



The American Prize
2015 Finalist

Three Songs of the Soul

III. The Soul Contemplates the Creator In the Creation

SATB *a cappella* with *divisi* and boy soprano *obligato*



Poem by Jan Luyken

Music by Rebecca Oswald
(1996)



Duration 4:45



Rebecca Oswald Music
rebeccaoswald.com

Rebecca Oswald (b. 1958) is an award winning composer and lifelong pianist. Her catalogue includes music for piano as well as other solo instruments, various chamber ensembles, string and full orchestra, art songs, all types of choral ensembles including chorus with orchestra, a clarinet concerto, and an opera. She has also written music for film and games. She holds a Bachelor of Music degree, *summa cum laude*, in music theory and composition from Westminster Choir College (1998), and a Master of Music degree in music composition from the University of Oregon School of Music (2001). For more information please visit rebeccaoswald.com or write to rebecca@rebeccaoswald.com.

Rebecca Oswald

Three Songs of the Soul

III. The Soul Contemplates the Creator In the Creation

SATB *a cappella* with *divisi* and boy soprano *obligato*

Program notes:

The Soul Contemplates the Creator In the Creation is the third in a choral set entitled *Three Songs of the Soul*. Jan Luyken (1649-1712), a native of Amsterdam, lived a secluded life as a poet, artist, and engraver. The English translations of these three poems (Frank J. Warnke, tr.) first appeared in the Winter 1958 issue of *Comparative Literature* (Volume 10:1). In this choral setting, the melodies and harmonies aspire to express the meaning and beauty of the poet's metaphysical ideals. Within lightly extended tonality which develops throughout the piece via expanding and contracting harmonic progressions and modulations, each voice has its own lyrical life.

The engraving on the cover, "*De Musikant*," is from *Het Mensylek Bedryf*, a collection of engravings made in the studio of Johannes Luiken (another spelling of Jan Luyken) and his son Caspaeres (Caspar). and was published in Amsterdam in 1694.

Requests:

- (1) Please report all U.S. performances of this work to BMI (classical@bmi.com) and to me (rebecca@rebeccaoswald.com) by emailing a JPG or PDF of a program, flyer, poster, or ticket showing the title of my programmed work(s) and my name (Rebecca Oswald).
- (2) Similarly, please report all non-U.S. performances to the host country's national performance rights organization, to BMI (classical@bmi.com), and to me (rebecca@rebeccaoswald.com).

Many thanks! I hope you and your choir enjoy singing *The Soul Contemplates the Creator In the Creation*.

— *Rebecca Oswald*



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The Soul Contemplates the Creator In the Creation

I saw the beauty and the sweetness of all things,
And said: "How fair you are!" Then heard an answer clear:
"Indeed we are, but He from whom our beauty springs
Is a thousand times more sweet, a thousand times more fair."
And that Thou art, my Dearest, the goal of my desire!
If a lily here on earth is fair, and white, and clean,
What must, eternal Good, Lord of all things and higher,
What must the whiteness be of Thy purity serene?
So lovely is the scarlet of the roses here below,
Glistening with pearls as the morning sun doth greet them,
How must the scarlet of Thy majesty then glow!
If violets smell sweet each time we bend to meet them,
As the little western wind blows softly through the field
(I've marked it many times in the mornings fresh and cool),
What then the sweetness that Thy kindly mouth must yield,
What blessed odours sweet through Paradise must roll.
If here the Sun appears, a bridegroom richly dressed,
So fairly shining down on the beauties of the day,
What must Thy countenance be, so beautiful and blest!
O God, my dearest Love, I would see Thee without stay!

Jan Luyken
English translation by Frank J. Warnke

The Soul Contemplates the Creator In the Creation

from *Three Songs of the Soul*

SATB *a cappella* with *divisi* and boy soprano *obligato*

Words by Jan Luyken

English translation by Frank J. Warnke

Music by Rebecca Oswald

With grace (♩ = 120)

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Piano (reh. only)

p

I saw the beau - ty and the sweet - ness of all things, _____

I saw the beau - ty and the sweet - ness of all things, _____

I saw the beau - ty and the sweet - ness of all things, _____

With grace (♩ = 120)

p

7

S

A

T

B

And said: "How fair you are!" Then heard an an - swer clear:

And said: "How fair you are!" Then heard an an - swer clear:

And said: "How fair you are!" Then heard an an - swer clear:

7

13 *mp* *mf*

S "In - deed we are, but He from whom our beau - ty springs Is a

A "In - deed we are, but He from whom our beau - ty springs Is a

T "In - deed we are, but He from whom our beau - ty springs Is a

B

13 *mp* *mf*

19 *mp*

S thou - sand times more sweet, a thou - sand times more fair."

