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Festival Psalm Sequence

a chamber work for four singers, three violists, and two percussionists

by

Dennis Friesen-Carper

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

Doctor of Musical Arts

APPROVED, THESIS COMMITTEE

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Houston, Texas
May, 1996
ABSTRACT

a chamber work for four singers,
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This seven-movement cantata is a setting of texts from the Psalms which portray a spiritual pilgrimage. The work begins with viola playing harmonics off-stage, and all performers processing into position. Each singer has an extended solo movement or section, and sings as a member of the quartette. The recessional is accomplished during the last two movements.

Texts are set in the original Hebrew, Latin, German, and English. The musical materials are drawn from the opening five pitches, Bb, C, D, F#, G, and the plainchant LU 1250, for the dedication of a church, Terribilis est locus iste, as used by Dufay in the motet Nuper rosarum flores. Although there are audible links between movements, several can stand alone.

The work was commissioned for the dedication of the Valparaiso University Center for the Arts, and was premiered on September 15, 1995 with the composer conduction.
Psalm 29

Psalm 29:1-5, 7-9, Hebrew text
Processional

Pacing of all entrances should accommodate the movement into performance position. Performers should move smoothly, not in step.
Ps 139

Psalm 139:1-3, 6-7, 9-12 NEB*

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Psalm 139:1-3, 6-7, 9-12 NEB*
Ps 139

T

poco marcato

If I take my flight to the confines of the morning or

dwell at the limit of the western sea.

T

even there thy hand will reach me and thy right hand will hold me fast. If I say,

T

So. by darkness will steal over me,

right will chase around me; darkness is no darkness for thee and

night is like noon so day; so there both dark and light are one.
Psalms 66 & 69
mezzo-soprano solo

Psalm 66:10-12, Psalm 69:2-5, 15-16
Luther's German translation

Denn, Gott, du hast uns versucht und geläutert, wie das Silber geläutert wird.
Du hast uns lassen in dem Thurnwerfen;
du hast auf un-s're Len-den ei-ne Last gelegt; Du hast Men-schen las-sen ü-ber un-ser Haupt füh-ren;
wir sind in Feu-er und Was-ser ge-kom-men;

slowly engage pedal
Gott, hilf mir; denn des Wasser geht mir bis an die Seele.

Ich ver sinks im tiefen Schlamm, da kein Grund ist;

ich bin im tiefen Wasser, und die Fluth will mich eräu fen.

Ich bin im tiefen Wasser, und die Fluth will mich eräu fen.
 habe mich müde geschrieben, mein Haß ist heisch; das Gesicht ver-

Recit.

geht mir, daß ich so lange müssen auf meinen Gott.

Gott, Du weißt meine Thorheit, und meine

Schulden sind dir nicht verborgen.
a tempo, accel. e cresc. poco a poco

Er - et - te mich aus dem

Koth; daß ich nicht ver-sink - te, daß ich

er - ret - tet werde von mei - nen Has - sern, und aus dem
tie- fen Was- ser;  Daß mich die Was- ser-fluth nicht er- säu- fe. Und die

Tie- fe nicht ver- schling- ge, und das Loch der Gru- be

nicht ü- ber mir zu- sam- men bre- ben.
Psalm 30

Psalm 30:4-7, 2-3, 11 Vulgate
saeclum, et confitemini memoriam sanctissimam.

qui sit ad summunum dignitatem victoriam.
et fac-tum sum con-tur-ba-tum.

Do-mine Do-num me-us, cla-ma-ri ad te, cla-

mi-vi ad te, et u-na-nim me.
Conversi sit plane tum me um in choro mi hi.

Conversi sit plane tum me um la choro mi hi.

Conversi sit plane tum me um in choro mi hi, conversi sit plane tum me um in.

Choro mi hi, conversi sit secum me um conversi sit secum me um.

Conversi sit plane tum me um conversi sit secum me um conversi sit secum me um

Choro mi hi, conversi sit secum me um conversi sit secum me um

Conversi sit plane tum me um

Choro mi hi, conversi sit secum me um conversi sit secum me um
play three times in rather free rhythm
Psalm 138

Psalm 138:1-8, 7-8
Scottish Psalter, 1823

Soprano solo

Thee will I praise with all my heart, I will sing praise to

Before the gods; And worship will towards thy
Sanctuary. I'll praise thy name, ev'n for thy truth, and kindness of thy love; for thou thy word hast magnified all thy great name. 
Thou didst me answer in the day

when I to thee did cry; And thou my fainting

soul with strength didst strengthen inwardly.
Though I in midst of trouble walk, I life from thee shall have: 'Gainst my foes' wrath thou'll stretch thine hand; thy right hand shall me save. Surely that which con-
Sop: cerneth me the Lord will perfect make.

Va 1

Va 2

Va 3

P 1

P 2 ped. sim.

Sop: Lord, still thy mercy lasts; do not thine own hands' works

Va 1

Va 2

Va 3

P 1

P 2

Sop: for sake.

Va 1

Va 2

Va 3

P 1 LV

P 2 LV
Terribilis est locus iste
Ps 67

Psalm 67:1-2, 6-7 NEB

Soprano/Alto

of God be gracious to us and bless us, God make his face

Tenor/Bass

shine up on us, that his ways may be known on earth

Viola 1

and his saving power among all the nations.

Viola 2

The earth has given its increase and God, our God, will bless us.

Viola 3

God grant us his blessing, that all the ends of the earth may fear him.
P

Glo-ry be to the Fa-ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho-ly Spi-rit.

As it was in the be-gin-ning is now, and e- ver shall be,

poco meno

world with-out end, A - men, Al - le - lu - ia.

For Lent

A - - - - men.