

...la braitne gbonaga duitb ish mise Tomas O'Croban...

ABBIE BETINIS

PERUSAL ONLY
(PERFORMANCE PROHIBITED)

AILILIÚ, Ó ÍOSA

- I. AN CAOINEADH (*A KEEN*)
For soprano solo, SSA trio, TB chorus, Gaelic harp, and vielle (or viola)
- II. QUIS EST DEUS (*WHERE IS GOD?*)
For alto or countertenor soloist, SATB chorus, and vielle (or viola)
- III. GAUDEANT CAELI (*REJOICE HEAVENS*)
For TB duet or chorus, vielle (or viola), and bodhrán

*Commissioned for The Rose Ensemble
Jordan Sramek, artistic director*

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Program Note:

Aililiú, ó Íosa (Alleluia, O Jesu) was commissioned for the Rose Ensemble by Andrew Martin, in honor of the birthday of Minnesota Public Radio personality (and devotee of all things Irish) Tom Crann. It was premiered by The Rose Ensemble as part of the program *Visitatio Sepulchri: The Dublin Mystery Play* on April 8, 2005 at the Southern Theater in Minneapolis, Minnesota, with collaborators Ann Heymann (Gaelic harp), Ginna Watson (vielle), Matt Jenson (choreography), New and Slightly Used Dance, and Jeff Bartlett (lighting design).

The three pieces of *Aililiú, ó Íosa* were created to complement the medieval mystery play in which the three Marys discover Christ's empty tomb and are told by the Angel that He has risen.

The first piece, "An Caoineadh" (Gaelic for *the keen* and pronounced "ahn QWEEN-eh") is sung by the weeping Virgin Mary who has not yet heard that her son has been resurrected. Keening, a specific type of wailing done over the body of the dead, was traditionally performed by women while rocking back and forth calling the name of the dead relative or friend. Though the custom dates back to pre-Christian funeral rituals, there are now many documented keens specifically for the Virgin Mary to sing for her son. The text for "An Caoineadh" is one of these traditional Irish keening songs, passed down orally for generations, and eventually written down by Irish singer and scholar Nóirín Ní Riain. The introduction to the piece uses the Alleluia portion of another of these keens, "Seacht nDólás na Maighdine Muire" (The Seven Sorrows of the Virgin Mary).

The second piece "Quis est Deus" (*Who is God?*) is sung by the Angel who, after telling the Marys the news of the resurrection, begins to wonder himself exactly where Christ has gone and how to find him. The vielle reassures the Angel of Christ's return by recalling the traditional Irish tune, *Jimmy, mo Mhile Stor*, a passionate song of faith in love in which a young lady awaits her beloved and has every confidence in his homecoming. Though the text for "Quis est Deus" was found among the notes of seventh century Bishop Tirechan of Ireland, it is thought to have originated from an earlier, unknown author (because, unfortunately, Tirechan was not exactly known for his fluency in Latin).

Once everyone has heard the good news of Christ's resurrection, they are very joyful indeed, and the men sing "Gaudeant caeli" (*Rejoice Heavens!*), a short song of celebration with a traditional Irish frame drum called the *bodhrán*. The opening nonsense syllables are inspired by the Irish tradition of "lilting," a way for vocalists to take part in instrumental, non-texted music by singing gibberish syllables. The rest of the piece uses excerpts from a longer poem, *De Strage Normannorum*, dating from the ninth century by Irish religious leader Sedulius Scottus.

- Abbie Betinis, March 2005

Performance Note:

The piece is written for Gaelic harp with gold strings (which have a very long resonating time), but translates to most folk harps where strings of different octaves can be individually tuned. It is also possible to perform on standard orchestral pedal harp.

I. An Caoineadh

Aililiú ó Íosa, aililiú 'stú mo leanbh,
Aililiú ó Íosa, 'stú Rí geal na bhFlaitheas.

'S ariú!
Agus a leanbh
Cad a dhéanfaidh mé?
Tátú ar shiúluaim
Agus airiú!

'S ariú!
Agus méliom féin
Dá mbeithéa go moch agam...
Agus och! och! ochón airiú! – gan thú!

- traditional Gaelic

I. The Keen

Alleluia, O Jesus, my child, my little thing,
Alleluia, O Jesus, you are Heaven's King.

'S ariú!
Oh child of mine
And what shall I do?
You've been gone a long time
Agus airiú!

'S ariú!
And now I'm on my own,
If I had you at the break of dawn...
Agus och! och! ochón airiú! – without you!

- trans. Nóirín Ní Riain

II. Quis Est Deus

Quis est Deus
et ubi est Deus
et cuius est Deus
et ubi habitaculum eius?

Si habet filios et filias,
aurum et argentum, Deus vester?

Si vivus semper,
si pulcher,
si filium eius
nutrierunt multi?

Si in caelo
an in terra est?
In aequore
in fluminibus,
in montanis
in convallibus?

Quomodo videbitur?
quomodo diligitur,
quomodo invenitur?

Si in iuventute,
Si in senectute,
invenitur?

– Anon. 600 A.D.

Quem queritis ad sepulcrum,
o Cristicole?
Surrexit... non est hic.

II. Who is God

(The Questions of Ethne Alba)

Who is God
and where is God,
of whom is God,
and where His dwelling?

Has He sons and daughters,
gold and silver, this God of yours?

Is He ever-living,
is He beautiful,
was His son
fostered by many?

Is He in heaven
or on the earth?
In the sea,
in the rivers,
in the mountains,
in the valleys?

How will He be seen,
how will He be loved,
how is He found?

Is it in youth
Or is it in old age
He is found?

