

A RECITAL

by

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JESSE EVERETT WADE, III

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GRADUATE RECITAL SERIES NO. 101

SEASON 1978-79

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

Presents

JESS WADE, III, Conductor

Bachelor of Music
Southwest Baptist College

CHAMBER CHOIR

DEANNA FREITAG, Accompanist

Friday, December 8, 1978

All Faiths Chapel

7:30 p.m.

A MASTER'S RECITAL

presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
MASTER OF MUSIC

PROGRAM

"SING TO THE LORD" *George Frideric Handel*
from *Zadok the Priest* (1685-1759)JESU DULCIS MEMORIA *Tomás Luis de Victoria*
(c. 1549-1611)O MAGNUM MYSTERIUM *Tomás Luis de Victoria*PSALM AND PRAYER OF DAVID *Walter Piston*
(1894-1976)

INTERMISSION

FOUR PART SONGS, OP. 92 *Johannes Brahms*
O Schöne Nacht (1833-1897)
Spätherbst
Abendlied
WarumAMERICAN MADRIGALS *Kirke Mechem*
Kansas Boys (born 1925)
He's Gone Away
Adam's Bride
New York Girls

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL: CORONATION ANTHEMS

English church anthems had gone through a great deal of development before their culmination in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Anthems which were set to English texts were already in existence in the early decades of the Reformation, even before the introduction of the Prayer Book in 1549. Officially, though, the anthem did not form part of the service until Charles II established his set of rules for the Church. Not only was the anthem used in the same manner in the Anglican service as was the motet in the Roman, but obviously the anthem was derived from the motet. Impressive examples of the motet-anthem can be found in the works of Tye, Tallis, Farrant, and Gibbons, but the decisive change comes with the Restoration. The mandatory break in the practice of church music during the Commonwealth greatly diminished ties with the old choral polyphony and led to the admission of new stylistic elements from the Continent, especially Italian cantatas and operas. The ceremonial tone dominant in the Louis XIV style was fully established in the English anthem, especially after the orchestra was substituted for the organ. Two types of anthems had developed by the seventeenth century: the "verse anthem," with solo alternating with chorus, and the "full anthem," which was all choral.¹

One of the Baroque English composers who was interested in the anthem was George Frideric Handel (1685-1759). By the time he arrived on the scene, the genre was fully developed. Handel is best known for his composition of

¹Paul Henry Lang, George Frideric Handel (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1966), pp. 223-224.

operas, oratorios, and instrumental music. However, a number of his anthems have become quite prominent in the choral repertoire. The list of his anthems includes the eleven Chandos Anthems, written between 1717 and 1720; the four Coronation Anthems (1727) (No. 1 "Zadok the Priest," No. 2 "The King shall rejoice," No. 3 "My heart is inditing," No. 4 "Let Thy hand be strengthened"); the Wedding Anthem for Princess Anne (1734); the Wedding Anthem for the Prince of Wales (1736); the Funeral Anthem for Queen Caroline (1737); the Dettingen Anthem (1743); and the Foundling Hospital Anthem (1749).² Of these, the Chandos Anthems and the Coronation Anthems are the most famous.

Handel approached the anthem with a mastery of vocal writing, both solo and choral, that surely was unrivalled at that time. In his use of polyphony he was aware of the "collective-universal nature" of choral music, of its "stability and suggestion of the spatial," and of the "multidimensional." He was also well aware of the susceptibility of English people to stirring ceremonial music, which was carried over from the anthem into the oratorio. His dramatic use of the chorus came from the English theater rather than the English church.³

Some of the most outstanding of Handel's anthems are his Coronation Anthems. The circumstances surrounding the composition and performance of these anthems are quite fascinating. Handel had lived in England since 1712, but he did not become a naturalized Englishman until February 20, 1727. On June 11 of that year, King George I, who was an avid patron of Handel, died on his way to Hanover. The Prince of Wales was immediately proclaimed King George II, but the official coronation had to wait for several months. Handel

²Eric Blom, ed., Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 5th ed., (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1954), IV, 54.

³Lang, Handel, p. 233.

and the Prince were not on the best of terms, but this was because George I was a staunch supporter of the composer. Since the Prince loathed everything about his father, the animosity was extended to Handel, even though he liked his music and had nothing against him personally. When George I died, so did the animosity the new king had had for Handel; the composer retained his Royal sponsorship, and was commissioned to compose the anthems for the coronation.⁴

According to George III's notes on his copy of the "Mainwaring" biography of Handel, the king himself insisted that Handel and not Maurice Greene, the Organist and Composer of the Chapel Royal, should compose the coronation music.⁵ Handel is mentioned in the first reference to the coronation music in the newspapers:

From the "Norwich Mercury," 16 September 1727.

September 9. Mr. Hendel, the famous Composer to the Opera, is appointed by the King to compose the anthem at the Coronation which is to be sung in Westminster Abbey at the Grand Ceremony.⁶

No official consideration of the coronation was made until the meeting of the Archbishops on August 11. At that time, October 4 was set as the date for the ceremony. The form of the service had not been discussed at the August 11 meeting, but it was decided that they would combine the order of the two previous coronation services. The final form of the complete order of service was approved by the Council on September 20, and 100 copies were ordered printed, 50 for the use of royalty and 50 for the use of

⁴Lang, Handel, p. 186.

⁵Newman Flower, George Frideric Handel: His Personality and His Times (London: Cassell & Co., Ltd., 1959), p. 188.

⁶Otto Erich Deutsch, Handel: A Documentary Biography (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1955), p. 213.

those who were to officiate at the ceremony. At this same meeting it was also decided to postpone the coronation until October 11.⁷ Both of these factors, the procrastination in making a final decision on the order of the service and the insufficient number of printed official programs, may have contributed to the apparent confusion at the coronation ceremony. The fact that the ceremony was postponed may also account for conflicting dates of performance given in earlier history texts and music dictionaries.

None of the printed texts coincides exactly with the texts of Handel's anthems. There is no date on the autographs of the coronation anthems, but it is likely Handel had completed at least some of the work before he received the printed order of service, since he had expected the ceremony to take place October 4. In fact, an article in Parker Penny Post dated October 4, 1727, states that the anthems had already been completed and heard by a select few.⁸ The best guide to the texts that Handel had had at his disposal was Sanford's account of the 1685 ceremony, A Complete Account of the Ceremonies Observed in the Coronation of the Kings and Queens of England (1727). Handel's texts for "Let thy hand" and "Zadok the priest" follows Sanford's exactly. However, the 1727 order of service completely omits the first of these anthems and gives a longer text for the second. It may be that Handel had already completed these two anthems before receiving the 1727 printed text. Seeing that his compositions already did not follow the text expected by the Archbishops, he may have felt freer to alter the texts of the last two anthems, neither of which follows any of the printed texts.⁹ It may have been these

⁷Donald Burrows, "Handel and the 1727 Coronation," The Musical Times, June 1977, pp. 469, 470.

⁸Deutsch, Handel, p. 214.

⁹Burrows, Handel, p. 470.

circumstances that precipitated the anecdote about the conflict between the Archbishop of Canterbury and Handel concerning the texts for the anthems, in which Handel is supposed to have said, "I have read my Bible very well and shall choose for myself."¹⁰

There is conflicting evidence as to the order in which the anthems were performed at the ceremony. The copy of the printed order of service belonging to the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Wake, gives one arrangement. This copy includes autograph amendments by Wake. The order of the anthems on the printed copy is first, "The King shall rejoice," followed by "Zadok the Priest" and "My heart is inditing." Wake has written in "Let Thy hand be strengthened" between the last two, though this placement is questionable. Another order of service is found in The Order of Performing the Several Anthems at the Coronation of their Majesties King George the Second and Queen Caroline which was copied into the Chapel Royal Cheque Book. This follows the 1685 form and includes all four anthems with "Let Thy hand be strengthened" appearing first, followed by "Zadok the Priest," "The King shall rejoice," and "My heart is inditing." This order is probably more nearly correct.¹¹

After the first anthem "The King shall rejoice" in Wake's copy, he has written "The Anthems in Confusion: All irregular in the Music." The logistics of the choir galleries in Westminster Abbey made it hard for the separated choirs to communicate. If, during the service itself, the Chapel Royal singers had embarked upon "Let Thy hand be strengthened" while the other performers following the printed order of service began "The King shall rejoice," Wake's comment would indeed be justified.¹² In fact, this discrepancy in program

¹⁰R.A. Streatfeild, Handel (New York: Da Capo Press, 1964), p. 105.

¹¹Burrows, Handel, p. 471.

¹²Burrows, Handel, p. 471.

orders may have caused other difficulties throughout the ceremony. The only anthem which occurs in the same place in both orders is "Zadok the Priest," which is the anthem that was best received by the listeners. If this second order of program is correct, then the enumeration of the anthems as they appear in the complete works is erroneous and should have "Let Thy hand" as No. 1, rather than "Zadok," then followed by the other three in order.

The person who is used to hearing mammoth Handelian choirs of today may be surprised to learn of the original ratio of singers to instruments used even at this most ceremonial occasion. There were approximately 47 singers as indicated by the specifications at the beginning of "The King shall rejoice" including 12 trebles (boys), 7 first and 7 second altos, 7 tenors, 7 first and 7 second basses. This would seem a fair approximation of the number actually used considering the money allocated for their salaries. The choir was the combined choirs of the Royal Chapel and Westminster, with the addition of a few Italian opera singers.¹³

The instrumentalists, on the other hand, numbered well over one hundred. The anthems are scored for three trumpets, drums, two oboe and bassoon parts, organ continuo, and a strong body of strings, with the violins often divided into three parts. The fact that Handel used only trumpets is significant. The trumpets are used in "Zadok," undarkened either by horns or trombones, to help in the acclamation of "God save the King." With regard to his brass Handel had very clear-cut ideas: trumpets were noble, horns were exotic, and trombones priestly. The secret of the brass's effectiveness is in the rarity of its appearance.¹⁴ The organ used for the first performance was one erected

¹³Burrows, Handel, p. 473.

¹⁴Percy M. Young, Handel (London: J.M. Dent & sons, Ltd., 1975), p. 114.

by Christopher Shrider especially for the occasion.¹⁵ The account that the double-bassoon was invented for the coronation ceremony is certainly inaccurate, as the sixteen-foot instrument was not made until 1739 by the flute-maker Stanesby.¹⁶

The Coronation Anthems are particularly ceremonial in style. They are simpler in design than Handel's earlier anthems and their counterpoint, even their rhythm, is less elaborate, but as Lang relates, "the ceremonial proclamatory quality is overwhelming. This is most descriptive music when studied from the score, one sees simple diatonic harmonies, but they are so placed in the voices and so timed that when heard the effect is irresistible."¹⁷ It is also necessary to understand that in ceremonial music of this kind the ritual aspects often must develop at the expense of the religious, even at the expense of some of the finer musical aspects. It has been said of these anthems that they "strike just the right note of regal splendour and magnificence, and seem to sparkle with the glitter of the gleaming pageant."¹⁸ It has been suggested that the reason that three of the anthems are in D major is because of Handel's "inner necessity" to use this key for festive occasions. However, the real reason was one of practicality. This was the preferred tuning of the trumpets, which were a necessity for ceremonial music.¹⁹

Perhaps the most outstanding and significant of the Coronation Anthems is "Zadok the Priest." Concerning this anthem, George III wrote ". . . as to the first (anthem) it is probably the most perfect if possible of all His superb compositions."²⁰ A performance of "Zadok" has been given at the

¹⁵Burrows, Handel, p. 473.

¹⁶Deutsch, Handel, p. 214.

¹⁷Lang, Handel, p. 229.

¹⁸Streatfeild, Handel, p. 105.

¹⁹Lang, Handel, p. 233.

coronation of every English monarch since George II. This anthem was performed many times during Handel's lifetime for various occasions, often omitting the introduction and using only the chorus "God save the King."

Handel has become quite noted for his use of plagiarism in composing many of his works. The practice began early in his career and included material borrowed from Carissimi, Stradella, Kerll, Keiser, Perti, Erba, Urlo, Graun, Habermann, and others. Handel borrowed musical ideas not only from other Baroque composers, but also often used portions of his own earlier works in later compositions. A great part of all four of the Coronation Anthems were transferred to oratorios with some revisions in the texts. "Zadok the priest" and "My heart is inditing" were used in the revised version of Esther (1732). "Let Thy hand be strengthened" and most of "The King shall rejoice" were utilized in Deborah (1733). "Zadok the priest" was also used for the final chorus of his Occasional Oratorio. Some of the techniques used in "Zadok" were even forerunners of Handel's most famous work, the "Hallelujah Chorus" from Messiah, as can be discovered by comparing the following two examples:

Ex. 1, "Zadok the priest."

men! May the King live for - ev - er, for - ev - er, for -

May the King live, may the King live for - ev - er, for - ev - er, for -

May the King live, may the King live for - ev - er, for - ev - er, for -

May the King live, may the King live for - ev - er, for - ev - er, for -

May the King live, may the King live for - ev - er, for - ev - er, for -

Ex. 2, "Hallelujah Chorus" from Messiah.

