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### PERFORMANCE NOTES

Texts may be sung using contemporary English pronunciation. However, Medieval English pronunciation is preferred, ideally for which a specialist should be consulted. In general, a "Germanic" reading of the vowels will result in a pronunciation that is close to a Medieval one.

Duration: 17 minutes

A Harp Part is available separately: 8658A

#### RECORDING

A recording is available on the CD *STILL*, released by the DaCapo Chamber Choir (Waterloo, Ontario) in 2004: www.dacapochamberchoir.ca\still

#### PROGRAM NOTES

The Sunne of Grace is a six-movement song cycle for Soprano Solo, SATB Chorus, and Harp, celebrating the story of the incarnation of the divine in the life of Christ, as expressed in anonymous Medieval English texts. The music was composed in 1984, while Enns was on a composition sabbatical in Cambridge, England. The work reflects this Britten-Britain context of its genesis. The premiere was a year later, by the Renaissance Singers of Kitchener, Ontario; the 1987 performance (and first CBC Radio broadcast) by Canada's Elmer Iseler Singers under Iseler's leadership really marked the beginning of the performance life of this cycle.

The texts are delightful, almost naïve, and similar in their own medium to the images in the stained-glass windows of Medieval cathedrals. The songs are arranged as three "nested" sets, with the first and final song framing the cycle.

1 and 6: The first and last songs sparkle with celebration; the text rhythms inspire dance rhythms in the harp and chorus, sometimes in agreement with each other, other times in rhythmic dialogue.

2 and 4: The solo songs are settings of more intimate, personal texts: first (No. 2) Mary speaking to the infant Jesus—simple words of affection, and regret for the crude comfort of beasts and stable. Then (No. 4) a personal expression of devotion and of a love "so hie" (so high) that no other love is of interest, a love through which all physical pain is considered a good thing.

3 and 5: The two unaccompanied songs deal with the image of light: (No. 3) Christ as the "sunne of grace" (sun of grace) who is born, suffers, and is stung on the cross; and then (No. 5) the love of Christ as the true light, a theme expressed here through a compelling literary conceit—true love rests in Christ, to which all other love is simply a reflection, like the moon. The idea inspires a literal melodic inversion at the text phrase, "Whose love is fresh and evre greene" (ever green).

#### TEVT

#### Medieval English Text

#### I. Hand by Hand We Shule Us Take

Chorus

Hand by hand we shule us take.

And joye and blisse shule we make;

For the devel of helle man hath forsake,

And Godes Sone is maked our make.

A child is boren amonges man, And in that child was no wam: That child is God, that child is man, And in that child oure lif bigan. Chorus

Sinful man, be blithe and glad: For your mariage thy peis is grad When Crist was boren. Com to Crist, thy peis is grad; For thee was his blood y-shad, That were forloren.

Chorus

Chorus

Sinful man, be blithe and bold,
For hevene is both bought and sold,
Evereche fote.
Com to Crist, thy peis is told,
For thee he yaf a hundrefold,
His lif to bote.

#### Contemporary English Paraphrase

#### I. Let Us Join Hand in Hand

Chorus

Let us join hand in hand, And be joyful; For the devil of hell has left, And the God's Son is become like us.

A child is born among us, In whom is no sin: That child is both divine and human, The source of our life. Chorus

Sinful man, be blissful and glad:
With this union your peace arrived
When Christ was born.
Come to Christ, your peace is found;
For you was his blood shed,
That were forlorn.
Chorus

Sinful man, be glad and bold, For heaven is purchased Entirely. Come to Christ, your peace is assured,

For you he gave completely
His life as salvation.

Chorus

#### Medieval English Text

#### II. Jesu, Swete Sone Dere

Jesu, swete sone dere, On porful bed list Thou here, And that me greveth sore; For Thy cradel is as a bere, Oxe and asse beeth Thy fere: Weepe ich may therefore.

Jesu swete, be not wroth,
Though ich n'abbe clout ne cloth,
Thee on for to folde,
Thee on to folde, ne to wrappe,
For ich n'abbe clout ne lappe;
But lay Thou Thy feet to my pappe,
And wite Thee from the colde.

#### III. The Sunne of Grace

The sunne of grace him shined in On a day when it was morwe, When our Lord God boren was Withoute wem or sorwe.

The sunne of grace him shined in On a day when it was prime, When our Lord God boren was, So well he knew his time.

The sunne of grace him shined in On a day when it was noon, When our Lord God boren was, And on the roode doon.

