

Anthony Doherty

Four Pieces
from
Byzantine Vespers

for women's chorus, a cappella

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Four Pieces from Byzantine Vespers

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1. Hear Me, O Lord

The liturgical day begins with the service of Vespers at sunset. After the introductory psalm and prayers, the choir sings the first two verses of Psalm 140 (141), asking that prayers ascend to the Lord like rising clouds of incense, while the priest or deacon incenses the altar, the icons, and the assembled worshipers.

2. O Gladsome Light

Carrying candles, incense, and the Gospel Book, the priest, deacon, and servers make the "Entrance," a procession from the side door of the icon-screen to the Royal Doors in its center. The deacon cries "Wisdom!" and the choir sings this ancient evening hymn to the Triune God, preserved in metrical form in many present-day hymnals.

3. Graciously Keep Us, O Lord

This hymn, usually read or chanted by a reader, follows the Entrance, Scripture readings, and a litany. Psalm verses of trust and praise lead to an ancient doxology the text of which goes back to at least the 4th Century in Greek. Employed in the Western monastic as well as the Byzantine liturgies, it ascribes praise, song, and glory to God.

4. Canticle of Simeon

Near the end of the service, the choir sings the words of Simeon (Luke 2: 29-32) on beholding the infant Jesus at the Temple, fulfilling the prophesy that he would see the Messiah before his death. As Simeon is now free to leave the Temple, so the worshipers, recognizing the evening light as a symbol of the glory of God, now also may depart to their homes to prepare for the coming day.

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Four Pieces from Byzantine Vespers

1. Hear Me, O Lord

Psalm 140 (141) 1-2, tr. A. D.

Anthony Doherty

With intensity $\bullet = 72$

mf *mp*

Soprano I
Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord.

mf *mp*

Soprano II
Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord.

Alto

for rehearsal only

5 *p*

S
Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord.

p

S
Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord.

f

A
Lord, I have called to you, hear me. Hear me, O

Hear Me, O Lord

2

10

S Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord.

S Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord.

A Lord. Lord, I have called to you. Hear me. Hear

10

13

S Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord.

S Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord.

A me. Hear me. Hear me. Give

13

17

S Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord.

S Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord.

A ear to my voice when I cry out to you. Give

17

20 *mf*
 S Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord.
 S Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord. *mf*
 A ear to my voice when I *f*
 Piano accompaniment

23 *pp*
 S Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord.
 S Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord. *pp*
 A *ff* cry out to you. *p*
 Piano accompaniment

Faster ♩ = 88
 27 *mf*
 S Let my prayer be count - ed as in - cense, as
 S Let my prayer be count - ed as in - cense, as *mf*
 A Let my prayer be count - ed as in - cense, as *mf*
 Piano accompaniment

Hear Me, O Lord

29 *f*

S in - cense ris - ing, ris - ing in your sight, and the

S in - cense ris - ing, ris - ing in your sight, and the

A in - cense ris - ing, ris - ing in your sight, and the

32 *mf* *mp* *rit.*

S rais - ing of my hands as an even - ing sac - ri -

S rais - ing of my hands as an even - ing sac - ri -

A rais - ing of my hands as an even - ing sac - ri -

35 *Slower* *p* *pp*

S fice. Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord.

S fice. Hear me, O Lord. Hear me, O Lord.

A fice. Hear me, O Lord.

2. O Gladsome Light

Greek, 3rd c. tr. A.D.

Anthony Doherty

Majestic ♩ = 60

ff

Soprano I

O glad - some light, O ra - diance of the Fath - er's

Soprano II

O glad - some light, O ra - diance of the Fath - er's

Alto

O glad - some light, O ra - diance of the Fath - er's

S 1

4 glo - ry, bles - sed Lord of heav - en, Je - sus Christ most

S 2

glo - ry, bles - sed Lord of heav - en, Je - sus Christ most

A

glo - ry, bles - sed Lord of heav - en, Je - sus Christ most

♩ = 68

mf

S 1

7 ho - ly. Now as sun - set ends the day, and

S 2

ho - ly. Now as sun - set ends the day, and

A

7 ho - ly. Now as sun - set ends the day, and

10

S 1 we be-hold the light, the light of eve - ning, we *p*

S 2 we be-hold the light, the light of eve - ning, we *p*

A we be-hold the light, the light of eve - ning, we

13

S 1 sing, we sing, we sing our hymn to *mf* *f*

S 2 sing, we sing, we sing our hymn to *mf* *f*

A sing, we sing, we sing our hymn to *mf* *f*

16

S 1 you our God, Fath - er, Son, and Spir - it. *mf*

S 2 you our God, Fath - er, Son, and Spir - it. *mf*

A you our God, Fath - er, Son, and Spir - it. *mf*

19 *f*

S 1
For to you, Son of God and source of light, are due all songs of ho - ly

S 2
For to you, Son of God and source of light, are due all songs of ho - ly

A
For to you, Son of God and source of light, are due all songs of ho - ly

22 *mp* *ff rit.*

S 1
praise. Glo - ry, glo - ry to you from all the world for - ev - er.