The image displays a musical score for the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's Messiah. It features five staves. The top four staves are vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass) and the bottom staff is the piano accompaniment. The key signature is D major (two sharps) and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are: "er. King of Kings, ev - er. King of Kings, ev - er, for ev - er and ev - er. Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le -". The piano part provides a rhythmic and harmonic foundation for the vocal entries.

"Zadok the priest" is a supreme example of Handel's ceremonial music. It is the shortest and probably the most magnificent of the anthems. It begins with a simple undulating introduction in the strings which is derived in essence from the earlier "Nisi Dominus." The lower strings and winds maintain an unbroken flow of eighth notes for 22 measures, while the violins in thirds and sixths build up a series of arpeggio figures, all on the most elementary progressions, until the chorus enters in seven parts with trumpets and drums.²¹ The choral entrance is a veritable explosion, about which Lang says that "it does not matter much what follows, the issues are settled then and there."²²

The choral harmony of "Zadok" uses simple, full diatonic chords. All three sections of the anthem are homophonic, with scarcely a trace of counterpoint, and firmly rooted to the tonic key of D major. The third and most often performed section, 'God save the King,' has extended melismatic sections

²¹Basil Lam, "The Church Music," in Handel: A Symposium, Gerald Abraham, ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 162.

²²Lang, Handel, p. 229.

for individual or paired voices, but the harmonic support for even these sections is always homophonic. For practicality's sake, modern performing editions of this last section have often changed the text (as might have Handel) to read "Sing to the Lord," instead of "God save the King." At any rate, "Zadok the Priest" is a supreme example of Handel's power to make a unique statement with the simplest of technical means.

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TOMÁS LUIS DE VICTORIA: JESU DULCIS MEMORIA; O MAGNUM MYSTERIUM

By the end of the sixteenth century, Renaissance choral music, especially the motet, had changed a great deal since its simple beginnings centuries before. A sacred choral work was almost always expected to have at least a four voice texture and usually employed a five or six voice texture. In fact, it had become common practice to use more than one choir in a single work, especially when writing for festive occasions. It was not at all uncommon to find liturgical music which was based on a secular melody or a complete madrigal. Motets were apt to be sectionalized with each section carefully describing the text, whether contrapuntally or in familiar style. Chromaticism had become more prominent while moving at the same time toward the concept of tonality. The Reformation movement had started a counter movement in Rome to purify its church music.

It was in the midst of this change that there arose the "culmination of Castillian religious polyphony" in the person of Tomás Luis de Victoria (c.1548-1611).¹ Victoria is often considered to be of equal importance to Palestrina, his older contemporary. Also, because of this association and the fact that he spent a great deal of time in Rome, he is sometimes considered to be of the Roman school. He is, however, decidedly Spanish in origin and in his approach to music.

Very little is known about Victoria's early life, except that he was probably born near Avila and began his musical training as a choir boy in the

¹Gerald Abraham, ed., The Age of Humanism 1540-1630, The New Oxford History of Music, IV (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 398.

local cathedral choir. In 1565 he went to Rome to begin his religious education. He studied at the Collegium Germanicum, which had been established in 1552 by Ignatius Loyola for the training of German priests to combat Lutheranism. It was later opened to people of other nationalities and, in 1565, was under Spanish direction. Also at that time, Palestrina was maestro di cappella at the Collegium Romanum. Victoria may have studied with Palestrina during this time. In 1569 he left the college to become chapel-master and organist at the church of Santa Maria di Monserrato. He then succeeded Palestrina as maestro di cappella at the Roman school in 1571.²

It was just after this appointment in 1572 that Victoria published his first book of motets, 14 numbers a 4, 9 a 5, 9 a 6, and 1 a 8--33 in all. The volume was dedicated to his chief patron, Cardinal Otto Truchsess, Bishop of Augsburg. In 1573 he returned to the German school, this time as a teacher. Victoria was not ordained into the priesthood until 1575. Therefore, all the motets in the 1572 edition were written before he attained this station in his religious career.³

Victoria remained in Rome until about 1596 when he returned to Madrid. From that year until his death in 1611 he was organist and choirmaster at the convent of the Descalzas Reales in Madrid. After the death of the Empress in 1603, he held the title of chaplain to her daughter, the Princess Margaret.⁴

Most of Victoria's works were published in Rome from 1572 to 1592. The first Madrid edition was published in 1600. The sumptuous nature of most of these publications and the high standing of the church and royal dignitaries

²Eric Blom, ed., Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 5th ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1954), VIII, 767.

³Blom, Grove's, p. 767.

⁴Oscar Thompson, ed., The International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians, 8th ed., rev. (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1958), p. 1971.

to whom they were dedicated testify impressively to the esteem in which Victoria himself, as well as his music, must have been held. His works include some 20 Masses, 44 motets, 34 hymns, a number of Magnificats, an Officium Hebdomadae Sanctae, and his last published work, the Officium defunctorum (Office for the Dead), which was composed in memory of the Empress Maria.⁵ Although his over-all creative output was relatively small by the standards of his time (only some 180 works in comparison with Palestrina's over 700 and Lassus' over 1200), there are few other composers of any era who demonstrated more masterful technical command in their very first works and maintained such craftsmanship more consistently.

Victoria's style is often compared to that of Palestrina, but it has characteristics which make his works masterfully unique. Victoria's compositions are exclusively sacred. Victoria "had no other aim than to sing of the Cross and of the Redemption, using means uncontaminated by profane art . . . He imitated the 'princeps musicae' of the Roman school, by writing music in praise of God and for the moving and uplifting of the listeners; able to harmonize artistic severity with loving emotion."⁶ When Victoria wrote using the 'parody' technique, he always used sacred models. Eleven of his Masses are parodies on his own motets.⁷

Victoria was more emotional and sentimental in his music than Palestrina. The methods he used to achieve these qualities depend to a considerable extent on what have been called "harmonic injections" into the system and a style which favors "mellifluous chromaticism."⁸ Victoria's music is distinctive in

⁵Abraham, Humanism, p. 399.

⁶Abraham, Humanism, p. 399,400.

⁷Abraham, Humanism, p. 403.

⁸Percy Young, The Choral Tradition (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1962). p. 48.

its emotional and dramatic qualities. His melodic line is freer, and his contrasts of rhythm and texture more pronounced than Palestrina's. Throughout his compositions there is a great preoccupation with the purely choral side of music.⁹

The music of Victoria was often considered to be old-fashioned by his contemporaries. However, there are a number of characteristics which point to his use of newer techniques. Harmon states that "he is completely 'modern' in both his style and in his fondness for polychoral writing, and of his comparatively small output nearly a sixth are for two or three choirs. A few of these, published in 1600, have a written-out organ accompaniment which is simply a reduction of the music for Choir I, and when that chorus rests, so does the instrument."¹⁰ Victoria also made use of "the madrigalesque style and of all the musical symbolism then current in Italy, in order to express mystical emotions of such poignancy and tragic grandeur that none before him had attained. Every idea suggested by the text is in some manner illustrated by the music with an extraordinary inventiveness, force, and color."¹¹ His music also makes great use of repeated notes, a common practice in his day. The basis of Victoria's style is the melodic line. Tension between the melodic and harmonic elements produces incomparable emotive force by means of dissonance.¹²

Victoria's music is also very much Spanish in character. Grout states that it is thoroughly personal and typically Spanish."¹³ The great Spanish

⁹Alec Harmon and Anthony Milner, Late Renaissance and Baroque Music (London: Barrie & Rockliff, 1959), p. 79.

¹⁰Harmon, Milner, Renaissance and Baroque Music, p. 79.

¹¹Gilbert Chase, The Music of Spain (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1941), p. 84.

¹²Abraham, Humanism, p. 405.

¹³Donald Jay Grout, A History of Western Music (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1973), p. 273.

polyphonic religion school of the sixteenth century that reached its culmination in the art of Morales and Victoria was not an offshoot of the contemporary Franco-Flemish school, but rather a further growth of the native school that had already been implanted, with all its characteristic features, by previous generations of Spanish composers.¹⁴ Some of the characteristics of the Spanish nationalistic school are the ascending interval of a diminished fourth, F sharp to B flat, and the augmented second, E flat to F sharp.¹⁵

It is, perhaps, ironic that the work which brought Victoria's music back to public attention is the one that gives musicologists the hardest time with its authenticity. Grove's relates that "Victoria began to be more generally known by one very delightful short motet a 4, 'Jesu dulcis memoria', universally attributed to him, though it does not appear in any of his own published works and its original source is nowhere specified."¹⁶ "Jesu dulcis memoria" is not really a motet, but rather a hymn which is to be used for the second vespers during the Feast of the Most Holy Name of Jesus, which is the Sunday between the Circumcision and the Epiphany.¹⁷ Pedrell includes the work in the supplemental volume (VIII) of Victoria's complete works. The source cited for the hymn is Recueil de morceaux de musique ancienne which the Prince of Moscow had published.¹⁸ Nowhere does Pedrell give even the slightest reason

¹⁴Chase, Music of Spain, p. 76.

¹⁵Abraham, Humanism, p. 405.

¹⁶Blom, Grove's, p. 772.

¹⁷Benedictines of Soesmes, ed. Liber Usualis (Tournai, Belgium: Desclée & Co., 1947), p. 452.

¹⁸Philippo Pedrell, Thomae Ludovici Victoria Opera omnia, VIII (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1913), p. xcvi.

for his obvious belief that the work was composed by Victoria. The MGG article states that this setting of "Jesu dulcis memoria" is definitely not genuine. In fact, F.X. Haberl had already proven that Victoria did not write the piece before Pedrell included it in the complete works.¹⁹

Most present-day scholars tend to agree that the hymn is not by Victoria, although there are elements in the piece which might suggest otherwise. "Jesu dulcis memoria" contains the characteristic "Victorian" serenity and luminosity. Its style is very much like Victoria in that it is extremely expressive of the text. However, it is unlike Victoria in the slow moving contrapuntal lines and the extensive use of the familiar style. This is especially true at the beginning, where all four voices enter simultaneously, a characteristic very uncommon for Victoria.

The long, sustained counterpoint in "Jesu dulcis memoria" serves to create a number of beautiful suspensions. Each new statement of the text is overlapped with the ending of the previous phrase. There are no obvious breaks in the rhythmic movement. However, there is a complete cadence that occurs before beginning the "Sed super mel" section. The restatement of the final text "dulcis praesentia" is made clear by using repeated notes in the uppermost voice. The text for the hymn is fairly short and simple:

Jesu dulcis memoria,
 Dans vera cordi gaudia;
 Sed super mel et omnia,
 Ejus dulcis praesentia.

Translation:

Jesus, of sweet memory,
 give us true joy of the heart;
 But sweeter than all,
 Your own sweet presence.

Almost all the motets written by Victoria appear in the 1572 edition.

¹⁹Friedrich Blume, ed., Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, XIII (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1966), col. 1591.

Two of the finest and best-known of these compositions are "O quam gloriosum" and "O vos omnes." Probably the next most important is the four voice Christmas response motet, "O magnum mysterium," which was intended to be sung during the Second Nocturne of the Day of the Nativity of Our Lord.²⁰ In many ways, this motet is typical of the motet style which Victoria used. Victoria's setting succeeds in demonstrating the gentle wonder and awe surrounding the birth of Christ. The New Oxford Dictionary of Music describes the motet simply with the word "sweet."²¹ Reese hails the Christmas motet as "exquisite."²² This is also one of the motets of which Victoria thought highly enough to use in the parody treatment for a later Mass. "O magnum mysterium" is not based on chant, and is a freely composed motet.

The original motet is written with one flat and is in the transposed dorian mode. The work is in four sections, the first two being in duple meter. The last two sections are both "Alleluia" sections, with the first being in triple meter and the final section again in duple. The first section begins with paired voices, with the second voice of each pair imitating the first a fifth below. In addition to this imitation within the paired voices, the bassus and tenor imitate the cantus and the altus an octave lower after the upper voices have stated the first line of the text. In describing Victoria's setting of the first line of the text, Reese says "Successive and contrapuntal rhythmic combinations lend elasticity and interest to the setting of the words 'et admirabile sacramentum'."²³ Imitation continues to

²⁰Benedictines, Liber Usualis, p. 382.

