

Stabat Mater:  
Lenten Meditations on the Sorrow of Mary

Jennifer Sherrill

Oratorio Comprehensive Project  
North Park University  
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# Stabat Mater

## Lenten Meditations on the Sorrow of Mary

Jennifer Sherrill, Soprano  
Janese Pentico, Soprano  
Tierra Whetstone, Alto  
Patrick Godon, Organ

From <i>Four Songs for voice and violin</i> , op. 35 Jesu Sweet I sing of a maiden	Gustav Holst (1874 - 1934)
Sang Mee Lee, Violin	
Filius, <i>Stabat Mater - A Human Prayer</i>	Eitan Steinberg (1955 - )
Pulchra es, <i>Vespro della Beata Vergine</i>	Claudio Monteverdi (1567 - 1643)
Stabat Mater dolorosa, <i>Stabat Mater</i>	G. B. Pergolesi (1710 - 1736)
Cuius animam geméntem, <i>Stabat Mater</i>	Girolamo Abos (1715 - 1760)
Zerfließe, mein Herz, <i>Johannes-Passion</i> , BWV 245	J.S. Bach (1685 - 1750)
Jerusalem, <i>Paulus</i> , op. 36	Felix Mendelssohn (1809 - 1847)
Erbarme Dich, mein Gott, <i>Matthäus-Passion</i> , BWV 244 Sang Mee Lee, Violin	J.S. Bach
Forgiveness Song, <i>Stabat Mater - A Human Prayer</i> Sang Mee Lee, Violin	Eitan Steinberg
Quando corpus moriétur, <i>Stabat Mater</i>	G. B. Pergolesi
Gel gönül seninle, <i>Yunus Emre</i>	Adnan Saygun (1907 - 1991)
St Gregory the Great Parish Choir Sang Mee Lee, Violin	

Stabat Mater - Repertoire timing

Jesu, Sweet - 2.75'

I sing of a Maiden - 1.25'

Filius - 3.5'

Pulchra es - 3.5'

Stabat Mater dolorosa - 4.5'

Cuius animam geméntem - 5.25'

Zerfließe, mein Herz - 6.5'

Jerusalem - 3.25'

Erbarme Dich, mein Gott - 6'

Forgiveness Song - 7'

Quando corpus moriétur - 4'

Gel gönül seninle - 3'

50.5' total

## RUN SHEET

Stabat Mater St. Gregory the Great Church

Jesu, Sweet - 2.75' SOUTH SIDE CHAPEL, Jennifer Sherrill, Sang Mee Lee, Violin

I sing of a maiden - 1.25' NORTH SIDE CHAPEL, Janese Pentico, Sang Mee Lee, Violin

Filius - 3.5' CHOIR LOFT, Tierra Whetstone, Patrick Godon, Organ

Pulchra es - 3.5' CHOIR LOFT, Janese Pentico, SI, Jennifer Sherrill, SII, Patrick Godon, Organ

Stabat Mater dolorosa - 4.5' CHOIR LOFT, Jennifer Sherrill, Soprano, Tierra Whetstone, Alto,  
Patrick Godon, Organ

Cuius animam geméntem - 5.25' CHOIR LOFT, Janese Pentico, SI, Jennifer Sherrill, SII, Tierra  
Whetstone, Alto, Patrick Godon, Organ

Zerfließe, mein Herz - 6.5' CHOIR LOFT, Janese Pentico, Patrick Godon, Organ

Jerusalem - 3.25' CHOIR LOFT, Jennifer Sherrill, Patrick Godon, Organ

Erbarme Dich, mein Gott - 6' CHOIR LOFT, Tierra Whetstone, Sang Mee Lee, Violin,  
Patrick Godon, Organ

Forgiveness Song - 7' SOUTH SIDE CHAPEL, Jennifer Sherrill, Sang Mee Lee, Violin, Patrick  
Godon, Organ

Quando corpus moriétur - 4' CHOIR LOFT, Janese Pentico, Soprano, Tierra Whetstone, Alto,  
Patrick Godon, Organ

Gel gönül seninle - 3' CHOIR LOFT, Jennifer Sherrill, Soprano, St. Gregory the Great Parish  
Choir, Sang Mee Lee, Violin, Patrick Godon, Organ.

The physical structure of this recital is adaptable for different venues. The purpose of the music is to assist listeners in contemplation and meditation on themes of Lenten journeys and grief, hence the musicians not being front and center.

