A Choral Conductor's Study, Rehearsal, and Performance Guide to Selected Pieces by Brahms, Josquin, Källman, Mozart, Nystedt, and Purcell

Amanda Massengill
amanda.massengill@siu.edu

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A CHORAL CONDUCTOR’S STUDY, REHEARSAL, AND PERFORMANCE GUIDE TO SELECTED PIECES BY BRAHMS, JOSQUIN, KÄLLMAN, MOZART, NYSTEDT, AND PURCELL

by

Amanda Massengill

B.S., Austin Peay State University, 2020

A Research Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master of Music

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Approved by:

Dr. Susan Davenport, Chair

Dr. Brittany Benningfield

Dr. David Dillard

Graduate School
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TITLE: A CHORAL CONDUCTOR’S STUDY, REHEARSAL, AND PERFORMANCE GUIDE TO SELECTED PIECES BY BRAHMS, JOSQUIN, KÄLLMAN, MOZART, NYSTEDT, AND PURCELL

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Susan Davenport

This document is an overview of the research and rehearsal considerations made in preparation for works programmed on a choral conducting recital. The pieces on the program are: Josquin’s *El Grillo*, Purcell’s “Man That Is Born of a Woman,” Mozart’s *Te Deum Laudamus*, Brahms’ “Sehnsucht,” Källman’s *Peze Kafé*, and Nystedt’s “Peace I Leave With You.” The program is ultimately a chronology spanning from the Baroque era into the Modern era. When selecting these pieces, it was of high importance to locate works that both showcased the nuances of each major musical time period and combined to form a contrasting program. Within each chapter there is: biographical and historical information about the composer and piece, rehearsal and conducting considerations, a formal analysis, and reviews of various recordings. The hope of these program notes are to aid in the future informed performances of conductors.
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Chapter 1

“El Grillo” (1505)

Josquin des Prez (1440-1521)

Biographical and Historical Perspective

At the end of the Middle Ages and the crest of the Renaissance, Josquin des Prez became one of the most notorious composers to be employed within the royal courts. Though an exact birth year and location are nearly impossible to deem certain, it is believed that his birth happened in the decade of 1440-1450. Furthermore, the composer’s birthplace is, at best, an oral record trace to a small village, Prez, in what is now Northern France.\(^1\) A few reasons for Josquin’s notoriety is the large output of music to which the composer is attributed, his travel between France and Italy, and the craftsmanship of compositions covering both sacred and secular works.

Throughout childhood and early adulthood, Josquin was periodically employed as a singer. The works produced during the composer’s early adulthood were distributed throughout France and Italy, particularly Milan. Scholars assert that music publishers were still not familiar with this composer during this span of time due to the wide variety of spellings for “Josquin des Prez.”\(^2\) Many early publications feature severe misspellings of the name, even within the same edition or collection of works. Despite the misspellings, having works produced and distributed


\(^2\) Patrick Macey, “Josquin (Lebloitte dit) des Prez.”
in Italy and France created Josquin’s success as a composer. Colleagues, religious officials, and monarchs were seemingly familiar with Josquin’s compositions. As previously stated, Josquin’s music was known in Italy and France, though the composer did not travel extensively and was only employed in Italy for brief intervals of time.

Published under the name Josquin or Jusquin d’Ascanio, for many years scholars believed that the named creator of “El grillo” and Josquin des Prez were not the same person. The most regarded truth behind the mysterious composer’s identity was later discovered through records indicating Josquin’s employment to Cardinal Ascanio Sforza in 1484 in Milan, Italy. There is still debate about the composer’s identity due to possible misprints, misspellings, and geographically popular names and surnames.

The professional relationship between the Sforza court and Josquin des Prez could be described in modern times as a non-salaried contractor. The Sforza family were the leading patrons of music in Milan, Italy during the fourteenth century. Josquin’s name appears periodically in the records from the Sforza court from 1459-1499. It was during one of the active employment periods that Josquin composed three secular works, one of which is “El grillo.” “El Grillo” was first published in Ottaviano Petrucci’s *Frottole libro tertio* in 1505. Among the most popular secular works of Josquin des Prez, “El grillo,” a short work composed in the *frottola* style, is arguably the composer’s most recorded and performed work.

Despite the short length of this *frottola*, it contains many elements of musical and

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contextual mystery and symbology and a rich story featuring entertaining onomatopoeia. The poetry of the work is a short, comical story featuring a singing cricket. The intention behind the story is to arouse humor with personified descriptions of a talented singing cricket who continues to perform for the love of singing. It is believed that “El grillo” may also be a piece dedicated in humor to a fellow musician, Carlo Grillo, who also served in the Sforza court in Italy during Josquin’s employment.5

Of all the animals that Josquin could have been inspired by to compose the fifteenth century equivocation of a pop song, one may stop to inquire why the cricket is so special? Though Josquin did not write the text of the piece, the composer favored the text greatly enough to set it. The reason seems to be directly linked to a public trend in Italy at the time celebrating the cricket. The origin of the “grillo” is a tradition in Italy, particularly the Festa de Grillo, which is a feast held in Florence each Spring, and dates back as a celebratory fertility meal shared throughout the city.

**Rehearsal Considerations**

To assist a choir in developing the vocal techniques to properly perform this piece, plan to use two primary vocalises prior to the start of the piece. The first is a short exercise that focuses on singing in a staccato style while keeping the jaw and tongue relaxed.6 Beginning in the middle register, around D4/D3, instruct the choir to sing on the vowel [u]. Remind the choir to support each tone with light diaphragm impulses. Once the exercise can be performed

5 William F. Prizer, “Music at the Court of the Sforza: The Birth and Death of a Musical Center,” 170.

skillfully at a moderate tempo, slightly increase the tempo until it is comparable to the planned conducting tempo.

Figure 1. Ehmann and Haaseman, *Voice Building for Choirs*, 40.

The second vocalise to use in preparation of “El grillo” focuses on supported legato singing. The second vocalise for this piece is valuable because it requires the singers to sing multiple vowels on stepwise tones while supporting each phrase with one breath. Instruct the choir to sing on the vowels [y] and [i] beginning on F4 and F3. The choir should sing each phrase legato without interruption by the changing vowels. These two warm-ups are practical when preparing to sing “El grillo,” as the piece alternates quick staccato passages with phrases that are legato.

7 Ehmann and Haasemann, *Voice Building for Choirs*, 75.
Beginning the first rehearsal of “El grillo” from a rhythmic standpoint is a practical way to introduce the piece to the choir. On a neutral, percussive syllable such as [ta] begin by speaking through the rhythms at a fraction of the eventual performance speed. The time signature changes in measures twenty-two through thirty-one may later prove to be challenging when combined with the syllables of the text, so it would be beneficial to fix those first.

Following the successful teaching of the rhythms, teach the pitches from a score prepared with a roman numeral analysis. Using Solfege, ask the choir to sing on Solfege syllables in the key of C major for measures one through nineteen. Next, measures twenty through thirty-four tend to reach cadential points in the key of G major, this, accompanied with increased F sharps may mean that the choir will be successful using Solfege in the key of G major. At the pick-up to measure thirty-five it appears that the piece transitions into an ambiguous key area, which both resembles A major and D minor. In the final measures of the work, the choir should respond
successfully using Solfege in the key of D minor, though there are zero B flats written.

Once a choir can confidently sing the pitches on Solfege, move on to singing the pitches in rhythm at a slightly faster pace on a neutral syllable that encourages the singers to phonate on the vowel. A good example of this syllable might be [ta] This short work is energetic and fast-paced with many consonants per note, so it may eventually be difficult to phonate each vowel while maintaining clear diction. Comparatively, this piece may prove to be on the easier side to sing, so it is not necessary to allocate tremendous amounts of time to rehearsing it.

The penultimate step in preparing a choir to sing this piece is the addition of the text. The language is Italian, which may be easily learned by some and not by others. To save time rehearsing this piece, plan to send out a recording of the text around two weeks prior to the exact rehearsal when the text will be introduced. The students who would struggle with the text and pronunciation can reference this recording and practice outside of class.

Lastly, once the choir can confidently sing the rhythms, pitches, and language at a moderate tempo, begin increasing the tempo in increments. Note that measures fifteen, sixteen, twenty-nine, and thirty may prove challenging to sing as the tempo increases due to their rhythmic texture. To mitigate inaudible diction in these measures, alternate singing at a slower tempo with speaking the text in rhythm until it is vocally clean. Prepare to work on these sections with a careful ear and adjust the tempo according to how well the choir can eventually articulate these passages.

**Formal Analysis**

At the start of the piece, the four voices share commonly longer rhythms and note values, which become intervalllic with sections of patter-like phrases. It is during these quick passages where the words become onomatopoetic and resemble the familiar sound of crickets chirping.
The oscillation between longer note values and shorter note values could also be understood to mimic the noises produced by the cricket at various stages of sound. The passage of vocal patter is shown below.

Figure 3. Josquin des Prez, “El grillo,” (Milan, Italy, Octavio Petrucci, 1489), mm. 13-18.

