

VOICE
for LIFE
SONGBOOK 2

RS  M

Preface

The Royal School of Church Music places a very strong emphasis on singing in churches, chapels, schools, colleges and other organisations where individuals come together to make music. If you have ever sung in a choir or ensemble, you will know what a special and unique experience it is to join together with others to make music using your voice.

The RSCM's *Voice for Life* training scheme has already become immensely popular across the world as an invaluable resource for choir-trainers, voice teachers and those who sing in choirs or other kinds of choral ensemble. Those who train, direct and teach singers, both on an individual basis and in choirs, do invaluable work and the *Voice for Life Songbook 2* provides tremendous support for those leaders; they will find it immensely helpful as an important new addition to the highly successful and greatly enjoyed *Voice for Life* scheme.

A wonderful range of music is presented in this collection, from plainsong to jazz, from the exquisite harmonies in Pergolesi's 'Stabat Mater' to the South African freedom song 'Siyahamba', and from the vibrant and powerful gospel song 'He is worthy' to a simple but most attractive arrangement of the well-known 'Be still for the presence of the Lord' by Martin How.

But apart from the extraordinary range of styles and material in this anthology, the features that stand out are the attention given to vocal technique, warm up routines and exercises, regular advice on 'how to use your voice well' and the useful background information on the origin of the songs. In addition, the accompanying CDs will assist those who seek guidance on how a song should sound or who have limited resources in rehearsals.

I am absolutely certain that you will enjoy using the materials and, as I travel around in my rôle as Director of the RSCM, I look forward to seeing and hearing some of the superb arrangements featured in this publication.

Lindsay Gray

Lindsay Gray
Director, RSCM

Contents

Introduction

Warm-ups	6
How to use the <i>Voice for Life Songbook 2</i>	13

Warm-up songs and canons

1	Come on, all you people <i>Christopher Norton</i>	16
2	Jesus walked this lonesome valley <i>Spiritual</i>	19
3	Alleluya <i>Trad. French</i>	23
4	By the waters of Babylon <i>Trad. Israeli</i>	25
5	Let us sing together <i>Leah Perona-Wright</i>	27
6	Laudemus virginem <i>Anon, arr. Jon Banks</i>	29
7	Of the Father's love begotten <i>Unknown, arr. Paul Ayres</i>	32
8	Leaning on the Lord's side <i>Trad. arr. Esther Jones</i>	35
9	Father God in heaven <i>Spiritual, arr. Esther Jones</i>	37
10	Change is coming <i>Ken Burton</i>	39
11	My God <i>Trad. arr. Esther Jones</i>	45
12	Non nobis Domine <i>Byrd ed. Patrick Russill</i>	48

Unison and two-part songs

13	God is love (Ubi caritas) <i>Unknown</i>	54
14	Veni, veni, Emmanuel (O come, O come, Emmanuel) <i>Unknown</i>	57
15	I see his blood <i>David Ogden</i>	60
16	Song of St Anselm <i>Joanna Marsh</i>	68
17	Nada te turbe <i>Paul Ayres</i>	76
18	Come ye people <i>Rheinberger, arr. Leah Perona-Wright</i>	86
19	The bread you do not use <i>Geoff Weaver</i>	92
20	Stabat mater <i>Pergolesi, ed. Alistair Warwick</i>	98
21	Praise ye the Lord <i>Mike Brewer</i>	105

Contents

Three-part songs

22	Change of heart <i>Ken Burton</i>	116
23	Siyahamba (We are marching) <i>Trad. South African, arr. Leah Perona-Wright</i>	119
24	Jesus Christ the apple tree <i>Trad. folk melody, arr. Richard Allain</i>	123
25	What wondrous love is this? <i>Trad. folk hymn, arr. Leah Perona-Wright</i>	135
26	Didn't my Lord deliver Daniel? <i>Spiritual, arr. Geoff Weaver</i>	143
27	Maranatha, alleluia! <i>David Ogden</i>	153
28	Alleluia <i>Mozart, arr. Leah Perona-Wright</i>	164
29	Spirit of mercy <i>Jon Payne</i>	171
30	Standin' in the need of prayer <i>Spiritual, arr. Geoff Weaver</i>	178
31	The holly and the ivy <i>Trad. arr. Robert Isaacs</i>	191