As we find ourselves in the heart of Lent, we may feel the need to step back from the chaos and soundscape of daily life, in order to find stillness. In the spirit of worship, please silence your cell phones and hold your applause until the end of the program. Today's program is an opportunity to sit in calmness, to pray, to meditate, to walk the stations of the cross, to light a candle or to simply be still. This program can be used to bring our hearts in line with the heart of Mary and to offer up our support and prayers to all mothers who have lost children. Thank you so much for your presence and open heart.

From *Four Songs for voice and violin*

Gustav Holst  
(1874 - 1934)

I.

Jesu Sweet, now will I sing  
To Thee a song of love longing;  
Do in my heart a quick well spring  
Thee to love above all thing.

Jesu Sweet, my dim heart's gleam  
Brighter than the sunnèbeam!  
As thou wert born in Bethlehem  
Make in me thy lovèdream.

Jesu Sweet, my dark heart's light  
Thou art day withouten night;  
Give me strength and eke might  
For to loven Thee aright.

Jesu Sweet, well may he be  
That in Thy bliss Thyself shall see:  
With love cords then draw Thou me  
That I may come and dwell with Thee.

III.

I sing of a maiden that matchless is.  
King of all kings was her Son iwis.  
He came all so still, where His mother was  
As dew in April that falleth on grass:  
He came all so still, to His mother's bower  
As dew in April that falleth on flower.  
He came all so still, where His mother lay

As dew in April that formeth on spray.  
Mother and maiden was ne'er none but she:  
Well may such a lady, God's mother be.

Though initially influenced by Wagner, Gustav Holst was introduced to folk songs and plainsong hymns by his contemporary and friend, Ralph Vaughan Williams. Inspired by the sound of a woman singing while playing the open strings of her violin, Holst set four poems from *A Medieval Anthology* to the same instrumentation. As World War I broke out across Europe, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Holst's brother, Emil went on active duty to France while Holst's wife served as an emergency ambulance driver. Holst, however, was rejected from military service due to chronic health issues. Composed between 1916 and 1917, in the heart of World War I, These two songs from the set, *Four songs for voice and violin*, employ an austere harmonic language with open parallel fourths and fifths. The unmetered songs give a chant-like quality and emphasis to the text, creating as Holst said, "a tune at one with the words."

Filius, *Stabat Mater - A Human Prayer*

Eitan Steinberg  
(1955 - )

Filius  
Stabat Mater dolorosa  
Lacrimosa  
Dolentem cum filio

Son  
The anguished mother stood  
Weeping  
Grieving with her son

Set to music by hundreds of composers, *Stabat Mater dolorosa* is a medieval Christian narrative of one observing the pain of Mother Mary as she watches her son die on the cross. Commissioned by The Voice of Music Festival, in Upper Galilee, Eitan Steinberg wrote *Stabat Mater - A Human Prayer* in 2004 for his wife, Ety BenZaken, to sing. Together, Steinberg and BenZaken formed the Modalius Ensemble, with the goal of bridging separations between ethnic, classical and contemporary music. The ensemble also serves to bridge cultural divides by celebrating the multitude of ethnic communities in Israeli society. Steinberg's *Stabat Mater - A Human Prayer*, is a thirty-minute work, strongly influenced by multiple ethnic traditions and using Hebrew, Arabic, English, Latin and Ladino texts.

Pulchra es, *Vespro della Beata Vergine*

Claudio Monteverdi  
(1567 - 1643)

Pulchra es, amica mea,  
Suavis et decora filia Jerusalem,  
Terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata.  
Averte oculos tuos a me,  
Quia ipsi me avolare fecerunt.

Thou art beautiful, O my love,  
Comely as Jerusalem,  
Terrible as an army drawn in battle order.  
Turn away thine eyes from me,  
For they have made me hasten away.

Though *Pulchra es* is text from the Old Testament, *Song of Songs*, Monteverdi's seventeenth-century Italy would have associated the text with Mother Mary. Published in Venice in 1610, *Vespro della Beata Vergine* was dedicated to Pope Paul V. Scholars suggest that this composition was instrumental in Monteverdi later being appointed as the musical director at St. Mark's Basilica in Venice. Straddling the line between the Renaissance and the Baroque periods, Monteverdi was constantly pushing the limits of the accepted musical norms of his time, much to the disapproval of some and the joy of others. While the *prima pratica* of the Renaissance period viewed the music as the primary focus with the words and intent coming second, Monteverdi followed and solidified the teachings of the *seconda pratica*. Monteverdi felt that the words and the drama were the focus with the music itself coming second. Monteverdi said that the "text was the mistress to the music"

Stabat Mater dolorosa, *Stabat Mater*

G. B. Pergolesi  
(1710 - 1736)

Stabat Mater dolorosa  
Iuxta crucem lacrimosa  
Dum pendebat Filius.

