

REPERTOIRE TIPS

Works for descant choir



PER EKEDAHL Five Shakespeare Songs (2017)

Dur: 14'30" SSAA

Text: William Shakespeare (Eng)

In his attractive musical settings of Shakespeare poems, Ekedahl has tried especially to make all parts in the chorus equally interesting to sing. He has incorporated some catchy melodic arabesques, and there is also a hint of reminiscences from English madrigals. The songs in the suite can be performed separately.



ULRIKA EMANUELSSON Arctic Yule & Arctic Elements (2017)

Dur: 6' SSAA

Text: Yoik and English

Ulrika Emanuelsson gives us wintry Nordic sonorities in her kaleidoscopic potpourri with fragments of Yuletide songs and sing-along yoik, including features of rhythmic improvisation.



OLLI KORTEKANGAS Harmony (2005) Dur: 5' SSAA

Text: composer after I Ching, The Book of Changes (Eng)

Harmony for descant choir was commissioned for the Florilege Vocal de Tours choral competition 2006. It represents tuneful choral Kortekangas and poses a host of exciting technical and expressive – yet not unreasonable – challenges.

Three Studies (2011) Dur: 6' SSAA

Text: phonetics, Hajime Kijima (transl. L. Levis) (Eng)

The celebrated Children's Chorus of Washington sang in the premiere of Kortekangas's oratorio Seven Songs for Planet Earth at the Kennedy Center in 2011, after which they commissioned this work from him. Each Study operates within one clear texture, and the middle one has room for improvisation.



JACOB MÜHLRAD Anim zemirot (2017) Dur: 8' SSSAAA

Text: Jewish liturgical poem (Hebrew)

Jacob Mühlrad is often inspired by the Jewish liturgy in his composing, and in this work he has set the psalm text Anim zemirot, sung in the synagogue at the end of the Sabbath. It is magnificent, suggestive and innovative. Here in a new version for descant choir.



EINOJUHANI RAUTAVAARA I min älsklings trädgård / In My Lover's Garden (1993) Dur: 9' SSAA

Text: Edith Södergran, transl. J. Mäntyjärvi (Swe/Eng).

A set of three songs, the first of which (*I de stora skogarna*) is beautiful and lyrical and the third (*Lyckokatt*) light and playful. *Mellan gråa stenar* begins with a melody for the altos accompanied by the others with figures in seconds or thirds. Sometimes the roles change, and the voices form a hypnotic weave evocative of a flock of birds.

Wenn sich die Welt auftut (When the World Surrenders) (1996) Dur: 10' SSSAAA

Text: Lassi Nummi, transl. by I. Schellbach-Kopra (Ger)

A work commissioned by the Mädchenchor Hanover based on inspiring poems which Rautavaara felt as being extremely personal. The five movements can also be performed separately or in different combinations. The opening *Freude steigt ins auf* is based on a jolly triplet rhythm that is varied in the most popular, fourth song, *Der Brief*.



KARIN REHNQVIST Der Herr ist mein Hirte (2007)

Dur: 8' SSAA

Text: Psalm 23 (Ger/Sw)

A joyous and beautiful setting of the well-known psalm text, also including folk music elements and suggestive whisperings. The work was commissioned by the 8th World Symposium on Choral Music.



JAN SANDSTRÖM / MICHAEL PRAETORIUS Det är en ros utsprungen/Es ist ein Ros entsprungen/Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming (1990/2017)

Dur: 4' SSAA + SSSAAAA

Text: Trad. (Sw/Ger)

Sandström used Praetorius's Christmas hymn as a starting point for his otherworldly composition for double choir a cappella, where the tones seem to stretch out into eternity. The four-part 'Choir I' is singing Praetorius in slow motion, while the contrasting, harmonizing music of the eight-part 'Choir II' is hummed throughout. The work has become a modern classic among choirs. In 2017 a new version was published, transcribed for descant choir by Mette Østby Madsen.



URMAS SISASK Gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro (1991) Dur: 6' SSAA

Text: Lat

The ostinato figures and repetitions in the text give this work a hypnotic atmosphere above which rise the first sopranos' melodies. Sisask's works reflect his interest in shamanistic cultures, medieval vocal polyphony and Estonian rune singing, and many of his choral works, this one included, draw on ecclesiastical texts in Latin.



AGNETA SKÖLD Agnus Dei (2015) Dur: 2'30" SSAA

Text: Lat

The music of Agneta Sköld's Agnus Dei brings Gregorian chant to mind, but in a modern tone language. A meditative and sonorous work.



VELJO TORMIS Üheksa eesti pulmalaulu / Nine Estonian Wedding Songs (arr.)

Dur: 9' SSAA

Text: Trad. (Est)

A recent arrangement for high voices by T. Kangron. The nine songs in the set vary in character from quick and cheerful to more lyrical, depending on the topic (e.g., Waiting for the Wedding, Wedding Ride, The Bride Cries for Home). Once again, Tormis brings archaic melodies and traditions back to life. A separate English translation of the text is available.



JENNA VAINIO At Midnight (2016) Dur: 4' SSAA

Text: Sara Teasdale (Eng)

Alto staccatos imitate the relentless tick of the second hand of a clock. Beautiful melodies and delicate harmonies emerge as the work proceeds. Teasdale's powerful text conjures forth an ominous midnight mood. The work is dedicated to the Kaari-Ensemble and was premiered at the Berlin Philharmonie in February 2017.