Another rhythmic aspect of this piece is the composer and poet’s use of uneven stanza, though this practice was extremely common as the popularity of frottola became a trend among amateur poets in Italy. The frottola became popular in Italy in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Amateur performers, poets, and musicians composed the lyrics and tunes that are often uneven and do not strictly follow the poetic forms of the time. This is a plausible explanation for the uneven syllables of “El grillo.” The syllables of each line are often identical in number but include one or two lines with syllables that are unlike the rest. This does not conform to the syllabic styles of the Italian barzeletta, a two-section, non-rhyming poem, of which most frottola forms were derived from. It is often questioned that perhaps the music of this
work was composed before the poetry was added, which could be an explanation for the uneven syllables and the subsequent metrical oddities.\(^8\)

Throughout the work, the four vocal lines are primarily homophonic with the melody sounding in the top voice. There is one brief phrase where the lines of text begin to slightly feel imitative, which happens between the four parts during a variation in rhythm of the top two voices and the bottom two voices. This phrase is set in the second section or B section of the work and then immediately returns to the chordal passages of the A section.

Figure 4. Josquin des Prez. “El grillo,” (Milan, Italy, Octavio Petrucci, 1489), mm. 39.

**Review of Recordings**

When finding a practical recording for “El Grillo” one of the most important details is locating a group whose tempo allows for the patter sections to be clearly understood and to not

sound frantic. It is also equally important to find a recording that does not go too slow that the excitement of the line is lost. The first recording, produced by the voices of Capilla Flamenca does an excellent job of reciting the text, however the tempo is too slow. During the patter phrases “Dale beve grillo canta,” the excitement of the phrase is somewhat lost. This recording offers an entertaining take on the phrasing of the piece, but for a performance the tempo would not work as well as the recording produced by the voices of Cantus, an all-male group.

The recording of “El Grillo” produced by Cantus is the perfect example of the vibrancy and entertainment crafted into the poetry of this piece. The clearly articulated rhythms, text, and dynamics make this recording superior to many ensembles who have performed this piece. The vocalists have also mastered the art of clear singing free from vibrato and tension, which then results in a balance of the lines of music, whereas some recordings tempt the highest voice to overpower the lower voices.
CHAPTER 2

“MAN THAT IS BORN OF A WOMAN” (1695)

HENRY PURCELL (1658-1695)

Biographical and Historical Perspective

English composer Henry Purcell is best known for his voice compositions, and his works can be easily accredited to him through study of his meticulous hand-writing nuances. Though no baptism registry can be found for Henry Purcell, the year of his birth, 1658, is a widely accepted fact. Throughout life, Purcell was involved in vocal music and the study of composition. As a boy, Purcell sang with the Chapel Royal choir, and when the composer hit puberty and could no longer sing, the transition from chorister to composer began, although Purcell’s interest in voice music never waned. Purcell worked numerous church jobs until September tenth of 1677 when he replaced his mentor, Matthew Locke in the position of composer in the royal court. In this position, his compositions, both instrumental and vocal were mostly within sacred genres.

“Man That Is Born of a Woman” is the first of a group of three sacred anthems entitled Funeral Sentences. The exact dates of the completion of the set are slightly unclear. The last two of the three Funeral Sentences still survive in manuscript form and due to the documented evolution of Purcell’s penmanship can be dated as early as 1677, but other records indicate that the first draft of this work can be credited to Purcell at the age of twelve. The three anthems appear in a manuscript copied by Purcell along with his and other composers’ works.

The logic that “Man That Is Born of Woman,” was composed around the same time as
the latter two anthems is evident in the missing time signature of the second anthem. According
to Robert Shay, musicologist at the University of Colorado Boulder, it appears that the first
anthem and second anthem were intended to be sung together, therefore they were likely written
around the same time.\(^\text{10}\) Throughout Purcell’s life and following his death, this work, as well as
the other two anthems, have been revised both in minor and significant respects. Shay notes that
despite the original manuscript for “Man That is Born of a Woman” not being extant, it is likely
that the first of the anthems was written by Purcell at an early stage in life. He further explains
that the resulting work, the oldest surviving copy, features compositional prowess with minute
details that can only be explained by an older, keener Purcell.\(^\text{11}\)

Although Queen Mary II died in December of 1694 her funeral did not occur until March
of 1695.\(^\text{12}\) Purcell, the contemporaneous court composer and organist for the Westminster
Abbey, had written and revised a collection of sacred anthems which were later grouped together
and referred to as *Funeral Sentences*. They are intended to be played graveside and not at the
funeral ceremony. The three anthems are preceded by a small quartet of trumpets and a hand
drum, which serves as marching music for the casket to the grave site, this dirge sets the tone for
the melancholic text “man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live and is full of
misery.”

\(^\text{10}\) Robert Shay, “Purcell’s Revisions to the Funeral Sentences Revisited,” *Early Music*
\(^\text{11}\) Robert Shay, “Purcell’s Revisions to the Funeral Sentences Revisited,” 466.
\(^\text{12}\) W. Barclay Squire, “Purcell’s Music for the Funeral of Mary II,” *Sammelbände der
Internationalen Musikgesellschaft* vol. 4, no. 2 (February 1903): 226,
Rehearsal Considerations

To begin a rehearsal of this piece, there are a few practical vocalises to use. The texture of this piece is often chordal but has a few sections with imitative passages. In addition to the texture, the range is moderate, the tempo is slow, and there are many accidentals. The first warm-up is a breathing exercise and can be found in *Voice Building for Choirs* on page seven. It is listed as number five or “diving while expelling the air.” The idea of this breath exercise is to slowly expel air over an extending period of time encouraging sturdy breath support. Begin by inhaling over one or two beats and then expelling a steady stream of air over two beats, then three, and continuing until the choir can successfully expel air over eight to ten beats. This exercise can also be done by using a small hissing sound while expelling the air or exhaling over a staccato “shh.”

The second vocal exercise to use when teaching this piece is designed for pieces with a solemn character. There are three sections for this exercise: loosening up the body, breathing, and developing resonance in the lower registers. First, the body movement exercise focuses on relieving tension in the arms, shoulders, and head. Have the choir swing their arms back and forth allowing for every muscle to loosen before slowly returning to a standing position. Next, the breathing exercises are interchangeable with the one mentioned above, but include a portion where the choir must gently whisper an exciting secret. This breathing exercise encourages the support needed to withstand the phrases of this piece but to also keep a low dynamic level exciting. Lastly, have the choir sing on laughing syllables [hu ho ha], while specifically relaxing the jaw. To incorporate this exercise into a specific moment in “Man That Is Born of a Woman”

begin in the higher end of the middle register, preferably near C five and four then slowly
descend on triads or in groups of three whole steps.\textsuperscript{14}

“Man That Is Born of a Woman” transitions often between keys. When checking the
cadential points of this work, one may find that measures are sectioned out in small groups so
using Solfege in one particular key may be challenging. To assist a choir in learning pitches, it
may be easiest to sing on a neutral [\textipa{ta}] and request that the pianist supplies support of the lines.
Within this piece there are many accidentals that are often a half step ascending or descending.

Rhythmically, this piece is not challenging, but begin the rehearsals by clearly stating if
the pattern used will be a four or a two. The choir should write the conductor’s choice into their
scores. There are arguable advantages to using either pattern, but the choir will adjust best if
made aware beforehand. Next, it may save time in rehearsals to send copies of the score that
include breath marks or alterations beforehand since this piece has many long phrases.

Next, the language of this piece is English, though it is an older version of English with
words that have since left the common vernacular. Instruct the choir that the word “ne’er” does
not feature the consonant “v” and should not be imposed onto the word. Additionally, the word
“continueth” is not commonly used and is set to the rhythm where the syllable “nu” is separated
within the word. The tendency may be to pronounce this syllable as written [\textipa{nu}] when the
appropriate articulation is a [\textipa{n}] as in the word continue. There is also an abbreviated form of the
word flower, spelled in the text as “flow’r.” Often this is to fit a two-syllable word into one
syllable for rhythmic purposes and should not be pronounced with two separate syllables.

\textsuperscript{14} Ehmann and Haasemann, \textit{Voice Building for Choirs}, 22-23.
Once the pitches, rhythms, and language are confidently learned it is then time to begin shaping the phrases and pointing out any instances of word painting. An example of word painting that happens often in this piece is found in the phrases “he cometh up” “and is cut down.” As these lines of text are sung, the pitches ascend or descend until the text is no longer being used on page three. To accentuate this, ask the choir to write a crescendo over the ascending pitches and a decrescendo over the descending pitches.

Lastly, tempo consideration is specific to the number of voices on each line, the size of the choir, and the technical experience of the group. There is no tempo marking included on most scores but recordings of this piece are typically taken very slowly. To determine a singable tempo for the group in question it is important to find the longest phrase in the work and attempt to sing it with a metronome. The first two phrases, measure one through five and measure six through ten are good phrases to use this technique on. Each phrase should be able to be sung in one breath, if it cannot be done the tempo must be increased.

Formal Analysis

The text of “Man That Is Born of A Woman” is taken from the book of Job, chapter fourteen from the Christian Bible. As was common practice in the eighteenth century, the time signature is cut time, though the general feeling of the piece is mournful and slow with long note values in each voice. In Purcell’s original manuscript there are no composer’s markings that indicate a tempo or style other than the dedication and understood use of the work.