Four-part songs

32	When there is light <i>Sharon Durant</i>	198
33	Be still for the presence of the Lord <i>David Evans, arr. Martin How</i>	202
34	His eye is on the sparrow <i>Jon Payne</i>	209
35	He is worthy <i>Bazil Meade</i>	223
36	Of a rose <i>Jon Banks</i>	235
37	Go forth in peace <i>Joanna Forbes and Alexander L'Estrange</i>	245
38	For remembrance <i>Keith Sparrow</i>	257
39	Gaudete <i>Trad. arr. Esther Jones</i>	264
40	O bone Jesu <i>Ingegneri, ed. Patrick Russill</i>	269
41	Jesu dulcis memoria <i>Victoria, ed. Patrick Russill</i>	273
42	The time of snow <i>Alex Campkin</i>	277

How to use the *Voice for Life Songbook 2*

The *Voice for Life Songbook 2* has been compiled in line with the *Voice for Life* philosophy to give singers the opportunity to:

- Enjoy using their voices
- Learn to use their voices well
- Experience a range of musical styles
- Sing both accompanied and a cappella
- Develop their musical skills and understanding

Leading on from the *Songbook 1*, this new collection has been designed to introduce your choir to a greater range of music, and to develop their confidence with part-singing and performing unaccompanied. The *Songbook 2* includes gospel, jazz, world music, plainsong, early music, worship song and folk music, appealing to singers of all ages and allowing them to explore a wealth of musical styles.

The majority of songs in this collection can be sung by everyone as the arrangements are flexible, allowing for either equal or mixed voice choirs to perform them. A number of pieces also include optional parts for melody instruments or percussion.

You will find the pieces arranged in the following sections:

Warm-up songs, rounds and canons

These are short songs, ideal for use at the start of a rehearsal as part of your warm-up.

Unison and two-part songs

These can be sung by mixed or equal voice choirs alike. With the exception of the plainchant, all songs in this section are accompanied.

Three-part songs

A mixture of accompanied and unaccompanied songs, some for equal voice choirs and some for mixed voice choirs. Most arrangements are flexible and could be performed by other voices, for example by simply omitting the men's part when a piece is accompanied.

Four-part songs

The songs in this section range from short unaccompanied songs to longer accompanied songs and anthems. Again, the accompanied pieces are often designed to be flexible, allowing for a performance even without all four voice parts available. Some arrangements are for upper voices, some for SATB and some for SSA + Men.

The vocal parts in the *Songbook 2* are photocopiable so you can provide the singers in your choir with the music. This permission to photocopy applies only to the purchaser's own choir or group. Any pages which may be photocopied are clearly marked 'You may photocopy this page' at the bottom of the relevant pages. Do not feel that your singers must always use the music though: if they also learn to sing from memory they will have a far greater sense of movement, will have a greater sense of ensemble and will be able to watch you conducting more closely.

A demonstration of each song is included on the accompanying CD. This is intended for those who would like guidance on how a particular song should sound, and also for those who are not confident at reading music so they can listen to their part and learn it. There is an additional CD containing piano accompaniments for use in rehearsals if you do not have a pianist.

The training notes which accompany each piece provide ideas about how you might introduce the song to your singers in rehearsals, ideas for a creative performance, and how you can use the song to develop your singers' voices and musical understanding. Less experienced choir trainers may like to follow the training notes in detail, whereas those who are more experienced may prefer to simply dip into the notes for ideas.

To help you in the task of developing your singers' voices as well as their musical skills and understanding, the *Voice for Life Singer's Workbooks* and *Choir Trainer's Book* are a useful backup resource. These contain a variety of teaching aids such as theory games and exercises, photocopiable worksheets, vocal exercises, and plenty of guidance about how to introduce each new concept or idea to your singers as well as practical advice on running your choir.

To add to your choir's repertoire, you may also like to use the *Voice for Life Songbook 1* which contains a number of warm-up songs, rounds and canons, plenty of ostinato based songs, and simple flexible arrangements which will help introduce singers to part singing, as well as longer songs and anthems.

I hope you enjoy singing the repertoire in this book as you rehearse, perform and develop the skills of your singers.

L.M. Perona-Wright.

Leah Perona-Wright
Director of *Voice for Life*

Warm-up songs and canons

2. Jesus walked this lonesome valley



Demonstration CD 1, Track 2 Accompaniment only CD 2, Track 2

Information

This melancholy spiritual has been set as a canon, ideal for use as a gentle warm-up song. As it focuses on Jesus walking 'a lonesome valley' it would be particularly good for use during Lent when we remember Jesus' time alone in the desert facing various trials and temptations. You could also use this song during Passiontide remembering when Jesus stood trial in front of Pontius Pilate, and his lonely journey to the cross.

