

Liankau G. Lupo

Three Sacred Songs

For a cappella solo mezzo-soprano

Videns **V**ox **V**idimus

Superare signum
2013

Three Sacred Songs 'Videns Vox Vidimus'

Instructions to the performer

Notation of these pieces is detailed intentionally. The music should be performed following the notation as accurately as possible. There is nothing accidental in the musical text – all nuances are serving the purpose of ideal performance of this music. Notational layout of 'VVV' is like a snapshot of the ideal soundscape of these pieces in the imagination of the author. Performer's task is to restore this snapshot into a living sound event. Understandably, music cannot become alive without an interpreter of the musical text who provides it with a unique musical conception through her personality. However, the endeavour to do so should stay – within reason – in the frames given by the author. To make it easier for the singer to convey the vision stored in the musical text, some instructions about the notation are given. The performer is asked to read the instructions thoroughly and investigate them. The performer should seek to put the instructions – within possibilities – into practice as closely as possible, however retaining at same time her unique musical personality.

Breathing

It would be ideal if the singer could breathe only at the notated rests. The lengths of the phrases should be optimal for this task.

The text

The text of the pieces is from the Bible and is in Latin. The accents of the words are written in the text. If there is more than one option for pronunciation the phonetic signs are added in square brackets. For better rendering of the pieces the translations of the texts are provided.

Tempo and agogics

The comments on tempo and agogics (subtle tempo changes) may at the first sight look unreasonably technical. The performer should still think them through in the learning process; however in the situation of final performance he should aspire towards total forgetfulness of 'technical noise' concerning tempo and agogics. This is an *a cappella* solo performance and synchronisation with other performers is not required. Therefore, after embracing the rhythmical blueprint the performer should trust herself, allow herself freedom, and concentrate on the text and music rather than exhausting all attention to 'counting quavers' (eighth notes).

To achieve in the final performance a pulse perception that is close to peaceful human pulse, the metronome mark indicates that a minim (half note) equals 75. During the learning process however, it is suggested to set the metronome on the value of a crochet (quarter note), which is 150 and determines the duration of a crochet in real time as 0.4 seconds (sec) or 400 milliseconds (ms). Based on this value other notes can be shortened or lengthened. *Tenuto*-mark (a horizontal stroke) lengthens all notes equally (0.1 sec or 100 ms) regardless of which kind of note it is attached to. Therefore, the duration of a crochet with a *tenuto*-mark is 0.5 sec (note 0.4 sec + *tenuto* 0.1 sec) and the duration of a dotted crochet is 0.7 seconds (note 0.6 seconds + *tenuto* 0.1 sec). And once again – *nota bene*: during the final performance the performer should definitely avoid constant ticking of an imaginary metronome and concentrate on coherent phrasing of the text and music.

The performer should note that retardations at the ends of musical phrases and sentences are occasionally written out in rhythmical values of the notes. Apart from these retardations additional slowing down of the tempo is allowed only if *ritenuto* is prescribed.

After the metronome mark of every piece the approximate duration of the piece is indicated. At the end of every formal section its approximate duration in seconds is also added. This information will help the performer to verify the correspondence of selected tempo and agogics to the musical text. However, these values show only approximate durations and are not supposed to become primary criteria for the performance of these pieces.

Dynamics

As can be seen from the detailed prescription of the dynamic design this feature is very important in this composition. The performer should be attentive to dynamic nuances. For example, there are rising melodic motives that are prescribed to be performed with a *diminuendo*, rather than a *crescendo*, although instinctively the latter seems to be appropriate. For example in 'Vidimus stellam' bar 6 the word 'mu-ne-ri-bus' the second syllable must definitely be performed with a *diminuendo*, although the rising melodic motive and the overall structure of the musical phrase may suggest a *crescendo* instead.

A four-step dynamic scale is used: *p*, *mp*, *mf*, *f*. Although adjacent notes often carry different dynamic signs (*subito* effect) there is not much dramatic dynamic contrast in these pieces. It is important to note that in most cases where successive notes are marked with different dynamic signs, their values are adjacent on the dynamic scale. For example, *mf* – *mp* is used on the first and second syllables of the word 'La-za-ri' in 'Videns Dominus' bar 3. In cases of this kind there should not be a drastic dynamic contrast and the transition from one note to another should sound fluidly and smoothly. It is advisable to think through the dynamic plan in a very slow tempo and then try to perform the piece in the correct tempo.

Special syllables

Dotted slurs mark the groups of successive identical vowels on the same pitch, in which the second (and the third) note should also be initiated with a mild accent, as if bouncing. For example in 'Vox in Rama' bar 12, the vowel 'o' (on E-flat) in the first syllable of the word 'con-so-lari' should be initiated with a slight accent also on the second and the third note of the bar.

In some cases part of a note or the whole note is prescribed to be performed on a sounding consonant. In these instances the correct division of the phonemes is indicated in a smaller script below the music. For example in 'Videns Dominus' bar 4 in the third syllable of the word 'mo-nu-men-tum', the second quaver (on D-sharp) must be performed on the phoneme 'n'.

There are also syllables in which vowels of the same syllable are to be distributed on two different notes as specifically prescribed. For example in 'Vox in Rama' bar 2 in the first syllable of the word 'au-di-ta' the phoneme 'a' is to be performed on F and the phoneme 'u' is to be performed on E. Also in these cases the correct division of the phonemes is indicated in a smaller script below the music.

