this same style is Mozart's *Kyrie*, K. 33, for SATB choir and continuo.²⁶ Like the Haydn, it works well with younger



CHORAL COMPOSERS' WORKSHOP
featuring
**CRAIG COURTNEY
SUSAN BOERSMA
DAN FORREST &
HOWARD HELVEY**

June 15-18, 2015
Capital University, Columbus, Ohio

- Master classes
- Open discussions
- Review of student works
- Lecture-presentations
- Q/A sessions
- Much more

Focused on developing compositional excellence and publishing success in church choral music. Limited to 8-12 students for maximum student/instructor interaction.

For more details and an application, please visit beckenhorstpress.com/workshop

The John Ness Beck Foundation 

MASTERS IN MINIATURE

but yield enormous musical satisfaction for choirs of all types. *Die Nachtigall* is particularly approachable.³³ It resembles a simple theme and variations, each of which sets the same brief text. For that reason it provides choirs of limited abilities with a viable introduction to German-language repertoire. Among Mendelssohn's sacred music, *Verleih' uns Frieden* is perhaps the best "teaching piece" from this era.³⁴ Its highly singable lines, elegantly arched phrases, and relatively simple German text should make

it a staple for younger ensembles and church choirs.

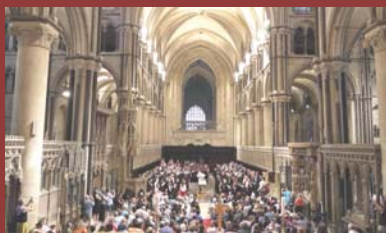
Mention of nineteenth-century Italian choral music conjures up images of such large-scale works as Giuseppe Verdi's *Manzoni Requiem* and Gioacchino Rossini's *Stabat Mater*. Giacomo Puccini's single-movement setting of the Introit of the Requiem Mass for chorus, viola, and harmonium is a relatively unknown jewel (Figures 6 and 7).³⁵ The STB chorus (altos can divide to sing both the soprano and tenor lines) sings fre-

quently in unison. Though rather simple, it exudes all the power and poignancy of a Puccini aria.

Adapting Repertoire for Solo Voice

Another excellent source of repertoire for choirs with few singers or with an imbalance between voice parts is the solo songs of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. Lyrical

The Oldest and Most Revered Children's Choir Event! Finest repertoire and music making with Henry Leck and David Flood! No Gimmicks, "Choir Rankings" or Contests Join over 150 choirs that have participated at Canterbury Cathedral and London!



International Children's Choir Festival

July 18 - 25, 2015
July 23 - 30, 2016
July 22 - 29, 2017



Henry Leck



David Flood



Euro Arts Tours Inc.
David T. Searles, President
cj@euroartstours.com
www.euroartstours.com

Figure 6. Giacomo Puccini, *Requiem*, mm. 7–14.

Edition © Copyright 2009 Santiago Suarez/Choral Public Domain Library.
Reprinted by permission.

30 *cresc.* *f*

S Re - quiem, re - quiem ae - ter - nam, lux per - pe - tua lu - ce - at e - is,

T *cresc.* *f*

Re - qui - em ae - ter - nam do - na e - is, Do - mi - ne, lux per - pe - tua lu - ce - at e - is,

B *cresc.* *f*

Re - qui - em ae - ter - nam re - quiem, re - qui - em, ae - ter - nam re - quiem, lux per - pe - tua lu - ce - at e - is,

Vla. *cresc.* *f*

Org. *cresc.* *f*

33 *p* *pp* *pp*

S lu - ce - at e - is, re - quiem, re - quiem

T *p* *pp* *pp*

lu - ce - at e - is, re - quiem, re - quiem

B *p* *pp* *pp*

lu - ce - at e - is, re - quiem, re - quiem

Vla. *mf*

Org. *pp* *pp*

Figure 7. Giacomo Puccini, *Requiem*, mm. 30–36.

Edition © Copyright 2009 Santiago Suarez/Choral Public Domain Library.
Reprinted by permission.