Preparation

Ask your singers if they know what a triplet is. In this piece they will need to be able to change between triplets and duplet quavers smoothly and evenly. In order to help your singers hear and 'feel' the difference between the duplet and triplet quavers in this piece try a clapping game. Start clapping a steady beat and ask your singers to divide your beat in two and clap quavers over your 'crotchet' beat. Make sure they keep their quavers even and steady:

Musical notation for clapping game 1. The notation is for a 4/4 time signature. The top staff is labeled 'Choir trainer' and contains a steady sequence of crotchets (quarter notes). The bottom staff is labeled 'Singers' and contains a sequence of duplet quavers (two eighth notes beamed together) that align with the crotchet beats of the choir trainer.

Once they can do this ask them to divide your beat into three so they are clapping triplet quavers over your crotchet beat:

Musical notation for clapping game 2. The notation is for a 4/4 time signature. The top staff is labeled 'Choir trainer' and contains a steady sequence of crotchets (quarter notes). The bottom staff is labeled 'Singers' and contains a sequence of triplet quavers (three eighth notes beamed together) that align with the crotchet beats of the choir trainer. Each triplet is marked with a '3' above it.

Then you can see if they can alternate between the twos and threes keeping them even:

Musical notation for clapping game 3. The notation is for a 4/4 time signature. The top staff is labeled 'Choir trainer' and contains a steady sequence of crotchets (quarter notes). The bottom staff is labeled 'Singers' and contains a sequence of alternating duplet and triplet quavers that align with the crotchet beats of the choir trainer. The duplets are marked with a '2' and the triplets with a '3' above them.

Teaching the song

Teach this song in a call and response pattern in two-bar phrases initially. There is no need for the singers to use the music. From the start encourage them to sing two bars in one breath by demonstrating this yourself. Once this is secure, try singing it as a two-part canon.

2. Jesus walked this lonesome valley

Words and music: Spiritual

♩ = 92

VOICE 1

1. Je - sus walked _____ this lone-some val - ley, _____ he had to
 2. I must walk _____ this lone-some val - ley, _____ oh, I must
 3. I must go _____ and stand my tri - al, _____ I have to

VOICE 2

1. Je - sus walked _____ this lone-some val - ley, _____
 2. I must walk _____ this lone-some val - ley, _____
 3. I must go _____ and stand my tri - al, _____

3

walk _____ it by him - self. Oh, no - bo - dy else _____ could walk it
 walk _____ it by my - self. Oh, no - bo - dy else _____ can walk it
 stand _____ it by my - self. Oh, no - bo - dy else _____ can stand it

3

_____ he had to walk _____ it by him-self. Oh, no - bo - dy else _____
 _____ oh, I must walk _____ it by my-self. Oh, no - bo - dy else _____
 _____ I have to stand _____ it by my-self. Oh, no - bo - dy else _____

6

for him, he had to walk it by _____ him - self.
 for me, I have to walk it by _____ my - self.
 for me, I have to stand it by _____ my - self.

_____ could walk it for him, he had to walk it by _____ him-self.
 _____ can walk it for me, I have to walk it by _____ my - self.
 _____ can stand it for me, I have to stand it by _____ my - self.

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5. Let us sing together



Demonstration CD 1, Track 5

Information

Written especially for the *Voice for Life Songbook 2* this is a double canon. This means that both melodies work individually in canon, but you can also sing both the canons at the same time.

Preparation

The accompanying canon is a major arpeggio, so try using some arpeggios in your vocal warm-ups to get your singers used to the pattern, and to help with their tuning.

Ask them to sing the arpeggios to numbers:

1, 3, 5, 8, 5, 3, 1

Then you could play a game with your singers where you call out a number and they have to pitch it. (e.g. you call out '1' and they sing the tonic, you call out '5' and they sing the fifth, etc.) Vary the order of the numbers you call out and start slowly to give them time to hear the notes, then build up the speed as they are able to respond more quickly and confidently.

Once they are able to do this, try building up some long sustained major triads: ask a small group of singers to sing the tonic, another small group to sing the third, and another small group to sing the fifth. They can sing to 'Ah' or any vowel you choose. Ask them to listen carefully to each other in order to tune the chord. Once it is in tune you could even ask them all to move up and down by semitone steps to see if they can still maintain their good tuning.

Teaching the song

Start by teaching the melody by rote in two-bar phrases. Once your singers are secure with the melody you can try this in canon. It will work in two, three or four parts. You could start in two parts and then build up as your singers become more confident.

Then you can move on to teaching the optional accompanying canon. Teach it by rote – you should be able to sing all four bars through and ask them to repeat what you have sung. Your singers will recognize the arpeggio pattern from your warm-up, and should be able to sing this confidently, with accurate tuning.