The grieving Mother  
Stood weeping beside the cross  
Where her Son was hanging.

Despite being known for his opera buffa, Giovanni Battista Pergolesi finished a prolific, though tragically short career, with his profound setting of the *Stabat Mater*. In the words of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the first stanza of Pergolesi's setting is "the most perfect and touching duet to come from the pen of any composer." The general public seemed to agree as the score became one of the most printed musical works of the eighteenth century. Though set in A minor and full of aching suspensions, Pergolesi wrote an ascending melodic line that offers hope, even in the depths of despair.

Cuius animam gementem, *Stabat Mater*

Girolamo Abos  
(1715 - 1760)

Cuius animam gementem  
Contristatam et dolentem  
Pertransivit gladius.

Through her weeping soul  
Compassionate and grieving,  
A sword passed.

O quam tristis et afflicta  
Fuit illa benedicta  
Mater unigeniti!

O how sad and afflicted  
Was that blessed  
Mother of the Only-begotten!

Quae moerebat et dolebat,  
Pia Mater dum videbat  
Nati poenas incliti.

Who mourned and grieved,  
The pious Mother, with seeing  
The torment of her glorious Son.

Quis est homo qui non fleret,  
Matrem Christi si videret  
In tanto supplicio?

Who is the man who would not weep  
If seeing the Mother of Christ  
In such agony?

Quis non posset contristari,  
Piam Matrem contemplari  
Dolentem cum Filio?

Who would not be have compassion  
On beholding the devout Mother  
Suffering with her Son?

Pro peccatis suae gentis  
Vidit Iesum in tormentis,  
Et flagellis subditum.

For the sins of His people  
She saw Jesus in torment  
And subjected to the scourge.

Girolamo Abos composed his setting of the *Stabat Mater* about fourteen years after Pergolesi completed his. In many ways, Abos followed a similiar path to Pergolesi. Though Abos was born in Malta, like Pergolesi, he received his musical education and spent much of his career in Napoli, composing opera buffas.

The *Stabat Mater* text consists of twenty stanzas. Abos composed his setting in six parts including a final "Amen." His second part begins at the second stanza with a soprano soloist who is soon joined by a second soprano in stanza three, and an alto in stanza four. Abos' *Stabat Mater* shares a similar harmonic language with Pergolesi's setting. However, Abos frequently shifts between major and minor, employing a much more optimistic tone overall.

Zerfließe, mein Herz, *Johannes-Passion*, BWV 245

J.S. Bach  
(1685 - 1750)

Zerfließe, mein Herze, in Fluten der Zähren  
Dem Höchsten zu Ehren!  
Erzähle der Welt und dem Himmel die Not:  
Dein Jesus ist tot!

Dissolve, my heart, in floods of tears  
To honour the Almighty!  
Tell the world and heaven your distress:  
Your Jesus is dead!

*Johannes-Passion* was Johann Sebastian Bach's first passion setting, written in his initial year as *Thomaskantor* in Leipzig. Composed in 1724 and first performed that year for Good Friday, *Johannes-Passion* was a large scale example of Bach's expressive potential. Circling around F minor, but with a phrygian quality, the soprano aria "Zerfließe, mein Herze" expresses intense sorrow at the death of Jesus, returning over and over to the phrase, "Dein Jesus ist tot!"

Jerusalem, *St. Paul*, Op. 36

Felix Mendelssohn  
(1809 - 1847)

Jerusalem, die du tötest die Propheten.  
Die du steinigest,

Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets,  
Thou that stonest them,

Die zu dir gesandt.  
Wie oft hab ich nicht deine  
Kinder versammeln wollen,  
Und ihr habt nicht gewollt!

Which are sent unto thee.  
How often would I have gathered  
Unto me thy children,  
But you would not!

Mendelssohn, who composed and worked in Leipzig, was greatly influenced by Bach, even quoting Bach's "Wachet auf." in his *Paulus*. With the help of his friend and librettist, Pastor Julius Schubring, and the critique of his father, Abraham, Mendelssohn's *Paulus* began to take shape in 1834. The abrupt death of Abraham Mendelssohn a year later, caused the large scale, dramatic *Paulus* to become a musical dedication to Felix Mendelssohn's beloved father.

Following texts from the *Acts of the Apostles*, *Paulus* is a narrative of the martyrdom of Saint Stephen and the conversion of Saul into Paul. The soprano aria "Jerusalem," is sung just before the stoning of Saint Stephen. Stephen looks to the heavens and sees an image of the clouds parting and the "son of man standing at the right hand of God."

Erbarme Dich, mein Gott, *Matthäus-Passion*, BWV 244

J.S. Bach

Erbarme Dich, mein Gott,  
Um meiner Zähren willen!  
Schau hier,  
Herz und Auge weint vor dir  
Bitterlich.