A thou - sand times more sweet, a thou - sand times more fair."

T thou - sand times more sweet, a thou - sand times more fair."

B

19 *p*

24

S

A

T *p*

8 And that Thou art, my Dear - est, the goal of my de - sire! _____

B *mp*

And that _____ Thou art, my Dear - est, the goal of my de - sire!

24

p

31

S

A

T *p*

8 If a li - ly here on earth is fair, and white, and clean,

B *mp*

If a li - ly here on earth is fair, and white, and clean,

31

p

37 *mp* *f*

S What must, e - ter - - nal Good, Lord of all things and

A What must, e - ter - - nal Good, Lord of all things and

T What must, e - ter - - nal Good, Lord of all things and

B What must, e - ter - - nal Good, Lord of all things and

37 *mp* *f*

42 *mf* *mp*

S high'r, What must the white - ness be of Thy pur - i - ty se - rene?

A high'r, What must the white - ness be of Thy pur - i - ty se - rene?

T high'r, What must the white - ness be of Thy pur - i - ty se - rene?

B high'r, What must the white - ness be of Thy pur - i - ty se - rene?

42 *mf* *mp*

48 *mp*

S So love-ly is the scar-let of the ros-es here be-low, _____

A *mp*
So love - - ly is the scar-let of the ros-es here be-low,

T

B

48 *mp*

55

S Glist' - ning with pearls as the morn-ing sun doth greet them,

A Glist' - ning with pearls as the morn-ing sun doth greet them,

T

B

55

61 *mp* *f*

S How must the scar - let of Thy ma - jes - ty then glow!

A *mp* *f*

A How must the scar - let of Thy ma - jes - ty then glow!

T *mf* *ff*

T How must the scar - - let of Thy ma - jes - ty then glow!

B *mp* *f*

B How must the scar - let of Thy ma - jes - ty then glow!

61 *mp* *f*

67 *pp*

S Ooh,

A *pp*

A Ooh,

T *mp*

T If vi - o - lets smell sweet each time we bend to meet them,

B *mp*

B If vi - o - lets smell sweet each time we bend to meet them,

67 *pp* *mp*

75

S oh,

A oh,

T 8 As the lit - tle west - ern wind blows soft - ly through the field

B As the lit - tle west - ern wind blows soft - ly through the field

75

ROMPERUSAL USE ONLY

81

S ooh. *p*

A ooh. *p*

T 8 *mp* (I've marked it man - y times in the *mf* morn - ings fresh and cool),

B *mp* (I've) (I've marked it man - y times in the *mf* morn - ings fresh and cool),

81

ROMPERUSAL USE ONLY

87

p *mp* *p*

S What then the sweet - ness that Thy — kind - ly mouth must yield, What

mf *f* *mf*

A What then the sweet - ness that Thy — kind - ly mouth must yield, What

mf *f* *mf*

T What then the sweet - ness that — Thy kind - ly mouth must yield, What

mf *f* *mf*

B What then the sweet - ness that — Thy — kind - ly mouth must yield, What

87

mf *f* *mf*

93

mp *p* *f* *mf*

S bless - èd o - dours sweet through Par - a - dise — must — roll.

f *mf*

A bless - èd o - dours sweet through Par - a - dise must — roll.

f *mf*

T bless - èd o - dours sweet through Par - a - dise must roll.

f *mf*

B bless - èd o - dours sweet through Par - a - dise must roll.

93

f *mf*

Obligato: solo boy soprano or similar voice — just barely heard above the choir, like an overtone.

98 *mf*

Obl. *f*

S *f*

A *f*

T *f*

B *f*

If here the Sun ap-pears, a bride-groom rich - ly dressed, _____

98

104

Obl.

S

A

T

B

So fair - ly shin - ing down on the beau - ties of the day,

104

110

mp *mf* *pp*

Obl. What must You be, so beau-ti - ful — and blest! O

S What must Thy coun - te-nance be, so beau-ti - ful — and blest! O — *ff* *mp*

A What must Thy coun - te-nance be, so beau-ti - ful — and — blest! O *ff* *mp*

T What must Thy coun - te-nance be, so beau-ti - ful — and — blest! O *ff* *mp*

B What must Thy coun - te-nance be, so beau-ti - ful — and blest! O — *ff* *mp*

110

ff *mp*

116

riten. *ppp*

Obl. God, — my dear - est Love, I would see Thee with - out stay!

S God, — my dear - est Love, I would see Thee with - out stay! *p*

A God, — my dear - est Love, I would see Thee with - out stay! *p*

T God, — my dear - est Love, I would see Thee with - out stay! *p*

B God, — my dear - est Love, I would see Thee with - out stay! *p*

116

riten. *p*

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