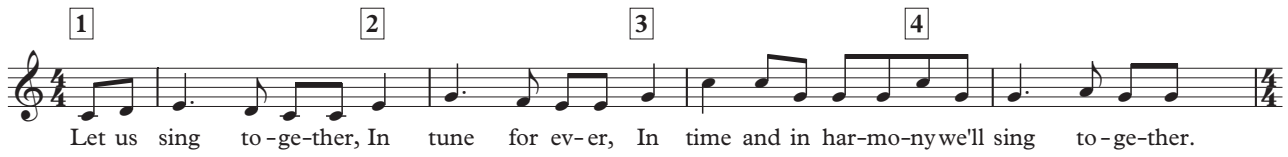
Be creative

Feel free to experiment with the structure of the song in your performance. You might like to begin by having the optional accompanying canon sung as a unison melody first time through, then putting the unison melody over the top on the second time through. Then you could drop back to the optional accompanying canon only, and build it up into a four-part canon before bringing in the main melody again, this time in canon also.

5. Let us sing together

Music and words: Leah Perona-Wright

1 2 3 4



Let us sing to-ge-ther, In tune for ev-er, In time and in har-mo-ny we'll sing to-ge-ther.

OPTIONAL ACCOMPANYING CANON

5 1 2 3 4



Sing to-ge-ther, sing to-ge-ther, sing to-ge-ther, sing to-ge-ther.

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Unison and two-part songs

19. The bread you do not use



Demonstration CD 1, Track 19 Accompaniment only CD 2, Track 8

Introduction

This thought provoking text written by Basil the Great (c.330–379) challenges us not to waste or take for granted any of our material possessions, remembering all those who have so much less than we do. Basil the Great lived as a monk for five years, and later became an ordained priest and then Bishop of Caesarea in 370. The monastic life of the Orthodox Church is still based on the principles he laid down. From many of his writings, including this text, it is clear that Basil had a strong sympathy with the poor and down-trodden.

Teaching the song

Although the rhythms look complicated, until bar 15 the words are roughly in speech rhythm. Go through the words with your singers, speaking them to the correct rhythms and going over any tricky sections as necessary.

Once the rhythms are secure try asking your singers to sight-sing through the notes – the two parts move in parallel most of the time, and always have the same rhythms. Much of the melody is step-wise, but singers will need to take care to distinguish between tones (whole steps) and semitones (half steps).

Using the voice well

The dynamics and expression marks in this piece are carefully marked in. Make sure your singers include these dynamics in their performance for an effective communication of this challenging text. You may need to point out that in the final phrase to be sung in bars 19–23 the dynamic rises all the way up to *ff* (fortissimo). Make sure that when your singers begin this phrase (in bar 19) *forte*, they have some volume left in order to crescendo to the fortissimo two bars later without pushing the pitch sharp.

19. The bread which you do not use

Words: Basil the Great (c. 330–379)

Music: Geoff Weaver

♩ = 54

VOICE 1 *mp*
The bread which you do not

VOICE 2 *mp*
The bread which you do not

4 *mf*
use is the bread of the hun-gry. The gar-ments hang-ing in your ward-robe

use is the bread of the hun-gry. The gar-ments hang-ing in your ward-robe

7 *mp*
— are the gar-ments of those who are na - ked. The

— are the gar-ments of those who are na - ked. The

10
shoes that you do not wear are the shoes of one who is bare - foot.

shoes that you do not wear are the shoes of one who is bare - foot.

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24. Jesus Christ the apple tree



Demonstration CD 1, Track 24 Accompaniment only CD 2, Track 11

Introduction

The words of this song are an old mystical poem by an unknown author. The poem has been set here to the melody of 'The water is wide', a popular folk song. 'Jesus Christ the apple tree' is often sung by choirs at Christmas time, but could be sung at any time of the year. Both texts (the poem, and the original folk song text) have been included here to provide extra flexibility in performance.

Teaching the song

Sing verse one all together in unison, making sure that each four bar phrase is sung in one breath and that the rhythm in bars 21–22 is secure. Once your singers are happy with this melody, they basically know the song even though they don't realize it yet! Divide them into two parts and sing the verse in two-part canon which starts at bar 41. Once they are confident with this, divide them into three parts and sing the three-part canon starting at bar 76. Finally go through the whole song from beginning to end with accompaniment.

Be creative

You could use this as a warm-up song, or perform it in a concert, or in a service. It is a totally flexible piece that can be used by a choir or group of any size. It could even be sung very effectively by a solo singer. If you are performing this with a choir, why not allocate a soloist or small group to sing verse four (bars 59–73) in order to provide some contrast?