Have mercy, my God,  
For my tears' sake!  
Look here,  
Heart and eyes weep before you  
Bitterly.

In 1829, five years before writing his *Paulus*, Felix Mendelssohn served as conductor of the first public performance of *Matthäus-Passion* since Bach's death, nearly ninety years before. Despite having fallen into obscurity, Bach's music had a nineteenth-century champion in Mendelssohn.

*Matthäus-Passion*, written in 1727, is the setting of the passion of Christ according to Saint Matthew. The alto aria "Erbarme Dich, mein Gott," is Saint Peter's lament after denying knowing Jesus three times. He begs for mercy and forgiveness as a solo violin voices his agony.

Forgiveness Song, *Stabat Mater - A Human Prayer*

Eitan Steinberg

Come, my friends, let's pluck our strings,  
And may our song be heard by kings.  
All that we tell - we've learned from Death  
And from the womb of Mother Earth.

When gone for war, I was a child  
My mother, at the window, cried.  
"Take care, my son," she said in tears,  
"May angels guard you from your fears."

"Don't look for Justice," so mom said,  
"For it is far away ahead.  
At first you'll meet the wrongs of life,  
And then the silence of the dead."

My heart was wounded and my soul,  
I've seen the wrongs, the dead and all.  
Justice is indeed so blind,  
But eyes were given to mankind...

With eyes wide open, I forgive  
Myself and all my enemies.  
My army medals put aside  
I'd pass on music to my child.

Come, my friends, let's pluck our strings  
And may our song be heard by kings.  
May this song heal the wounds of war,  
And may love dwell in our core.

Eitan Steinberg's setting of the *Stabat Mater* moves beyond the initial medieval text, creating a contemporary, nine-part, through-composed narrative. Steinberg's composition and BenZaken's interpretation "is rooted in the Israeli-Palestinian reality, and moves on from the Christian prayer to describe a universal experience of motherly bereavement and the loss of sons in wars." "Forgiveness Song" uses extended vocal techniques over a slow moving harmonic drone, to invite the listener to join in the process of healing.

Quando corpus moriétur, *Stabat Mater*

G. B. Pergolesi

Quando corpus moriétur  
Fac ut animae donétur  
Paradisi gloria,

When my body dies,  
Grant that to my soul is given  
The glory of paradise.

Completed just weeks before Pergolesi died of tuberculosis, his *Stabat Mater* served as a final prayer and reconciliation while also cementing his place of respect in the history of classical music. Though composed in F minor and full of descending triads, the last stanza of the *Stabat Mater* offers hope that upon the casting off of the human body, one will have the reward of paradise.

Gel gönül seninle, *Yunus Emre*

Adnan Saygun  
(1907 - 1991)

Gel gönül seninle  
Dost'a gidelim Dost,  
Yâd olma bilişelim  
Dost'a gidelim Dost.

Come my heart together  
Let us go seek the Friend;  
So fear not with one accord  
Let us go seek the Friend.

O eller,  
Güzel eller anda olan bülbüller,  
Anlardan gelen yeller,  
Dost'a gidelim Dost.

In that land with glory glowing  
Where ever sing the nightingales;  
'Tis from thence these breezes blowing,  
Let us go seek the Friend.

Bir garâip haloldu,  
Elif kaddim dal oldu,  
Hakka doğru yol oldu  
Dost'a gidelim Dost.

Ah, my heart is burning  
And my footsteps are turning,  
For the truth I am yearning,  
Let us go seek the Friend.

In his oratorio *Yunus Emre*, the Turkish nationalist composer, Adnan Saygun, sought to fit Sufi mystical texts within the forms and harmonic language of western classical music. Composed in 1942 and performed in 1958 at the UN General Assembly in New York, Saygun's oratorio is divided into three sections that narrate three stages of meeting God. The first section represents the pain of the absence of God, while second part is the personal discovery of God. The third part represents the joy in the attainment of unity with a loving God. "Gel gönül seninle," is a soprano solo and chorus, from the middle section of the oratorio. As the text seeks to sooth and ease fears, the melody is a repetition of the first four notes of the dorian mode. A weeping countermelody in the violin can be seen to represent a restless heart seeking to find peace in unity with God.

### Purpose

This program began to germinate last year during Lent, when I was called on to cantor for a mass for lost children. I started to think about the possibility of providing a moment of peace and reflection as a chance to draw deeper on the lessons of Lent. This program will serve dual purposes of sharing stunningly beautiful music while using that music as a setting for contemplation and rest.

