A NEW SONG

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the North Texas State University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF MUSIC

By

Rebecca D. Remley, B.M.
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*A New Song* is a sacred contata in four parts written for mixed chorus, soloists, narrator, congregation, and chamber ensemble consisting of organ, brass ensemble, and percussion. It is designed to be performed within the limitations of a church sanctuary.

The text is taken from the New American Standard Version of the Bible. The four parts are based on prophecies found in the book of Isaiah and the fulfillment of these prophecies as found in the New Testament books of Matthew, Luke, and John.

The texture and orchestration throughout the contata change according to the mood of the text. For practical performance purposes, vocal parts are based on traditional harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic patterns, leaving the more complex patterns to the instrumental parts.
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ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

"A New Song" is a sacred cantata in four parts based on texts from the Bible. It is written for mixed chorus, soloists, narrator, congregation and chamber ensemble consisting of organ, two B flat trumpets, two French Horns in F, two trombones, tuba, and percussion. It is designed to be performed within the limitations of a church sanctuary. The four parts may be performed separately depending on the type and the length of the worship service.

Text

Each part of this cantata is based on a prophecy found in the Book of Isaiah. The chorus or a soloist responds to each prophecy with its New Testament fulfillment. The text is taken primarily from the New American Standard Version of the Bible. Other texts consist of original poetry, paraphrased verses and a hymn, "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name". (See Appendix for the complete text of the cantata.)

Compositional Techniques

The texture and orchestration throughout the cantata changes according to the mood of the text. For practical performance purposes, vocal parts are based on traditional harmonic, melodic and rhythmic patterns, leaving the more
complex patterns to the instrumental parts. The cantata is cyclic in that motives and chordal structures recur. The perfect fifth is the predominant interval throughout the cantata.

Part I

Part I is based on the familiar prophecy of the birth of Christ. After Isaiah sings the prophecy, the chorus responds with "Glory to God" found in Luke 2:14. In "Mary's Song," which is through-composed to an original text, Mary contemplates the purpose of her son and her situation as the mother of God's Son. Her mood changes from happiness after the birth, to wonderment, to an attitude of servility.

The first song in the cantata is rhythmically free as Isaiah presents the prophecy of the birth of Christ. The first chord in the brass ensemble emphasizes the quintal harmonies heard throughout the cantata. In this instance, the stacked fifths begin on the tuba's great G. (See Figure 1.)

Fig. 1 -- The use of fifths in the brass ensemble.

Melodically, Isaiah's prophecy is based on an A Aeolian mode. It uses a range of an octave and maintains a free, chant-like quality.
The following organ interlude is played while Isaiah exits. Based on a descending bass line, the quartal and quintal sounds are again heard. The organ ends on octave A's, preparing the men for their entrance in "Glory to God."

"Glory to God," employs full chorus, brass and organ. The chorus parts in this cantata are based primarily on unisons, thirds, fourths and fifths. Seconds are found as passing tones as seen in measure 16 in the tenor and measure 18 in the alto part. (See Figure 2.)

![Fig. 2 -- The use of the second in choral parts.](image)

Unlike the vocal parts, the chamber ensemble makes use of many tertian, quartal, and quintal sonorities as well as seconds unprepared by step-wise approach as found in measure 2 of "Glory to God." (See Figure 3.)

![Fig. 3 -- The use of seconds in the chamber ensemble.](image)

Melodically, this song is based on the Aeolian mode and is derived from two motives: the "glory" motive found first in measures 5 and 6 and the "second" motive found in the trumpet
parts in measure 12. This "second" motive emphasizes the subtonic of the aeolian scale. (See Figure 4.)

![Musical notation]

Fig. 4 -- The "glory" motive and the "second" motive.

In measure 52, the "glory" motive returns in the vocal parts and is passed to the brass section in measure 61 when the organ and chorus return with the "second" motive. The "glory" motive is heard for the last time two measures from the end in a combined fury in the brass ensemble. Both motives contain a rhythmic structure which is recognized several times in later sections of the cantata.

"Mary's Song" is an example of text painting. It can be divided into three sections, each expressing a different mood Mary might have had as she looked at her child. The first, in the key of A flat major, expresses a happy mood in a triple meter. When Mary realizes the seriousness of her calling, the accompaniment becomes more chromatic. (See Figure 5.) The third section, beginning in measure 21,

![Musical notation]

Fig. 5 -- Chromaticism in "Mary's Song."
expresses Mary's realization of what actually is happening to her. It uses many of the major and minor seconds first introduced in the previous song.

Part II

Part II is based on Isaiah's prophecy of the coming of a great light. In this passage the narrator reads the prophecy while being accompanied by organ, solo trumpet, chimes, glockenspiel, suspended cymbal and triangle. The fulfillment is provided by the narrator and congregation in a responsive reading.

