

Rehearsal Notes for the 2019 High School Honors Choir
Honors Performance Series at Sydney Opera House
Lynne Gackle, Conductor

Dear Singers:

Congratulations on your selection as a member of the High School Honors Choir. I am truly honored to be with you in just a few months!

Below, you will find rehearsal notes for each of the musical selections. I would ask that you read through them and make any notes in the music which refer to specific measure numbers. Also, I have provided YouTube recordings of the pieces in case you are interested in listening to “live” performances, correct pronunciation, style, etc.

This will be a truly awesome experience for each of us and I can’t wait to meet each of you and to make music “Down Under” in beautiful Australia at the world-renowned Sydney Opera House!

I would really like the program to be COMPLETELY MEMORIZED! So, please work for that as our goal!

Rehearsal Notes:

Our program will open with Johann Hasse’s Quoniam from his Mass in D Minor. This is a wonderful. The Quoniam is the last part of the Gloria movement of the Latin Mass. The text is translated:

*For You alone are holy,
You alone are Lord,
You alone are the highest, Jesus Christ.
With the Holy Spirit,
In the glory of God, the Father, Amen!*

**You will find a YouTube recording at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FSpkxVixiv8>

The opening A section is full and rich but the whole work provides the opportunity to understand and appreciate Baroque style and phrasing. If you only look at the notes written on the page with no regard for characteristic style, the music looks very straightforward and if sung as written, will sound rather lifeless and uninteresting. However, when stylistic markings are used, the work literally begins to “sparkle and dance!” The tempo for the A section is quarter note = 106.

- Be sure to articulate the ‘KW’ sound of “Quoniam” at each homophonic and polyphonic entrance.
- At meas. 8, I would encourage a little feeling of “lift” or ‘space’ on the dotted eighth/sixteenth – just a slight bit of separation within the word, “*quo-niam*” – the same is true on the word in “*Do-minus*” in meas. 10, and 11 and anywhere this rhythmic figure exists.
- The ends of phrases also have a sense of decrescendo in order to shape the phrases.

- Please note in measures 9, 10, 11, that the eighth notes on “**tu solus**” are light and almost staccato-like, leading to the word “**DO-minus** – (with more weight on “Do”)
- Mark NO BREATH at Meas. 14 – 15.
- Soprano – Meas. 16, please sing the grace notes as EQUAL Quarter notes, d, c#, b.
- From Meas. 19 – 26, each vocal entrance uses the style and articulation mentioned above.
- The two quarter notes on the word “**Sanc-tus**” at meas. 23 (soprano/bass) are not sung as ‘straight quarters with equal weight.’ Rather, we sing the word by “off-gliding” the second syllable (i.e., placing more emphasis on the first syllable and less (or a slight decrescendo) on the second syllable.)
- In your music, put ‘mp’ on the eighth note pickup into meas. 26/27, then at meas. 27/28, write, ‘mf’ and finally, at meas. 28/29, Write a ‘f’ for the dynamic.
- Meas. 39, 40, sing the words ‘Je-su’ and ‘**Chris-te**’ by “off-gliding” the second syllable (i.e., placing more emphasis on the first syllable and less (or a slight decrescendo) on the second syllable).
- Meas. 44 – 48, note that it is marked ‘piano,’ but there will be a slight crescendo/decrescendo within this phrase.

The FUGUE starts on page 10 at measure 60. The tempo is marked “presto” and will be at about Quarter note = 132.

- Again, this section needs to be sung light and articulated, but DO NOT RUSH.
- The eight notes at each of the polyphonic entrances should be sung almost staccato with precise diction.
- The “amen” melismas are sung legato in contrast.
- The dotted quarter notes on the ‘Amen’ sections should have a little crescendo for a feeling of energy and forward motion in the phrase.
- Soprano/Tenors be precise on the C# and C naturals in meas. 82 – 85.
- Meas. 96 for Soprano and Tenor, the grace notes should be sung as EQUAL quarter notes (Sop., f#, e, d, c#; Tenor, f#, g, f#, e).
- Alto and Basses, be aware/precise on the chromatic g#/g and c/c# respectively.
- On meas. 102, Sopranos, lift after 2nd beat so that all voices lift together before the Amen of that measure.
- On the final ‘Amens’, sing a voiced “n”/release on the quarter rest of meas. 103, 105, and 105.