### Structure

Rather than serve as a recital for a single singer, I designed this program for three singers in order to access a larger range of repertoire, including duets and trios. We will not be front and center as in a traditional recital, but instead will use different areas of the church to create varying sound textures. Our venue, St. Gregory the Great in Andersonville, has second story side chapels behind the altar, with windows opening into the main congregation. There is also a choir loft and an organ in the back of the church. Multiple singers, a violinist, and an organist will allow us the ability to utilize these areas and move between them seamlessly. This nearly through-composed structure will allow for an uninterrupted meditative texture. As a result, applause will be held until the end of the program.

### Program order

This program does not follow a chronological path through music history, but rather unfolds as a narrative journey through grief, blame, guilt and eventual acceptance, forgiveness and hope. While the order reflects that narrative, it also enables a subtle movement of musicians around the church, as well as accounting for an even pacing for each singer.

### Selections

There are certainly a few unconventional choices in this program. I gave great thought to the programming of Holst, as these selections quite obviously do not fall into the oratorio or cantata category. However, they serve key logistical, textural, and narrative purposes. The instrumentation allows for these selections to take advantage of the side chapels. The simplistic harmonic texture and exposed melodies serve as an introduction that is not intimidating to the listener, and the text introduces the “characters” of the Lenten narrative. I am also partial to the way the Holst text bookends an emotionally tough program with an uncomplicated desire to be near and to love God. We begin the program with the phrase “Jesu Sweet, now will I sing to Thee a song of love longing,” and we end the program with Saygun’s setting of the text “Let us go seek the Friend.” Though we suffer loss and grief in the middle, we begin and end, always with a longing for the presence of God.

In my research, I came across a short video of a section of Eitan Steinberg’s *Stabat Mater*, and was instantly intrigued. I was unable to find a score or full recording, but I still wanted to know more. I sent an email to the composer without expectation and received a warm response the next day from Ety BenZaken. She sent me links to recordings, a pdf of the full score and

information sheets. She also extended an open offer of help. Her warmth and the unique quality of the work caused me to program the fourth and ninth section of Steinberg's *Stabat Mater*. These settings move the narrative of the program forward while also ensuring that the audience will be hearing something new and exotic.

Aside from the Holst, Steinberg and Saygun, the other selections are relatively traditional choices. Overall, the combination of the expected and unexpected should flow into each other, creating a meditative texture.

#### Technique/endurance

While the division between three singers shares the pressures of a recital, this music is extremely exposed and will require intense focus. The duet and trio settings will need a comfortable ease with straight tone and dissonance, and the Steinberg settings will certainly challenge us to step out of our known melodic language. With the exception of the Steinberg setting, Janese, Tierra and myself are trained to manage the challenge of this music.

In the past year, I have been working with Greek *Rebetika* music which has opened my ear to the sounds of Asia-Minor. As a result, I look forward to the challenge that singing Steinberg's "Forgiveness Song" would present. Due to Tierra's impressive vocal agility, both in the realms of classical and gospel, I have no doubt that she would approach Steinberg's setting of the first stanza of the *Stabat Mater* with the necessary skill and sensitivity. The range and emotional quality of the piece suits her both vocally and in her role as a mother. Were either of us unsure of the outcome of our work, we could simply go to the source, seeking advice and guidance from Etty BenZaken.

In the performance of this program, each musician has a break and a moment to prepare for the next task, with the exception of the organist. Also, the organist will often times be playing orchestral reductions or filling a role as multiple string players. It will be absolutely necessary that he have his music well in advance, and the particular role of the organ in each piece is solidified.

#### Chamber Music

This program certainly presents logistical challenges due to the use of three singers, an organist, a violinist and a choir. However, with intense organizational and communication skills, I have no doubt that we can make this concept a success. There will be a need for a dress rehearsal and advance rehearsals with the St. Gregory parish choir. The choir would have the music scheduled into their weekly rehearsal times, touching on the Turkish pronunciations at least a month in advance. We could also use the Saygun piece for a Sunday morning communion anthem as a practice run. This program is flexible and depending on the willingness and input of the parish choir, can be expanded, potentially adding the final choruses of *St. John Passion*, "Ruht wohl, ihr heiligen Gebeine," and "Ach Herr, Laß dein lieb Engelein."

## Final Comments

My parish, St. Gregory the Great in Andersonville, has had a tough year. We have lost our beloved nun and workhorse, Sr. Barb Quinn to retirement, and our music director has moved on to much more secure and lucrative work. The Catholic church itself is battling the horror of the sexual abuse scandal and a combination of these factors has led to drastically lower numbers in our pews. We are worried. We are planning ahead for next year and brainstorming ways to connect St Gregory to the surrounding community. Next month is a meeting of our Evangelization through the Arts committee. I and author, Amy Alznauer, intend to co-present a concept of a series of recitals and readings in line with the church calendar. The hypothetical program listed above is to be a part of that presentation. Due to the possibility of making this program a reality, I will value and welcome any and all input you are willing to give.