²¹Abraham, Humanism, p. 401.

²²Gustave Reese, Music in the Renaissance (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1954), p. 602.

²³Reese, Renaissance, p. 602.

play an important role in the remainder of this first section which ends with a full cadence on the word "praesepio," followed by a rest.

The second section, which begins with the words "O beata Virgo," is shorter than the first. It is set mostly in familiar style with some contrapuntal movement. Victoria uses repeated notes to emphasize the name of the Blessed Virgin. The "alleluia" sections are spirited and lively with most of the contrapuntal interest coming in the last duple section in contrast with the preceding familiar style. The final chord includes both the third and the fifth, and is major. The text for the motet is as follows:

O magnum mysterium, et admirabile sacramentum,
ut animalia viderunt Dominum natum,
jacentem in praesepio.
O beata Virgo,
cujus viscera meruerunt portare
Dominum Jesum Christum.
Alleluia.

Translation:

O great mystery and wonderful sacrament,
that animals might see the birth of the Lord
as He lay in the manger.
O, Blessed Virgin,
Who was worthy of bearing our Lord Jesus Christ,
Alleluia.

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WALTER PISTON: PSALM AND PRAYER OF DAVID

Neo-classicism has become one of the prominent styles of compositional techniques used by twentieth century American composers. One great exponent of this style was Walter Piston. His contributions to music of this century, through his compositions and text books, have been outstanding. Piston's achievements have been greatest in the field of symphonic literature, but he has written music for practically every medium, including choral music.

Walter Hamor Piston, Jr., was born in Rockland, Maine, January 20, 1894. His grandfather was an Italian sea captain from Genoa by the name of Antonio Pistone, who married a New England girl named Experience Hamor. The couple settled in Rockland and became such a part of the American lifestyle that the final "e" of Pistone was dropped. Antonio's son, Walter Hamor Piston, Sr., and his wife Leona (Stover) remained in Maine until after their son had become a young boy. When Walter Jr. reached the age of ten, the family moved to Boston.

Piston's parents encouraged him to study both the piano and the violin. However, his original career aspirations were not in the field of music, but rather in the visual arts. During the summer of 1912, Piston worked as a draftsman for Boston Elevated Railway, working on trolley engineering. As the time drew near to decide on a college education, economics proved to be the deciding factor. As Piston put it, "My family was far from wealthy. . . the New England Conservatory cost money, but the Massachusetts School of Art was free."¹ So he pursued architectural drawing as his field of study

¹Peter Westergaard, "Conversation with Walter Piston," Perspectives of New Music, Fall-Winter, 1968, p.3.

and was graduated in 1916. While in school he continued to earn extra money by playing the violin and piano at dance halls, hotels, restaurants, and social events in Boston. Though Piston's interests later turned more fully to music, his training as an artist was always apparent. His scores were noticeably clear and neatly drawn. In fact, he drew most of the illustrations for his books himself. Many of the characteristics of his music were gained from art, noticeably discovery of form, clarity, economy of line, and sureness of design.²

With the advent of World War I, Piston joined the Navy band after convincing the military personnel that he could play the saxophone, an instrument he had purchased a few weeks before and taught himself how to play from an instruction book borrowed from the library. On September 14, 1920, he married Kathryn Nason who was also an artist.³ Piston enrolled as a part-time music student at Harvard in a course taught by Archibald T. Davison. Dr. Davison encouraged him to become a full-time student and took him on as his assistant. In 1924, Piston was graduated from Harvard with a B.A., summa cum laude. He won the John Knowles Paine traveling fellowship and went to Paris. There he became one of several prominent twentieth century American composers who studied with Nadia Boulanger at Fontainebleau. He became a professor of music in 1944 and retired in 1960. While at Harvard he taught courses in theory, composition, and orchestration and used his spare time to compose. After his retirement he continued to live on Belmont Hill and spent his summers in South Woodstock, Vermont, where he did much of his composing.

Walter Piston died at his home on November 12, 1976, at the age of 82.⁴

²Klaus George Roy, "Walter Piston," Stereo Review, April, 1970, p. 58.

³J.T.H. Mize, The International Who Is Who in Music, 5th ed. (Chicago: Who Is Who in Music, Inc., Ltd., 1951), p. 332.

⁴Edward Hudson, "Walter Piston Dies: Composer Won Two Pulitzers," New York Times, 13 November 1976, p. 26, col. 4.

On November 24, Leonard Bernstein, a former student of Piston's, paid tribute to him by conducting the New York Philharmonic in a performance of the Adagio of the Second Symphony.⁵

Walter Piston was a rather prolific composer even if the variety of media he employed was small compared to other twentieth century composers. Almost all of his compositions are instrumental. They are very objective and use abstract forms and titles. Koussevitzky, conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in the 1920's, asked Piston to write a symphony. Piston, not yet feeling ready to tackle a work of such great proportions, wrote the eight minute "Symphonic Piece" which was premiered March 23, 1928.⁶ After several other attempts at smaller works, he finally wrote his First Symphony in 1937. In all, Piston wrote eight symphonies. His Third Symphony, written in 1947, was premiered by Koussevitzky and the BSO in 1948 and was the winner of the Pulitzer Prize for that year.⁷ The Seventh Symphony was also a Pulitzer Prize winner. It was written in 1960 and premiered by Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1961.⁸ His final symphony, Symphony No. 8, was written in 1965. All totaled, Piston wrote 37 pieces for orchestra. Among these is his last work written in 1971, the Concerto for Flute and Orchestra.⁹

Only one ballet is among the list of Piston's compositions. The Incredible Flutist, written in 1938, was a dance play by Jan Veen (Hans

⁵Allen Hughes, "Music: Bernstein Art Songs," New York Times, 26 November 1976, III, p. 4, col. 2.

⁶Roy, "Walter Piston," p. 60.

⁷Roy, "Walter Piston," p. 63.

⁸Roy, "Walter Piston," p. 65.

⁹Friedrich Blume, ed., Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, 10 (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1962), col. 1306 and suppl., col. 1500.

Wiener) and was premiered by Arthur Fiedler and the Boston Pops Orchestra.¹⁰ His single ballet is probably more popular in Europe than any of his other works.¹¹ Piston wrote 23 chamber music pieces, including five string quartets. He wrote three piano works, one piece for band, and one piece for organ, the "Chromatic Study on the Name of Bach."¹²

Surprisingly, Piston wrote no songs or operas. Though he was one-fourth Italian and a noted lyrical melodist, his compositions had little to do with the voice. This may be explained by Piston's preoccupation with "absolute" music. Piston felt that "musical thought is not a translation into music of what can be or has been expressed in some other medium, such as poetry, or photography. It has meaning only in a musical sense."¹³ He did, however, write two works for chorus. The first, written in 1938, was Carnival Song for men's chorus and eleven brass instruments. The text, written by Lorenzo di Medici, is in the original Italian. It was first performed in 1940 by the Harvard Glee Club under the direction of G. Wallace Woodworth. The second, more substantial, choral composition is Psalm and Prayer of David, written in 1958, for mixed chorus and seven instruments (flute, clarinet, bassoon, violin, viola, cello, and bass). The work was commissioned by Brandeis University and first performed in 1959 by the Chorus Pro Musica under Alfred Nash Patterson.¹⁴ These two compositions represent Piston's total vocal output and are so overshadowed by his instru-

¹⁰Roy, "Walter Piston," p. 61

¹¹Obituary, "Dr. Walter Piston," The Times, 15 November 1976, p. 171.

¹²Blume, MGG, 10, col. 1306.

¹³Roy, "Walter Piston," p. 62.

¹⁴Roy, "Walter Piston," p. 62.

mental works that they are not even mentioned in the New York Times tribute to Piston after his death.¹⁵

In addition to being a composer, Piston was also the author of a number of scholarly texts. The first book, Principles of Harmonic Analysis was published by E.C. Schirmer in 1933. His second book, Harmony, was originally published in 1941 by W.W. Norton and Company. It is now in its fourth edition and has become the most widely used harmony text in America.¹⁶ He attempted to show not what should be done, but what had been done and why. According to Piston, "Theory follows practice, and not the other way around."¹⁷ Piston wrote two other texts, Counterpoint in 1947, and Orchestration in 1955, both drawing on his vast knowledge and teaching experience in these respective areas.

Piston was the recipient of a number of awards and honors. His awards include the John Knowles Paine fellowship from 1924-26, the Guggenheim Fellowship in 1934, the Coolidge Medal in 1935, the New York Critics' Circle Award in 1944, 1945, and 1959, and the Boston Symphony's Horblit Award, 1948. He was the winner of the two already mentioned Pulitzer Prizes in 1948 and 1961. Piston held four honorary doctorates of music. In 1938 he was elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters, and in 1948 was elected as a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 1955 he became a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters.¹⁸

¹⁵Hudson, "Walter Piston Dies," p. 26, col. 4.

¹⁶Walter Piston, Harmony, 4th ed., rev. and exp. by Mark Devoto (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1978), p. xiii.

¹⁷Roy, "Walter Piston," p. 60.

¹⁸Roy, "Walter Piston," p. 64.

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Oscar Thompson, ed., The International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians, 10th ed. (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1975), p. 1681.

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E. Ruth Anderson, Contemporary American Composers: A Biographical Dictionary (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1976), p. 346.

The life and works of Piston have already taken on great importance in the history of American music. His music has had a large impact on other twentieth century music, although his works have seldom been regarded as revolutionary. However, they "possess a durability lacking in many more revolutionary works, and even the earliest works sound remarkably fresh and unfaded."¹⁹ Even in 1941, Aaron Copland recognized the importance of this man's work. "Piston's music sets a level of craftsmanship that is absolutely first-rate in itself and provides a level of standard of reference by which every other American's work may be judged."²⁰ He has also had a great influence on American music by teaching a generation of excellent composers, among them Arthur Berger, Irving Fine, Gordon Binkerd, Leonard Bernstein, Harold Shapero, Samuel Adler, and Daniel Pinkham.²¹ His teaching has doubtless influenced countless other music students through his textbooks. Piston Copland, Harris, Sessions, Thomson, and others were jointly responsible for the founding of Arrow Press, a publishing company which for many years published contemporary American music.²²

The style and characteristics of Piston's music are usually regarded as being apart from the music of other composers of this century who openly rebelled against using any previously established style of composition. His music has been recognized as "forming the heart and soul of American neo-classicism."²³ Piston's goal was "the perfect balance between expression

¹⁹F.W. Sternfeld, ed., Music in the Modern Age, Vol. 5 of A History of Western Music (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973), p. 375.

²⁰Aaron Copland, Our New Music (New York: Whittlesey House, 1941), p. 182.

²¹William W. Austin, Music in the 20th Century (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1966), p. 441.

²²Westergaard, "Conversation," p. 9.

²³Mark DeVoto, "In Memoriam: Walter Piston," Perspectives of New Music, Spring-Summer 1977, pp. 243-244.

and form."²⁴ Though he delighted in "form-finding," his forms were never static, schematic, rigid, or overly symmetrical. He greatly disliked any procedure that was easy or ready-made. He was principally a polyphonist and was concerned with each melody line. He felt that "the essence of what a composer has to say is found in the melodic thread, which should never falter. Form is growth controlled by design."²⁵

Unusual tonality was one of Piston's trademarks. The harmonic progression of a work is determined by what Piston called "harmonic rhythm," the contribution of root progressions to the rhythmic life of music. The tonal scheme of any of Piston's works depends on its method of defining tonal emphasis. The root may be implied in his textures either by the traditional implication of the fifth or by a unison.²⁶

Piston did not seem to like 12-tone music and serialization. He had these things to say about it:

The 12-tone school isn't interested in harmony, but the fact is that they've got musical meaning they don't want. When you combine two notes, you're writing harmony; it either develops what I call "harmonic rhythm" and means something, or it doesn't. . . I don't mind if they write static music on purpose. But it's too bad when they're stuck with it.²⁷

In a rather humorous anecdote, he made this pointed comment, "I recall a performance of *Pierrot Lunaire*, and one of the Schoenberg Quintets. At the end of it the clarinetist told me he had five measures left over when

²⁴Austin, 20th Century, p. 440.

²⁵Roy, "Walter Piston," p. 66.

²⁶Clifford Taylor, "Walter Piston: for his seventieth birthday," Perspectives of New Music, Fall-Winter 1964, p. 113.

