

REHEARSAL NOTES for October 27, 2014

Hi Singers,

As with all songs which were originally written to be sung solo, when we sing popular songs in a choral setting, we must pay strict attention to the rhythm, so we can be together (think LET IT SNOW, SANTA CLAUS, etc.). Yes, it can feel stilted, but if we have chosen to sing these pieces this way, we must stick with what's written.

Write in your next note on page turns when you're surprised. *Mark something* when a quick page turn is called for; in general, we should turn pages much faster! An L.A. Master Chorale friend posted a page in a score where a past singer had written in caps: "TURN, OR YOU'RE SCR*WED!! Just a suggestion... ;)

Let's really focus on CUT-OFFS from now on. Be sure you know how a piece is being counted by the conductor, and always be looking ahead in your music. Remember, we sing on the vowel. *Never* allow an 's' to last for a whole beat! Circle all rests, and cut off. If the previous word ends with a consonant, put that consonant on the rest. ***Do not bleed over into the next measure.***

Please memorize these pieces:

Act 1

Winter Wonderland of Snow (opener)

Betelehemu (helps energy)

Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town (closing Act 1)

Act 2

Sleigh Ride (opening Act 2)

S'vivo

Auld Lang Syne (closer)

****** This boxed section will be different every week. **My latest rehearsal notes are in BLUE.** Past notes are in BLACK. **Notes which need a reminder return to blue.**

Until next week,

Teresa Parente, Soprano I

shkeevy@gmail.com

www.teresaparente.com/lessons

Here's what we worked on. **Please mark something in your music for each of these items, and always for everything Lance conducts or speaks about:**

LET IT SNOW! LET IT SNOW! LET IT SNOW! (Eb -> E)

ALL: Pg 5, meas 1 - Change 'snow' to an eighth note, add an eighth rest (or mark a breath).

Pg 5, 2nd system, m.1 - 'and' is on Beat 4. 'I' in the next measure is on Beat 1.

Pg 5, 3rd system, m.2 - Write in the beats: '1 2 3-and'. 'Let' is on the 'and' of beat 3.

Pg 7, last measure - Be ready for that last beat. Give 'Oh' a little glottal.-

- Pgs. 7-8 - Be ready for that page turn. *Turn early.* We went over rhythm.
 M. 42 - Women **mp**, Men **f**
 MEN: M.59 - Write in your next note!
 ALL: M.66, e.g. - LESS S. If you do not know where to put it, sing 'fire ih—>zlowly'.
 - We worked measures 66 -> end, stressing **dy-ing** & **bye-ing** in ms. 67 & 69.
 Top pg. 11 - Circle the **rit.** and slow down with Lance. *He will cut us off on the downbeat, then Sopranos & Tenors are in.* Return to previous tempo with Lance.
 - As with many of our pieces, be sure to "sing what you see, not what you know".
 - Mind the rests. They will define the rhythm.
 Bottom pg. 11 - Soprano split on top two notes. Cross out dot on last note, and mark a quarter rest on Beat 2.

THE PRAYER (F -> Bb) (English translation attached to this email - thanks to John Odell!

