

CMP Unit Teaching Plan

Varsity Women's Choir – Chippewa Falls High School

THERE IS NO ROSE

Contemporary arrangement of a 15th century traditional carol

Z. Randall Stroope (b. 1953)

SSA with piano

English and Latin sacred text

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Broad Description: The piece joyfully announces the birth of Jesus Christ from Mary's womb. Using both consonance and dissonance, Stroope creates the feelings of awe, joy, and serenity.

Background Information

Z. Randall Stroope is widely known as a conductor, lecturer, and composer. He is the Artistic Director of a summer music festival in England, and frequently conducts in Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Washington National Cathedral and other well-known venues in the United States. Dr. Stroope studied composition with Cecil Effinger and Normand Lockwood, both students of Nadia Boulanger (who was a student of Gabriel Faure'). Stroope has published 80 musical works, and has sold over a million and a half copies of music. Many of his compositions are contemporary arrangements of old well-known texts.

The text of "There is No Rose" dates back to the 15th century. A SAT musical setting was transcribed and edited by John Stevens, 1963, and is available from Stainer and Bell, Ltd., London. The notes to this carol state that it came from a manuscript roll of carols, copied out in the early 15th century and now is in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge. In that edition, the first verse both precedes and follows the verses, with a different musical line. The tenor line carries the melody. That setting also omits the sixth verse.

The text is as follows:

1. There is no rose of such virtue

As is the rose that bare Jesu;

Alleluia.

2. For in this rose contained was

Heaven and earth in little space;

Res miranda.

3. By that rose we may well see

That he is God in persons three,

Pari forma.

4. The angels sungen the shepherds to:

Gloria in excelsis deo:

Gaudeamus.

5. Leave we all this worldly mirth,
And follow we this joyful birth;
Transeamus.

6. *Alleluia, res miranda,*
Pares forma, gaudeamus,
Transeamus.

Translations:

- *Res miranda* is translated as "Wonderful thing."
- *Pares forma* is translated as "Equal in form."
- *Gloria in excelsis deo* is translated as "Glory on high to God."
- *Gaudeamus* is translated as "Let us rejoice."
- *Transeamus* is translated as "Let us follow."

Elements of Music

Form

The piece is a loose A B A Coda form with an initial eleven bar piano introduction. The A section begins at the pickup to measure twelve and is characterized by the falling vocal line and pedal tone followed by a brief three part homophonic section. The B section begins at measure 41 and is characterized by mixed meters and a homophonic rejoicing of the choir. The piece returns to the A' section at the pickup to measure 70 but is now in the key of C major. The coda consists of the simplistic, unified 'Alleluias' that begin at measure 82.

Rhythm

The A, A', and coda sections are in 3/4 which easily allows for proper word stress and may be related to the sacred trinity of the Catholic Church. The B section changes from 3/4 to 9/8 to 4/4 numerous times. This mixed meter helps push the music forward and symbolizes the increasing joy and excitement of the new text.

Melody

The melody is very chromatic in nature and alternates between major and Lydian modes. The vocal lines are constantly creating consonance and dissonance with one another and are often found in unison. The melodies are consistent with modern practice and consist of large intervallic leaps and difficult voice leading.

Harmony

The harmony is both diatonic and modal. Stroope uses B-flat major and B-flat Lydian, as well as C Major and C Lydian in the A, A' and Coda sections. The B section is very modulatory and seems to lack a tonal center. The vocal lines' harmonies often create dissonance with one another, but then resolve at the cadences.

Texture

The A and A' sections are characterized by a falling unison line in two voices accompanied by a pedal tone in the third voice. This creates a thin, but interesting and sometimes dissonant vocal

texture. The B section contrasts unison singing with large homophonic chords and chorale style singing. The Coda is sung almost entirely in unison and octaves, but is accompanied by an agitated, quickly moving piano line that thickens the thin vocal texture.

Timbre

The timbre should be warm and light, especially in the A and A' sections. Stroope notes: "Singers should strive to make the line absolutely unified in vowel weight and color, avoiding accents on downward intervals. The audience should be relatively unaware of the descending scale, but rather sense a quiet settling of two lines into unison – like a 'sonic sunset.'" The B and Coda section can be slightly more robust and strong in nature as the texture changes, but vowel unification among singers should be stressed throughout the piece.

Expression

There are many dynamic and stylistic markings throughout the piece. The piece alternates between pianissimo and fortissimo and contains both terraced and gradual dynamic changes. Phrases are clearly marked in the music and should be followed closely by the singers. The ensemble and director should aim to produce a sweet and expressive performance as indicated by Stroope at the beginning of the piece. The suggested tempo is quarter note equals 66.

The Heart

The heart is the feeling of awe and joy created by the contrast between dissonance and consonance within the vocal lines. The dissonance and disjunct leaps depict the hardship and sin in human life, but the beautiful, thick consonant chords remind the audience of the hope and joy the birth of Jesus brought to those living on Earth.

Introducing the Piece

- Have all students sing together the S1 and S2 line for measures 9-25 on solfege syllables. Immediately involve the students physically in creating a smooth, unified line by having them draw the line in the air with their hands and/or gently bending their knees with the rise and fall of the line. Add the words.
- Split the voices into three parts and sing measure 9-25. Discuss the aesthetic outcome of the falling vocal lines and the pedal tone. What feeling did it create for the listener? How does this relate to the text? What feeling is Stroope trying to create using this compositional technique?
- Have the students listen to a recording of the piece. Following the listening, have the students journal about these questions:
 - Does the mood of the piece throughout the piece? Where? What changes in the music/vocal parts that makes the mood or feeling of the piece change?
 - Do you like this piece after the first reading? Why or why not?

Outcomes

Knowledge Outcomes:

1. Students will define and describe consonance and dissonance and will recognize when the vocal parts are exhibiting these distinct harmonic textures.
2. Students will define the Lydian mode and will compose their own short melody in B-flat Lydian.

Skill Outcomes:

1. Students will sing with accuracy in a smooth, unified singing style.
2. Students will phrase appropriately according to the score and will use staggered breathing when needed.

Affective Outcomes:

1. Students will explore how consonance and dissonance create different affective outcomes.
2. Students will appreciate contemporary compositional techniques.