Ubi Caritas by Ola Gjeilo

This is one of Gjeilo’s most performance and popular pieces. Though written in 2001, the piece draws its inspiration from Gregorian chant. The text is:

*Where Charity and Love are, God is there. (Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est).
The Love of Christ has gathered us together. (Congregavit nos in unum Christ amor)
Let us rejoice and be glad in it. (Exultamus et in ipso jucundemur.)
Let us revere and love the living God. (Timeamus et amemus Deum vivum).
And from a sincere heart, let us love one another. Amen. (Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.)*

**A YouTube recording is found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J5MoZlNVG-s>

- Pure vowels and unified tone are the goals throughout this piece.
- Note the dynamic changes at meas. 16/17 (mf) and at meas. 22/23 (ff)
- The punctuation marks are also the phrase markings for the most part!
- Note both dynamic markings and slower tempo change at meas. 28.
- Work for note precision at meas. 31 and 32 (half -steps for tenor, bass and whole step in meas. 32 for the alto.
- Bass line, meas. 28 – be careful on descending line. Think whole steps and half step relationships.
- Basses – on the ascending line in Meas. 37, listen and tune – move into falsetto to sing this line (*congregavit nos in unum*) – Always sing light and in head voice here!
- Mixed Meter at the last line – the 4/4 and 5/4 bars can be tricky.
- Basses listen careful at entrance at meas. 43 on the c#.
- Meas. 44 - Altos– listen carefully and be sure that these final notes are truly whole steps.

Psalm 23 – Paul Basler

I love this piece! It is a truly setting of the familiar Psalm 23 and was dedicated to Dr. Andre Thomas.

**Below are two recordings of this piece:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZRttOaxJArA>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDnbrZAXpA8>

- Note the dynamic markings throughout. At the beginning piano, mezzo piano, mezzo forte, and finally, at the top of page 5, meas. 18 – forte.
- Also, each phrase must have shape – beginning, middle and end!
- Meas. 30, lift after “leadeth me” Then,
- NO BREATH at meas. 33 – 34. (Carry “righteousness for His name’s sake.”)
- Place the “K” of “sake” on Beat 1 of meas. 56.
- Meas. 58, place the “K” of “walk” on the eighth rest.
- Meas. 60, carry the phrase, NO BREATH after “walk” – Elide the “K” to the word, “through”
- Meas. 43, put the “TH” of “death” on the quarter rest.
- Meas. 51, the word is pronounced “com-**fort**” Not, comfort! ☺
- At Meas. 56, the compound meter here has a feeling of buoyancy throughout! The 12/8 is conducted and felt as a 4/4 meter.
- The 15/8 bars are conducted and thus, felt as 5/4 (2+3) bars.
- Meas. 59, put the “s” of ‘enemies’ on the dotted quarter rests.
- Meas. 63, pronounce “over” as “oh-vuh.”
- Meas. 73, note the dynamic contrast. This unison section should be light, lyric and floating.
- Meas. 74 – 75 – NO BREATH!!
- Meas. 76, end of 79 and 81 – the 6/8 bar is almost felt as a hemiola and is conducted in 3.
- Meas. 82, will be conducted as 5/4 (3+2) with the ‘d’ of ‘Lord’ on beat 3!
- Note the dynamic and tempo change at meas. 82/83

- Meas. 86, put the 'd' of 'shepherd' on the eighth rest.
- Meas. 88, carry over with (NO BREATH) to meas. 89.
- Meas. 92-93, NO BREATH – Carry over "Shepherd forever" then, break before the final "Amen."
- Put the "n" of 'Amen' on beat 1 of meas. 95.

The next two pieces are by Australian composers.

The first is Tunggare by Stephen Leek.

**A recording can be found at these links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ppJUqiUqplC>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ps6S6nQBaoI>

Stephen Leek is a well-known Australian composer. Leek was born in Sydney in 1959. Following school and after a period of working in Sydney, Leek received a double degree in Cello Performance and Composition at Canberra School of Music. Leek has been described as a pioneer in the Australian music community, and his involvement with numerous groups across Australia has strongly influenced the nature and direction of new Australian choral music. He has also been described as Australia's best-known choral composer. In 1993, he and Australian composer and educator, Graeme Morton founded "The Australian Voices" to promote the works of Australian composers. As a freelance composer/conductor, Leek continues to be in demand a guest artist around the globe.