- ALL: RULES FOR THE ITALIAN c & g:
 *When a 'c' or 'g' is followed by an 'e' or 'i', it takes a 'ch' sound, as in 'amici' or a 'j' sound as in 'giustizia' (joo-steetzya), **except!**
 *if it's written 'ch' or 'gh'! Then, the sound is hardened to 'k' and 'g', respectively, **as in 'che' (pronounced 'keh')** and 'preghiera' (pronounced 'preh-Gyeh-ra')
- RULE FOR THE ITALIAN 'gn':
 * Think of the word 'lasagna'. Thus 'sognamo' is pronounced 'soh-nyah-moh'.
- ALL: - Note those places where we cut off on the "and of beat 4", as in ms.18, 35, 61, 62 and 65 - be ready to cut off with Lance just before the end of the measure.
- SOP: M. 62 - No diphthongs - stay on 1st part of it, rule of thumb.
 MEN m. 53 - moh —> r
- ALL: - Good work on watching Lance for dynamics. Be sure to cut off with him as well!
 M. 6, etc. - Keep those vowels open. For example, in m. 6, stay on an 'ahh—' until you cut off. What we *don't* want is 'ah-eeeeessss'.
- WOMEN & ALL: *Everywhere you have an 'S' (as in measures 18 & 19, etc.), be mindful not to linger or begin it too early. If you are not sure where to put your 'S', leave it out.*
- ALL: ms. 40-42, 44 - Dotted rhythms! These rhythmic figures *propel* us into the next measures.
 m. 43 - HUGE crescendo in very small space of time.
 m. 44 - 'di-a' Emphasis is on 1st syllable. Make that 2 eighth notes. DEE-ah, not di-AH
- MEN: m.53 - Stay on an 'ohhhh—>' sound on 'amore'. End with an 'rr' on the rest of next measure. (Yes, this is a departure from usual Italian pronunciation).
 ms. 67-68 - Cut off on beat 3 of m. 67. Delay the 'S' of 'sento' until m. 68.
 - Review the pronunciation guide inside the front cover. If you find any symbols confusing, ask me to clarify, and write in any phonetic symbol you will understand.
 - **COPY IN** all the crescendos, 'no breath' arcs, spinny arrows, if you didn't write them all in...too many to list here!
- Ms. 40, 44.. - The "pick-ups" to these measures — the notes leading in — should propel you into the next *emphasized* word.
- Last meas. - Cross out decrescendo, release on a schwa....uh.

S'VIVON (Fm) (memorize)

- ALL: Form - Lance is experimenting with the form of this beautiful arrangement. For now, at end of m. 36, repeat back to m.5, where Lance will set a new, faster tempo. This may change again.
- Pronounce 'happened there' this way: 'ha-pehh-'nd' there'.
- BASS: ms. 9-10 - Careful with your pitch here. You are descending in teeny half-steps which need to be precise so they don't sink and go flat.
- WOMEN: ms.17&33 - Circle the rest on beat 1. We sing on beat 2.
- ALL:
- If you missed rehearsal, or did not write everything in, please copy all the [bracketed and emphasized words, and all added dynamic markings. We are now also bracketing every instance of the word [eight.
- Someone asked: why, if this is a song about a joyous holiday, does it sound so sad? Well, almost all traditional Hebrew music is in minor keys. Think of the piece as an exercise in *wonder*, as expressing a deep joy over a miracle.
- This piece is in the key of F minor. "F is your anchor", so if you get lost, you can always find your place wherever you see that F is your note.
- The **S'** in **S'vivon** is pronounced as a schwa (as in the word 'the').
- *Over-exaggerate* all the dynamics, crescendos & decrescendos.
- MEN + ALTOS: - The oo + oh combination means sing an 'oo' in an 'oh' *shape*.

BETEHELEMU (Bb) (memorize)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N9gXWuqZcNw> - Mormon Tabernacle Choir

Yes, there are rigorous standards for membership in the M.T. Choir, but they are still made up of volunteers, like Towne Singers. I love the intensity of intention in this nearly all-white 300-voice group, their energy, and the joy you can feel in every moment of the piece, up until the very end!

- ALL: - We will be singing this memorized. Lance is having us prepare that a bit at a time. This week we worked ms. 23 - 27. It will make a big difference in our delivery of the piece.
- Lance now counting "in 2", meaning he will beat 2 half-notes per measure.
- Beh-teh-leh-heh-moo
- MEN: - Release off the word Betelehemu with a "schwa": "Betelehemu-uh"
- WOMEN: - "Straight tone", no vibrato.
- ALL: - Road map for the repeats: At bottom of first page: add a 4 to make '2.3.4' The fourth time around, just continue at top pg. 4. Cross out that little 4.
- M. 23** - **At top of the measure, draw in a SEGNO, or Sign.**
We're now "in one", faster. Lance will conduct one beat per measure.
Then.....
- Pg. 9 - Cross out the last measure of the page, and write in "D.S. al Fine".
This means we jump back to the SEGNO at m. 19. Then...
- Pg. 6 - Mark 'FINE' at end of the last measure. Second time around, this is where we'll end the piece. Cross out all of pg. 10.
- WHEW!

(CONTINUED below...)