The work is a true mixture of imitation and chordal passages. The vocal entrances are staggered, but quickly cadence in a homophonic way. This exchange from homophony and imitation alternate from line to line with each new introduction of text. Contrary to the common ABA’ form of the Baroque period, “Man That Is Born of a Woman,” features Biblical text that
reads through much like the scripture itself, with the form taking three separate sections with one similar portion at the end.

Despite the ominous text choice, Purcell employs many major chords throughout the work. The melancholy is found in the composer’s use of half steps at the stress of each phrase. For example, in the opening phrase, “Man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live,” the composer begins with a major chord and allots half steps to the two top voices on the word “born.” Though the chromaticism is not exclusively found in the top two voices nor at the center of the phrase, Purcell’s selective use of note value paired with accidentals and half steps highlight the direction of each phrase.

Figure 5. Henry Purcell, “Man That is Born of a Woman,” (November 1695) mm. 1-7.

Review of Recordings

A major aspect of “Man That Is Born of a Woman” is its implied mood indications that make it a piece of music designed for a funeral. The first varying idea of the performance of this piece is the tempo. A melancholic dirge is understandably “slow,” but when searching for a
recording of this work, there are many different interpretations of exactly how slow this work should be performed. The most common phrase length of this short piece is five measures, which then raises the question of what tempo is both appropriate and practical for an ensemble.

Both the Monteverdi Choir and the Collegium Vocale Gent have tempos set at half note equals thirty-four. The Oxford Camerata Choir uses a slightly faster tempo, half note equals forty, which makes the phrasing more approachable for a high school or undergraduate choir. A detail this small makes a huge impact on the phrasing and overall difficulty level in regards to breath support for singers. Set to a metronome, the difference is approximately six clicks in difference. In that difference however, the Oxford Camerata Choir’s recording is more approachable and realistic for developing a breathing technique in young singers.

The last two criteria of the recordings are the tone and color produced from each ensemble in addition to the clarity of diction. Despite being eliminated for the chosen tempo, the Collegium Vocal Gent produced a clear, light sound appropriate to the style of the time, whereas the Monteverdi Choir’s sound was full and mature, which may not be an appropriate interpretation for the already slow tempo when working with a younger choir. In the slower recordings, the words became minced and were difficult to understand, which seems inappropriate for a funeral sentence intended to recite biblical text. Though each ensemble used a grave tempo, the Oxford Camerata Choir’s diction was remarkably the clearest to understand, which is also helpful when considering phrase structure.
CHAPTER 3

“TE DEUM LAUDAMUS” K 141 (1769)

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791)

Biographical and Historical Perspective

Remembered as one of the most prolific composers to ever live, German-born W.A. Mozart lived only a short thirty-five years. Though his compositional output remained mostly consistent over the course of his life, some of the works he produced in adolescence are most frequently performed and hailed as reminders of his genius. W. A. Mozart, accompanied by his younger sister, Nannerl, and father, Leopold, returned home from a lengthy European tour in which the trio performed for royal courts all over the continent.15 Mozart, at age twelve, had already experienced vast success in both performance and composition. Leopold was entirely responsible for the Mozart children’s education, which included lessons in composition, violin, and keyboard for an especially promising W. A. Mozart. With a combination of an especially studious childhood and inspiration from the finest court musicians Europe had to offer, young Mozart was already well versed in form and harmony. It was during a brief time spent at home in Salzburg that young Mozart composed a short sacred work, “Te Deum Laudamus.”

As many scholars have noted, Mozart’s Te Deum resembles one written by Michael Haydn in 1760. The resemblances are great enough that some scholars have argued it is an arrangement. Musicologist K. G. Fellerer argues, “classification

as an arrangement would be thoroughly justified even though Mozart superseded his model in
terms of harmonic and rhythmic scope.”

The short, sacred work was composed at the same time as his Benedictus sit Deus, K 171.
As a lesser-known sacred work of Mozart, the authenticity of the composer was doubted until the
original manuscript was located with notations in Leopold Mozart’s handwriting. The
manuscript was found in Salzburg Cathedral’s archives, yet scholars Cliff Eisen and Stanley
Sadie of Grove Music Online still only attribute this composition to Mozart tentatively.

**Rehearsal Considerations**

To begin rehearsals for “Te Deum Laudamus” prepare the choir by allowing the singers
thirty to forty seconds to properly stretch and become comfortable in the singing position.
Allowing the singers bodies to become limber will be useful for the endurance needed to sing
this work. The first vocalise to use for this piece contains brief moments of coloratura similar to
those found within the piece. Beginning on F4 and F3, sing the excerpt depicted in the figure
below. Plan to descend by two or three whole steps and ascend by four or five whole steps
covering a wide range of each singer’s voice. While doing this vocalise, remind the chorus to
keep the pitches light and buoyant. Incorporating a light movement such as a sway into this
exercise may be a good idea to keep the singer’s bodies loose.

17 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Te Deum Laudamus (Kassel: Bärenreiter- Verlag, 2015).
18 Cliff Eisen and Stanley Sadie, “Mozart, (Johann Chrysostom) Wolfgang Amadeus,”
Grove Music Online, ed. Dean Roote, Accessed 1, November, 2021,
omo-9781561592630-e-6002278233.
19 Ehmann and Haasemann, Voice Building for Choirs, 81.
11. Alternate long notes with coloratura figures. Precision for the coloratura will be enhanced if the long note ends in a slight decrescendo. The diaphragm relaxes. (See B II,e,20 and 21.) With this relaxation, the coloratura flourish will flow easily and clearly. Imagine a new vowel for the first sixteenth note of each group:

The next vocalise to use in preparation of this piece teaches the choir to sing both staccato and legato while maintaining a light sound. On the vowels [u] and [o] begin at D four and three, instruct the choir to sing the first ascending and descending arpeggio with a light staccato and the second time with a connected legato. This vocalise will also prepare the choir to sing leaps and transition gracefully between the passagio, so doing this exercise up and down by three or four whole steps is recommended.
Next, this piece is portioned off into four main sections. A practical place to begin working is the first section, measures one through sixty-three. Though it seems quite long, the first section of the Te Deum is highly repetitive in both its rhythmic and melodic material. Instruct the choir to sing on Solfege in the key of C major. There are phrases throughout that feature accidentals, so it may be a good idea to address those before the choir begins singing. Ask the choir to label the accidental Solfege syllables, for example in measures twenty-six, thirty, and fifty-one. The reading tempo of the first section should be significantly slower than the eventual performance tempo. Additionally, be aware that the bass line is possibly the most angular of all four parts. If necessary ask the choir to sing the bass part for both assistance to the basses and clarity of the harmonies.

Following the first read through, rehearse the first section with the repetitions in mind. Though the first section isn’t exactly strophic, each “verse” is similar, it may be necessary to verbally point out where each section begins and ends. An example of this would be measures

13. Combine staccato and legato:
It is helpful to follow the staccato exercises (b1-12 above) with identical passages in a sustained style without taking a breath. Unconsciously, the singer will use the diaphragm actively for the staccato version and passively for the legato singing:
one through twenty-four have similar rhythmic and melodic material and are then repeated with variations at measure twenty-five.

The next section to rehearse is the third, which spans from measure seventy to one hundred thirty-two. Though it is not as long as the first section, it is less repetitive. It is also in C major, but has a time signature of three quarter notes per measure. Ask the choir to sing through this portion on Solfege in the key of C major. This section should also be rehearsed much slower than it will eventually be performed. As with the first section, ask the choir to label the accidental Solfege syllables at measures one hundred seventeen through one hundred twenty-five.

At measure one hundred forty-three, the time signature changes to cut time and the texture of all four lines is different from the first three sections until the end of the piece. It may be necessary to conduct the fourth section with a four pattern until the singers are comfortable with their parts. First, ask the basses to join the tenors and the altos to join the sopranos on Solfege in the key of C major. The parts are not identical melodically but are similar rhythmically, which will reinforce the confidence in reading. Upon finishing the initial Solfege reading, instruct the choir to sing through this section again. Since the entrances are an integral part of the final section, instruct the choir to enter with a dynamic of forte while the other parts decrescendo to a mezzo forte. This may take a few attempts to do successfully each time, but it will ensure that when a section enters it is pronounced and balanced.

Lastly, section two is the shortest portion of this work, but it is tonally the most unstable. Measures sixty-four through sixty-nine can be sung on Solfege with a loose tonal center of C. Instruct the choir to use C as a tonal center with the reminder that there are many accidentals and the key is no longer C major. Another way of singing through this section is with intervallic
reading as many of the parts only move by half and whole steps.

Now that all four sections have been sung on Solfege, before applying the Latin, it is necessary to spend a fair amount of time focused solely on measures fifty-nine through seventy-one. It is within this measure range that three sections occur and many changes happen with both the meter, tempo, mood, and texture of the music. There are a few challenges that will need to be addressed to master this range of measures. First, rehearse the tempo changes from tempo one into tempo two and then back into tempo three, which may be the same or similar to tempo one. The end of the first section may be conducted with a slight ritard, so instruct the choir to label this spot in their music with either ritard, “look up,” or any indicator to watch the conductor.