Stabat Mater  
Annotated Discography

Abos, Girolamo. *Stabat Mater*. Isabelle Poulenard. Isabelle Desrochers. Martin Oro. Stradivaria. Daniel Cuiller. Cypres CYP1639, 2002. Compact disc.

Though a couple of live performances are posted on YouTube, there was only one album recording of *Stabat Mater* to be found. While the quality of the recording is clear and well balanced and the singers are skilled, the vibrato of the first soprano oftentimes takes away from the tightness of the harmonies. She sings beautifully through solo sections. However, when she is entering into a texture created by the instruments and other singers, she is not sensitive to matching the timbre. This is apparent in measure 46. The counter-tenor enters first, followed by the second soprano, both using straight-tone. The first soprano enters with a wide vibrato which does not take advantage of the dissonance written by Abos. There are many additional distracting examples. Though this is a quality performance and recording, one would hope that more artists will record this work in the future.

Bach, Johann Sebastian. "Erbarme dich." *Bach*. Anne Sofie von Otter. Concerto Copenhagen. Lars Ulrik Mortensen. Archiv Produktion B0012820-02, 2008.

The recording is clear and the diction is crisp. The addition of an organ as a foundational texture adds emphasis to the treble weeping quality of the violin, while also blending well with the color of a mezzo-soprano melody. The singer expertly employs control over vibrato, stretching into straight-tone on long notes and beginning phrases gently before growing into a wider tone. Her voice is beautiful and straddles the line between operatic, dramatic story-telling and the more constrained context of Baroque vocal techniques.

Bach, Johann Sebastian. "Zerfließe, mein Herz." *Johannes-Passion*. Angela Maria Blasi. Concentus Musicus Wein. Nikolaus Harnoncourt. Teldec Classics 9031 74862 2. 1993. Compact disc.

The tempo of this recording is faster than Bach's marked tempo, which gives a more lilting quality to the introductory flute line, in contrast to the weeping quality of other recordings. However the long, well-controlled lines of the soprano keep the speed of this performance from seeming rushed. The soprano has a fast vibrato that she uses sparingly. She does an admirable job of starting long phrases at a soft dynamic with little vibrato before growing dramatically, allowing her phrases to effectively convey a story. Her lower register occasionally gets lost in the texture of the instruments, such as in the final phrase.

Bach, Johann Sebastian. "Zerfließe, mein Herz." *Johann Sebastian Bach*. Elly Ameling. Stuttgarter Kammerorchester. Karl Münchinger. Decca 476 170-8, 2004. Compact disc compilation.

The many contrasting parts balance well in this recording. The singer gives a sensitive beautiful performance. She gives weight to the middle range notes while allowing the voice to float up to the highest notes, notes that would typically carry tension. Her diction is clear except in the highest register, when the need to modify vowels supersedes text.

Bach, Johann Sebastian. "Erbarme dich." *Matthäus-Passion*. Delphine Galou. Judith Steenbrink. Holland Baroque. Reinbert de Leeuw. Interakt ISBN 978-90-824556-0-1, 2016. Compact disc.

The timbre of Galou's mezzo-soprano voice is unique and compelling to hear. She has a wide vibrato but uses it effectively and sparingly. Her phrasing is dramatically striking and she leans in to each dissonance, enhancing the weeping quality of the composition. Galou's diction is clear and the recording is well balanced between the instruments and the vocal line.

Bach, Johann Sebastian. "Erbarme dich." *Simply Baroque*. Yo-Yo Ma. Tom Koopman. The Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra. Sony Classical SK60680. 1999. Compact disc.

Yo-Yo Ma accomplishes what a singer would not have the freedom to do in the context of this song. His melodic line gets lost within the stunning counter melodies of the accompanying instruments. By taking the emphasis away from the melodic sung line, the listener is introduced to the beautiful complexity of the lamenting instruments underneath. In this recording, the violin is equally important to the cello. The tempo is achingly slow, as string players have the luxury of being able to breath in the middle of phrases.

Holst, Gustav. "Jesu Sweet." "I sing of a maiden." On *Holst, Vocal and Instrumental Music*. Peter Pears. Norbert Brainin. Argo ZRG 5497, 1965. Vinyl.

Though Peter Pears has an impressive repertoire to his credit, his voice may not have been the color that Holst had in mind when composing his *Four Songs For Voice And Violin*. Pears' tenor rendition adds a gravelly timbre that is at odds with the simplistic exposed setting, and his legato is not entirely effective.