²⁷Louis Chapin, "Walter Piston at 70," Musical America, December 1963, p. 34.

the others stopped, but he thought he had better stop, too."²⁸ There are, however, a few instances when Piston used the rigid system he disliked so much. Even his first symphony was written in a manner akin to the 12-note practitioners, but freer of merely doctrinaire principles.²⁹ There is one use of 12-tone in the third movement of his Partita for Violin, Viola, and Organ. In it he uses four forms of a 12-tone set exposed in the first twelve measures. However, its essential consequence in this movement is to arbitrarily order chromatic inflection around an apparent F sharp tonality.³⁰ There is even some use of serial devices in his Variations for cello and orchestra written in 1968.³¹

Piston was proud to be an American composer, but he did not succumb to folk tunes to prove his nationality. He defined American music as simply music written by Americans. "If a composer desires to serve the cause of American music he will best do it by remaining true to himself as an individual and not by trying to discover musical formulas for Americanism."³² This is exactly what Piston did. His music is best taken exactly as it stands. Its humanity, its wider and more personal meaning, is to be found in the sound, in the form, in the line, and in the logic of design and development. It is essentially "objective," and profoundly "classical" in nature.

Piston's style characteristics can easily be discovered in his choral work, Psalms and Prayer of David. It was written at a time when interest in

²⁸Westergaard, "Conversation," p. 7.

²⁹Percy M. Young, Biographical Dictionary of Composers (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1954), p. 261.

³⁰Taylor, "Walter Piston," pp. 104, 105.

³¹Sternfeld, Modern Age, p. 388.

³²Roy, "Walter Piston," p. 57.

his music had begun to lessen. This may help explain why he took the unusual choral commission. Yet all the elements that make Piston's music unique are present in these two short movements. The work is scored strictly for four mixed voices with no divisi parts. The instrumentation, previously mentioned, is unusual because it includes the double bass in place of a second violin. This, of course, gave the composer a wider range and additional timbre combinations. The texts for the work are taken from the King James version of the Bible. The "Psalm" is based on Psalm 96, "O sing unto the Lord a new song," and the "Prayer of David" is a setting of Psalm 86, "Bow down thine ear, O Lord." The work takes about 17 minutes to perform.

In examining the first of the two movements, the "Psalm," the neo-classic element of form is readily apparent. Using the choral thematic material as a guide, it is possible to analyze the form of the "Psalm" as ABCABA. Though not a classical form, it still has a definite form of its own. In fact, there is even some correlation between the number of measures in each section. The first A section has 23 measures, the second 29, and the last A restatement about half as many, 12 measures. The first B section has 17 measures and the second has 16. The middle C section has 22 measures. None of these sections is an exact repeat of a previous section, but there is enough of the same material to merit recognition. A chart of the overall form and characteristics of the movement is included in the appendix.

One of the most obvious characteristics of the "Psalm" is the continual meter change. Throughout this first movement the meter almost constantly switches from $\frac{5}{8}$ to $\frac{6}{8}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ with no apparent systematic scheme. Both of the tempo meno mosso sections, at m. 38 and m. 116, are strictly in $\frac{6}{8}$ and the middle tempo primo at m. 56 is consistently $\frac{5}{8}$ for a while, but this soon

breaks off into changing meters. Even the $\frac{5}{8}$ measures are not uniform in their eighth note groupings. A 3-2 grouped measure is often followed by one 2-3 grouped measure and vice versa. In fact, the $\frac{5}{8}$ groupings of eighth notes may vary in one measure within the various voice parts (e.g., m. 13).

The instrumental introduction is soft, but rhythmic, setting the mood of the uneven pulse. The strings have the harmonic cushion over which the flute has the melodic interest, rising, falling, and rising again to the sustained D above the open fifth G-D in the strings. The A section begins where the chorus enters in m. 10 on an octave G. The opening vocal line is unaccompanied so that the opening text, "O sing unto the Lord a new song" is clearly understood. It is simple and homophonic until the word "new" where the polyphony combined with the unusual meter groupings make it indeed "new" and different.

Ex. 1, mm. 10-15.

Con moto

10 *p* O sing un-to the Lord a new song: 15

At m. 26, on the words "Declare his glory," the dynamic level is suddenly forte. The voices are paired and enter one after another. There is a brief instrumental transition into the B section, marked meno mosso, which is in $\frac{6}{8}$. The bass instruments have a repeated rhythmic figure while the treble instruments vacillate between a 2-2-2 and 3-3 rhythmic combination. The voices enter individually with a new melodic figure, building from bass

to soprano, although the texture remains homophonic.

Ex. 2, mm. 39-41

meno mosso $\text{♩} = 144$ 40

For the Lord is great, and great-ly to be prais-ed:

The word "strength" in m. 51 is taken by the basses only, at first, while the word "beauty" is first sung by the sopranos. The final soft A minor chord of "sanctuary" in m. 55 is truly solace after the unusual rhythms and harmonies that precede it.

Ex. 3, mm. 51-55.

meno mosso $\text{♩} = 144$ 55

strength and beau-ty are in his sanc-tu-a-ry.

When the tempo primo returns in m. 56 in ⁵8, it is not with the same thematic material heard at the first, but is, rather, the beginning of the contrasting C section. This forte "Give unto the Lord" is by the sopranos alone. The altos enter six measures later with a separate contrapuntal line of their own. In m. 68 the basses take over and are joined

by the tenors to complete this section.

Ex. 4, mm. 57-60.



There is then, beginning in m. 77, an instrumental interlude which is actually the return of the introduction material which has been expanded. The voices enter softly in m. 88 on an octave G and continue on an unaccompanied variation of the opening vocal material, section A. Measures 96-99 of the instrumental parts are exactly like mm. 16-19. At m. 103 there are again paired voices, only this time the basses and altos are paired together and the tenors and sopranos are paired together. Piston dramatically portrays the text "let the sea roar" in the instruments with parallel major and minor sevenths.

The tempo meno mosso at m. 116 is very much like the first B section both rhythmically and melodically, though not entirely identical. The vocal parts in mm. 127-130 are almost exactly the same as those in mm. 49-52, except a major second lower. Also the tempo primo happens earlier, in m. 129. Ex. 5a, mm. 49-52.

Ex. 5b, mm. 127-130.

a tempo primo $\text{♩} = 168$ **130**

- for he com - - - eth, for he com - - - eth to

- - - eth,

- for he com - - - eth, for - - he com - eth to

- - - eth, for he

The following instrumental interlude is again a combination of introduction material and the instrumental material just before the return of tempo primo the first time. The last short A section is at a slower tempo than any of the previous sections. The voices enter softly on an octave G and perform a shortened variation of the original thematic material with at least one measure, m. 142, being exactly like a measure in the original, m. 13. The chorus finishes softly on a sustained chord, which the instruments echo a few bars later.

Although traditional tonality does not play a major role in the "Psalm," some points can be made on the subject. Although the piece seems to be almost atonal, it centers around G. There is a sustained G throughout the introduction and the voices enter on a G. The note D often occurs with or just before the G which would point to the latter being the preferred tonality. The movement also ends on a sustained G. There are, however, a number of excursions from this tonality within the piece. Even in the places where the G might seem apparent by looking at the score, the G tonality is not quite so apparent to the ear. The first meno mosso section appears to have an E tonality eventually acting as the fifth of the final

A minor chord. However, the E tonality returns in the C section. This E quickly resolves to G when the original material returns. G remains the basic tonality throughout the rest of the movement, except for some major tonal explorations in the return of the second thematic material.

The second movement, "Prayer of David," is shorter than the "Psalm" but takes longer to perform because of the very slow tempo, *molto adagio*. Unlike the "Psalm," the rhythms are relatively simple and it stays in $\frac{4}{4}$ meter throughout. Form is also an important factor in this movement and can be described as AA'BACAA', with A' representing the inverted portion of the principal motive. The appendix contains a chart of the form and characteristics of the "Prayer."

The "Prayer" opens with a mournful, pleading solo by the cello which partly introduces the principal motive for the movement. In the fourth measure the basses enter softly with the A section motive: a descent of five notes by half-step, whole-step, half-step, half-step, and an ascent of a minor third. Each of the voices carries out this motive entering a measure after the previous entrance on a pitch a perfect fourth above the previous entrance. With this motive occurs a half-step suspension on the words "hear me." This second short, pleading motive is repeated in each voice. All this occurs over a pedal G.

Ex. 6, mm. 4-7.

Molto adagio $\text{♩} = 40$ 5

pp pp pp pp

Bow down thine ear, o Lord, hear me: for

At m. 13 the motive is inverted with each voice executing the inversion again at staggered entrances.

Ex. 7, mm. 13-16.

Molto adagio 15 *p*

Pre - serve my soul; for I am ho - ly: O thou my

Pre - serve my soul; for I am ho - ly: O

Pre - serve my soul; for I am

With the poco piu mosso at m. 25 there is a mood change with the entrance of the woodwinds introducing the B section. The solo tenor line no longer has the original motive, but moves around a single D. With the words "Rejoice the soul" in m. 31 the dynamic level is suddenly mezzo forte and the violin enters on a high sustained melodic line. On the word "lift," Piston again uses text painting by raising the inner voices a whole-step with a slight pause in all the voices before continuing.

At the tempo primo in m. 40 there is a short unaccompanied, homophonic, rhythmic section that is followed by a return to the principal A motive, this time introduced by the tenors. This is cut short by the return of the faster tempo which is introduced again with woodwinds and later accented by pizzicato strings. The solo soprano line begins section C with an inversion of the principal motive, but develops into a new motive. This is carried out in its inversion by the tenors. The phrase "and I will glorify thy name for evermore" is forte and homophonic.

• The original slow tempo returns for the last time in m. 74 with a

cello solo which is a development of the introduction idea. Over this happens a soft, sustained, unison line by the men. The musical portion of the following A and A' sections is almost exactly like the first sections, except the A section occurs over a pedal C this time. At m. 98 the motive is inverted as in m. 13 except a major third lower. The instruments drop out and the voices cadence on a C chord. The movement ends as it began with a cello solo ending on a C supported by a low C in both the viola and bass parts.

The tonality of this movement might clearly seem to be G at the first with the long, sustained G. However, it obviously ends in C. The G can, therefore, be viewed as having a dominant relation to the final C. However, considering the general feeling of atonality throughout much of the movement, it is, perhaps, better to simply see the movement as starting in G and ending in C. This practice of beginning in one key and ending in another is not at all uncommon for twentieth century music.

Piston's Psalm and Prayer of David can therefore be seen as exemplary of the composer's style--conciseness, lyricism, and satisfying design. Though it is not one of Piston's major works, it does indeed have importance because of its unique contributions to the medium.

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JOHANNES BRAHMS: FOUR PART SONGS, OP. 92

Choral music is a particularly important part of the musical output of Johannes Brahms (1833-1897). His various types of choral works comprise a major portion of the whole body of his compositions and are marked by "a dignity and musicianship that are well-nigh unsurpassed. Often intensely difficult, demanding both mental and physical endurance and thorough preparation, they rise to ideal heights that have been unapproached by any of the older masters."¹

Nineteenth-century choral music is of three main classes: (1) part songs (that is, songs in homophonic style for a small vocal ensemble, with the melody in the topmost voice) usually set to secular words, to be sung either unaccompanied or with accompaniment of piano or organ; (2) music on liturgical texts or intended for use in church services; (3) works for chorus (often with one or more solo vocalists) and orchestra, on texts of dramatic or narrative-dramatic character, but intended for concert rather than stage performances.² Brahms wrote choral music belonging to each of the three categories. However, many of his most beautiful and most noted choral works belong to the third category, those written for chorus and orchestra. Included here, in addition to the monumental Deutsches Requiem, are the Rhapsody for alto solo and men's chorus (1870), the Schicksalied (1871) and Nänie (a song of lamentation on verses by Schiller, 1881) for mixed chorus, and Gesang der Parzen (1883) for six-part mixed chorus.³

¹John Lawrence Erb, *Brahms* (London: J.M. Dent & Co., 1905), p. 142.

²Donald Jay Grout, A History of Western Music, rev. ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1973), p. 553.

³Grout, History, p. 554.

Brahms also wrote a great number of works which fall under the part-song category. Some of these are short pieces written specifically for chorus. But many of them, though often sung by choruses today, were originally intended to be sung by vocal solo ensembles. Among these are the vocal duets and quartets. The duets are listed under six separate opus numbers and are written for varying combinations of voices.