If you have a group of mixed voices you could ask the upper voices to sing verse one, and men's voices to sing verse two. It is then up to you whether you divide the voices S/T and A/B or S/A and T/B when the parts split into two.

The accompaniment can be played by piano or harp depending on the resources you have available.

Using the voice well

The phrases in this piece need to be legato and sustained. Your singers should avoid breathing after every long note (e.g. initially some singers may only sing 'the tree of life' in bars 8–9 before taking a breath). Try to encourage singers to breathe on the punctuation. This means that in verse one, the following phrases would be sung in one breath:

'The tree of life my soul has seen,' (bars 8–11)

'Laden with fruit and always green:' (bars 12–15)

24. Jesus Christ the apple tree

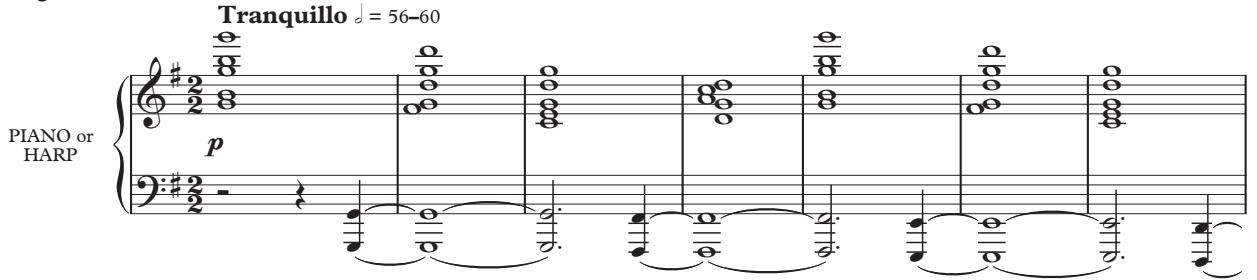
The water is wide

Words: 1. from *Divine Hymns*
compiled Joshua Smith 1784
2. English traditional

Music: traditional
arranged Richard Allain

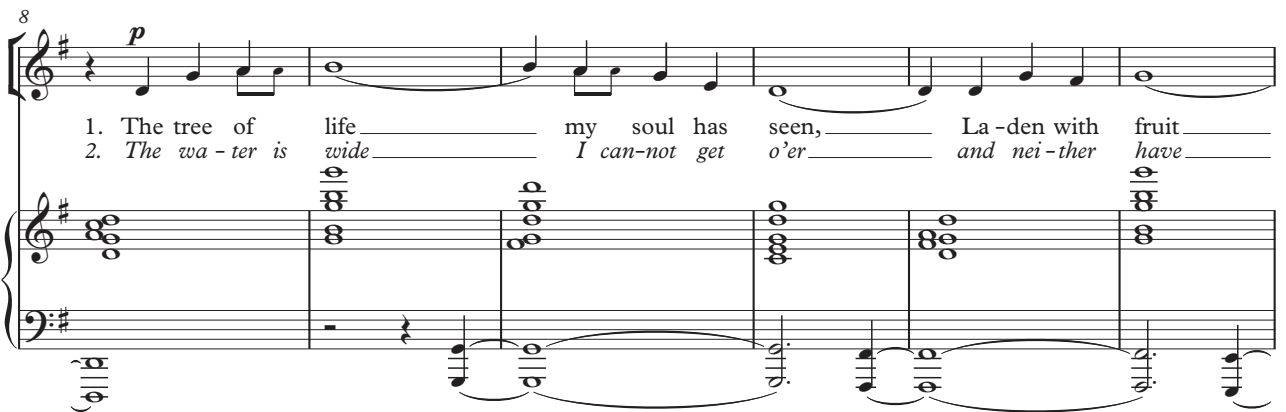
Tranquillo ♩ = 56-60

PIANO or HARP *p*



8 *p*

1. The tree of life _____ my soul has seen, _____ La-den with fruit _____
2. The wa-ter is wide _____ I can-not get o'er _____ and nei-ther have _____