Holst, Gustav. *Vedic Hymns / Four Songs For Voice And Violin / Humbert Wolfe Songs*. Susan Gritton. Louisa Fuller. Naxos 8.557117, 1998. Compact disc.

Recorded at St. Silas Church in London, "Jesu Sweet," and "I sing of a maiden," both have a clean resonance that enhances the simple texture. Gritton's voice is clear and her

diction allows for easy understanding. Her measured use of vibrato allows an almost chant-like quality to the legato eighth-note passages of “Jesu Sweet.” The unhurried tempo enhances a sense of reverence, allowing the text to be the focus. Due to the conversational quality of the quarter-note beat in “I sing of a Maiden,” a listener may not be aware that the vocal line is unaccompanied until the violin enters in the thirteenth measure. Susan Gritton’s voice beautifully changes color at this point, skillfully matching the vibrato and dynamic of the violin.

Mendelssohn, Felix. "Jerusalem! Die Du Tötest Die Propheten." *The Gundula Janowitz Edition*. Gundula Janowitz. Gewanhausorchester Leipzig. Deutsche Grammophon 0289 479 7348 5, 1987. Compact disc compilation.

The sound quality of this recording has a bit of reverb, which causes some of the diction to be lost. While the singer has a well-supported pleasant tone, her vibrato at times is wide which causes the center of the pitch to become murky. The triplet eighth-notes can be brought out more in the orchestra, but this may also be a result of the recording quality.

Mendelssohn, Felix. "Jerusalem! Die Du Tötest Die Propheten." *Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, Paulus*. Susan Roberts. Royal Scottish National Orchestra. Leon Botstein. Arabesque Recordings Z6705, 1998. Compact disc.

Susan Roberts has a more full-bodied soprano tone, which allows her a greater dynamic range from which to draw. Her legato is effective and unhindered by her clear German diction. The weight of her voice allows for a compelling contrast in the delicacy of the handling of the final pleading “Jerusalem.” The recording quality is clear and the voice is well balanced with the orchestra.

Mendelssohn, Felix. “Jerusalem, Thou that Killest the Prophets.” *St Paul*. Callie Wohletz. Tower Chorale. International Chamber Artists. Patrick Godon. Tower Chorale, 2016. Compact disc.

Patrick Godon, the director of the Tower Chorale, chose to perform Mendelssohn’s Paulus in English, so to immediately include the audience in the drama of the storyline. Callie Wohletz is a Chicago based soprano who has sung with the William Ferris Chorale. She approaches each note with a beautiful delicacy. This delicacy is particularly apparent in the last phrase “Jerusalem.” Her diction is clear and each word comes through the texture. The tempo of this recording is slightly slower than other recordings. However, the clarity of the text justifies the tempo. This is a live recording which accounts for occasional incidental sounds.

Monteverdi, Claudio. "Pulchra es." *Monteverdi: Vespro della beata Vergine*. Agnès Mellon. Guillemette Laurens. La Chapelle Royale. Harmonia Mundi France HMC 1247.48, 1987. Vinyl.

This recording is a very understated example of Monteverdi's *Vespers*. In "Pulchra es," the tempo is slow, which plays well with the two voice dissonances. However, the slower tempo pulls away from the lilting rhythmic quality of the text. The soloists are clean and clear, without sounding overly strong. They employ vibrato sparingly.

Monteverdi, Claudio. "Pulchra es." *Monteverdi: Vespro della beata Vergine*. L'arpeggiata, Christina Pluhar. Nuria Rial. Raquel Andueza. Virgin Classics 50999 6419940 5, 2010. Compact disc.

Nuria Rial is a personal favorite due to the free agility of her voice and her expressiveness within the confines of Baroque techniques. This recording is no exception. While both singers liberally use straight-tone and the tempo moves forward at a quicker rate than other recordings, there is still substance and weight to their voices. They balance well with each other and with the ensemble, moving effortlessly together. The Baroque vocal techniques are beautifully employed.

Monteverdi, Claudio. "Pulchra es." *Monteverdi: Vespro della beata Vergine 1610*. Jill Gomez. Felicity Palmer. The Monteverdi Choir and Monteverdi Orchestra. John Eliot Gardiner. Decca 443 482-2, 1974. Compact disc.

The two sopranos in this recording have full-bodied voices, both with a dark timbre. They do not shy away from a liberal use of vibrato as other baroque singers might. The recording has quite a bit of reverb, which can at times, cause the ensemble to become muddy and lost underneath the strength of the two sopranos.