Open fifths provide a very bright sound to be played behind the narrator. The melodic line uses these intervals almost exclusively as seen in the trumpet part in measures 5 and 6 and in the organ cadenza in measure 14. (See Figure 6.) Texturally, the orchestration is very thin and pointillistic.

Fig. 6 -- The use of the fifth in the organ cadenza.

Part III

Isaiah sings the prophecy found in Isaiah 42:1-4 and is answered by the mixed chorus telling the fulfillment. In "Sing a New Song," the chorus sets the stage for several
quotes from the narrator concerning the ministry of Jesus. Following this song, the first trumpet plays the hymn tune "Coronation" written in 1793 by Oliver Holden.

In the opening of "Behold, My Servant", the use of the fifth is again seen in the trumpets. In measure 4, the complete ensemble plays either a C or a G as background to Isaiah's prophecy. The last chord is built on projected fourths beginning on the great C of the tuba.

Harmonically, "Sing a New Song" is a reflection of the "second" motive found in "Glory to God." The chorus begins in unisons and octaves and gradually becomes chordal. This song ends on an A major chord.

Part IV:

Part four is based on the prophecy found in Isaiah 68:17 concerning the new heavens and the new earth. The mixed chorus responds with an a cappella chorale based on the passage "Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled," taken from John 14:1-3. Following the chorale, a brass fanfare derived from the rhythmic and harmonic structure of "Sing a New Song" is heard. Following this selection, the choir director will invite the congregation to join the members of the chorus and the chamber ensemble in singing the hymn, "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" using the hymn tune "Coronation."

The narrator is accompanied by the organ and brass in the prophecy. To provide a thin texture, few parts are doubled.
"A New Heaven and a New Earth" is another demonstration of the use of the perfect fifth. After reaching a climax in measure five, these fifths begin a descending line by half-steps. Following this prophecy, the mixed chorus sings a slow, legato chorale. It is presented as a comforting word to the people. The voice leadings are step-wise.

The brass and organ fanfare at the beginning of "Sing a New Song" is based on the progression found chorally in Part III. The increased tempo, with a few rhythmic changes, adds to the fanfare quality of the motive. Following the fanfare, the chorus and brass continue interweaving motive upon motive. The vocal parts are homophonic as opposed to the polyphonic brass parts. In measure 22 the chorus begins an "amen" chorus leading to the return of the "New Song" theme in measure 26. The brass carries a counter line in measure 27 much like the original counter melody in the earlier song, "Glory to God." The cantata concludes with the hymn, "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," combining congregation, soloists and instrumentalists.
APPENDIX

A NEW SONG

The Text

Isaiah's Commission: "Then I heard the voice of the Lord," saying, 'Whom shall I send and who will go for us?' Then I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'" Isaiah 6:8)

Part I

Isaiah: For a child will be born to us. A son will be given to us. And the government will rest on his shoulder. His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of his government or of peace on the throne of David and over his kingdom to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness.

-From then on and forevermore. (Isaiah 9:6-7)

Chorus: Glory. Glory.

Glory! Glory!

Glory to God in the highest.

And on earth, peace among men.

And on earth, peace.

For he has come to be your life, your light,

Your eternal glory, glory.

xii
Glory! Glory!
Glory to God in the highest.
Peace among men.
Peace among men.
Peace on earth.
Glory to God in the highest.
Peace among men. (Luke 2:14)

Mary: This my child.
Holy child.
My child, yet not mine.
He said you will be great and you will rule
You, my child, rule.
Your kingdom will not end.
I don't understand.
The son of God?
I'll watch you grow and see you go to your people.
And then, I'll lose you.
Yet, by losing, so many will be saved.
I am God's servant.
Jesus, my child, the world's sacrifice.

Part II
Narrator: The people who walk in darkness will see a great
light. Those who live in a darkland, the light will
shine on them. (Isaiah 9:2)

Narrator: In the beginning was the word and, the word was
with God, and the word was God. The same was in the
beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made.

Congregation: In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

Narrator: He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

Congregation: But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born not of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (John 1:1-5, 10-14)

Part III

Isaiah: Behold, my servant, whom I uphold.
My chosen one in whom my soul delights.
I have put my spirit upon Him.
He will bring justice to the nations.
He will not cry out or raise his voice
Nor make his voice heard in the streets.
A bruised reed he will not break.
And a dimly burning wick he will not extinguish;
He will faithfully bring forth justice.
He will not be disheartened or crushed,
Until He has established justice in the Earth.

(Isaiah 42:1-4)

Narrator: Sing to the Lord a new song,
Sing his praise from the end of the Earth.