Second, a tricky aspect of working through this range of measures is achieving the tuning of the second section. The final cadence of the first section is a C major chord and is followed by a brief break before singing the first chord of the second section, a C sharp minor chord. In many recordings, this tuning proves to be very difficult to do, so to rehearse this, have the choir practice audiating their next pitch and then singing it. This may take a few attempts to achieve. Additionally, the final chord of the second section is an E minor chord and the first chord of the third section is a C major chord. This tuning will also need to be practiced many times since no pitches will sound prior to the choir’s entrance. Again, practice audiating all of the pitches, singing them and then tuning the chord with the piano until the singers can do it every time with no help.

The addition of the Latin can be accomplished in two to three rehearsals. To save time, two weeks prior to the introduction of the text, send out a recorded pronunciation of the words to the choir. This allows for any choristers unfamiliar with Latin to begin practicing on their own. In the rehearsal, once each line of text has been spoken, instruct the choir to then speak through
each section on their own line in rhythm. After a choir can successfully speak the Latin in rhythm, it is time to sing through the piece on text.

To rehearse this work, it is a good idea to alternate working in the four main sections and the entire work continually. The addition of the text may warrant using a slower tempo than the eventual performance speed. As the choir becomes familiar with the text, increase the tempo in intervals of five beats per minute. One last consideration is the addition of the instrumental lines and the overall balance between voices and instruments. If a smaller chorus is performing the work, it may be a good idea to select three or four instruments, for example, two violins and a cello instead of the entire orchestration written.

A rehearsal with the instrumentalists should happen prior to the dress rehearsal and performance. Due to the choir’s size, listen for balance between the instruments and each vocal line. It is also a good idea to remind the choir to both sing with full resonance and conversely not over-singing or straining to be louder. Lastly, when considering the eventual performance tempo, it is important to focus on the smallest note division which is found in all of the instrumental lines. To maintain clear articulations in both the instrumental and vocal lines, choose a moderate tempo that responds well to each instrument involved. This may take a few attempts to locate and secure.

**Formal Analysis**

The *Te Deum Laudamus* text has documented origins dating as far back as the fourth century and is a collection of various Latin sacred texts.²⁰ Traditionally used for a variety of events.

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sacred Catholic events, composers have set this text for centuries with varying moods, tempi, and personal interjections onto the form.

In W.A. Mozart’s setting of the text, the overall form is comprised of four distinct sections all marked by changes in tempi, time signature, and text. The first portion of the work is an Allegro in C major, which begins with a declamation of the text “Te Deum Laudamus” (O God, We Praise Thee). Historically, the first portion, due solely to the text, is dedicated to the honor of the first of the holy trinity, God. The instrumentation is moderately large yet suited to the size of a Classical era ensemble composed of two clarino, two tromba, timpani, cello, bassoon, organ, two violins, and four vocal parts. Throughout the Allegro, a short rhythmic figure can be heard in both the first and last portions, with a middle section that both modulates to F major and the rhythmic figure is temporarily retired.

Another notable aspect of this portion, which is sixty-seven of the total two hundred twenty-seven measures, is Mozart’s variety of textures. At measure seven, the tenor and bass voices rest as the soprano and alto voices sing a small solo before the ensemble is again tutti. When the rhythmic figure returns and the piece modulates back into C major, one might be expecting a solo tenor and bass idea to counter the soprano and alto solos, but this never occurs. Within the first section, the texture varies from chordal to brief moments of imitation in the voices and instrumental lines.

The second section is a stark contrast to the opening jubilant nature of the first. Though it is a brief six measures, it is a moment of slow reprise from the faster tempo preceding it. There are a limited amount of dynamics throughout the two hundred twenty-seven measures, yet Mozart specifically marked three distinct dynamic levels, which may be related to the intensity of the harmony and text. Marked Adagio, one might infer that the text reflects the mood of the
diminished chords in the harmony, but the text instead is a short plea for mercy before transitioning into the third section.

Figure 8. W.A. Mozart, “Te Deum Laudamus,” (1769) mm. 66-69.

Next, the third portion which is also marked Allegro is both rhythmically and metrically contrasting to the first. The time signature changes from four beats per measure into a dance-like three. This section features the only fermatas found in the work, and are both found on the third beats of the ends of phrases, particularly following a phrase that is used multiple times throughout the work "Domine miserere nostri" (O Lord Have Mercy On Us). Interestingly, this portion of the music is also the longest with a total of seventy-two measures of text that declares the next call to worship, the second of the holy trinity, Jesus Christ. Interestingly, the texture remains chordal for the voice lines while the instruments play a new rhythmic figure repeating in the cello, bassoon, and organ parts. The rhythmic motive of the instruments in the third portion include longer note values than the first portion marked allegro.
The final section begins rather suddenly and does not include a tempo indication as the first three sections did. Briefly following a rest in all voices in instruments, the time signature changes to cut time. The initial texture of the fourth portion is a contrast to the three preceding it by beginning with a fugal idea in the tenor and soprano lines before adding the altos and basses. This same fugue is then repeated when the text repeats at measure one hundred ninety. An arguable fifth portion of this work occurs at measure two hundred four when both the text repeats “Non confundar in aeternum” (Let Me Never Be Put To Shame) and the texture becomes strictly chordal again.

**Review of Recordings**

The descriptive tempo markings indicated in the score leave a small amount of interpretation regarding the pace of each section. For instance, when performing this work with a choir of younger vocalists or instrumentalists, care must be given for selecting a metronome marking for the first Allegro. The complexity of the bassoon, cello, and organ part is dense and therefore must be slow enough to be played clearly. Another item to inspect before selecting a recording when conducting this work is the clarity of the soprano section. There are a few reasons for this, namely the tessitura of the soprano line is particularly high with small divisions of the beat, therefore any recording that features weighted sounds or excessive vibrato from the sopranos is not fit for use.

In a recording made by the Pianissimo choir of Slovakia under the direction of Martin Holúbek in 2010, there are many great qualities that make this recording a viable option to both listen to and share with an ensemble. First, an aspect of performing this piece not yet mentioned is the size of the instrumental section and the choir. The Pianissimo choir has only two or three dozen singers, yet includes a large orchestral ensemble and the sound output is still incredibly
balanced. In addition to this, due to the video recording, one may notice that the singers appear to be younger, yet manage to produce a rounded, rich sound. Next, the pure vowels needed to properly recite Latin text are abundantly clear in the voices of this ensemble. At one brief moment, the choir is reciting the word “sanctus” and nearly goes too bright with the [a] vowel, which may slightly take away from the excellence of the performance, but is a good goal to aim for when rehearsing.

The next recording is an excellent example of an adventurous and large interpretation of this work. A recording made by the William Jewel College Concert Choir under the direction of Anthony J. Maglione in 2016 depicts how an ensemble of larger size and resources can effectively perform this work. The tempo of the first movement is lively and exciting, which slightly discredits the diction of the singers but not the clarity of the instruments. It is also a lovely example of a natural vibrancy in the voices without too much vibrato altering the tuning of the chords. Another brilliant aspect that this recording captures that others struggle to achieve is the nearly perfect tuning of the entry in the second section with no pitch reference provided as well as the aural presence of the inner voices throughout.

Lastly, a recording made by the Herriman High School Chamber Singers under the direction of Austin Thorpe in 2015 depicts how a smaller school program can perform this work without the need of an orchestral ensemble. The tone quality of the younger singers is clear and bright and the pianist does an excellent job of replacing an orchestra. Since performing this work with multiple instrumentalists is not a possibility each time for every choir, this recording depicts how a smaller high school chorus can successfully perform a multi-movement work. At the beginning of the second section, this choir also masterfully tunes the first chord with little hesitation and no pitch reference. The conductor, Austin Thorpe utilized tempos that kept the line
pushing forward but did not overwhelm amateur singers with a limited range, dense text, and a specifically highly acoustic environment. Acoustics, which have not been previously mentioned is another determining factor in choosing a recording, which greatly discredits the excellent output of this choir’s recording, given that the recording environment is extremely resonant.
CHAPTER 4

“SEHNSUCHT” OPUS 112, NO. 1 (1891)

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)

Biographical and Historical Perspective

The years of 1830-1880 brought about many changes in both the lives of Germans and in the development of music. Remembered as a craftsman of the German Romantic era, Brahms’ career continued the legacies of Beethoven, Bach, and Schubert. As a devoutly religious man, many know Johannes Brahms for one of the largest works produced during his career, the German Requiem, though his output of lied for both solo voice and chorus is numerous and versatile.

Living in Vienna with good health, Brahms was at the beginning of his path toward retirement. Compositionally, 1891 was a busy year for the composer producing both chamber and solo works for a variety of instruments including chorus. As a lover of all forms of literature, namely poetry, Brahms set texts by esteemed contributors such as Goethe and Rückert. It was during Brahms’ summer vacation that he composed six quartets, which were later published in the fall. Having waited over a decade for a personal copy of writer Franz Kugler’s book of poetry, he set two of the six quartets when it arrived in 1888. Of the six quartets, the first two


are the only works with a melancholic mood while the remaining four being Hungarian folk songs.

