

CHORAL JOURNAL: CHORAL REVIEWS ANALYTICAL GUIDE (1/11 - PL)

This sheet is provided as a courtesy to our reviewers to encourage comprehensiveness in initial examination of choral works. Reviewers may use this guide to cover many of the considerations that could come into play in developing a review; this guide is an aid and not meant to restrict, proscribe, or define the scope or contents of a choral review. (For format and minimal content requirements, see the Format Guidelines page.)

Composition: Title, and Opus (if applicable):
Is this work edited or arranged? If so, by whom?
Is this a work in a series or an excerpt from a larger work?
Has this work been dedicated or commissioned?
Date of composition, edition, etc.
When was this work written or arranged?
To which genres and styles does this work belong?
Is this work sacred or secular?
Are other editions available? If so, what distinguishes this one?
If an arrangement, what distinguishes this one?

Composer: Dates (birth-death)
Does this work belong to a particular stylistic period of this composer's oeuvre?
Is this work a typical or unusual example of this composer's works?
What information regarding the composer might shed light on understanding and interpreting this work?
If the composer is lesser known to our readers, what information might place this composer into a wider context or perspective?

Publisher: Name; if a subsidiary, also list the parent company
Publisher's website
Are .pdf files of the works available on line? Sound files?
Bios or other supporting materials?
In which way does this the publisher distinguish itself?

Voicing: What is the voicing of this work?
Any divisi? Any solos? Do these possess any special or extraordinary requirements?
Identify the ranges of each voice part (c4 = middle c)
Examine the tessitura of each voice part and solo.
Is the tessitura high, low, or within the middle of the range?
Is the voicing of the choral parts completed, enhanced, supported, or in contrast to any instrumental parts found in this work?

Ensemble: For what type of ensemble does this work seem to be written?
What other types of ensembles might enjoy this work?
Does this work lend itself best to any size ensemble? ...any age of singer?

Accompaniment: For what instrument(s) is the accompaniment written?

If for more than one instrument, is the accompaniment idiomatic?

Are instrumental parts available separately, included in the octavo, or downloadable?

Do the choral parts have a reduction? If so, is the reduction accurate?

Is it clearly written?

Does a reduction of the instrumental parts appear in the score?

Do instrumental cues exist in the score?

Is the accompaniment difficult or easily played?

To what extent does the accompaniment support entrances, important choral entries and harmonies?

Are the instrumental parts optional or obbligati? Are they difficult?

Text:

In which language is the text?

If in a foreign language, are any of the following supplied?

Transliteration of the text; IPA of the text

Singing translation; Literal translation;

How accurate or useful are these? Do significant omissions exist?

What is the text's source?

What information might one appreciate regarding the meaning or context of the text found in this work?

Is the poetry or its background available online?

(If so, try to find an online resource for our readers. Sites like Poetry X and others can be valuable resources.)

How is the textual underlay? It is clear? Is alignment done well?

Is the type and size of the text appropriate?

How are the aesthetics of the text reflected in the setting; is text painting found?

Is the setting of particular words potentially challenging to singers due to its setting of particular syllables to particular (high or low) pitches?

Does the text lend itself to any particular type of event--liturgical, patriotic, celebratory, educational?

Analysis:

What is the form of the work?

Does this form lend itself to any particular advantageous rehearsal approaches?

Is the harmonic and melodic content familiar to our readership? How so/how not?

What aspects of this work are most challenging; least challenging?

What elements of this work would empower one's hearing, interpretation, and overall mastery of this work?

Layout:

Does the layout of the music facilitate performance and rehearsal?

Identify ALL the R&S areas which would be interested in performing this work.