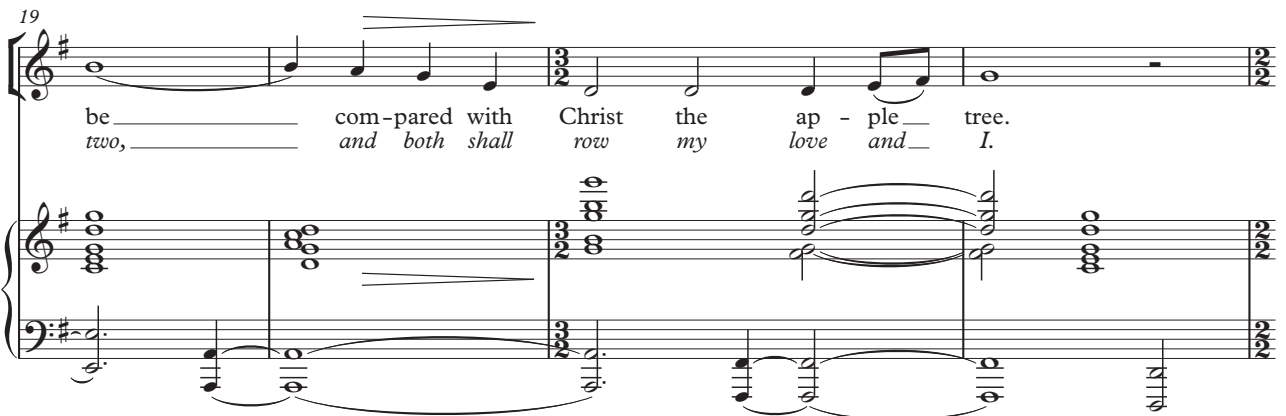
14

_____ and al - ways green: _____ The trees of na - - ture fruit - less _____
_____ I wings to _____ fly. _____ Give me a boat, _____ that will car - ry _____



19

be _____ com-pared with Christ the ap - ple _____ tree.
two, _____ and both shall row my love and _____ I.



29. Spirit of mercy



Demonstration CD 1, Track 29 Accompaniment only CD 2, Track 16

Introduction

The words of this piece are found in the 1774 Foundling Hospital Collection in London. The Foundling Hospital was London's first home for abandoned children established in 1739. Up to a thousand babies a year were abandoned in early 18th-century London and the hospital looked after more than 27,000 children until its closure in 1953.

The musical service at the hospital was supported by Handel. He became involved as a Governor of the Hospital the day after he directed a performance of the Messiah there to mark the presentation of a new organ to the chapel on 1 May 1750. It seems reasonable to assume that the words of 'Spirit of mercy' were written during Handel's period of involvement at the Hospital, although it is not known who the author of the text is.

Teaching the song

Begin by teaching all your singers the melody in unison up to bar 20. Each vocal part sings this melody at some point during the piece. Make sure all the intervals are secure. Encourage smooth phrasing throughout, even when your singers are negotiating interval leaps. Once this section is secure cover the alto part up to bar 20; then put this together with the melody.

Then cover the descant in the final section from bar 44 to the end. Here the Alto and Soprano 2 parts have the melody which they should already be confident with whilst Soprano 1 take the descant. Once the descant is secure add all the parts together, making sure that the last chords are tuned very carefully.

Finally, go back and cover the middle section from bar 25 to 40. Depending on the reading ability of your singers you may prefer to cover each part separately here before putting all the parts together again as each group of singers have their own independent part to sing in this section.

Using the voice well

The phrases in this piece need to be sung legato, even when there are interval leaps to negotiate. If your singers are finding this difficult, take the words out, and sing the melody to 'Ah' or any other vowel of your choosing. When they have got used to the feeling of a seamless melody without any 'bumps' add the words back in, but ask your singers to aim for that same smooth effect they just achieved on the vowel only.

Ask your singers to breathe only at the end of phrases. The phrases are clearly marked. There are two four-bar phrases in the first section (and your singers can breathe at the end of each four-bar phrase), but from bar 13 to 20 they must sing through an eight-bar phrase in one breath. If they find this difficult allow them to stagger their breathing (making sure they understand that they need to breathe at a different time to the person standing next to them) to achieve the effect of one long unbroken phrase.

29. Spirit of Mercy

Text: 18th Century

Music: Jon Payne

Andante ♩ = 80

SOPRANO 1 and 2 *pp*
Spi-rit of mer - cy, truth and love.

ALTO *pp*
Spi-rit of mer - cy, truth and love.

KEYBOARD *pp*

9

cresc.
O shed thine in - fluence from a - bove, And still from age to age_ con - vey_ the

cresc.
O shed thine in - fluence from a - bove, And still from age_ to age_ con - vey_ the

cresc.

17

dim. *pp*
won - ders of_ this sa - cred day.

dim. *pp*
won - ders of_ this sa - cred day.

dim. *pp* *mf* *cresc.*

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Four-part songs

34. His eye is on the sparrow



Demonstration CD 1, Track 34 Accompaniment only CD 2, Track 19

Introduction

This Gospel hymn has become a staple of African-American worship services, but was originally written in 1905 by two white songwriters, including lyricist Civilla D. Martin. Civilla's inspiration came from a friend who had a hopeful, optimistic outlook on life even though she had been bedridden for many years. When asked how she kept so positive, her friend replied 'His eye is on the sparrow, and I know he watches me'.