MASTERS IN MINIATURE

eighteenth-century arias like Giordani's "Caro mio ben" and Torelli's "Tu lo sai" or Handel's "Ombra mai fu" can teach beautiful vocalism and nuanced expressivity while providing audiences with a highly satisfying listening experience. Pieces from the nineteenth-century *lieder* repertoire also come to mind, such as Schubert's "An die Musik" or Brahms's "Sonntag." With some attention to finding an appropriate key, the latter is a highly effective choice for a young male

chorus. From the twentieth century, the folk song settings of Copland³⁶ and Britten³⁷ can also serve as rich resources.

Conclusion

Today's choral conductors suffer no shortage of repertoire to meet our programming needs. There are myriad newly composed pieces written with various types of choirs in mind and numerous simplified arrangements of

works from earlier eras. Those who lead choirs of modest abilities may feel compelled to select such arrangements or to simply forego the music of Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, and Romantic master composers altogether. The authors hope that this article has illuminated some of the many authentic historical works—in a variety of genres and styles—that can be convincingly performed by choirs of all sizes, types, and ability levels. 

ARE YOU AN EMPLOYER? MAKE SURE YOU ARE SEARCHING IN THE CORRECT PLACE

Find the top talent at careers.acda.org

careers.acda.org

Search 

We make it easy for you to manage your recruitment efforts and improve your ROI by specifically targeting choral professionals seeking to build a better career in the choral music world.

Post your job listings where the top talent resides.

<http://careers.acda.org>

AMERICAN
CHORAL
DIRECTORS
ASSOCIATION 



Repertoire Discussed

Composer	Title	Scoring	Recommended Edition (see endnotes for complete citation)
Billings, William	Wake Every Breath	canon	CPDL
Billings, William	When Jesus Wept	canon	CPDL
Blow, John	Sing, Sing, Ye Muses	SATB, 2 violins, continuo	Walton Music
Buxtehude, Dietrich	Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Thy Word (Erhalt uns, Herr)	SATB, 2 violins, continuo	Concordia Publishing
Buxtehude, Dietrich	In dulci jubilo	SAB, 2 violins, continuo	IMSLP
Crüger, Johann	Awake, My Heart with Gladness (Auf, Auf, mein Herz)	SATB, 2 C insts, continuo	Augsburg Fortress
De Sermisy, Claudin	Tant que vivray	SATB	National Music Publishers
Dowland, John	Come again, sweet love doth now invite	various	CPDL
Dufay, Guillaume	Conditor alme siderum	ATB	CPDL
Dufay, Guillaume	Kyrie Orbis Factor	ATB	GIA Publications
Farrant, Richard	Call to Remembrance	SATB	Oxford Univ. Press
Hassler, Hans Leo	Dixit Maria	SATB	CPDL
Hassler, Hans Leo	Missa super Dixit Maria	SATB	IMSLP
Haydn, Joseph	Missa brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo	SATB, 2 violins, cello/bass, organ	Various (see endnote 25)
Haydn, Joseph	Six Psalm Settings	3-part, keyboard (opt)	Various (see endnote 27)
Isaac, Heinrich	Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen	SATB	CPDL
Leising, Volckmar	O Filii et Filiae	SATB double choir	Alliance Music
Mendelssohn, Felix	Die Nachtigall	SATB	Hinshaw Music
Mendelssohn, Felix	Verleih' uns Frieden	SATB, organ	E. C. Schirmer
Morley, Thomas	Sound Forth the Trumpet in Zion	SAB	GIA Publications
Mozart, Wolfgang A.	Kyrie, K. 33	SATB, continuo	Bärenreiter Verlag
Mozart, Wolfgang A.	God Is Our Refuge	SATB	Augsburg Fortress
Obrecht, Jacob	Parce, Domine	SAB	GIA Publications
Praetorius, Michael	En natus est Emanuel	SATB	Augsburg Fortress
Praetorius, Michael	Psallite	SATB	Augsburg Fortress
Puccini, Giacomo	Requiem	STB, viola, organ	CPDL
Scheidt, Samuel	Remember, Lord (Gedenke, Herr)	SAB, continuo	GIA Publications
Schein, Johann Hermann	Christ lag in Todesbanden	SAB, continuo	Tetra/Continuo
Schein, Johann Hermann	Eight Chorale Settings from Opella Nova (Part I)	2-part treble, continuo	Concordia Publishing
Schubert, Franz	Mass in C Major	SATB, orchestra	Carus Verlag
Schubert, Franz	Mass in G Major	SATB, orchestra	Carus Verlag
Schubert, Franz	Antiphonen zum Palmsonntag	SATB	Augsburg Fortress
Schütz, Heinrich	Becker Psalter	SATB, continuo (opt)	Augsburg Fortress (see endnote 19)
Tallis, Thomas	If Ye Love Me	SATB	Oxford University Press
Vulpus, Melchior	Arisen Is Our Blessed Lord (Erstanden ist der heilig Christ)	SATB double choir	Augsburg Fortress