(Isaiah 42:10)

Chorus: Sing to the Lord a new song.

Narrator: Repent for the kingdom is at hand. (Matthew 4:17)
Chorus: Sing to the Lord a new song.

Narrator: Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you. (Matthew 5:44)
Chorus: Sing a new song to God.

Narrator: Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst again. (John 4:14)
Chorus: Sing to the Lord a song.

Part IV

Narrator: For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth;
And the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. (Isaiah 65:17)

Chorus: Let not your heart be troubled; Believe in God,
Believe also in me. For I go to prepare you a place.
I will come again. (John 14:1-3)

Chorus: Alleluia, amen.

Sing to the Lord a new song.
Sing to the Lord a new song.
Sing to the Lord a new song.
Sing a new song to God.
Sing to the Lord a song.

Chorus and Congregation:

All Hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all.

Let every kindred, every tribe,
On this terrestrial ball,
To him all majesty ascribe,
And crown him Lord of all;
To him all majesty ascribe,
And crown him Lord of all.
A NEW SONG

by

Rebecca Danner Remley
A NEW SONG

A Sacred Cantata for Mixed Chorus, Soloists, Chamber Ensemble, Narrator and Congregation

The text is based on four prophesies from the Book of Isaiah and the fulfillments as they occur in the New Testament.
VOICES

Narrator
Isaiah - Baritone
Mary - Soprano
Mixed Chorus

CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

Organ
2 Trumpets in Bb
2 Horns in F
2 Trombones
Tuba
Chimes
Glockenspiel
Gong
Suspended Cymbal
2 Timpani
Triangle

CONGREGATION
# Contents

## Part I

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A NEW SONG
PART I

For a child will be born to us.
And the government will rest

Isaiah

For a child will be born to us.

Soprano Solo

Rebecca Dumon Romley

Baritone Solo

Eb Trumpet

Horn in F

Trombone

Tuba

Percussion

For a child will be born to us.
won’t

of P., C.

and the

on His shoulder, His name will be

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.
Isaiah: (spoken - instruments tacet)

There will be no end to the increase of his government or of peace.

On the throne of David and over his kingdom. To establish it and

to uphold it with justice and righteousness.

from then on and for ev - er - more.
2. Organ Interlude
3. "Glory to God"
Peace among men, Peace
And on earth, Peace
And
S.  
A.  
T.  
S.  
Org.  
Tpt.  
Hn.  
Tr.  
Tuba.

on Earth, Peace.
On Earth, Peace among men.
And on Earth, Peace among
For He has come to be your life, your light.
Glory!  Glory!  Glory!  Glory!
Glory to God in the highest!
Glo-ry to God. Peace a-mong men. Peace a-mong men
Peace on Earth.
Part II

5. "The People Who Walk in Darkness"

The people who walk in darkness will see a great light.
Those who live in a dark land. The Light —
6. "In the Beginning Was the Word"

Narrator - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the Beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.

Congregation: In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; And the darkness comprehended not.

Narrator - He was in the world, and the world was made by him, And the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

Congregation - But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God even to them that believe on his name; Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh Nor of the will of man, but of God. And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (And we beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) Full of grace and Truth.

John 1:1-5, 10-14
Part III

7. "Behold, My Servant"

\[(1:54)\]

\[
\begin{align*}
Izidi & :  \\
T. & :  \\
B. & :  \\
\text{Organ} & :  \\
\text{Tp.} & :  \\
\text{Hn.} & :  \\
\text{Tr.} & :  \\
\text{Fl.} & :  \\
\end{align*}
\]
Ser vant, whom I up hold, my chosen one in whom my soul - lights. I have put my str in up.
Ike will not cry or shout.

He will not cry or raise his voice.
8. "Sing a New Song"

Narrator: Sing to the Lord a new song, Sing His praise from the end of the Earth!

Narrator: Repent for the kingdom is at hand.

Narrator: Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.

Who ever drinks of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst.

Sing to the Lord a new song.
Part IV

9. "I Create New Heavens and a New Earth"

For Behold, I create New Heavens and a New Earth.
And the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind.
10. "Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled"

(j = 80)

Let not your heart be troubled; Believe in God, Be-

live al-so in Me. For I go to pre-pare you a place.

B. \[\text{Music notation}\]

A. \[\text{Music notation}\]

T. \[\text{Music notation}\]

B. \[\text{Music notation}\]

S. \[\text{Music notation}\]
Sing to the Lord a Song.

Sing a Song, a Song.

Sing to the Lord a Song.

Sing to the Lord a Song.
12. "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name."
Congregational Hymn

All hail the power of Jesus' name! Let angels prostrate fall;
Ging

Forth the royal di- a- dem, and crown him Lord of all.
Ging