In Leon Botstein’s book, *The Compleat Brahms*, he suggests that the six quartets are a reflection of Brahms’ own personality, he offers this as a possible explanation of Brahms’ strange grouping of quartets. The first of the quartets, “Sehnsucht” (Desire), is described by Botstein as possibly Brahms’s frustration at unfulfilled desires.\(^{23}\) The first two pieces of the six quartets are introspective and deal with complex emotions while the last four are light-hearted dance music.

The previously mentioned theory about Brahms’ strange grouping of quartets is contradicted by Lucien Stark in his book. Stark asserts that Brahms had simply placed a variety of quartets in his “drawer” or to the side with the intention of destroying them or not publishing them. In the spring of 1891 Brahms revisited his unpublished manuscripts after another announcement of giving up composition in 1890. As he sorted through his manuscripts he found many he chose to discard, but the six quartets of opus 112 were grouped together and published later that year. As Stark states, the six pieces were written many years prior to their actual publication. This is verified in both the dates of correspondence between Brahms and Franz Kugler’s daughter in the summer of 1888 and the corresponding letters of both he and Clara Schumann.\(^{24}\)

As a long time friend and confidant, Brahms wrote a letter to Clara Schumann in June of


1891, including the six unpublished manuscripts of opus 112. In August she wrote him back and expressed her excitement of the new pieces describing the set as charming, though she expressed that the first of the six, “Sehnsucht” was her least favorite of them all. It was in November of 1891 that the pieces were officially published by C. F. Peters in Leipzig, Germany.

**Rehearsal Considerations**

Unique vocalises are needed to teach the techniques used in “Sehnsucht.” Beginning in the middle register on F, instruct the choir to sing descending octave leaps on the word “selig” or [‘ze liç]. Continue this exercise by descending a half step for three or four repetitions and then ascending by a half step four or five times. This exercise is practical for this piece due to its extended range and frequent registral leaps.

The next vocalise is a group exercise in polyrhythms, which occur frequently in this piece and may prove to be a challenge. This exercise can be used flexibly with innovations added as needed. To assist a choir in feeling the pulse of a two against three, begin by dividing the choir in half. Instruct one half to clap eighth notes while the other half clap triplets. Initially, have the choir speak the rhythms they are clapping, for example “one and two and” or “one two three.” Once the two halves can consistently perform the polyrhythm with ease, switch the two groups and continue with the exercise. Following this, introduce simple groups of tones such as a five-tone scale in both halves of the choir. If needed, it may be beneficial to assist the choir from the piano until the feeling of the division has settled into the singer’s bodies. In “Sehnsucht” the four

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vocal lines sing continual eighth notes while the piano primarily plays triplets, so being able to successfully feel the polyrhythm is highly important to mastering this piece.

The difficulty of this piece will require more rehearsal time. Anticipate that this piece may need more time than any other in this document and may be continually difficult to balance and execute when the piano accompaniment is added. To help mitigate the difficulty of this piece, plan to work in small sections and continually revisit those sections until the singers can firmly sing them. Later, it will take additional time to connect each of the phrases together.

To begin rehearsing “Sehnsucht,” use Solfege in the key of F minor for measures one through seventeen. Prior to singing, point out the accidentals and have the choir write in the correct Solfege syllables. Since the four parts are divided into two, the sopranos and tenors will pair together while the altos and basses do the same. By doing this, everyone learns the first melody and everyone has a task. Measures seventeen to twenty-four are slightly ambiguous in key. Instruct the sopranos to pair with the altos and the tenors with the basses and everyone sing on the syllable “two” [tu] with the assistance of the piano. Next, alternate to the soprano and tenor lines with the altos and basses doubling these parts. Once all four lines are secured in these measures, with piano guidance, attempt to sing the entire section. When all four lines are audible and correct, start at measure one and sing to measure twenty-four. Remind the singers to use the written dynamics even as they are still learning their parts.

Measure twenty-five through thirty-nine should be rehearsed as an individual portion. This section is uniquely chromatic and imitative. Pair the altos with the basses and the sopranos with the tenors. There are two ways to find anchor pitches for this section. The first method uses Solfege syllables to sing through with a tonal center of C. The second utilizes the piano to demonstrate pitches while the choir sings on a [ta]. To further explain the use of Solfege for this
section, the concept is treating the section as it is C major and using only one altered Solfege syllable of “Di” for the recurring C sharps.

To continue, begin by dividing the next large section into two portions: measures forty through fifty-two and measures fifty-two through fifty-seven. Have the choir pair up again sopranos with tenors and altos with basses and [ta] through measure fifty-two with the support of the piano playing parts. Prior to moving on, have the entire choir sing the lines of all three inner parts to assure they are solid and correct. At measure fifty-two change back to Solfege in the key of F minor.

At measure sixty-one, the first melodic motive returns though it is slightly altered. Using Solfege syllables in the key of F minor, have the choir sing on Solfege to the final measure. Since the pitches are slightly different, there may be a few places to return to for clarity, such as measure seventy where the sopranos have a small ornament. Another spot is the final four measures where the sopranos have an octave leap from F four to F five.

Once the choir can successfully sing the pitches and rhythms, the next step is the introduction of the accompaniment line. The piano offers little assistance to finding pitches and providing a sturdy sense of support to the singers, so allowing time for the choir to become accustomed to singing against the triplets of the piano is mandatory. Specifically, the choir is not thinking about the language yet and is still firmly singing on either a [ta] or Solfege as needed to continue to solidify pitches. As the choir becomes confident with their part in relation to the accompaniment and can successfully execute this piece while on a [ta] it is safe to move on to the German.

Two weeks prior to introducing the language, give the choir an advantage by sending out recorded diction tracks or links to recordings from websites like Youtube.com to speed the
process of learning the sounds of the text before singing it in a rehearsal. Once it is time for the
language rehearsal, use call and response to go over the German word by word and then phrase
by phrase in rhythm. Begin actually singing the German on the simpler portions of the piece, the
beginning and the end without the accompaniment. Instead of playing, instruct the accompanist
to intervene if the tuning or pitches begin to suffer. The B section will also need support from the
piano while the text is being learned. Work in the aforementioned sections introducing the
language while continually stopping to correct pitches if necessary.

**Formal Analysis**

The overall form of “Sehnsucht” is ABA prime, which is made apparent by both the text
and use of melodic material. Despite its form, Brahms incorporates many flourishes to add
personality to each section within the form. Beginning in the key of F minor with a time
signature of two quarter notes per measure, “Sehnsucht” holds a variety of vocal textures and a
recurring hemiola between the piano accompaniment and four vocal lines. The tempo is marked
ambiguously *andante*, and although the tempo is not marked as *rubato*, often the interpretation in
the piano part is done with slight deviations in tempo throughout the piece.

To begin, the first A section begins with four measures of piano prelude before the
soprano and alto lines begin to sing. At measure nine the tenor and bass voices are added and
share a nine measure duet before measure sixteen when the soprano and alto lines are
incorporated again. This is one small flourish of personality Brahms included in his
instrumentation of the piece. It is important to note that while the four vocal lines are sung in a
duple, the piano accompaniment is playing a triple division.

The start of the B section, measure twenty-five, starts with staggered entrances of each
voice beginning with the tenor line. Marked *espressivo*, the key begins to modulate from F minor
into a brief chromatic section and loosely floats between several keys that then periodically cadence in a variety of major keys. Each phrase throughout the B section begins with small amounts of chromaticism then resolves to cadence on a major chord which both heightens the tension and then resolves it for each phrase being sung. A tonal anchor can be found in the left hand of the piano, which primarily suspends the tone G.

Measure sixty-one marks the beginning of the A prime section and the return of the key of F minor, which is a culmination of themes and text from the first A section but excludes the duets found within the first sixteen measures. The staggered entrances of the phrase “deine Sehnsucht wacht,” which was performed in the first A section at the dynamic level of a piano has now evolved into the dynamic level forte, which remains constant until a large decrescendo at measure seventy-nine. Another large difference between the first and second A section happens when the phrase “es reinen die Wasser tag und nacht” is repeated with the articulative mark dolce. The piece ends with the four vocal lines ceasing on beat two while the piano sustains a half note chord marked with a fermata.

Lastly, when studying this score it is important to note that the piano part often acts as an individual line of music throughout the work. The line alternates between eighth note triplets and syncopated chords, but never does the piano line feature any of the melodies found in the four vocal lines. In essence, the piano acts as a fifth independent voice throughout the piece. Although it does provide chords sounding in the voices, the rhythmic makeup and subdivisions do not support the choral lines.

**Review of Recordings**

When searching for a suitable recording of this work, there are a few key areas to consider: quality of German diction, the selected tempo, and the varying degrees of dynamics
captured in the recording. Additionally, there is a fourth category which may only be determined by taste alone, which is the portrayal of the mood, and in this case the mood is melancholic and dreary. One aid to the setting of the mood in a recording can be the overall timbre of the vocal ensemble and piano, to further explain, it may be possible that a group with a mature timbre exercising excellent vocal control may relay the dreary mood better than a younger, brighter sounding ensemble.