MASTERS IN MINIATURE

NOTES

- ¹ To access a complete list of titles in the *Ars Antiqua Choralis* series, visit http://www.giamusic.com/choral_music/arsantiquachoralis_top10.cfm.
- ² Frank Stoldt, gen. ed., *Chantry Choirbook: Sacred Music for All Seasons*, Augsburg Fortress 9780800657772.
- ³ Zebulon M. Highben, gen. ed., *Augsburg Motet Book*, Augsburg Fortress 9781451423709.
- ⁴ Richard Farrant, *Call to Remembrance*, Oxford University Press TCM 60B.
- ⁵ Thomas Tallis, *If Ye Love Me*, Oxford University Press OU.9780193521384.
- ⁶ Hans Leo Hassler, *Dixit Maria*, <http://www0.cpd.org/wiki/images/sheet/hassler/hass-dix.pdf>. Also found in *Augsburg Motet Book*, Augsburg Fortress 9781451423709.
- ⁷ Hans Leo Hassler, *Missa super Dixit Maria*, http://conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/9/96/IMSLP88963-PMLP103807-Hassler__HL__Missae__EdAuer__I__Missa_I.pdf.
- ⁸ Jacob Obrecht, ed. Richard Proulx, *Parce, Domine*, GIA Publications G-1900.
- ⁹ Thomas Morley, ed. Richard Proulx, *Sound Forth the Trumpet in Zion*, GIA Publications G-1867.
- ¹⁰ Guillaume Dufay, ed. Zebulon M. Highben, *Conditor alme siderum*, http://www.cpd.org/wiki/images/6/6b/Dufay_-_Conditor_alme_siderum.pdf. Guillaume Dufay, ed. William Tortolano, *Kyrie Orbis Factor*, GIA Publications G-2147.
- ¹¹ For the latter, see this edition: http://www0.cpd.org/wiki/images/4/45/Dowland_-_Come_again.pdf.
- ¹² Claudin de Sermisy, *Tant que vivray*, National Music Publishers 08761663. Heinrich Isaac, *Innsbruck ich muss dich lassen*, <http://www0.cpd.org/wiki/images/sheet/isaa-001.pdf>.
- ¹³ Volckmar Leisring, *O Filii et Filiae*, Alliance Music Publications AMP0171.
- ¹⁴ Melchior Vulpius, *Erstanden ist der heilig Christ*, in *Chantry Choirbook: Sacred Music for All Seasons*, Augsburg Fortress 9780800657772.
- ¹⁵ Excellent editions of both may be found in *Chantry Choirbook: Sacred Music for All Seasons*, Augsburg Fortress 9780800657772. A good edition of *Psallite* is also available at <http://www0.cpd.org/wiki/images/sheet/pr-psal.pdf>.
- ¹⁶ Johann Hermann Schein, ed. Kurt Stone, *Christ lag in Todesbanden*, Tetra/Continuo TC 225.
- ¹⁷ Samuel Scheidt, ed. William Tortolano, *Remember, Lord (Gedenke, Herr)*, GIA Publications G-6852.
- ¹⁸ Johann Hermann Schein, ed. Ludwig Lenel, *Eight Chorale Settings from Opella Nova (Part 1)*, Concordia Publishing House 98-4713.
- ¹⁹ Modern editions of several of these psalms, with the original German text and singable English translations, may be found in the *Augsburg Motet Book*, Augsburg Fortress 9781451423709, and *Chantry Choirbook: Sacred Music for All Seasons*, Augsburg Fortress 9780800657772.
- ²⁰ Johann Crüger, *Auf, Auf, mein Herz*, in *Chantry Choirbook: Sacred Music for All Seasons*, Augsburg Fortress 9780800657772.