Pergolesi, Giovanni Battista. *Stabat Mater*. Véronica Gens. Gérard Lesne. Il Seminario Musicale. Virgin Veritas 7243 5 45291 2 2, 1997. Compact disc.

In "Stabat Mater dolorosa," Véronica Gens and Gérard Lesne emerge from the texture. They clearly have an awareness of when they are singing as soloists and when they are creating a part of a larger texture. Their effective use of straight-tone allows them to balance perfectly together as does their rhythmic precision.

In the work as a whole, there appears to be one instrument per part, which in "Quando Corpus morietur," allows for an exposed weeping quality to the repeating, descending, triplet sixteenth-note figure. Again, the singers employ great delicacy to be a part of the overall texture, balancing beautifully with both each other, and the accompanying musicians.

Pergolesi, Giovanni Battista. *Stabat Mater*. Emma Kirkby. James Bowman. The Academy of Ancient Music. Christopher Hogwood. Decca 478 4029, 1988. Compact disc.

In “*Stabat Mater dolorosa*,” the vocal entrances of Emma Kirkby and James Bowman are so subtle that a listener may not notice until the singers crescendo into the dissonances. Both singers beautifully match their dynamics and use of vibrato to each other and to the instruments. The only negative is that end consonants disappear into the texture.

In “*Quando Corpus morietur*,” the soprano color matches well with the color of the counter-tenor, allowing a listener to still be able to distinguish between the parts. The counter-tenor occasionally gets stuck on his [d] consonant, slightly breaking up his legato. Overall, the singers and the orchestra balance well together.

Pergolesi, Giovanni Battista. *Stabat Mater - a Tribute to Pergolesi*. Anna Netrebko. Marianna Pizzolato. Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia. Deutsche Grammophon 00289 477 8857, 2010. Compact disc.

The tempo of “*Stabat Mater dolorosa*” is comfortable, allowing the singers to draw out aching dissonances while still pushing forward. Though both singers have stunning resumes and unquestionably virtuosic voices, they sing Pergolesi with perhaps more of an operatic quality than is beneficial to the plethora of close dissonances in the score. The orchestra is playing without vibrato which also makes the wide vibrato of each singer stand out. The end consonants are emphasized heavily, giving too much length to the final [s] on the word “*filius*.”

On “*Quando Corpus morietur*,” the vocalists are clear and well supported. The vocal lines are not as closely written as in the “*Stabat Mater dolorosa*,” which allows for an operatic tone to be more palatable. However, the elongated final [s] consonants and frequent scoops are distracting.

Saygun, Ahmed Adnan. “*Gel gönül seninle*.” *Yunus Emre*. Müfide Özgüç. Orchestra of the Ankara State Opera and Ballet. Ankara State Opera Chorus. Hikmet Şimşek. Ankara State Opera A-91.0001, 1991. Vinyl.

Both available recordings of *Yunus Emre* are conducted by Hikmet Şimşek. Therefore the tempos and general musical choices are similar. However, this recording is in the native Turkish. The soprano has a heavier timbre, but perhaps due to the quality of the recording, she is occasionally lost into the texture of the chorus and orchestra. Her diction is also not as clear as in the German recording.

Saygun, Ahmed Adnan. “*Komm, mein Herz*” *Yunus Emre*. Ibolya Verebics. Budapest Symphony Orchestra and chorus. Hikmet Şimşek. Hungaroton HCD 31077, 1989. Compact disc.

Though the conductor of this recording was Turkish and the Budapest Symphony was used, it is not clear why the performance was given in German rather than the original Turkish. However, Saygun's score gives concurrent Turkish, English, French and German text options. The quality of this recording is clear and well balanced. The singer is strong and cuts through the texture of a full orchestra and choir. Her diction is precise.

Steinberg, Eitan. *BenZaken sings Steinberg and Bardanashvili*. Etty Ben-Zaken. Israeli Contemporary String Quartet. Etty Ben-Zaken, 2004. Compact disc.

Due to the fact that *Stabat Mater – a Human Prayer* was written by Eitan Steinberg specifically for his wife, Etty Ben-Zaken to sing, there is only one recording available on compact disc. This recording is of the premier of the work in 2004, and despite being a live performance, there are very few incidental sounds from the audience. In "Filius," Ben-Zaken's voice is clear and well balanced with the instruments. Ben-Zaken's tempos are stretched and often-times uncomfortably slow. This seems to be a conscious choice to allow the audience to find discomfort with the pain of the subject matter. In "Forgiveness Song," Ben-Zaken puts emphasis on specific consonants and closes to end consonants sooner than a native English speaker might. Future performers would need to make conscious choices on pronunciation in the context of the style.