Beginning with a highly reputable recording, which excels in all of the aforementioned categories (tempo, diction, and dynamics), is from the German chorus Gächinger Kantorei under the direction of Helmuth Rilling in 1992. This recording can be easily accessed through the music medium of Naxos Music Library. The mixed chorus is filled with German-speaking natives who enunciate the text exceptionally well. The precise diction is complimented by the professional quality of the recording, making it a practical recording to use when performing this piece. Additionally, this performing group has numerous recordings of various Brahms’ choral works, so they are a reliable resource. The selected tempo in the 1992 recording is a moderate andante, so the text is easily distinguished and blends well with the hemiola happening between the vocal lines and piano. As a special touch, this recording displays tasteful yet meaningful dynamics as well as text delivery and phrasing. I find that the overall timbre of the ensemble is a hint too bright when dealing with the text, though the vocal production is perfectly lyrical and free. It is also important to note that this recording features a full chorus with multiple voices on each line when the work is actually a quartet.

The second recommended recording of this work was made by the Chamber Choir of Europe under the direction of Nikol Matt. This recording can also be found on the music website Naxos Music Library. In this recording, the diction and production quality are both excellently
executed. One of the most attractive qualities of this recording is both the use of a vocal quartet, which allows each line to be heard clearly, and the lush rubato and careful tenderness in the piano accompaniment. These two elements combined with the clear diction make this recording a wonderful example of the piece. When conducting this piece with a younger chorus, the tempo may be too slow to successfully replicate the phrasing used by the singers in the recording. To further this point, the singers in the recording used tasteful, withheld dynamics to express a dreary text, especially at moments such as measure fifty-four and seventy-eight where the music is marked as forte. This may be hard to accomplish with less experienced singers since the tempo is slightly slower than other recordings or interpretations of andante.

The last recording is of the Anton Webern Choir of Freiburg under the direction of Hans Michael Beuerle in 1995. In this recording, the piano sets a practical tempo that drives the piece forward yet possesses a highly musical rubato. The diction is clear and precise while the percussive German does not interfere with the lines nor the balance. The overall timbre of the ensemble is warm yet lyrical and clear. In many recordings of this piece there are ensembles who elected to use full vibrato. This interfered too much with the clarity of diction and balance, particularly between the soprano and alto lines. This recording is a combination of the best aspects of the first and second recordings in that it uses multiple voices per part and employs dynamics that do not contrast with the mood set in the poetry.
CHAPTER 5

“PEZE KAFÉ” (2012)

STEN KÄLLMAN (1952)

Historical and Biographical Perspective

The country of Haiti is filled with lush scenery and many facets of rich culture and heritage. One distinguishable aspect of Haitian culture is the folklore and music of the island. The story of Peze Kafé is over one hundred years old and survives on the island as a chant often learned and sung in childhood. A direct translation of the phrase Peze Kafé is “weigh coffee,” though the story is recognized as “coffee theft” or “coffee thieves” as well. It is the story of a young boy who enters the village searching for coffee beans for his mother. He is able to purchase the coffee beans, but is later arrested by the police. During his arrest he cries out, “what will I tell my mother?”

The creole story of Peze Kafé has a variety of origins in countries throughout the Caribbean. Most folklore tends to be expansive and difficult to trace completely. Though the story and tune are a large part of Haitian culture, the story is recognized in various languages across the Caribbean and in parts of Africa.

Born in 1952, Sten Källman’s involvement in music began as a singer and flutist for a church during adolescence, he describes that this is where his enjoyment of choral music began. In 1970, he travelled as an exchange student to Haiti and was shocked at the rich heritage of a

country with very little financial means. Initially, eighteen-year-old Sten Källman had only traveled to Haiti for an exchange program to study Latin American culture. He describes that his one year visit to Haiti influences many of his musical decisions and compositional choices. Though choral music is not the only result of the composer’s love of Haiti, he has produced numerous choral works with Haitian folk melodies. Additionally, he is a pioneer in the fusion of Haitian culture with Scandinavian culture and enjoys introducing aspects of the Haitian culture to the Western world. Källman states that despite the piece being published in 2004 he initially arranged the piece in the eighties, though he cannot remember precisely when.

Källman currently teaches world music at the University of Gothenburg in Gothenburg, Sweden while also singing in bands and choirs, and freelancing on saxophone, flute, and percussion. When asked about his specific interests in composition, he replied “it is a part of my musicianship.” As an active performer, Källman has toured with his band, “Simbi” (the blue-eyed Haitians) across numerous continents. In January of 2004, Källman’s band was the only non-Haitian band to receive an invitation to perform at the Bicentennial Celebration of Haiti’s Independence. The band was personally invited by Haitian President Arestide. This invitation and the average of Källman’s work displays his love of Haiti that never waned in intensity.

Another of Källman’s collaborations is with the Swedish performing group Amanda. The group began a relationship with Källman in the 1980’s. Since their union with the composer the group routinely features both Källman’s Haitian arrangements and other traditional Haitian

28 Sten Källman, email to Amanda Massengill, December 16, 2021.
29 Sten Källman, email to Amanda Massengill, January 15, 2022.
30 Sten Källman, email to Amanda Massengill, December 16, 2021.
music in their performing repertoire. Their following is international and includes many Haitian listeners as well. In Källman’s own words, “no one sings Haitian music like Amanda,” and due to this close relationship, they regularly perform and commission Haitian arrangements from the composer.

**Rehearsal Considerations**

To prepare the choir for the rhythmic aspects of “Peze Kafé,” a conductor should first ask the choir to stand and move around while singing through the vocalises. If introducing this piece halfway through a rehearsal, this piece may be a good opportunity to ask the singers to recalibrate their bodies by standing up. A gentle stretch of the body is especially important for this piece due to its fast pace and percussive vocal lines. Next, ask the choir to sing on a staccato [u] as depicted in the figure below. This warm-up incorporates speech sounds with diaphragmatic engagement while also using pitches.\(^{31}\) The motion used in this warm-up will be used numerous times throughout “Peze Kafé.”

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“Peze Kafé” is a highly repetitive and rhythmic piece of music, so to begin rehearsals, ask the choir to speak their respective rhythms on a neutral [ta]. The first page features a few conducting decisions, namely how many repetitions each line should make before introducing the soprano line and moving on to the second page. While the choir is reading their rhythms it may be necessary to snap conduct or clap the quarter note.

Once the rhythms of the first page are learned, move onto the second page, ask the tenors and basses to speak their parts on [ta] introducing the sopranos and altos at measure twenty-seven. These rhythms repeat until the fourth page where there is a repeat written. After the first and second rhythmic figures are secure, ask the choir to then speak their rhythms on [ta] from measure sixty-seven to eighty-two. Now that you have covered all three of the sections from a rhythmic standpoint, return to measure nineteen and begin singing on a [ta] Prior to learning the pitches explain to the choir how to navigate the many repeats of this piece. In essence, provide the choir with a map of when and where to sing to avoid later confusion.

The key of this piece is somewhat ambiguous, so instruct the choir to read the intervals on a [ta]. From a pitch perspective, continue to work in sections. Section one is measures one through eighteen, section two is nineteen through sixty-six, and section three is measure sixty-seven to the end. It may be necessary to isolate these sections and work with the piano to aid in the choir singing their parts. The soprano and alto lines are often unison, so spend additional time on the tenor and bass parts. Ask the altos to sing with the tenors and the sopranos to sing with the basses before everyone returns to their own parts.

After the rhythms and pitches are secure, continue to the language: Haitian Creole. There are limited resources to aid the conductor and subsequently the singers in learning to pronounce the language. Depicted in Appendix A is a translation and IPA guide created by Elizabeth Pauly
in 2018. This combined with recordings of Sten Källman’s ensemble *Amanda* should give the conductor and choir a good idea of how to pronounce the Haitian Creole. Prior to introducing the language of this piece to a choir, the conductor should record the diction and distribute it to the choir. Relay to the choir that the vowels and consonants of Haitian Creole are similar to English or Italian which should be familiar to sing and read.

Begin working with the text by doing a slow call and response of the words and syllables. Then, going line by line through the entire piece, speak through the text in rhythm. After this is complete, sing through the three major sections at a reduced tempo on the text. Since this piece is performed best from memory, it is important to learn the pitches, rhythms, and text quickly.

Next, when considering the accompanying percussion parts of this piece, there are only small recommendations for the four parts. Provide a copy of the small percussion notes at the beginning of the piece to the percussionists, but remember that generally in this style each part is improvised. At measure eighty-three the vocal line stops and there is a repeating four bar percussion break. At the beginning of the music, the arranger has included optional patterns for the drum break, but this too can be improvised by the instrumentalists.

When combining the choir with the percussion parts in rehearsal, check the balance frequently. Often percussion instruments can overwhelm the general volume of the voice, so balancing the rhythm section and the choir will need to be done a few times before it is level. The percussionists should attend at least one of the rehearsals prior to the dress rehearsal and performance.

To aid in the choir’s memorization of the piece, begin by memorizing the smallest section first which is mostly page one. After this is complete, move on to the second and third sections. Much of the memorization will occur naturally during the learning process, but it is a good idea
to inform the ensemble of the intention to perform the work from memory. Once the first section is solid, alternate singing through the entire piece with and without the score. A good trick to helping singers gain the confidence in memorization is asking them stand behind their chairs with their music open and lying on the chair in front of them. The singers should look down at their scores as needed, but overall this will help speed up the memorization process.