CHRISTMAS GLORY HALLELUJAH (Eb → E → F)

- ALL: - Mind *all* the dynamic and other markings you already have. Think phrasing! We begin **mp**, and will gradually build throughout the piece.
- Round, full, projected.
- Lance added and changed dynamic markings all over the piece. We will build in intensity. Please copy these in if you missed.
- Hard G or K on each “Glory”.
- M. 7, 8, etc. - Precision with the rests will give this piece it’s bounce. Be sure NOT to hold over when Lance cuts us off.
- M. 10, 11, 13, etc. - Pop those final consonants right on the cut-off! That is, release on a schwa (vowel sound in the word “the”). “Christ was boh-horn ahh-**nuh**”.
- M. 13 - Circle the REST. ‘on-uh’.

LOVE CAME DOWN AT CHRISTMAS (E)

- ALL: Ms. 19 - Take that catch breath, circle. Observe *all* marked breaths.
M. 20 - Bracket [and [angels
- ALTO 2: - Check that low A against the Alto 1’s B
- ALTOS & ALL: - Lots of space (*inside* height)
- Ms. 4 & 6 - Mark a breath after Beat 3; tiny break here. -
- M. 22 - Mark a breath (?) after ‘sign’.

SLEIGH RIDE (F → A (m.29) → G (briefly) → F → G → F! (Act II opener)

- ALL: - We worked from m.101 → end. This is not what you know - words, rhythms, very different.
- pg. 11 - M. 109. Cut off on Beat 3. Men m. 110, attention to rhythm.
Women, you land on the G with the men.
- At ‘D.S. al Coda, jump back to m.29.
- Form all consonants in the front of the mouth, “on the teeth”, not in the back - crisp & light.
- Note precision will be a challenge with this one. Be sure you’re singing what’s written!
- This is counted “in 2” - the measures will go by very fast. Mind your cut-offs; they happen quickly! In m.39 e.g., ‘grand’ is ONE beat only.
- Circle all rests, and cut off. If the previous word ends with a consonant, put that consonant on the rest. **Do not bleed over into the next measure.** Ms. 38 & 40, for example, count **1-2 / OFF**, putting the ‘D’ from ‘grand’ and ‘hand’ on the next rest.
- M. 28, etc. - Pronounce it “giddy-yahp”.
- MEN: M. 101 - Circle and observe that rest.
- WOMEN: M. 101 - ‘Too’ is ONE BEAT
- ALL: M. 106 - That C is an 1/8th note; it comes later than if it were a 1/4 note.
- M. 108 - ‘**are-a**’ calling....
- MEN: M. 110 - Your Db is 1/2 step up from your last note.

(continued below...)

AULD LANG SYNE (closer - memorize)

ALL: - We worked pages 1-3, 9 & 10

IRVING BERLIN CHRISTMAS (C -> Bb -> Eb)

ALL: Pg. 3, bottom - On “blessings”, do this: *cross out the ss’s, and sing ‘bleh—>sings’*

Pg.3, bottom - Observe that breath mark in 2nd measure. Make ‘sleep’ a 1/4 note, add a 1/4 rest. Put the ‘p’ of ‘sleep’ on the rest.

WINTER WONDERLAND (Eb -> F) (Opener - memorize)

WOMEN: Ms. 7 & 8 - Watch rhythm here. ‘heaven of diamonds’ is in a straight rhythm, not triplets.

MEN: M. 16 - Watch rhythm here. ‘romance can blossom’ is in a straight rhythm, not triplets.

ALL: M. 23 - Watch for the Tempo change. Faster!

WOMEN: M. 39 -> - Approach the higher notes from above.

ALL: Ms. 69 & 70 - Repeat 3 times. 3rd time, we’ll ritard, and rhythm will change. Last note: Sop1 sing E (high), Sop2 sing C (high). All Altos on G.

- The piece will end here, after measure 70.

LUX AURUMQUE (C#m)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vi2kZtHk8mM> René Clausen conducting the Concordia Choir. **GORGEOUS!**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sgUxn7nzwMQ> Whitacre conducting. The singing isn’t nearly as good, but it’s always great to see Mr. Handsome at work.

ALL: - We worked from m. 29 to the end. *Exaggerate all the dynamics.*

SOPRANOS: - After m. 34, Lance shifted the Soprano parts around: 2/3 of Soprano 2’s will sing the Soprano 3 part.

NEW: 6 Sop1 (including me) will stay on Sop 1 part, rest will go down to Sop 2 part
If you are not sure what you should be singing, sing either Sop 2 or 3 part, or ask your trusty Section Leader Angela!