There are seven groups of quartets, all of which are written for soprano, alto, tenor and bass. Op. 31 includes three quartets. Op. 52 is the first of the "Liebeslieder" waltzes for piano duet and voices. These are set to a text by Daumer. Op. 64 again includes three quartets. The "Neue Liebeslieder" waltzes, Op. 65, are also written for piano duet with the text by Daumer. The exception here is that the final section is set to a poem by Goethe. This textual scheme is also used in the four quartets of Op. 92, the subject of this discussion. The text for the first of the Op. 92 quartets, "O schöne Nacht," is by G. Fr. Daumer; the second, "Spätherbst," is by Hermann Allmers; the third, "Abendlied," is by Friedrich Hebbel; and the text for the final quartet, "Warum?," is again by Goethe. Op. 103, "Zigeunerlieder," is a collection of eleven gypsy songs. And finally, Op. 112 includes six quartets, the last four of which are also gypsy songs.⁴

These songs for more than one solo voice are generally considered to be on a lower level of intensity than Brahms' solo songs. In fact, for the quartets, a lyrical style is practically all that is required. Of the accompanied vocal quartets, the two sets of "Liebeslieder," with piano duet, and the "Zigeunerlieder" are the most outstanding. Grove's describes the Op. 64 and Op. 92 quartets as being "full of pleasantly rich and romantic

⁴Peter Latham, Brahms (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1975), pp. 206-208.

music."⁵ However, Latham even goes so far as to say that, though the Op. 92 quartets are "mellifluous," they are "not particularly interesting."⁶ How these quartets are judged, though, depends on the critic's point of view, as will be discussed later.

The Op. 92 quartets were not written as a set, but were written over a span of a number of years. The exact composition dates for the quartets is, therefore, somewhat in question. Most sources give the dates as 1877-1884 with 1884 as the publication date. Grove's gives the dates as 1874-1884, the first date of which seems to be proved wrong by all other evidence. MGG states that No. 1, "O schöne Nacht," was composed during the summer of 1877 in Pörschach, with the remainder being composed during the summer of 1884 in Müzzzuschlag. The premiere of No. 1 was on October 24, 1885, in Basel, while the first performance of No. 2 was on January 26, 1893, in Leipzig.⁷ The 1877 date for "O schöne Nacht" is fairly definite, for the song is mentioned in a letter to Brahms, dated December 11, 1877, from his good friend Dr. Theodor Billroth.⁸ However, the 1884 date of the final quartet, "Warum?," is not so certain. "Warum" is mentioned in two letters from Brahms to Billroth, dated August 10 and 12 of 1882 which would prove that the final quartet in the set was written before the middle two.⁹ All four of the quartets are mentioned in a letter written from Billroth to Brahms, dated August 6, 1884.¹⁰ Apparently, by this time the quartets were

⁵Eric Blom, ed., Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 5th ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1954), I, 885.

⁶Latham, Brahms, p. 157.

⁷Friedrich Blume, ed., Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, II (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1952), col. 196.

⁸Hans Barkan, ed., trans., Johannes Brahms and Theodor Billroth: Letters from a Musical Friendship (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), p. 601.

⁹Barkan, Letters, p. 124.

¹⁰Barkan, Letters, p. 144.

being considered for publication as a set.

The events surrounding the writing of the Op. 92 quartets are many and varied. By the time of the writing of the first quartet, Brahms had already written and performed both his Deutsches Requiem and his First Symphony in C Minor. In 1875, he went to Heidelberg where he stayed until 1878 when he returned to Vienna. From that time until his death, Vienna became his permanent home, except for his frequent travels.¹¹ In 1877, the University of Cambridge in England conferred upon Brahms the degree of Doctor of Music. It was suggested that Brahms should write a new work for the occasion. Brahms' health would not really permit him to travel, nor did he care to make the trip across the channel. He therefore answered the request by saying that if any of his old works seemed good enough he would be happy to receive the honor, but that he was too busy to write a new piece. He offered his "C Minor Symphony" which was played at the commencement exercises, and Brahms received his degree in absentia.¹²

However busy Brahms was, he found time to write another symphony. He began work on his Second Symphony in March of 1877 at Pörtlach and finished it in the autumn of that year. Therefore, Brahms was writing his Second Symphony at the same time he wrote the first quartet, "O schöne Nacht," of Op. 92. The Symphony was premiered December 24, 1877, by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Richter. In 1879 the University of Breslau followed the example set by Cambridge and awarded Brahms an honorary Doctor of Philosophy. Two of Brahms' greatest choral works, Nänie and Gesang der Parzen were composed in 1881 and 1882, respectively. In 1883, Brahms

¹¹Oscar Thompson, ed., The International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1958), p. 223.

¹²Erb, Brahms, p. 63.

finished his Third Symphony, and in 1884, the year that he completed the Op. 92 quartets, Brahms had already begun his fourth symphony.¹³

The list of Brahms' publications for 1884 is relatively large with most of the publications being vocal works. The list includes: Op. 90, Third Symphony in F Major; op. 91, two songs for alto with violin obligato and piano; Op. 92, "Four Quartets"; Op. 93a, "Songs and Romances," four-part chorus, unaccompanied; Op. 93b, "Tafellied," six-part chorus and piano; Op. 94, "Five Songs," for low voice and piano; and Op. 95, "Seven Songs," for one voice and piano.¹⁴

Though not written at the same time, the Op. 92 quartets were published together in 1884. The original title read, "Quartette für Sopran, Alt, Tenor und Bass mit Pianoforte von Johannes Brahms. Op. 92, Partitur. Verlag und Eigenthum für alle Länder von N. Simrock in Berlin. 1884." It was later published with an English translation under the German text, a practice which had become common at this time. The translation was by Mrs. John P. Morgan of New York. The first publication was so carefully done, that there are no corrections that need to be made from the manuscript.¹⁵

The first of the quartets, "O schöne Nacht," Op. 92, No. 1, is as beautiful as the night it describes. Yet it was originally intended as almost a joke. In order to understand the humor and the story behind the composition, it is first necessary to understand the text:

O schöne Nacht!
Am Himmel märchenshaft erglänzt der Mond in
seiner ganzen Pracht;

¹³Thompson, Cyclopedia, p. 227; Madeleine Goss and Robert Haven Schauffler, Brahms the Master (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1943), pp. 340,341.

¹⁴Erb, Brahms, p. 71.

¹⁵Johannes Brahms Sämtliche Werke, XX (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1949), vi.

um ihn der kleiner Sterne liebliche Genossenschaft.
 O schöne Nacht!
 Es schimmert hell der Tau, am grünen Halm;
 mit Macht in Fliederbusche schlägt die Nachtigall;
 Der Knabe schleicht zu seiner Liebsten
 sacht, sacht. . .
 O schöne Nacht!

Translation:

O lovely night!
 In the fabulous sky, the moon sparkles in its
 entire magnificence;
 Around it the tiny stars are delightful company.
 O lovely night!
 The dew shimmers luminous on each greening stalk,
 With might, the nightingale warbles in the
 lilac bush;
 The youth steals toward his beloved
 softly, softly. . .
 O lovely night!

There are two manuscripts of this quartet, both in Brahms' handwriting and both inscribed with the word "Notturmo." One of the manuscripts was expressly made for Frau v. Herzogenberg, a close friend of Brahms and the wife of a fellow composer. Frau v. Herzogenberg had earlier gently reprimanded Brahms concerning the text of one of his songs, "Willst du das ich geh?" (Wilt thou have me go?), Op. 71, No. 4. "I don't sympathise at all with "Willst du das ich geh?" if only on account of the words; for such things as they contain can at most only be alluded to in folk-song."¹⁶ Therefore, Brahms had written on Frau v. Herzogenberg's score of "O schone Nacht" at the passage "Der Knabe schleicht zu seiner Liebsten sacht, sacht" as follows:

Halt! master John; what are you doing now? You have forgotten that such things can, at most, only be alluded to in folk-song. Only a rustic asks whether he may stay or whether he must go; so, as you are no rustic, just cut it short, and simply say again-- ["O schone Nacht. . ."]¹⁷

Brahms himself describes this as a "schlechter Witz," or bad joke, the

¹⁶Edwin Evans, Historical, Descriptive & Analytical Account of the Entire Works of Johannes Brahms, Vol. I, "The Vocal Works." (London: Wm. Reeves, 1912), p. 348.

¹⁷Evans, Works, p. 405.

message of which the lady could not fail to understand.

Theodor Billroth discusses "O schöne Nacht" in his letter to Brahms dated December 11, 1877:

Here back to you comes your good and beautiful Night. In addition there is a copy, as you wished. The intermezzo will not be very welcome for a loving pair, for it interrupts the beautifully rhythmically written, "softly, softly." But everything ends well, even if one doesn't know the consequences!"¹⁸

He again mentions the ending of the quartet in his letter to Brahms of August 6, 1884, "the youth softly approaches his beloved. . .Well, it is perhaps better so. . ."¹⁹

The work is indeed a Notturmo, as the character of the piece conveys. It is in E major, uses a $\frac{3}{4}$ meter throughout, and moves along at a gentle "andante con moto." The piano part is fairly elaborate and rather difficult to play. After the initial statement of "O schöne Nacht!" by all the voices, each voice part takes a portion of the text by itself, which, if performed as originally intended, would actually be solo lines. The bass has the first line of the text, followed by the tenor. After a re-statement of "O schöne Nacht!", again by all the voices, the alto continues with the next line of the text. The line about the nightingale is reserved for the soprano, who Brahms lets warble around a high F sharp accompanied by a trill in the piano part. The most important part of the text, about the youth, is given first to the tenor and bass and then to the entire ensemble. Brahms sets the words "softly, softly," in a duple feeling with a rest after each note, perhaps implying another step taken by the youth after each word of caution. The mood is interrupted, however, by the final statement of "O schöne Nacht!"

¹⁸Barkan, Letters, p. 60.

¹⁹Barkan, Letters, p. 144.

The middle two quartets, "Spätherbst" (Late Autumn) and "Abendlied" (Evening Song), are less impressive than the two quartets which enclose them. Billroth described the pieces as "beautiful pictures in words and music. . . One should hear things of that sort with a choir hidden in a garden at dusk."²⁰ "Spätherbst" is a simple description of a dreary day in Autumn.

Der graue Nebel tropft so still
herab auf Feld und Wald und Heide,
Als ob der Himmel weinen will
in übergroßem Leide.
Die Blumen wollen nicht mehr Blüh'n,
die Vöglein schweigen in den Hainen
Es starb sogar das letzte Grün,
da mag er auch wohl weinen.

Translation:

The grey mist drops down so still on the field,
forest, and moor,
As if heaven wants to weep in overwhelming sorrow.
The flowers will bloom no more,
The birds keep silent in the groves,
Even the last green color has faded away,
Thus indeed heaven might well weep.

This second quartet is in E minor, and in $\frac{3}{4}$ meter with a tempo marking of "andante." The part writing is interesting because the lower three voices serve as an accompaniment to the soprano voice which has a quasi-independent character. The bass of the accompaniment is in continuous triplets. The triplet figure is also quite prevalent in the voices, often giving the feeling of $\frac{9}{8}$ instead of $\frac{3}{4}$. However, there is also a great deal of juxtaposition of duple and triple rhythms in the voice parts.

The third quartet, "Abendlied," is really a slumber-song:

Friedlich bekämpfen Nacht sich und Tag;
Wie das zu dämpfen, wie das zu lösen vermag!
Der mich bedrückte, schläfst du schon, Schmerz?
Was mich beglückte, sage, was war's doch, mein Herz?
Freude wie Kummer, fühl ich zerrann,
Aber den Schlummer führten sie leise heran.

²⁰Barkan, Letters, p. 144.

Und im Entschweben, immer empor,
Kommt mir das Leben ganz wie ein Schlummerlied vor.

Translation:

Peacefully, night and day combat each other;
How one might muffle this, how the other might loosen that!
You that oppressed me, grief, are you asleep already?
Tell me, my heart, what was it then that made me happy?
Joy, as well as sorrow, I feel have dissolved,
But they gently brought along slumber.
And as I soar ever upward, life seems to me
altogether like a lullaby.

This quartet is a closer approximation to the ordinary type of part-song. It is in F major, in common time, and is also marked "andante." The accompaniment is made up of alternate chords for the two hands with a change to unison in a few places, and an occasional complete rest. "Abendlied" is fairly simple in texture, though the harmony does get rather chromatic in places. Brahms uses text painting in the soprano line on the words "soar ever upward" by writing an ascending arpeggio to a high G. The last line of the text is set very much like a lullaby. It is gentle, legato, and uses as its motive rising and falling pairs of slurred notes. There are also brief instances of silence, as though the singers had momentarily drifted off to sleep.