**Formal Analysis**

This piece can be divided into approximately seven sections. The text is short and is therefore repeated throughout the work. A distinction can be made about the sections based on the instrumentation, articulations, and choices of text settings. The tempo is decisively marked quarter note equals one-hundred-four with a time signature of two quarter notes per measure. The key signature features three flats, but does not truly reflect the key of E flat major throughout and occasionally modulates.

The work begins with a variety of repeats. The composer intended for staggered entrances of percussive voicings which begin to make an ostinato pattern prior to the soprano entrance of measure seven. Measures one through six have noises in the text line of the voice part such as “goudoum takk,” which do not translate to any language, they are for the percussive sound only. In measure seven with the entrance of the soprano section, the piece begins to truly sound tonal and utilize the Haitian Creole of the folksong. An interesting aspect of this piece is the complete absence of any unity between the four voice lines. In the one hundred twenty-seven measures of the piece, never do the four voices sing the same text at the same time, the closest instances of this happen throughout where the four lines become imitative for a few measures. Largely, the phrases of the text are split between the two top lines and two bottom lines, which creates a call and response between the male and female voices.
At measure sixty-seven all voices then solely use the text “Sa mi dilakay l’ém arive woy,” (what will I say when I get home). This text goes through phases of imitation in the vocal lines and eventually becomes a unison between the sopranos and altos at measure eighty-three. This leads the piece into a four measure drum break marked with repeats. In measure one hundred three the tenor and bass voices enter again and continue singing the same phrase of text but alternate the rhythm with the sopranos and altos.

One final analytical facet of this work not yet mentioned are the written percussion parts. As described by Sten Källman, the percussion parts are both literal percussion instruments as well as the voices. This was orchestrated to reflect the traditional way this folk song is performed in Haiti. In the preface of the work, the percussion instruments are listed: piece of iron, small drum with two sticks, large conga, and small conga. There are three proposed drum break patterns reflective of the drumming often heard in Haitian music, but all of the percussion instructions are loosely optional.

Lastly, there are four types of drum techniques outlined by the composer to match the notation in the drum break patterns and recurring patterns throughout the work: bass tone with a cupped hand in the middle of the drumhead, open tone with a half closed hand on the rim of the drumhead, a slap to the drumhead’s center while the other hand deadens the head, and a rim beat using two fingertips on the edge of the drumhead. All four of these notations and techniques produce a different sound which both supports the rhythms of the choir and pushes the tempo forward throughout.

**Review of Recordings**

*Peze Kafé* as arranged by Sten Källman is an energetic, percussive, Haitian folksong. Since this piece is still relatively new, there are not vast amounts of excellent recordings readily
available on Naxos Music Library or even Youtube.com. When considering recordings of this piece there are many different interpretations, tempos, text delivery styles, and choices of instrumentation that can be found. Most often this piece is performed by high school or college choruses that may have limited access to percussionists and subsequently percussion instruments. A few concepts that make great recordings of this piece are the lively, driving tempo, appropriate percussion instrument choices, and the range of dynamics used since there are zero dynamic markings placed in the score.

When searching for a recording of *Peze Kafé* one very practical and popular choice comes from the performing ensemble previously mentioned, *Amanda*. This Swedish performing group collaborates frequently with Sten Källman, so the Haitian Creole diction is superb. One drawback to solely using this recording are the liberties taken by the group, which may or may not be helpful to a conductor. To elaborate, the ending of the piece performed by the group is in a traditional Haitian voodoo scat style that is not found in the music, Källman describes this as a liberty taken by *Amanda*. It can serve as a great example if a creative group wanted to feature more of the Haitian culture in the music, but for a group searching for the music found in print, it is not helpful and may even be confusing. Adversely, the tempo, dynamics, diction, and percussion of the piece are a true reflection of both the printed score and are an excellent example of the piece. As previously mentioned, many choruses take the tempo slower than the written quarter note equals one-hundred-four as printed in the score. The recording made by *Amanda* takes a lively tempo that drives the piece forward in an exciting way.

Another excellent recording of this piece was made in 2017 by the Messiah College-

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32 Sten Källman, email to Amanda Massengill, December 16, 2021.
Concert Choir under the direction of Linda L. Tedford. This recording can be accessed through the website Youtube.com. The tempo is slightly faster than that of the *Amanda* recording and features a slightly different percussion section including the clave instead of the specified “piece of iron” found in the score. The ultimate factor of this recording that makes it comparable to the professional ensemble’s recording is the impolite delivery of the text, which seems to give the piece more character than traditional singing with emphasis on traditional vocal technique. The choir’s diction is not only clear but it is sung in the speak-singing style of the story, which adds a dimension that many other recordings do not have. One small critique or reason for not using this recording might be the tempo, it is lively and quick, but may be too fast for a group struggling with the Creole diction.

The final recommended recording of this piece was made in 2019 by the Texas All-State Small School Mixed Choir under the direction of Jeffrey L. Ames. Though this recording is made with a younger choir, the sound is full, the text is delivered clearly with excellent diction, and the energy level remains incredibly high throughout the performance. This recording can be accessed on the Naxos Music Library and has high recording quality. It is not only impressive that a group of younger singers are able to sing the text so clearly but are also able to maintain a lively tempo. This tempo is possibly even faster than the tempo indicated in the score. This recording features dynamics, which are specifically left out of the score and are up to the conductor’s or performer’s interpretation. One specific dynamic choice are the staggered entrances and terrace effect at the beginning of the piece. As a small addition, the choice of percussion balances with the choir and aids to the high energy and stellar execution of the piece.
CHAPTER 6

“PEACE I LEAVE WITH YOU” OP. 43, NO. 2 (1958)

KNUT NYSTEDT (1915-2014)

Historical and Biographical Perspective

The Scandinavian countries of Europe are not regularly thought of as a host to the world’s most prolific composers as one might think of Italy or Germany and their long traditions of exceptional musical output. Despite this, the region boasts numerous countries with rich cultures filled with folk music. During the large emergence of folk music in composition field during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Scandinavian countries such as Sweden and Norway produced a school of exceptional composers who aided in the birth of a new wave of compositions, particularly in the field of choral music. Among the new school of Scandinavian composers is Norwegian-born Knut Nystedt.

Born in September of 1915, Nystedt became interested in music as a child. By his high school years Nystedt, who had primarily studied organ and choral music as an adolescent became dually interested in studying composition and organ at the Oslo Conservatory of Music. Following his time spent at the Oslo Conservatory of Music and the Nazi occupation of Norway, Nystedt earned a scholarship to study in the United States where he continued his education in composition. While in the United States, he worked with composers such as Aaron Copland and conducting with Robert Shaw.\(^3\) Nystedt’s career then shifted almost exclusively to the output of his compositions.

The majority of Nystedt’s choral compositions feature religious texts. Nystedt attributes his large output of religious text setting to his conversion to Christianity and long appointment as the organist for the Bethlehem mission church. It was during this time, 1946-1958, that Nystedt’s career can be described as Neoclassical. When Nystedt was asked why his career has changed and evolved into distinctive periods he replied, “the reason that these periods are different is easily explained by the fact that there have been different things that have demanded my attention during these years, and these things have naturally influenced my production.” *Three Motets Op. 43* was composed at the end of Nystedt’s neoclassical years when his style would again change and his focus would shift from choral music briefly to instrumental works.

The second of the three motets, “Peace I Leave With You,” was published in 1958. Nystedt, who was living in Norway but frequently travelling to both Germany and the United States, was influenced highly influenced by the *Society Music Sacra* an organization founded by his friend Rolf Karlsen. This organization’s focus was to revive canonical prayers including Gregorian chant, which highly influenced Nystedt’s compositions at this time.34 “Peace I Leave With You” is set in chant style in addition to the first and third motet in the opus.

By the time Nystedt published *Three Motets Opus 43*, the composer had already begun to receive attention for both his compositions and his conducting. In 1950 he founded the Detnorske solistkor (Norwegian Soloists Choir), with whom he frequently toured for forty years.35

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Rehearsal Considerations

“Peace I Leave With You” is a short, harmonically rich motet. Vocalises to help ease rehearsal of this piece should cover two main areas: tuning and dynamic contrast. The first exercise covers the harmonic awareness of a choir, and for this piece, the ability to listen and tune with the other vocal parts is crucial. Begin by dividing the choir into three of four parts. On the neutral syllable [bu] have all four parts sing from D ascending by half steps to G and then descending stepwise back down. When this is finished, have one group sing the same melody while starting the other three groups at certain intervals apart. For example, have each part begin the canon off-set by one beat, each part should sustain their final pitch until all groups have finished the canon.36

The second vocalise relates to the extreme dynamic contrasts needed to musically perform this piece. Have a choir sing a D major chord on quarter notes for ten full beats. The syllables can be divided into two quarter notes each on [mi ma mo mu]. Begin with the dynamic level pianissimo and ascend one dynamic level until beats five and six. At beat six start descending by one dynamic level until beat ten.37 This is a good example of how quickly the dynamics change in “Peace I Leave With You,” and given that the piece is so short, extensive dynamic contrast must often be executed quickly.