Preparation

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system covers the first two lines of the verse. The vocal line (treble clef, 4/4 time) begins with a rest, followed by the melody: "I sing be-cause I'm hap-py, — I sing be-cause I'm free, — for his". The piano accompaniment (treble clef, 4/4 time) provides a harmonic foundation with chords and a rhythmic pattern. The second system covers the next two lines. The vocal line continues: "eye is on the spar-row, — and I know — he watch-es me. — I". The piano accompaniment includes a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and continues the harmonic support. The score concludes with a double bar line.

Incorporate this short section of the song into your warm-up. Begin by teaching the 'Sing, sing, sing' riff, a part at a time. Ask your singers to clap on beats two and four. When this is secure add the melody over the top. To perform it at the end of your warm-up session you could build up slowly, one harmony at a time, finally adding the melody, then drop back to just the 'Sing, sing, sing' harmonies again to finish. Play around with the scoring to produce a mini performance.

Teaching the song

First teach all your singers the melody of the verse from bar 8 to 20. Then ask them to sing the chorus melody from bar 23 to 28. They should already recognize this from the warm-up song you taught them. They could sing the whole song in unison if necessary, if you do not have the resources available to sing in many parts. If you are going to sing in unison, then once you have covered the melody up to bar 28, your singers should be able to continue to the end now, as the tune is the same but with different words.

If you included the warm-up exercise in your rehearsal, then your singers have already learnt the harmonies for the chorus (bars 47–51 and 70–74). All you need to cover now are the harmonies under verses two and three. The notes and rhythms are the same in the harmony part for both

these final verses – only the words change. To teach these harmonies, ask the singers with the melody here to repeat the melody of the verse over and over again until you tell them to stop. Demonstrate while they are singing, how the top line of the ‘harmonies’ part fits against the melody. Then get this group of singers to join you. Once they are secure and confident, sing against them and against the melody the next line down of the ‘harmonies’. Ask that group of singers to join you, and so on, until you have all the parts singing confidently together.

Using the voice well

This song has been written in a gospel style, and your singers should therefore be encouraged to use their voices in a less formal way than they might in a piece of classical or traditional church music, for example. See page 198 (*When there is light*) for further information on using the voice in lighter styles of music.

Try not to follow the melody too prescriptively. Although there needs to be unity amongst your singers, the syncopations should feel natural and unforced. Providing there is an ensemble, there’s no real requirement to sing the printed rhythms absolutely accurately.

Be creative

Verse one and the chorus could be sung by a solo voice, with all the voices joining in for verse two (from bar 31). Feel free to add movement, and encourage your singers to clap when the piece builds up.

34. His eye is on the sparrow

Text: Civilla D. Martin

Music: Jon Payne

Lively

VOICE

PIANO

f

5

ff

1. Why should I

9

feel dis - cou - raged, why should the sha - dows come, why

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11

should my heart be lone-ly, and long for heaven and home, when Je-sus is my por-tion? My

14

con-stant friend is he: his eye is on the spar-row, and I know he watch-es me; His

17

eye is on the spar-row, and I know he watch-es me.

21

I

36. Of a rose



Demonstration CD 1, Track 36 Accompaniment only CD 2, Track 21

Introduction

This is a setting of a beautiful medieval poem that represents what were known in those times as the 'Joys of Mary' – the Annunciation, Nativity, Resurrection and Ascension. The way in which these joys are described as branches of a rose tree springing from her bosom is wonderfully vivid and may have been inspired by a pictorial image. The musical setting is modern, but is written in a traditional style that aims to match the directness of the original poem.

Teaching the song

There are two main melodies in this piece – the opening solo section which appears again in verse three (bars 34–42) and in the final section (bar 84 – end); and the other melody used in all the other verses, with its first appearance in verse one (bar 14–22).

First ask all your singers to sing the opening melody in unison. Then, when secure, jump to bar 34 to learn verse three (based on the same melody) in four-part harmony. Finally ask the sopranos to sing the final verse, making sure their consonants (especially the 's' sounds at the end of 'rose' are together).

Now teach your singers the other main melody. Ask the men to sing verse one (from bar 14), and when secure ask the ladies to sing the next verse, which has the same tune. Next jump to verses five and six, teaching the men their two-part harmony then moving on to the sopranos' and altos' two-part harmony in the next verse. Finally, cover verse seven which is in four parts. Once all this is secure, allocate the opening solo to one of your singers; then perform the piece all the way through.