About articulation, voice production, and vibrato

All pieces must be performed with a *senza vibrato* voice production. The tone should be natural and performance should be as *legato* as possible. There are notes in the pieces on which a very gentle, almost unnoticeable vibrato is allowed. These notes are equipped with 'poco vibrato' ('p.v.') marking. Places where vibrato is likely to emerge but is most definitely not allowed are marked with a cautionary sign 'non vibrato' ('n.v.'). All markings concerning vibrato are applicable only to the note (or notes) above which they are written. In this case many notes are marked with a bracket, for example in 'Vidimus stellam' bar 9. Vibrato emerges in two typical instances:

(1) *Non vibrato* tone that has a strong musical tension starts gently to vibrate at the end of the phrase due to relaxation of the musical phrase, for example, in 'Videns Dominus' bar 4 on the last note of the last syllable of the word 'Mo-nu-men-tum'. This vibrato however is nearly unnoticeable and by no means should be artificially produced. At the same time it should not be permitted that more relaxed notes are performed with a vigorous straight (*non vibrato*) tone until the end.

(2) In some instances, like for example in 'Vidimus stellam' bar 4 on the second note of the word 'et' vibrato arises due to specially intense melodic projection.

In summary, it should be said that *poco vibrato* marking indicates instances where emergence of vibrato is allowed, not the instances where vibrato should be enforced by the performer. If *poco vibrato* marking produces problems it can be ignored altogether and the music should be performed with a *non vibrato* tone, calling for gentle vibrato on the notes where the musicality of the performer prescribes it.

Thank you very much for performing Three Sacred Songs 'Videns Vox Vidimus'!

1. Videns Dominus

L. G. Lupo

$\text{♩} = 75$ (Duration of the piece ca 2 min.)
sempre legato, non vibrato

Ví - dens Dó - mi - nus flén - tes so - ró - res Lá - za - ri ad mo - nu -
[tsa]

4 mén - tum, la - cri - má - tus est có - ram Ju - daé - is, et cla - má - bat:
[de]

7 Lá - za [tsa] - re, vé - ni fó - ras: et pród - i - it li -

10 gá - tis má - ni - bus et pé - di - bus, qui fú - e - rat qua - tri - du -
[kwi] [kwa]

13 á - nus mór - tu - us. **Fine**
ca 50 sec.

15 Ve - ní - te a - do - ré - mus et pro - ci - dá - mus án á - n te
[tít]

18 Dé - um: plo - ré - mus có - ram Dó - mi - no qui fé - cit nos. **D.C. al Fine**
ca 18 sec.

Kui Issand nägi Laatsaruse õdesid haua juures nutmas, siis valas ta juutide nähes pisaraid ja hüüdis:
"Laatsarus, tule välja!": ja ta tuli välja kätest ja jalust seotud, kes ta oli olnud surnud neli päeva.
Tulge, kummardage ja langege maha Jumala ette: heitke põlvili Issanda ette, kes meid on loonud.
Johannese Evangeelium 11: 33, 35, 43, 41 ja 39 põhjal; Psalm 95:6

When the Lord saw the sisters of Lazarus crying at the tomb, he wept in the sight of the Jews and cried: "Lazarus, come forth!" And he came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes, he who has been dead four days.
Come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord who made us.
On the bases of the Gospel John 11: 33, 35, 43, 41 and 39; Psalm 95:6

2. Vox in Rama

L. G. Lupo

$\text{♩} = 75$ (Duration of the piece *ca* 1 min 53 sec.)

sempre legato, non vibrato

Vó - (o)x in Rá - ma au - dí - ta est, plo - rá - (a) - tus et u - lu -

lá - tus: Rác - hel pló - rans fí - li - os
[Ra - hel]

sú - os, nó - (o) - lu - it co - (o) - (o) - (o) n - so -

lá - ri, quí - (i) - - - a non o - n sunt.
[kwi]

Ef - fu - dé-runt sán-gui-nem ip - só-rum tám-quam áq-uam in cir-cú-i - tu Hie -
[kwam] [a - kwam] [tʃir] [Je]

rú - sa - lem: et non é-rat qui se-pe - lí - (i) - (i) - ret.
[kwi]

Raamas kuuldakse häält, nutmist ja kaebamist: Raahel nutab oma lapsi ega lase ennast lohutada, sest neid ei ole enam.

Nad on valanud nende verd nagu vett Jeruusalemma ümber ja ei ole olnud kedagi, kes neid matakas.

Matteuse Evangeelium 2:18 põhjal; Psalm 79:3

A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning: Rachel is weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.

Their blood they have shed like water all around Jerusalem, and there was no one to bury them.

On the bases of the Gospel of Matthew 2:18; Psalm 79:3

3. Vidimus stellam

L. G. Lupo

$\text{♩} = 75$ (Duration of the piece ca 1 min 25 sec.)
sempre legato, non vibrato

Ví - di - mus stél é - ll am é - ius in O - ri -
3 én - te, et vé - ni-mus cum mu - né - ri -
7 bus ad - o - rá - re Dó - mi - (i) - num. *Fine* ca 34 sec.
10 O - ri - é - tur in di - é - bus é - ius ius - tí - ti - a:
[tʃi]
14 et a - bun - dán - ti - a pá - cis.
[tʃi] *D.C. al Fine* ca 16 sec.

Me oleme näinud tema tähte idas ja me oleme tulnud koos kingitustega, et kummardada Issandat.

Tema päevil õitseb õige ja rahu on külluslik.

Matteuse Evangeelium 2:2b põhjal; Psalm 72:7a

We have seen His star in the East and have come with the gifts to worship the Lord.

In His days the righteous shall flourish, and abundance of peace.

On the basis of the Gospel of Matthew 2:2b; Psalm 72:7a