S 2
praise. Glo - ry, glo - ry to you from all the world for - ev - er.

A
praise. Glo - ry, glo - ry to you from all the world for - ev - er.

3. Graciously Keep Us, O Lord

Composite, adapted by A. D.

Anthony Doherty

With motion ♩ = 60 ♪ = 80
mp

Soprano I
Gra-cious - ly keep us, O Lord, this eve-ning with-out

Soprano II
Gra-cious - ly keep us, O Lord, this eve-ning with-out

Alto
Gra-cious - ly keep us, O Lord, this eve-ning with-out

S
sin. You are bles-sed, O Lord, the God of our fath - ers, *mf*

S
sin. You are bles-sed, O Lord, the God of our fath - ers, *mf*

A
sin. You are bles-sed, O Lord, the God of our fath - ers, *mf*

6

S and praised and glo - ri - fied is your Name to all *f mp*

S and praised and glo - ri - fied is your Name to all *f mp*

A and praised and glo - ri - fied is your Name to all *f mp*

9

S a - ges. A - men. Let your mer - cy rest up - on us, O Lord, as we have *p*

S a - ges. A - men. Let your mer - cy rest up - on us, O Lord, as we have *p*

A a - ges. A - men. Let your mer - cy rest up - on us, O Lord, as we have *p*

12

S placed our hope in you.

S placed our hope in you.

A placed our hope in You are bles - sed, O Lord; teach me your com - *mp*

15

S

mp

S You are bles - sed, O Mas - ter; let me un - der - stand your com -

A *p*

mand - - - - - ments. com - - - -

15

S *mp*

S You are bles - sed, O Ho - ly One; en - light - en me, en -

A *p*

mand - - - - - ments. en - light - en me, en -

18

S *mf* *f*

S *mf* *f*

A *mf* *f*

mand - - - - - ments. en - light - en me, en -

18

S *mf* *p*

S *mf* *p*

A *mf*

light-en me by your com - mand - ments. Your mer - cy is ev - er -

21

S *mf* *p*

S *mf* *p*

A *mf*

light-en me by your com - mand - ments.

21

24

S last - - - - - ing, O Lord;

S last - - - - - ing, O Lord;

A *mf* nev - er dis -

27

S *mf* hands.

S *mf* hands. To you is due praise; to

A *mf* par - age the work of your hands.

30

S you is due song; to you is due glo - - - - - ry, glo - - - - -

A *mf* To you is due praise; to you is due song; to

Graciously Keep Us, O Lord

34 *mf* *mf*

S To you is due praise; to you is due song; to

S ry, glo - - - - - ry, to *mf*

A you is due glo - - - - - ry, to *mp* *mf*

37 *mp* *f*

S you is due glo-ry, Fath-er, Son, and Ho - ly Spir-it,

S you is due glo-ry, Fath-er, Son, and Ho - ly Spir-it,

A you is due glo-ry, Fath-er, Son, and Ho - ly Spir-it,

40 *rit.* *ff*

S now and al-ways and un - to a-ges of a-ges. A - men

S now and al-ways and un - to a-ges of a-ges. A - men

A now and al-ways and un - to a-ges of a-ges. A - men

4. Canticle of Simeon

Luke 2: 29-32, tr. A. D.

Anthony Doherty

Calmly $\text{♩} = 72$

Soprano I
Soprano II
Alto

p

Now do you re-lease your ser - vant in peace, Lord, ac -

S
S
A

mp

cord - ing to your word. For my own eyes have seen your sal -

S
S
A

mf

va - tion, which you have set forth be - fore the

11

p *f* $\text{♩} = 80$

S face of all peo - ples. It is the

S face of all peo - ples. It is the

A face of all peo - ples. It is the

14

mp $\text{♩} = 68$

S light for rev - e - la - tion to all na - tions and the

S light for rev - e - la - tion to all na - tions and the

A light for rev - e - la - tion to all na - tions and the

17

p *pp*

S glo - - - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.

S glo - - - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.

A glo - - - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.