The fourth and final quartet is "Warum?" (Why?). Latham states that "Perhaps the best of them [the Op. 92 quartets] is Warum?, even if the promise of its dramatic opening is not quite fulfilled in the six-eight movement that follows."²¹ Billroth saw the work in another light, though. "There is wonderful rhythm in this composition. The melodic answer to the somewhat rhythmically and harmonically restless question satisfies one."²² Brahms mentions, in a letter to Billroth dated August 9, 1882, that "In the book Hiob [Job], you will find Warum, but no answer to it."²³ The question

²¹Latham, Brahms, p. 157.

²²Barkan, Letters, p. 144.

²³Barkan, Letters, p. 124.

can be found in Goethe's text:

Warum doch erschallen himmelwärts die Lieder?
 Zögen gerne nieder Sterne die droben
 blinken und wallen;
 Zögen sich Luna's lieblich Umarmen.
 Zögen die warmen, wonigen Tage seliger
 Götter gern uns herab!

Translation:

Why indeed should songs resound heavenward?
 They would gladly draw down the stars that up
 there twinkle and float;
 They would rather attract the moon's charming embrace.
 They would gladly draw the warm, blissful days
 of happy gods down to us!

This piece is in high contrast to the two preceding quartets, the introductory movement being very spirited (Lebhaft), while the finale is of a graceful, cheerful effect (Anmutig bewegt). The first section is in common time, while the second section changes to a lilting $\frac{6}{8}$ meter. The piece is written in the key of B flat major, though it is never really established until the beginning of the second section. The first section is extremely chromatic. The introduction begins with an F^7 chord which would seem to act as the logical dominant preparation chord to the home key. However, the voices enter two short measures later on a G flat major chord. This is followed by two quick modulations to B major and C major respectively. The B flat is added to the C chord so that it becomes the dominant of the following F major chord. An E flat is added to the F chord in the hope that it will finally resolve to B flat, but it does not. The B flat chord becomes a $\frac{6}{4}$ suspension above an F pedal. This modulates to D major to finish the vocal introduction. The third relation is picked up through a repeated D in the piano, and B flat is clearly established in the $\frac{6}{8}$ section.

The accompaniment for "Warum?" is also a study in contrasts. The introductory material is very rhythmic, loud and chordal. The piano part for the second section is a simple arpeggio figure occupying one measure in descent

and ascent. "Warum?" is indeed the most impressive and dramatic of the four quartets, Op. 92.

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KIRKE MECHEM: AMERICAN MADRIGALS

One of the most promising and innovative of contemporary American choral composers is Kirke Mechem. His compositional endeavors have utilized practically every medium in the musical spectrum, from light-hearted choral pieces to opera, and from string quartets to symphonies. The bulk of Mechem's output has been choral, though his instrumental works and even his choral accompaniments are idiomatically written and imaginative, and have always been well received.

Kirke Mechem was born in the "heart of America," Wichita, Kansas, August 16, 1925. His father, Kirke Mechem, Sr., was a historian and author and was the head of the Kansas State Historical Society from 1930 until 1952. His mother was an accomplished pianist. When Kirke, Jr. was still a boy, his family moved to Topeka. There, young Mechem began his musical career by taking piano lessons from his mother. His musical interests followed him through high school, though he still found time for sports, of which tennis was a particular favorite. During the war, Mechem was drafted into the army and spent 2½ years in England and France. Luckily, however, he had an office job which allowed him to continue to work on music. He wrote musical comedies for Special Services, composing the harmony himself.¹

After Mechem returned from abroad, he used the G.I. Bill to study at Stanford University. There he received his A.B. in music composition and theory, after which he went to Harvard for his M.A. in composition and theory. While at Harvard he studied with Walter Piston and Randall Thompson, and had

¹Ruth E. Anderson, Contemporary American Composers: A Bibliographical Dictionary (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1976), p. 299; "Commissioned Work by Kirke Mechem Honors Carmie Wolfe," Allegro (Topeka Civic Symphony Society), March, 1975, p. 2, col. 2; Letter to Gerald Polich, January 31, 1977.

the honor of winning the Boott prize.²

Upon graduation from Harvard, Mechem moved back to California to live in Oakland for four years. While there, he held concurrent teaching positions as assistant choral director at Stanford University and choral director at Menlo College. Mechem then decided to spend a year in Vienna, absorbing the Austrian music and culture. The experience proved so rewarding that he later returned to Vienna for 2½ years. However, this time he concentrated on composing.³

When Mechem returned to California, he chose to live in San Francisco, where he has lived since. There, Mechem has taught at San Francisco State University, and, until 1972 was composer-in-residence at Lone Mountain College/University of San Francisco. He is now a full time composer, lecturer, and conductor, which is a truly full time job considering the number of commissions he receives.⁴

Mechem has been fortunate enough to have had bestowed upon him a number of honors during his career as a composer. He was the winner of the tri-annual American Music Award for vocal music from Sigma Alpha Iota. His First String Quartet was the only American work to receive a prize in the fourth International Concourse for composition in Monaco. His Psalm 100 was one of three works to represent American music in the United Nations 20th Anniversary celebration. Mechem's piano trio was performed in Washington for the 20th Anniversary of the National Gallery concerts. Articles on his choral music have appeared in the American Choral Review and in the ACDA Choral Journal. His essay, "The Choral Cycle," appeared in a 1970 issue

²Anderson, Bibliographical Dictionary, p. 299; Allegro, March, 1975, p. 4, col. 1.

³Allegro, p.4, col. 1.

⁴Allegro, p.4, col. 1.

of the Choral Journal and a more recent article, "Alienation and Entertainment," appeared in the March, 1973 issue of the same periodical. His chamber music has been performed internationally by leading ensembles as well as by soloists on the B.B.C. and in many European countries. In 1975, the Royal Welsh Male Choir toured the United States with Mechem's American folk song arrangements. His works have often premiered on national and divisional choral conventions. He received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to write an opera which he has recently completed. The opera is based on Molière's comedy Tartuffe.⁵

Among his orchestral works are two symphonies. In fact, his first orchestral success was the premiere of his First Symphony by the San Francisco Orchestra under Joseph Krips. The conductor declared it "one of the world's great pieces of music--the best piece of contemporary music I have conducted in three years." Krips immediately commissioned Mechem to write a second. After completion of Symphony No. 2, Krips conducted it and requested the writing of a fourth movement, after which Krips performed the symphony again.⁶ Other orchestral works include Haydn's Return, a fugue and variations on the "Farewell" Symphony, and The Jayhawk--An Overture to a Musical Comedy, to be discussed later. He has written three piano works, including a suite and a sonata, and a number of chamber instrumental pieces. Also outside his choral music, Mechem has published two sets of solo songs, one for baritone and one for medium voice.

Mechem's largest accomplishments have been in the area of choral music. He has written three major choral works that require orchestral accompaniment.

⁵Anderson, Bibliographical Dictionary, p. 299; Marguerite Kelly Kyle, "AmerAllegro," Pan Pipes, January 1976, p. 62; Kyle, Pan Pipes, January, 1978, p. 53; Kyle, Pan Pipes, January, 1979, p. 39.

⁶Allegro, p.4, cols. 1,2.

One of these is his "Elizabethan Recreation" Singing is So Good a Thing for chorus, tenor or soprano solo, orator, and at least thirteen players. The text for the work is William Byrd's Reasons briefly set down to persuade everyone to learn to sing. . . omnis spiritus laudet Dominum. In addition to the usual orchestral compliment, Mechem includes guitar and harpsichord. The work also calls for dances of the period.⁷ Another of Mechem's large choral works is the comic cantata, The King's Contest, which is written for chorus, mezzo-soprano, tenor, baritone and bass soli. The work is orchestrated for both a chamber version and a full orchestral version, depending on the size of the choral ensemble. The text was adapted by the composer from The Apocrypha. The King's Contest was first presented June 16, 1974, at the San Fransisco Opera House by the San Fransisco Civic Chorale and Symphony Orchestra, with the composer conducting.⁸ Mechem's 15-minute work, Speech to a Crowd (text by Archibald MacLeish), is also fully orchestrated. The work was commissioned for MENC's national convention in Anaheim, California, in March of 1974. Mechem has also written an orchestral version of his Seven Joys of Christmas, originally unaccompanied, the accompanied version of which was first performed December 21, 1974, by the Los Angeles Master Chorale and Orchestra with Roger Wagner conducting.⁹

There are a number of other choral works written by Mechem of varying lengths, some sacred and some secular. The largest of these is probably his unaccompanied cantata Songs of Wisdom. This is a set of solo recitatives which alternate with motets. One of the most impressive of his secular choral works is a cycle of madrigals called Five Centuries of Spring. The

⁷ Kyle, Pan Pipes, January, 1974, p. 63.

⁸ Kyle, Pan Pipes, January, 1975, p. 65.

⁹ Kyle, Pan Pipes, January, 1976, p. 62.

madrigals are settings of poems about spring written by poets from five consecutive centuries. Another set of songs of some length is one written for women's voices, entitled The Winged Joy. For men's voices, Mechem has written two sets of songs, Three American Folk Songs and English Girls.

Though Mechem has traveled widely in Europe, studied music at institutions on both coasts of the United States, and lives in California, he has never lost sight of his Mid-western heritage nor has he ignored the influence of his parents in his music career. A number of his works are based on or are related to folk-tunes and folklore. His orchestral work, The Jayhawk, is one of these. The composition was commissioned by the Topeka Civic Symphony Society in 1975, a tribute to a former Topeka school teacher (who also happened to be one of Mechem's former teachers). In deciding on a theme for the commissioned work, Mechem "wanted to choose something essentially Kansas--something that would typify the strength and tenacity of the Kansas people while expressing their good humor and lightness of spirit."¹⁰ Mechem's father had published in the February, 1944, issue of the Kansas Historical Quarterly an article entitled "The Mythical Jayhawk," recounting the legend of the mystical bird. Mechem felt this would be the ideal subject matter for the orchestral work.¹¹ The work quotes not only the "Rock Chalk" yell for solo trombone, but also "Home on the Range" in double stops for solo violin, played "with schmaltz".¹² "Home on the Range" is also quoted in "Kansas Boys," one of his American Madrigals. That this song should be a favorite of Mechem's is no surprise, for his father, in the 1940's, investigated and wrote a booklet which "proved once and for all that "Home on the Range"

¹⁰Allegro, p. 2.

¹¹Allegro, p. 2.

¹²"Civic Symphony Chorus Brilliant," Topeka State Journal, March 20, 1975, p. 8, col. 2.

was written in Kansas--the words, at least."¹³

Another endeavor which combined the talents of both the older and younger Mechem is the short work "Shadows of the Moon" for men's chorus. It was commissioned by Gerald Polich for, again, a Kansas musical ensemble, the Kansas State University Men's Glee Club, in memory of its former president, Dennis Clark. The work, composed in 1977, is set to a poem which Mechem's father wrote when he was a young man, describing a Kansas landscape at night.

Although Mechem's works can be extremely serious and intense, they are more often written in a humorous vein. His Epigrams and Epitaphs, twenty-one catches and canons for equal or mixed voices are particularly witty. The way in which he has set the sounds of spring in Five Centuries of Spring is clever and appropriately charming. The text for "Professor Nontropo's Music Dictionary" is entirely of musical terms. The humorous title "Lament for a Choral Conductor" speaks for itself. His The King's Contest is a "comic" cantata and his new opera is based on a famous comedy. This expression of humor is not forced for Mechem, but comes very naturally. One such example of his wit comes from a letter to Gerald Polich. Speaking of the commissioned work for Topeka, The Jayhawk, Mechem wrote, "I know that Kansas State people are not always too fond of Jayhawks, but the bird my father and I wrote about is the symbol of a great state, not of a second-class educational institution [University of Kansas]." ¹⁴

In 1975, practically any American composer who could pick up pen and paper wrote something for the American Bicentennial. Some composers were

¹³Letter to the author, February 4, 1979, a transcription of which appears in the appendix.