- “Straight, round tone”. No vibrato. Unified vowels.

Ms. 15-17 - Pronounced ‘grah-vee-skweh”.

M. 29 - Cut off, draw in a larger caesura (//), which indicates a break. Watch.

SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN (Bb) (Act I closer - memorize)

ALL: - Lance gave us new dynamic markings throughout the piece. Be sure you have them all.

- Again, sing what you see, not what you know.

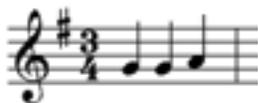
HALLELUJAH CHORUS (D)

- ALL: - Circle all dynamics; they're teeny! From ms. 36-37, we have a very fast and dramatic crescendo from *mf* → *f*.
- BASS: M.45 - Give that A its full value, all way to the rest.
- SOP & TENOR: - **When we're singing up high, let the other parts spit out the consonants! Relax your jaw and tongue, and sing a tall idea vowel. 'ee' sound becomes 'ih', 'oo' becomes 'oh'.**
- of the
Our jaws shouldn't
be working hard; that will pinch the sound.

HERE WE COME A WASSAILING (D)

- ALL: - *Propel* off of Beat 2 in each measure. That is, emphasize Beat 2 to emphasize the "3 feel".
- The rhythm feel of this version is *very* different from what we're used to. If you find yourself singing the usual "**skippy**" rhythm, ask for help. Try to feel the difference this way:

In 3/4 time, each measure has three beats and the *quarter* note gets the beat:



The 6/8 time signature indicates that the count will be six beats per measure, with the *eighth* note getting the beat:



So what's the difference between 6/8 and 3/4 ? Although both have (the equivalent of) 6 eighth notes in a measure, 6/8 consists of 2 groups of 3, and 3/4 consists of 3 groups of 2. Notice which beats are emphasized in each:



- Mind your *cut-offs*. Circle any rests you miss.
- Pronounce "wassail" this way: "wahn--sail". Always delay that 's' - less 's', not more. If you're not sure where to put it, leave it out.

HAVE YOURSELF A MERRY LITTLE CHRISTMAS

- ALL: M. 5, etc. - Lance asked us to bracket many words which begin with vowel, this way: "From now [on [our...". Not a real glottal stop, it separates the last letter of the previous word from the next word. What we *don't* want here is 'From nowonour' for example. Pronounce 'our' as 'hour'.
- Back off when you don't have the melody. Mark the part which does.

Ms. 5-6, etc. - Much of this piece consists of 2-bar phrases, such as measures 5-6. Move toward words like 'troubles' and every instance of 'merry', underlining them for emphasis.

ALL: - Circle every rest, and write in the final consonant from the previous word. *Any final 's' should be sung as a **light 'z'**.*

WOMEN: M. 17 - **mp** here. 1st Tenors have the melody.

ALL: M.1 - No breath between "yourself" and "a". Mark an arc between notes.

ALTO, TEN, Ms. 22-23 - No breath between "us" and "gather".

BASS

*** **MARKING YOUR MUSIC** *** These can be done quickly, while we rehearse:

Breath mark:  Either one **Catch breath:** (')

No breath:  An arc above or below is fine. "N.B." also ok.

Stress a syllable: underline

Bracketed consonant: "need] [a little Christ-mas..."

Shaping, phrasing:  CIRCLE all dynamics (**mp, f...**)

Energize: Energize the elongated phrases you sing with a , a spinny arrow.

Rit. or Rall.: Both mean Lance will slow down. There are subtle differences, but just circle them and always WATCH LANCE.

Open, lifted tone: Tall oval O

Sing higher or lower on specific pitch or page turn: Arrow UP or DOWN.

CIRCLE everything you miss even once. You can erase it later!

*** **Where's my part?** Mark something on or highlight *each* line you sing. An arrow will do, or circle the clef.

[This is a Choral Bracket, { This is the piano part.
indicating where we sing.

Anything else may be an instrumental or solo; in any case, we only sing within the [.

MORE: <http://notesfromtheconductor.wordpress.com/mark-your-score/>

<http://www.uwgb.edu/acda/new%20website/choral%20handbook/Mark%20Your%20Music.htm>

Till next week,

Teresa Parente, Soprano I

shkeevy@gmail.com

www.teresaparente.com/lessons

©Teresa Parente