The text of "Tunggare" is a single Australian aboriginal word which means "to sing" and should be pronounced so that it rhymes with "fun-far-mah."

- Note that the asymmetrical rhythm creates a wonderful, almost percussive feeling to the piece. The melodic line of the alto and soprano lies above this ever-steady pulse provided in the tenor and bass line.
- The "M" at the end of word "tunggare" at meas. 4 is simply a close to a 'Hum' on 'm.'
- Note at letter l, Meas. 49, the men repeat the word "tunggare" on pitch as fast as possible individually, ad libitum.
- The dynamics are hugely important throughout this piece, as is the rhythmic energy of the piece.

Waltzing Matilda – Australian Folksong, arr. Graeme Morton

"Waltzing Matilda" is Australia's best-known bush ballad (folksongs from the Australian bush or outback) and has been described as the country's "unofficial national anthem." It's important to know some of the slang used in the song so that we can fully understand its meaning. The title is Australian slang for travelling on foot (**waltzing**) with one's belongings in a "**matilda**" (a swag or type of knapsack/or bedroll) slung over one's back. The song narrates the story of an itinerant worker, or "**swagman**" (transient laborer who travelled by foot from farm to farm) making a drink of **billy tea** (a billycan is a lightweight cooking pot in the form of a metal bucket commonly used for boiling water to make coffee or tea over a campfire) at a bush camp and capturing a stray **jumbuck** (ram or male sheep)

to eat. When the jumbuck's owner, a **squatter** (landowner), and three mounted policemen pursue the swagman for theft, he declares "You'll never catch me alive!" and commits suicide by drowning himself in a nearby **billabong** (watering hole), after which his ghost haunts the site. (The aboriginal term for water is "billa." The **billabong** is like an ox-bow type lake.)

The original lyrics were written in 1895 by Australian poet Banjo Patterson and were first published as sheet music in 1903. Extensive folklore surrounds the song and the process of its creation, to the extent that it has its own museum in the Queensland outback where Patterson wrote the lyrics.

Like any folksong, there's usually a narrative behind its intent. Thus, the important thing about this piece is clear and distinct diction so that the "story" of the swagman is understood. There is a full, robust feeling to this "waltz".

**I can only find a little snippet of this piece on the Australian Center for Music website which I want to share with you:

<https://www.australianmusiccentre.com.au/workversion/morton-graeme-waltzing-matilda-arr/23617>

It's not a long recording, but you get a feeling of the "lift" and the fun, folksong style of the piece.

- Note the repeat signs within the piece (page 4).
- Key change at top of page 5 (after the ritardando, then, a tempo!)
- On the third verse (key of E major), Basses have the melody.
- S1, S2 and A have the "do" accompaniment with a feeling of 3 + 2 for the 5/4 meter.
- Tenors have the same 3 – 2 feeling, but they are "off the beat" with a rest on the first beat of the 3 and the first beat of the 2. This will need to be precise!
- All voices come together in a more homophonic fashion for the chorus/modulation at meas. 71 back to the key of Eb Major for the 4th verse which contains the part of the story about the swagman's ghost at the billabong.
- Immediately, the key changes to F Major with a return to the original fast tempo.
- Meas. 90 (I'll check with Mr. Morton, but I believe that this interlude is metrically correct, but the note values in the 2/4 bars are incorrect.)
- Yet another key change occurs at meas. 125 back to the original key for the 5th and final statement of the chorus at the coda (meas. 130 to the end) which contains modulations as well.
- The actual voice parts of this arrangement aren't difficult, but they don't always "go" where you think they should, so take the time to really tune the accidentals which are found at the various key changes and the coda.

Flight Song – Kim Andre Arnesen – FROM MEMORY!

I first became acquainted with this composition through Dr. Anton Armstrong at St. Olaf College. The work was written as a tribute to him on his birthday. The text is truly beautiful and it speaks of the influence of mentors and on our lives and how they positively affect the way that we look at life. For many of us, Music is that wonderful gift that we turn to whether in joy or in sadness...it is often, our solace.

For this piece, diction is truly a key element and the shape of phrases enables the piece to soar. SA at the bottom of page 4, please note the *mp* dynamic.