The majority of the time spent with this piece should be learning the pitches and then subsequently checking the integrity of the tuning. Begin learning the pitches at a moderate tempo on Solfege in the key of C sharp minor. The key remains somewhat fastened in C sharp minor

36 Ehmann and Haasemann, Voice Building for Choirs, 83.
37 Ehmann and Haasemann, Voice Building for Choirs, 84.
until measure fifteen. At measure fifteen, transition the key of Solfege into E flat minor and note that there are many accidentals. Note that this piece contains many accidentals that are foreign to the key though they are often only half steps from the diatonic scales being used.

Next, while still using a tempo slightly faster than the performance tempo, begin to sing the two sections as partitioned by the key areas on the syllable [ku]. The text is in English so it should be simple to later incorporate, but this exercise is the first of many times a conductor should check the tuning and balance of the five parts. While listening for balance, do not forget that though there is only one line divided, the pitches of the second soprano are often only a third lower from the soprano one line and will be difficult to hear and sing. Balance and tune the lines of the altos with the first and second sopranos.

Lastly, with the English text, from the moderate rehearsal tempo, slowly descend tempo markings until the choir can support the phrases at the desired tempo. Once the desired tempo is achieved, continue to balance and tune the five parts while simultaneously instructing the large dynamic contrasts needed to effectively perform this short piece. Throughout the work, there are many stark dissonances between two or three parts at a time. An example of this happens in measures fourteen and fifteen. Instruct the basses to sing the tenor line while the sopranos and altos sing their parts. This will provide the tenors with support and eventually help with tuning as the basses will understand better their dissonant entrance with tenors at measure fifteen.

**Formal Analysis**

The second of Knut Nystedt’s *Three Motets* is a short twenty-five measures. Consisting of two key areas, C sharp minor and E flat major, the tonality is often ornamented with tone clusters, dissonances, and non-chord tones. The form of this short work is in roughly three sections: an introduction combined with the A section, section B, and section C. Texturally, this
piece is composed of call and response style that alternates with simple chordal writing. The composer set the text with a time signature of four quarter notes per measure and gave a specific tempo indication of quarter note equals forty-eight.

Beginning with the direction *dolce*, the piece starts with an ethereal pianissimo as the four vocal lines repeat the phrase “peace I leave with you.” The second phrase begins to add color to the piece with dissonance as the sopranos sing a C sharp and the basses and tenor sing a D sharp and B natural. This is one of the first of the tone clusters that appear and then quickly resolve to a triadic chord. In measures six and seven the dynamic level gradually rises to a mezzo forte and then quickly decrescendos in measure eleven with the repeat of the word “peace.”

In measure fourteen, the staggered entrances marked at forte are a stark contrast from the gentler beginning phrases. Another distinct change of color that happens in measure fifteen are the sudden appearance of accent markings. This section is short and exhilarated with energy before resolving at a cadential point and the dynamic level becomes pianissimo. The B section spans over measures fourteen until the E flat major cadence in measure nineteen.

Knut Nystedt uses a variety of compositional tools such as chromaticism and dissonances to add tension to each phrase of this piece. In measure fourteen and fifteen, the loudest measures of the piece, he employs a tri-tone between the top two lines and the tenor line before staggering the bass entrance with a dissonance against the tenor voice. The three pitches are B- F sharp- E and create both a consonance and a dissonance with the sopranos and altos. It is not a coincidence that the composer uses a harsh dissonance at this moment in the work as it is an example of Nystedt’s skillful tone painting. Associated with evil, the tritone appears as the phrase “not as the world giveth” is sung.

Beginning approximately in measure sixteen, the appearances of E flat start to become
apparent as the piece modulates from C sharp minor into E flat major. It does not fully transition to this key until the cadence before the phrase “let not your heart be troubled,” in measure nineteen. Rather unstably, the piece alternates minutely between the major and minor key, before finally cadencing in the key of E flat major in the final measure.

Throughout each phrase, the rhythm carefully follows the stress of the language, resulting in it being unique from phrase to phrase. It is noteworthy that the smallest division of the beat is the eighth note, which provides a constant, slow pulse throughout the work, but gives a sense of urgency in the short B section. It is also the eighth note that eventually leads the piece to an implied rallentando in the last two measures with the phrase “neither afraid,” which is marked with a final fermata.

**Review of Recordings**

There are an abundance of excellent recordings of this short motet on both Youtube.com, Naxos Music Library, and throughout the internet. A few specificities about selecting a high quality recording of this work are the diction of the English, the tempo, carefully placed breaths or lifts, and a highly sensitive tuning for each chord. Since there are so many superb recordings, it is easy to be selective about which recordings to recommend for this work.

The first recording recommended for this work was made in 2019 by the Amadeus-Chor under the direction of Nicol Matt. This choir takes a practical tempo of approximately quarter notes equals fifty-six, which is both slow enough to savor the tones of each chord while not exhausting the breath control of the singers through the long phrases. I found that the soprano section in particular exercised superb vocal control in the upper register without ever sounding strident or destroying the balance with the other three sections. Since this piece features long phrases, I found that the diction of the choir did not falter and was extremely clear throughout.
Lastly, as many other choirs tend to do to mitigate the slow tempo and long phrases, I was pleased with when and where this choir chose to lift or take breaths, I did not find that it interfered with the overall flow of each line. This recording was accessed through the website Youtube.com.

Another superb recording for this work was made in October of 2020 by the Denkmalchor under the direction of Philip Goldmann. This recording is exemplary due to its wide variety of dynamics used. Written in the work, the range of dynamics varies from pianissimo to forte and is spackled with crescendos, decrescendos, and many accents. It was pleasantly surprising how articulate this choir performed all of the dynamics and accentuations within the context of each phrase. A small exciting portion of this recording happens around measure fourteen at the first forte marking when it is finally audible that the recording was made in a highly acoustic environment. It is then that it becomes apparent that this work was intended to be sung in a highly resonant cathedral or concert hall. The tempo of this recording is two or three beats per minute slower than the first recording mentioned, but despite the slower tempo it does not lose any of the forward drive through each phrase. This exciting recording can be found on Naxos Music Library.

The final recording is made by the ensemble previously mentioned, which was founded by Knut Nystedt in 1950, the Norwegian Soloists’ Choir. The recording was made under the direction of Grete Pederson in 2015. This recording is exceptional for many reasons, the first is the subtle growth and decay of the numerous major cadences throughout. I found that this small detail of the singers to be delightful and it makes the recording one of the best that exist for this piece. The next is the extremely fine tuning of each individual chord. A common problem with recordings of this piece are the small fluctuations of the singer’s vibrato that interfere with the
chords even if only periodically. In this recording I could not find a single moment when the choir was not perfectly balanced and tuned with each other. The tempo taken in this recording is also quarter note equals fifty-six which seems to be a nearly perfect pace for this short motet. This recording is a gleaming example of how spectacular this piece can sound in a highly sensitive ensemble. This recording can be found on Youtube.com, but it can also be accessed through Naxos Music Library.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX

PEZE KAFÉ TRANSLATION AND IPA GUIDE BY ELIZABETH PAULY

Peze Kafé
Traditional Haitian
Arranged by Sten Källman (b. 1952)

Translation and Pronunciation Guide

Gu-dum tak
Goudoum takk

De-gé dep
Dege dep

Du-gé ta wi-wém
Douge ta wiwam

Ma-må m vo-je pe-ze ka-fe o
Maman m voye m peze kafé o
Mama sent me to weigh coffee

ää na-ri-vä mwè sup o-tal
an arivan mwen sou potay
arriving at my gate

Më jun zä-dä ma-re-të
Men youn jandam arête m
But one policeman stopped me

wöl sa ma di la-kal le ma-ri-ve me-zä-mi
Woy sa ma di lakay lè m arrive mezanmi
Alas this what say home when I arrive my friends

Sa ma di la-kal le ma-ri-ve
Sa ma di lakay lè m arrive
This what say home when I arrive

Ma-mâm wöl-jëm sup o-tal
Maman m voye m sou potay

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Mam sent me to my gate
pu ma-le pe-ze ka-fe
Pou m ale peze kafé
Go to my weigh coffee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maman m voye m peze kafé</th>
<th>My mother sent me to weigh the coffee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O an arivan mwen sou potay</td>
<td>When I reached the road I was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men youn jandam arête m</td>
<td>Ambushed by the police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woy sa ma di lakay lè m arrive</td>
<td>When am I going to say at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mezannmi</td>
<td>What am I going to say at home?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sa ma di lakay lè m arrive</td>
<td>What am I going to say at home?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maman m voye m sou potay</td>
<td>My mother sent me to the gate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pou m ale peze kafé</td>
<td>Go weigh my coffee.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Background

"Peze Kafé" is a song found in the rich Haitian treasure of folk music. Its secular text tells in a few words of a young boy who is sent to the market with coffee for sale – and somehow, he loses the coffee on the way. What will he say to his mother when he returns home? A story of a troublesome every-day event....

2 The translation for the last two lines are by me.

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VITA

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University

Amanda B. Massengill

Abm.music.studio@gmail.com

Austin Peay State University
Bachelor of Science, Liberal Studies, May 2020

Research Paper Title:
   A Choral Conductor’s Study, Rehearsal, and Performance Guide to Selected Pieces by Brahms, Josquin, Källman, Mozart, Nystedt, and Purcell

Major Professor: Dr. Susan Davenport