– trans. James Carney

Whom do you seek at the sepulchre,
O worshippers of Christ,
He is risen... He is not here.

III. Gaudeant caeli

Gaudeant caeli, mare, cuncta terra,
Gaudeat Christi populusque vernans;
Facta miretur domini tonantis
Fortia patris.

Laudibus dignus, bonitatis auctor,
Magnus in magnis opifex beatus...
Gloria nostra.

Gloriae plausus, modulans osanna,
Personet patrem genitumque Christum,
Spiritus sanctum: polus unda tellus,
Glorificate.

- Sedulius Scottus, (excerpted from
"De Strage Normannorum," c.850.)

III. Rejoice Heavens

Rejoice heavens, sea, and all the land,
You people too who flower in Christ,
See the great deeds of the Lord, the Father,
Thundering Godhead.

Most worthy of praises, sole author of good,
Great in great deeds, blessed creator,
Our glory.

Now cry you glory and cry Hosanna,
Now sing of the Father, Christ begotten,
And Holy Spirit; sky, earth, and water,
Praise Him you all.

- trans. James Carney (adapted A.B.)

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AILILIÚ, Ó ÍOSA

I. An Caoineadh ("A Keen")

for Soprano soloist, SSA trio ("Mary 1, 2, 3"), TB chorus, Gaelic harp and Vielle (or Viola)

TRAD. GAELIC

ABBIE BETINIS

(2005)

Freely, as chant ♩ = c.60

2nd time only
pp (an echo)

Mary 1
2 & 3

Ai - li - liú _____ ó Ío - sa, ai - li - liú _____

TB CHORUS

p

Ai-li - liú _____ ó Ío - sa, ai - li - liú 'stú mo _____ lean

Vielle

player please gently improvise

p

Harp*

player please gently improvise

p

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* Folk harp or lever harp in this alternate tuning (all other Cs & Fs are natural)

6

Mary 1

_____ ó Ío-sa, _____

'Sa - riú, _____ *ad lib repeat*

Mary 2 & 3

_____ ó Ío-sa, _____

Mary 3, *ad lib repeat*

'Sa - riú, _____

'Sa - riú, _____ *Mary 2, ad lib repeat*

TB CHORUS

_____ *< mf*

bh, Ai - li - liú _____ ó Ío - ³sa, 'stú Rí geal na bhFlai-theas. Ai-li -

Vle.

Hp.

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11 *crying out*

Sop Solo *f* 'Sa - - - riú! *p* 'Sa - - - riú..._____

Mary 1
2 & 3

TB CHORUS *p* liú,_____ Ai-li - liú,_____

Vle.

Hp.

18 *f* A-gus a lean - bh,_____ *p* A-gus a lean - bh,_____

Mary 1 *mf* ó _____ Ío - sa,_____

Mary 2 & 3 *mf* ó _____ Ío - sa,_____

TB CHORUS *mf* Ai - li -

Vle.

Hp.

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25 *f* *p*

Sop Solo 'Sa - riú! 'Sa - riú...

TB CHORUS liú, Ai - li - liú.

Vle.

Hp.

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29 Sweetly, ♩ = c.60 *mp* delicately, lovingly

Sop Solo A - gus a lean-bh,

Vle. Sweetly, ♩ = c.60 *espressivo* *mp*

Hp. Sweetly, ♩ = c.60 *p*

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35

Sop Solo

Cad a dhéan - faidh_____ mé? A - - - gus a lean-bh,

Hp.

39

Sop Solo

Cad a dhéan - faidh mé? Tá - tú ar shiúl - uaim.

Vle.

mp cresc.

Hp.

mp *mf*

with increasing longing

3

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44

Sop Solo

Cad_ a dhéan - faidh_____ mé?_____

Vle.

mp

Hp.

f *mp cresc.*

3 3

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84

Mary 1

Ai - li - liú, 'Sa - riú, *ad lib repeat*

Mary 2 & 3

li - liú, Ai - li - liú, *Mary 3, ad lib repeat* *Mary 2, ad lib repeat*

'Sa - riú, 'Sa - riú,

TB CHORUS

bh, Ai - li - liú ó Ío - sa, 'stú Rí geal na bhFlai-

Vle.

Hp.

88

Sop Solo

f 'Sa - - - riú! *p* 'Sa - - - riú...

Mary 1

Mary 2 & 3

TB CHORUS

theas. *fp* Ai - li - liú, *p* Ai - li - liú.

Vle.

Hp.

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94

Mary 1

Mary 2 & 3

Vle.

Hp.

niente

niente

niente

niente

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Composer Abbie Betinis (b. 1980) writes music called "inventive, richly melodic" (*The New York Times*), and "the highlight" of the program (*Boston Globe*). With over 50 commissioned works for ensembles such as Cantus, Dale Warland Singers, New England Philharmonic, and The Rose Ensemble, Abbie has been awarded a McKnight Composer Fellowship, grants from the American Composers Forum, ASCAP, and Jerome Foundation, and was recently listed in NPR Music's *Top 100 Composers Under 40*. She studied composition at St. Olaf College, the University of Minnesota, and counterpoint and harmony at the European American Musical Alliance in Paris, France.

Abbie publishes and distributes her music internationally through Abbie Betinis Music Co., with additional scores published by Fred Bock Music, Graphite Publishing, Kjos, Santa Barbara Music Publishing, and in G. Schirmer's *Dale Warland Series*.

An alto in The Dale Warland Singers for their final three seasons, Abbie was a founding member of The Singers-Minnesota Choral Artists, where she has been composer-in-residence since 2004. She has also held residencies with The Schubert Club and The Rose Ensemble. A three time cancer survivor, she lives in St. Paul, Minnesota.

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