- ²¹ Dietrich Buxtehude, *Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Thy Word (Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort)*, Concordia Publishing House 97-6331.
- ²² Dietrich Buxtehude, *In dulci jubilo*, <http://petrucci.mus.auth.gr/imglnks/usimg/b/b5/IMSLP200486-PMLP340764-BuxWV52.pdf>.
- ²³ Note that *In dulci jubilo*, like several of Buxtehude's other cantatas, is only for three (SAB) voices. Others include *Lauda Sion Salvatorem* and *Jesu, meine Freude*.
- ²⁴ John Blow, *Sing, Sing, Ye Muses*, Walton Music WM 155/Hal Leonard HL08500260.
- ²⁵ Joseph Haydn, *Missa brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo*, Carus-Verlag 40.079/01. Joseph Haydn, ed. Patrick Liebergen, "Kyrie" and "Gloria" from *Missa brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo*, Alfred Music Publishing AP21689. Joseph Haydn, "Agnus Dei" from *Missa brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo*, Hal Leonard Corporation 0896766.
- ²⁶ W. A. Mozart, *Kyrie*, K. 33, Bärenreiter-Verlag BA5345a.
- ²⁷ The six settings are *How Oft, Instinct with Warmth Divine* (Psalm 26); *Blest Be The Name of Jacob's God* (Psalm 31); *Maker of All! Be Thou My Guard* (Psalm 41); *The Lord, The Almighty Monarch, Spake* (Psalm 50); *Long Life Shall Israel's King Behold* (Psalm 61); and *O Let Me in th'Accepted Hour* (Psalm 69). The texts are metrical paraphrases of the psalms by James Merrick (1720-1769). As of this writing, three are available on IMSLP and four are available on CPDL in editions of varying quality. All six are published individually by Broude Brothers in editions by H. C. Robbins Landon. One setting (*The Lord, The Almighty Monarch, Spake*) is included in the *Augsburg Motet Book*, an excerpt of which is provided in Figure 4.
- ²⁸ W. A. Mozart, *God Is Our Refuge*, in *Augsburg Motet Book*, Augsburg Fortress 9781451423709.
- ²⁹ William Billings, *When Jesus Wept*, <http://www3.cpd.org/wiki/images/sheet/billings/bill-wjw.pdf>. William Billings, *Wake Every Breath*, <http://www1.cpd.org/wiki/images/sheet/billings/bill-wak.pdf>.
- ³⁰ Franz Schubert, *Mass in G Major*, Carus Verlag 40.675/00. Franz Schubert, *Mass in C Major*, Carus-Verlag 40.658/00.
- ³¹ "Six Antiphons for Palm Sunday."
- ³² Franz Schubert, *Osanna filio David*, in *Augsburg Motet Book*, Augsburg Fortress 9781451423709. Schubert's *Pueri Hebraeorum* from this set is also included.
- ³³ Felix Mendelssohn, ed. Ray Robinson, *Die Nachtigall*, Hinshaw Music HMC 407.
- ³⁴ Felix Mendelssohn, *Verleih' uns Frieden*, E. C. Schirmer Music Company #5212. Also found in *Chantry Choirbook: Sacred Music for All Seasons*, Augsburg Fortress 9780800657772.
- ³⁵ Giacomo Puccini, *Requiem*, <http://www2.cpd.org/wiki/images/2/2e/Pucc-req.pdf>.
- ³⁶ Aaron Copland, *Old American Songs*, Boosey & Hawkes HL 48019954.
- ³⁷ Benjamin Britten, *Complete Folksong Arrangements: 61 Songs for High Voice*, Boosey & Hawkes HL 48018781.