The sunne of grace him shined in On a day when it was undern, When our Lord God boren was, And to the herte stungen.

#### IV. I Have Set My Hert So Hie

I have set my hert so hie
Me liket no love that lowere is,
And alle the paines that I may drie
Me thenk it do me good iwis;

For on that Lord that loved us alle So hertely have I set my thought, It is my joye on him to call For love me hath in ballus brought. Me thenk it do iwis.

#### Contemporary English Paraphrase

#### II. Jesus, Sweet Son Dear

Jesus, sweet Son dear,
You lie here on a crude bed,
And that grieves me greatly;
For your cradle is like a bier,
Ox and ass are your companions:
I weep because of that.

Sweet Jesus, be not angry.
Though I have no scrap of cloth
With which to cover you.
Nor in which to wrap you,
For I have neither scrap nor rag;
But lay your feet to my breast,
And shelter yourself from the cold.

#### III. The Sun of Grace

The sun of grace shone in In the morning, When our Lord God was born Without sin or sorrow.

The sun of grace shore in
At sunrise, (prime = first monastic hour)
When our Lord God was born,
So well he knew his time.

The sun of grace shone in At noon,
When our Lord God was born,
And was put on the cross.

The sun of grace shone in At mid-morning, (undern = third monastic hour) When our Lord God was born, And was pierced to the heart.

#### IV. I Have Set My Heart So High

I have set my heart so high That no lower love appeals to me, And all the pains that I may endure I think they certainly do me good;

For on that Lord that loved us all So earnestly have I set my thought, That it is my joy to call on him For love has brought me the scourge. I certainly think so.

#### Medieval English Text

#### V. All Other Love Is Like the Moone

All other love is like the moone That wexth and waneth as flowr in plain, As flowr that faireth and fallweth soone, As day that clereth and endeth in rain.

All other love beginth by blisse, In wop and wo maketh his ending; No love there n'is that evre habbe lisse, But what areste in hevene King,

Whose love is fresh and evre greene, And evre full without wanying; His love sweeteth withoute teene, His love is endless and aring.

All other love I flee for Thee; Tell me where Thou list. In Marie mild and free I shall be found, Ac more, ac more in Crist.

#### VI. In excelsis gloria

When Crist was born of Marie free In Bedlam, in that faire cite, Angelles song evre with mirth and glee In excelsis gloria.

Herdmen beheld thes angelles bright. To hem appeared with gret light, And said, "Godes Sone is born this night." In excelsis gloria.

This King is comen to save kinde, In the scriptur as we finde; Therefore this song have we in minde, In excelsis gloria.

Then Lord for Thy gret grace, Grant us the bliss to see Thy face, Where we may sing to Thy solas. In excelsis gloria.

Anonymous Medieval English Texts

#### Contemporary English Paraphrase

#### V. All Other Love Is Like the Moon

All other love is like the moon
That waxes and wanes like a flower in the meadow,
Like a flower that blossoms and quickly fades,
Or a clear day that ends in rain.

All other love begins with bliss,
Yet ends in weeping and sorrow;
No love gives eternal joy,
Except that which rests in the King of heaven,

Whose love is fresh and ever green, And ever full without growing pale; His love sweetens without grief, His love is endless and eternal.

I leave all other love for you;
Tell me where you lie.
"In Mary mild and pure I shall be found,
But more, much more in Christ."

#### VI. In excelsis gloria (Glory in the Highest)

When Christ was born of sinless Mary In Bethlehem, that fair city, Angels sang continually with mirth and glee, "Glory in the highest."

Shepherds saw these bright angels Which appeared to them in a great light, And said, "God's Son is born this night." "Glory in the highest."

This King has come to save all creation, As we find in the scripture; Therefore we are mindful of the song, "Glory in the highest."

Then Lord for your great grace, Grant us the bliss to see your face, Where we may sing to your pleasure. "Glory in the highest."