¹⁴Letter to Gerald Polich, January 31, 1977.

asked to write works because of their prominence in musical circles, while other composers wrote patriotic works in hopes of becoming prominent and being widely performed by American musicians. Kirke Mechem belongs to the former category and accomplished the latter. He received at least four bi-centennial commissions from the Dallas Civic Chorus, the University of Rochester, Pasadena High School, and the Stockton Public Schools. Probably the most popular and widely performed of these compositions is the work written for the Dallas Civic Chorus, his American Madrigals. The work, which is a set of five madrigals based on American folk songs, was originally commissioned by Lloyd Pfautsch, conductor of the chorus, and written in 1975. Dr. Pfautsch had planned to give the premiere in December, 1975, but had to reschedule them for his spring concert in 1976. However, prior to the re-scheduling, Mechem had given the Stanford University Chorale (William Ramsey, Conductor) permission to perform them first on the West Coast at the Western Division Conference of the American Choral Director's Association in Palo Alto, California, on February 13, 1976. As it turned out, this performance became the actual premiere, as Dr. Pfautsch had kindly given precedence to Stanford.¹⁵

Concerning the reasoning behind the composition of the Madrigals, Mechem wrote:

. . .I naturally wanted to write something particularly American, but not a "patriotic" piece which would probably never be done again. I was attracted to the folk-song idea, but wanted to do something a little more ambitious than simple arrangements. The madrigal idea has always been dear to me. . .So why not American madrigals?--making free use of indigenous materials just as Elizabethan English composers did.¹⁶

¹⁵Letter to the author; Kyle, Pan Pipes, January, 1977, p. 59.

¹⁶Letter to the author.

Another thing that made these madrigals American was the particular medium for which he wrote them.

. . .I wanted to make it quite clear that these pieces were not meant to be sung by solo voices and were not necessarily a cappella pieces (in fact I have yet to hear them sung without accompaniment and am rather afraid of doing so.) American part singing is hardly ever done by individuals . . .so it seemed to me more typically American, and better suited to the commission, to write for a medium-sized SATB chorus, the kind that is found in every college, high school, and community in the U.S. that has any choral program worthy of the name.¹⁷

The American Madrigals are versatile concert pieces. They may be performed a cappella, with piano accompaniment, or with an instrumental ensemble. The instrumental accompaniment is scored for flute, clarinet, bassoon, violin, viola, cello and contrabass. Concerning the instrumentation, Mechem wrote "I don't know why I chose that particular group of instruments--variety and practicality were certainly factors. I thought that almost any college or high school conductor who wanted to add a little instrumental variety to his program could find this grouping."¹⁸ However, Mechem did approach the instrumentation of the Madrigals in a fashion contrary to the way he usually orchestrates. Knowing that most choral groups would perform the pieces with piano, he wrote the piano accompaniment first and orchestrated from that. His larger works for chorus and orchestra were first written for the instruments with the piano part being a reduction written later. Mechem's orchestration certainly does achieve variety. He employs a wide range of unusual effects for both winds and strings, while always expressing the mood of the text.

Almost every American can usually think of ten or twelve favorite folk

¹⁷Letter to the author.

¹⁸Letter to the author.

songs. There are, however, thousands of them which have been compiled from every corner of the United States and which have been sung by people from every walk of life. Mechem states that he probably went through two or three hundred folk songs in his search for the ones that would most easily lend themselves to the madrigal treatment and form a group which was both varied and unified. "The unity comes from the fact that all five pieces deal with the relationship of men and women (as most madrigals do). Three quick and essentially humorous pieces ["Kind Miss," "Kansas Boys," "New York Girls"] are relieved by two slow, serious ones ["He's Gone Away," "Adam's Bride"]."¹⁹

The source of the folk songs was not particularly important to Mechem. What was important is what he did with that basic material. "I wasn't too fussy about the sources of the folk material as long as I was convinced that they were either indigenous to this country or else had been here so long that they were considered by the 'folk' to be indigenous." There are variations of all the folk songs used in the madrigals. Mechem simply took the versions he liked best and that best suited his purpose. Some of the tunes which occur in the pieces Mechem wrote himself. There are also instances (as in "Kansas Boys") where he combined several folk songs. Though the folk tune is always present, the madrigals are far from arrangements. Mechem emphasizes, "I treated the folk material the same way I would have treated it if I had written it myself, and wanted to make madrigals out of it."²⁰ The original songs are included in the appendix for a comparison with the madrigals.

The first of the madrigals, "Kind Miss," is a light-hearted conversation between a boy and a girl. He offers her marriage and even elopement.

¹⁹Letter to the author.

²⁰Letter to the author.

She is not impressed by his extravagant offers and states that all she wants is "a handsome man." After the quick introduction, the original folk melody is immediately broken up into small sections and used contrapuntally, though still retaining the contour of the original melody in most of the parts. The second line of the text is stated twice, the first time with each voice part having only two words of the phrase. The second time, it is said homophonically. Mechem describes the text well with the *rallentando* and minor key feeling at the words "If she says 'No'" and breaks the mood with the a tempo, contrapuntal "we'll run away" in contrary motion. The third verse uses the women to voice the girl's reply, while the men reiterate what the boy had said in the previous verse. The final statement is prepared in a typical Mechem fashion, with a slow, soft, sustained line leading into the louder, crisp, surprise ending.

"He's Gone Away," the second of the madrigals, is based on a folk song from the Yandro mountain valley in North Carolina. The song is descended from an English ballad known as "The Lass of Rock Royal." It is also marked with mountaineer and southern negro influences. The text is a farewell scene between a young man and a young woman. The original text is rather long and involves mostly the woman. Mechem has chosen, however, to utilize only the first two verses which are the conversation between the two young people. He combines the two verses into one, with the men immediately answering the questions posed by the women, so closely that they often overlap. The tempo is very slow and fairly simple and constant. The mood is one of longing. The piece ends with the same texture that it began and the final cadence fades into the distance "over Yandro."

The middle madrigal, "Kansas Boys," is really based on a folksong which is a compilation of songs, probably brought to Kansas from Kentucky. It is a warning to prospective brides to be wary of marrying a man who is likely

to move to the unsettled West. There are a number of versions of the text in existence and Mechem simply chose five verses that worked well together. Mechem sets the third verse above a rhythmically varied "Home on the Range" while the fourth verse is introduced and set above a square dance tune. This madrigal is marked by having the most meter changes of any of the madrigals, though these changes are not overly abundant and closely follow the text. "Kansas Boys" really has two endings, both lively and quick and both prepared with soft, slower sections followed by a complete break.

"Adam's Bride" is a marriage sermon in song. It is based on an early white spiritual which tells the Biblical story of the first couple to be joined in wedlock and shows them as the model of marital conduct. According to Mechem, the text can be traced to St. Thomas a Kempis. This is the longest of the madrigals because of the slow tempo and the number of verses involved. The texture is extremely contrapuntal and imitative. No two voices ever enter together until the final verse. The last verse, which bears the moral of the story, is set in a chorale texture. The piece ends solemnly and unaccompanied.

For the final madrigal in the cycle, "New York Girls," Mechem used the old English form, the ballett. These included the familiar "fa-la-la" refrains, of which Mechem's are extremely complex. The folk tune is a capstan shanty which first appeared in the early eighteen hundreds. The introduction of the work is reminiscent of Gilbert and Sullivan. The verses are always homophonic while the refrain and fa-la-las are contrapuntal and imitative. The most prominent feature of this madrigal is the rhythmic complexities of the refrains, with each voice having its own particular rhythmic figure. "New York Girls" is a bright and spirited ending to this fine set of American Madrigals.

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APPENDIX A.

Chart Analysis of "Psalm" from Walter Piston's Psalm and Prayer of David

Section	Measures	Tempo	Meter	Dynamics	Texture	Text
Introduction	1-9	con moto	$\frac{5}{8}, \frac{6}{8}$	p	homophonic	--
A	10-32	con moto	$\frac{5}{8}, \frac{3}{4}, \frac{2}{4}$	$p < f > mf$	homophonic	"O sing unto the Lord. . ."
Transition	33-38	con moto	$\frac{5}{8}, \frac{6}{8}$	$mf < f$	homophonic	--
B	39-55	meno mosso	$\frac{6}{8}$	$p < f > p$	polyphonic, homophonic	"For the Lord is great. . ."
C	56-77	tempo primo	$\frac{5}{8}$	$f > mf$	polyphonic (paired voices)	"Give unto the Lord. . ."
Transition	78-87	tempo primo	$\frac{5}{8}, \frac{6}{8}$	p	homophonic	--
A	88-116	tempo primo	$\frac{5}{8}, \frac{3}{4}$	$pp < f$	homophonic	"O worship the Lord. . ."
B	117-132	a tempo meno mosso	$\frac{6}{8}$	f, p, f	homophonic	"Let the field be joyful. . ."
Transition	133-138	a tempo primo	$\frac{5}{8}, \frac{6}{8}$	$f > p$	homophonic	--
A	139-155	a tempo rit.	$\frac{5}{8}, \frac{6}{8}$	pp	homophonic	"He shall judge the earth. . ."

APPENDIX B.

Chart Analysis of "Prayer of David" from Walter Piston's Psalms and Prayer of David

Section	Measures	Tempo	Dynamics	Texture	Text
Introduction	1-3	molto adagio	pp	cello solo	--
A	4-12	molto adagio	pp	polyphonic	"Bow down thine ear. . ."
A'	13-24	molto adagio	p < mf > p	polyphonic	"Preserve my soul. . ."
B	25-39	poco piu mosso	p < f	polyphonic	"Be merciful unto me. . ."
Transition	40-48	tempo primo	p	homophonic	"For thou, Lord, art good. . ."
A	49-55	tempo primo	p < mf > p	polyphonic	"Give ear, O Lord. . ."
C	56-73	tempo II	mp < f > p	homophonic	"Teach me thy way. . ."
Transition	74-85	tempo I	pp	cello solo, unison men	"and thou hast delivered. . ."
A	85-97	tempo I	pp	polyphonic	"O turn unto me. . ."
A'	98-109	tempo I	p < mf > pp	polyphonic	"Shew me a token. . ."
Extension	109-113	tempo I	pp	cello solo	--

APPENDIX C.

Transcription of a Letter from Kirke Mechem

Feb. 4, 79

Dear Jess,

I'm happy to know that you used my "American Madrigals" for your graduate recital. I'll try to answer as many of your questions as I can. (You can find the biographical material in the enclosed catalog.)

The pieces were commissioned by the Dallas Civic Chorus, Lloyd Pfautsch, conductor, for the Bicentennial. I wrote them in 1975. Dr. Pfautsch planned to give the premiere in December, 1975, but then had to change his plans and reschedule them for his spring concert, 1976. In the meantime I had given Stanford University Chorale (William Ramsey, conductor) permission to perform them first on the West Coast at the ACDA Regional Conference in Palo Alto in February, 1976. As it turned out, this was the actual premiere, as Dr. Pfautsch kindly gave precedence to Stanford.

For the Bicentennial I naturally wanted to write something particularly American, but not a "patriotic" piece which would probably never be done again. I was attracted to the folk-song idea, but wanted to do something a little more ambitious than simple arrangements. The madrigal idea has always been dear to me; I used the genre in a number of different ways in my "Elizabethan Recreation"; Singing Is So Good a Thing, on a text by William Byrd, and have written quite a few choral cycles which are really suites of madrigals. So why not American Madrigals?--making free use of indigenous material just as the Elizabethan English composers did (they also made free use of Italian material sometimes, too, as I'm sure you know.) But I wanted to make it quite clear that these pieces were not meant to be sung by solo voices and were not necessarily a cappella pieces (in fact I have yet to hear them sung without accompaniment, and am rather afraid of ever doing so.) American part singing is hardly ever done by individuals (at least in public, excepting of course Barbershop quartets) so it seemed to me more typically American, and better suited to the commission, to write for a medium-sized SATB chorus, the kind that is found in every college, high school and community in the U.S. that has any choral program worthy of the name.

I must have gone through two or three hundred American folksongs in my search for the ones which would best lend themselves to the madrigal treatment and which would form a varied but unified group. The unity comes from the fact that all five pieces deal with the relationship of men and women (as most madrigals do). Three quick and essentially humorous pieces are relieved by two slow, serious ones. I wasn't too fussy about the sources of the folk material as long as I was convinced that they were either indigenous to this country or else had been here so long that they were considered by the "folk" to be indigenous. (Tracking down the ultimate source of folk material is usually impossible.) I found several variants of all these tunes and texts; again, I wasn't a purist--I simply took the versions I liked best, or rather, mixed the versions to suit myself. Since I was going to use them only as raw material, as a starting point, I didn't feel

it mattered much. I can't even tell you now where I got the tunes--except at the public library--and I don't think many musicologists will find that a very satisfying answer.

Of course, some of the tunes which occur as the pieces develop I wrote myself, and I occasionally changed a verse here and there to suit my purpose, or (as in "Kansas Boys"), brought in a couple of other folk tunes. After all, "Home on the Range" is the Kansas State Song, and I was born and raised in Kansas, and my father, when he was head of the Kansas State Historical Society in the forties, investigated and wrote a booklet which proved once and for all that "Home on the Range" was written in Kansas--the words at least. What I am saying is that I treated the folk material the same way I would have treated it if I had written it myself, and wanted to make madrigals out of it. Being folk material, however, it probably influenced my style. The pieces are certainly more direct, less complicated harmonically than my "Five Centuries of Spring," another group of five madrigals.