Using the voice well

The phrases of the opening solo and verse three are short, but should not sound disjointed – it is better to think and breathe in two-bar phrases rather than every bar. The melody of the verse should flow naturally and be as legato as possible, with relaxed and unhurried breaths, especially in the second half of verse six.

The medieval English words will be unfamiliar at first so it would be good to explain the meanings of 'hevne' ('heavenly'), 'sheen' ('beautiful'), 'blosmè' ('blossom'), 'throdde' ('third') and 'boot' ('treasure'). Most of the unfamiliarities, however, are with the way the words are written rather than the way they sound and so singers should take care to enjoy them and make the most of them as they should be mostly clear to a listener. The pronunciation should be as in modern English; the 'è', as for example in 'saidè' or 'branchè' should be pronounced like the 'e' in 'get'.

36. Of a rose

Words: Medieval anon.

Music: Jon Banks

5

SOPRANO SOLO *p*

Of a

5

rose, a love - ly rose, of a rose is al myn song, of a

9

rose, a love - ly rose, of a rose is al myn song.

13

TENOR and BASS *mf*

1. List - neth lord - ings both old and young, How_ this rose be - gan to

18

spring; Such a rose to myn li - king In al this world ne__ know I none.

23

SOPRANO and ALTO *p*

2. The an - gel came from_ hev - ne tower To greet Ma - ry with great ho -

28

nour And sai - dè she should bare the flower Thatshoul - dè break the__ fien - dè bond.

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40. O bone Jesu



Demonstration CD 1, Track 40 Accompaniment only CD 2, Track 24

Introduction

This expressive miniature, once attributed to Palestrina, is now generally ascribed to Ingegneri, Monteverdi's teacher at Cremona Cathedral. It was initially published in the early 19th-century, and was one of a number of short, easy motets sometimes dubiously attributed to 16th-century masters which achieved enormous currency and popularity. (The *Ave Maria* settings attributed to Victoria and Arcadelt are similar examples).

O bone Jesu is especially suitable as an Introit or devotional acclamation during Lent and Passiontide.

Preparation

Absorb the English translation first – meaning and structure – and then repeat the Latin original to yourself until it is as familiar and meaningful as in English. Ingegneri's response to the text is simple, expert and emotional. Chord movement and note-lengths in each phrase are directed towards a critical moment of harmonic tension before the last chord of the phrase brings repose. The relatively close spacing of the opening suggests a *mezzo-piano* start, intensifying towards bar 3, followed by a relaxation in bar 4 (the tenors should be allowed to diminuendo after the other voices). The wide spacing at the start of the second phrase invites 'miserere' to be a bit bolder and more dramatic, while the suspensions in bars 7 to 8 suggest intensity should be maintained until the altos complete their elaboration on 'no-', followed by repose on '-bis' (take care this is given full value and a quiet 's').

Resuming gently at 'quia', Ingegneri builds up the tension in two waves of almost identical music: relax a little on the first 'nos' to make room for another strong growth to the second 'nos'. This leads to a sustained climax on 'sanguine tuo' and a tender diminuendo on 'pretiosissimo', its fourth syllable given an expressive weight extended for five beats (and ideally given a little *rallentando* too). Hold the last chord for as long as your singers can control it quietly, and make sure its release is gentle. From bar 15 the text is actually continuous, but Ingegneri almost certainly expected a quick breath before 'sanguine' and possibly before 'pretiosissimo'.

For the tempo try *crochet* = *c.*92. Beat the first two or three chords at the start of phrases in minims, but clearly lead the movement at the end of phrases in crotchets (and allow just a pinch of expressive *ritenuto* at bars 4 and 8 as well as at the end).

Teaching the song

Both in what you say and how you conduct you will need to lead the choir in the understanding of the piece as discussed above in the preparation section – but don't try to do it all at once! In your rehearsal do use a keyboard, particularly to show the altos and tenors what wonderful things they do to the harmony in the second half of phrases. They need to be confidently independent

40. O bone Jesu

*O good Jesus, have mercy on us,
for thou hast created us, thou hast redeemed us
by thy most precious blood.*

Edited: Patrick Russill
original pitch retained
original note-values halved

Music: Marc'Antonio Ingegneri (c.1547–1592)
formerly attributed to Palestrina

Musical score for the first system of "O bone Jesu". It features five staves: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, and Keyboard. The time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "O bo - ne Je - - su, mi - se -". The keyboard part is marked "For rehearsal only".

Musical score for the second system of "O bone Jesu". It features five staves: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, and Keyboard. The time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "-re - re no - - bis, qui - a tu cre -". The keyboard part continues with accompaniment.

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