Contemporary English Paraphrase by Leonard Enns

### The Sunne of Grace

for Soprano Solo, SATB Chorus (divisi), and Harp

Anonymous Medieval English Texts

Leonard Enns





















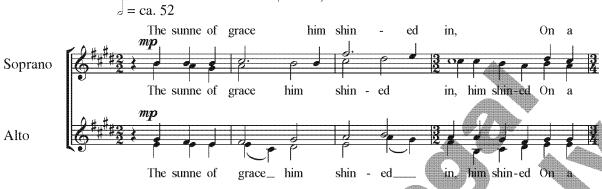
## II: Jesu, Swete, Sone Dere (Soprano Solo and Harp)





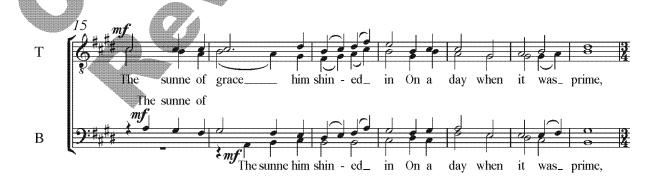
### III: The Sunne of Grace

(Chorus)









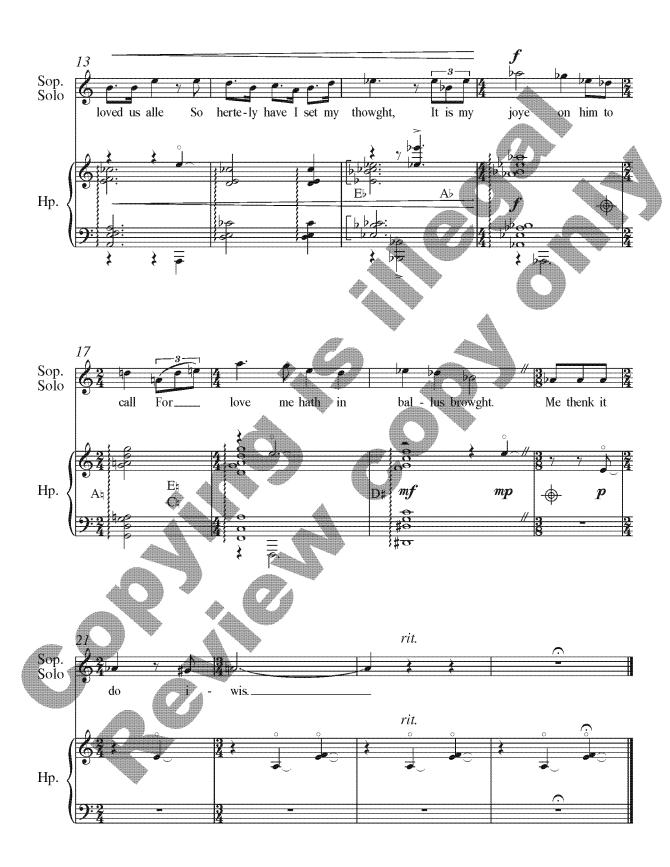




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# IV: I Have Set My Hert So Hie (Soprano Solo and Harp)















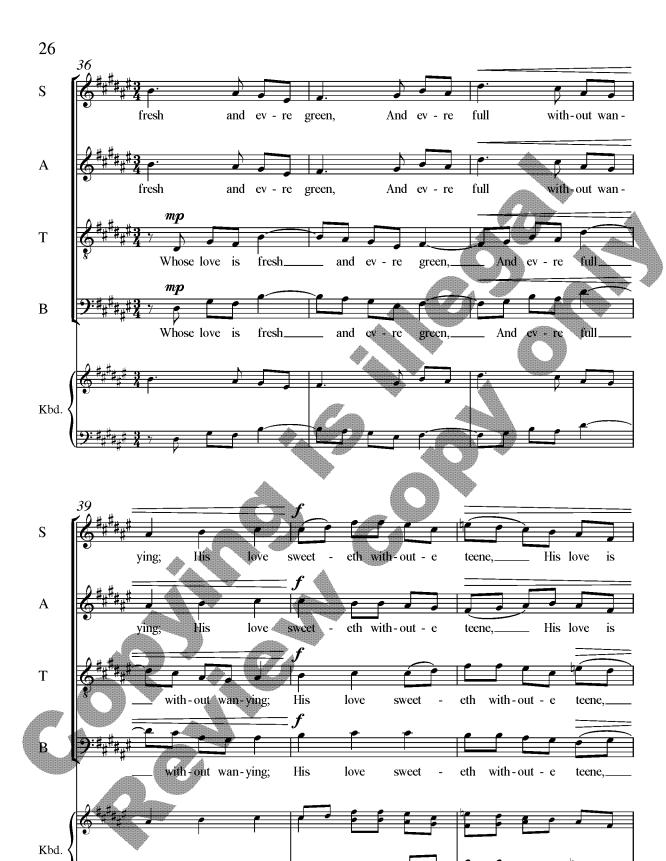
King,

Whose love is

fresh

and ev - re green,













# VI: In excelsis gloria (Soprano Solo, Chorus, and Harp)

















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