The best way you can tell what I have done in these pieces is to find the folk songs and compare them with the madrigals. You will then see how far these are from being "settings" or "arrangements."

I don't know why I chose that particular group of instruments--variety and practicality were certainly factors. I thought that almost any college or high school conductor who wanted to add a little instrumental variety to his program could find this grouping. But I knew that most groups would perform them with piano, so I wrote the piano accompaniment first and orchestrated from that, rather than the other way around. (My other larger pieces for chorus and orchestra were first written for the instruments, the piano part being a later reduction.)

I hope this helps you, as I haven't made a copy, please send me your paper when it is finished so I'll know what I've written and can more easily help the next person who asks about these pieces.

Good luck!

Sincerely,

Kirke Mechem

APPENDIX D.

Folk Songs Used in Mechem's American Madrigals

KIND MISS

"Did she marry him for love or money?" is about as old as the query, "Would you rather marry a handsome man who is poor or a man with lots of money and a face like a mud fence?" The answer among children is, "I'd rather have both." In the Kentucky song here we have an offer of marriage, even elopement. The girl refuses and tells why. . . . Ann Riddell Anderson of the University of Kentucky communicates this; her father, Hugh Riddell, is judge in a circuit of courts including "Bloody Breathitt" County.

Arr. A. G. W.

Con moto

Kind miss, kind miss, go ask your moth-er If you, my bride shall ev - er be.

mf

piti lento *poco rit.*

If she says "Yes," Come back and tell me, If she says "No," we'll run a - way.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. The voice part is on a single staff with a treble clef. The piano accompaniment is on two staves (treble and bass clefs). The tempo is marked 'Con moto' at the beginning. The first system of music corresponds to the first line of lyrics. The second system of music corresponds to the second line of lyrics. The piano part includes dynamic markings like 'mf' and 'piti lento' (piano molto lento) and 'poco rit.' (poco ritardando). There are also some performance instructions like 'mf' and 'piti lento' written below the piano staves.

1 Kind miss, kind miss, go ask your mother
If you, my bride shall ever be.
If she says "Yes," come back and tell me,
If she says "No," we'll run away.

2 Kind miss, I have much gold and silver,
Kind miss, I have a house and land,
Kind miss, I have a world of pleasure,
And all of these at thy command.

3 What do I care for your gold and silver,
What do I care for your house and land,
What do I care for your world of pleasure,
When all I want is a handsome man.

HE'S GONE AWAY

This is an arrangement from a song heard by Charles Rockwood of Geneva, Illinois, during a two-year residence in a mountain valley of North Carolina. It stages its own little drama and characters. The mountain called Yandro was the high one of this valley. A "desrick," Mr. Rockwood was told, is a word for our shack or shanty. The song is of British origin, marked with mountaineer and southern negro influences. Other mountain places in the southern states have their song about going away ten thousand miles; this one weaves in the exceptional theme of the white doves flying from bough to bough and mating. "so why not me with mine?" Mr. Sowerby was lighted with a rich enthusiasm about this song and has met its shaded tones with an accompaniment that travels in fine companionship with the singer.

Not too slow and not too strict

Arr. L. S.

The musical score is arranged in three systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo/mood is indicated as "Not too slow and not too strict".

System 1: The vocal line begins with a rest followed by the lyrics "I'm goin' a-way for to stay a lit-tle while, But I'm comin' back if I go". The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and chords in the left hand.

System 2: The vocal line continues with "ten thou-sand miles. Oh, who will tie your shoes? And who will glove your". The piano accompaniment continues with similar rhythmic patterns.

System 3: The vocal line concludes with "hands? And who will kiss your ru-by lips when I am gone? Oh, it's". The piano accompaniment ends with a final chord.

HE'S GONE AWAY

pap - py'll tie my shoes, And mam-my'll glove my hands, And

This system contains the first line of the song. It features a vocal melody in treble clef and piano accompaniment in bass clef. The piano part includes a series of descending eighth notes in the left hand and chords in the right hand.

you will kiss my ru-by lips when you come back! . Oh, he's

ppp

This system continues the melody. The piano accompaniment features a more complex texture with sixteenth notes in the left hand and chords in the right hand. A piano (ppp) dynamic marking is present.

gone, he's gone a - way, For to stay a lit - tle while;

This system continues the melody. The piano accompaniment features a more complex texture with sixteenth notes in the left hand and chords in the right hand.

But he's com-in' back if he goes ten thou-sand miles. Look a - way, .

p

This system concludes the song. The piano accompaniment features a more complex texture with sixteenth notes in the left hand and chords in the right hand. A piano (p) dynamic marking is present.

HE'S GONE AWAY

.. look a - way, . . . look a - way o - ver Yan - dro,

The first system of music features a vocal melody in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are: ". . . look a - way, . . . look a - way o - ver Yan - dro,". The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand and chords in the right hand.

On Yan - dro's high hill, where them white doves are

The second system continues the melody. The lyrics are: "On Yan - dro's high hill, where them white doves are". The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern.

fly - in' From bough to bough and a - mat - in' with their mates, So why not me

The third system continues the melody. The lyrics are: "fly - in' From bough to bough and a - mat - in' with their mates, So why not me". The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern.

with mine? For he's gone, oh, he's gone a - way For to stay a lit - tle

retarding *pp* in time

The fourth system concludes the melody. The lyrics are: "with mine? For he's gone, oh, he's gone a - way For to stay a lit - tle". The piano accompaniment features a final chord in the right hand and a sustained bass line in the left hand. Performance markings include "retarding" and "*pp* in time".

HE'S GONE AWAY

while, But he's com-in' back if he goes ten thou-sand miles. I'll go

build me a des-rick on Yan-dro's high hull, Where the wild beasts won't bother me

nor hear my sad cry; For he's gone, he's gone a-way for to stay a lit-tle

while, But he's com-in' back if he goes ten thou-sand miles.

ppp

**THIS BOOK
CONTAINS
NUMEROUS
PAGES WITH
THE ORIGINAL
PRINTING ON
THE PAGE BEING
CROOKED.**

**THIS IS THE
BEST IMAGE
AVAILABLE.**

HE'S GONE AWAY

I'm goin' away for to stay a little while,
 But I'm comin' back if I go ten thousand miles.
 Oh, who will tie your shoes?
 And who will glove your hands?
 And who will kiss your ruby lips when I am gone?

Oh, it's pappy'll tie my shoes,
 And mammy'll glove my hands.
 And you will kiss my ruby lips when you come back!

Oh, he's gone, he's gone away,
 For to stay a little while;
 But he's comin' back if he goes ten thousand miles.

Look away, look away, look away over Yandro,
 On Yandro's high hill, where them white doves are flyin'
 From bough to bough and a-matin' with their mates,
 So why not me with mine?

For he's gone, oh he's gone away
 For to stay a little while,
 But he's comin' back if he goes ten thousand miles.

I'll go build me a desrick on Yandro's high hill,
 Where the wild beasts won't bother me nor hear my sad cry;
 For he's gone, he's gone away for to stay a little while,
 But he's comin' back if he goes ten thousand miles.

HELLO, GIRLS

Girls who are thinking about getting married find advice here. The third verse carries a laugh, with a slight mourning border of sober second thought. Movers from Kentucky, probably, took the tune to Kansas, and gave it new verses as in text B, the song of Kansas Boys. "Puncheon floor" and "milk in the gourd" are clearly Kentucky inventions or importations. Planting corn in February "with a Texas pony and a grasshopper plow," however, is a farming trick the Kentuckians first heard of after they left "the Gascony of America" and took up claims in the Sunflower state. The verses traveled up into Nebraska districts where they pitch horseshoes and hold championship corn-husking contests, for Edwin Ford Piper, who lived on a farm near Auburn, wrote of Kansas Boys, "This ballad I found in my sister's note book. The older brothers and sisters used to sing it."

Arr. A. G. W.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. The voice part is on a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The piano accompaniment is on two staves (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of one sharp. The tempo is marked 'poco rit.' and the performance instruction 'colla voce' is present. The lyrics are written below the voice staff.

Hel-lo girls, lis-ten to my voice, Don't you nev-er mar-ry no good-for-nothing boys.

If you do your doom shall be Hoe-cake, ho-min-y and sass-a-fras tea.

A

- 1 Hello girls, listen to my voice,
Don't you never marry no good-for-nothing boys.
If you do your doom shall be
Hoe-cake, hominy, and sassafras tea.
- 2 Young boys walking down the street,
Young girls think they look mighty sweet.
Hands in their pockets not a dime can they find,
Oh, how tickled, poor girls mine.
- 3 When a young man falls in love,
First it's honey and then turtle dove.
After he's married no such thing,
"Get up and get my breakfast, you good-for-nothing thing!"

B

KANSAS BOYS

- 1 Come, all young girls, pay attention to my noise,
Don't fall in love with the Kansas boys,
For if you do your portion it will be,
Johnny cake and antelope is all you'll see.
- 2 They'll take you out on the jet black hill,
Take you there so much against your will,
Leave you there to perish on the plains,
For that is the way with the Kansas range.
- 3 Some live in a cabin with a huge log wall,
Nary a window in it at all,
Sand stone chimney and a puncheon floor,
Clapboard roof and a button door.
- 4 When they get hungry and go to make bread,
They kindle a fire as high as your head,
Rake around the ashes and in they throw,
The name they give it is "doughboys' dough."
- 5 When they go to milk they milk in a gourd,
Heave it in the corner and cover with a board,
Some get plenty and some get none,
That is the way with the Kansas run.
- 6 When they go to meeting the clothes that they wear
Is an old brown coat all picked and bare,
An old white hat more rim than crown,
A pair of cotton socks they wore the week around.
- 7 When they go to farming you needn't be alarmed,
In February they plant their corn,
The way they tend it I'll tell you now,
With a Texas pony and a grasshopper plow.
- 8 When they go a-fishing they take along a worm,
Put it on the hook just to see it squirm,
The first thing they say when they get a bite
Is "I caught a fish as big as Johnny White."
- 9 When they go courting they take along a chair,
The first thing they say is, "Has your daddy killed a bear,"
The second thing they say when they sit down
Is "Madam, your Johnny cake is baking brown."

WHEN ADAM WAS CREATED

Arrangement by Elie Siegmeister

SMOOTHLY FLOWING

When A - dam was cre - a - ted, he dwelt in E - den's shade, As —

Mo - ses has re - la - ted, be - fore a — bride was made; Ten

thou - sand times ten thou - sand of crea - tures swarmed a - round, — Be -

fore a bride was form - - ed or a - ny mate was found. —

Can't You Dance the Polka?

A capstan shanty. The tune of this shanty is "Larry Doolan," a shore ballad. The shanty dates from the last days of the packet ships when American sailors had already begun to cut their hair "short behind" in modern fashion.

Gaily

mf Solo

1. As I came down the Bow-ery, One eve-ning in Ju -
 2. To Tif - fan - ny's I took her, I did not mind ex -

mf

col 8.....

ly, I met a maid who asked my trade, And a sail - or John said
 pense; I bought her two gold ear - rings. They cost me fif - ty

2

Chorus

cents, Then a - way, you Sant-y my dear An-nie,

Oh, you New York girls, can't you dance the pol - ka?

bass

8. Says she, "You lime-juice sailor,
Now see me home you may,"
But when we reached her cottage door
She unto me did say:

Chorus:

4. "My young man he's a sailor,
With his hair cut short behind;
He wears a tarry jumper,
And he sails in the Black Ball line."

Chorus:

CHORUS

Then away, you Santy, my dear Annie,
Oh, you New York girls, can't you dance the polka?

A RECITAL

by

JESSE EVERETT WADE, III

B. M., Southwest Baptist College, 1977

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MUSIC

Department of Music

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

. 1979

ABSTRACT

This Master's Report (recital) features choral selections by Tomás Luis de Victoria, George Frideric Handel, Johannes Brahms, Walter Piston, and Kirke Mechem. Included with the recital program and a tape of the recital is a series of program notes. Those program notes which concern the compositions by Victoria, Handel, and Brahms include a brief biographical sketch, comments on the composer's general compositional style, some historical background on the works discussed, and a brief analysis of these works. Those program notes which deal with the twentieth-century composers, Piston and Mechem, include a more extensive biographical sketch with information on some of the composer's other works, comments on the composer's general compositional style, background on the individual works discussed, and a more extensive analysis of the works with accompanying charts and musical examples.