DIVISI:

- Whenever there is a 2-part split for the Basses, the Baritones (B1), take the top note).
- Whenever there is a 2-part split for the Tenors, Tenor 1 takes the top note and Tenor 2, takes the bottom note.
- Whenever there is a 2-part split for Altos, Alto 1 takes the top note and Alto 2 takes the bottom.
- The only EXCEPTION is at Meas. 52: ONLY SOPRANO 1 on the TOP part at meas. 52 – 56; SOPRANO II, join the ALTOS on the melody on these measures! SOPRANO 2, join the SOPRANO 1 part again at meas. 59 and 60.
- Then, at meas. 61, SOPRANO 1 ONLY on the TOP line from 61 – to the end; SOPRANO 2, joins the Alto at meas. 61 and will sing the UPPER NOTES on the DIVISI. ALTOS sing the BOTTOM note on the DIVISI at the end.

OTHER NOTES:

- Be conscious of *word stress* for the dramatic section at meas. 34 – 36. We will emphasize BRO-ken, SHA-ken, CRIES and on PAIN, there will be an *immediate subito mp* on “for this is music’s inner voice.”
- **ALL take a breath** just before Meas. 40 (*all you who cry aloud.*)
- Meas. 43, the Soprano 2 part is key! The tenor part, ‘answers’ in measure 45.
- The same happens in Measures 46 – 47 for Soprano 2 and again in meas. 48 – 49 in the tenor part.

**Here is Dr. Armstrong’s choir from St. Olaf singing “Flight Song.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CUvE6i1l2do>

Let the River Run – Carly Simon, arr. Craig Hella Johnson – FROM MEMORY!

I remember this piece as being recorded by pop artist, Carly Simon. She wrote and recorded the piece for the film “*Working Girl*” in 1988. In fact, *Let the River Run* is the first of only two songs to have won all three major awards (the Oscar, Golden Globe and Grammy) while being composed and written, as well as performed, entirely by a single artist. Craig Hella Johnson arranged the current setting of the piece for his professional choir, Conspirare in 2012.

The dynamics of this piece are truly important. Starting with the Bass II entrance, the introduction builds in excitement with the addition of each voice part. Note the REPEAT SIGNS with each vocal entry (as well as DYNAMIC change). **We may or may not take these repeats. Be prepared either way!**

- For the ladies at top of Page 4, all ALTO 2’s sing the Alto line, ALTO 1s, sing the BOTTOM of the three parts in the Soprano line. SOPRANO 2, sing the MIDDLE note on the Soprano line and SOPRANO I will sing the TOP line.
- Be sure to emphasize the ‘K’ sound of “Come” throughout for a more percussive effect. Especially enunciate the K at the bottom of Page 2.
- On the top of page 8, Alto, Tenor and Bass, put a “D” sound in front of the “Oo” (Doo). Bass 2, rearticulate the Doo sound **on each note** in the downward movement of your line.

- At the top of 9, on BEFORE Meas. 32 - **ALL voices, take a breath** and Alto, Tenor and Basses rearticulate the 'Doo' on meas. 32
- Soprano 1 – be sure to ARTICULATE the words at meas. 34 – 35. Soprano 2 and Altos, note your parts on the Middle staves!
- On the Coda, Page 10, at Meas. 37, Soprano 1 takes the top note and Soprano 2 takes the bottom note of the Soprano line. All Altos are on the Alto line and the Bass/Baritone lines are obvious through the end of the piece. n the first line
- At meas. 35 on the last 4 eighth notes, Tenor 1, take top notes, Tenor 2 take the 2nd note from the top – On Meas. 39, Tenor 2, Take the TOP note of the Dotted Half Note Split in the Bass line. Baritones are on the TOP of the bass line until Meas. 39. At that point, please take the MIDDLE note on the 3-note split. The Bass 2 will take the BOTTOM note throughout.

**This is such a FUN piece and it MUST be memorized! Here's the Conspirare group performing the work with the arranger, Craig Hella Johnson conducting.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OArloBORaYs>

I hope you like the music and that you will find these notes to be helpful to you as you continue to prepare for our rehearsals! I have performed these pieces with my own choirs as well as with other singers throughout the country. I feel sure that you will find at least a few pieces that you truly love in this program.

I look forward to meeting you and making awesome music with you very soon!

Sincerely,

Lynne Gackle, Ph.D.
Director of Choral Activities
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