THE MARTYROLOGY



ad

sanctos





AD SANCTOS

a choral performance work bpNichol/words Howard Gerhard/music

> The Martyrology Book 9 1986-87

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PREFACE bpNichol



AD SANCTOS a music/theatre piece with Howard Gerhard

ACT I:

We hear the tail end of a play (last scene of a pageant) as a final cart loaded with actors rumbles out of the area we are watching in. There is a distant flourish of trumpets, a moment's stillness, and then a troupe of 4 or 5 rag-tag players comes rushing into the space. The leader calls on us to wait, not to leave just vet, that as a special treat they will put on a small performance for us. He explains they are poor pilgrims on their way to be buried by the tomb of their favorite saints and that they seek, thru pleasing us with their performance, to find funds for the long journey. Even as he talks more of the same group straggle onto stage until there are some twelve people assembled there. One of them now begins a small sermon on the virtue of virtue but is frequently interrupted as there is much arguing among themselves as to what constitutes virtue and a fair amount of name-calling re the shenanigans X or Y has been up to in the last few days. The narrator becomes anxious that we will become bored and tries to hold our attention with jokes, etc. and then persuades various members of the troupe to come forward and tell their story. This they do with their interjections and corrections from the other members standing around, but this way some four or five stories get told and some notion of the saints they go to be buried by. But as this information accumulates there is new consternation, the sudden realization that there are simply too many saints, that those going to the nearest ones (as it were) will reap all the benefits of the struggle but that others will be left out, end up travelling on their own thru hostile lands. A literal fight breaks out with much punching and name-calling. But out of this a compromise is arrived at; they will all travel to be buried by the tomb of the same saint. Now it remains to choose which saint, a saint they can all agree on. The list is quickly winnowed down to only one obvious choice—St. Valentine. Everyone is happy with this. The man who first spoke to us thanks us for our attention and kindness and says: "When next we meet may it be in Rome by the tomb of St. Valentine." Everyone exits through the crowd asking for donations.

ACT II:

Members of the same troupe come staggering in. The same man says to us: "Ah, we meet again. We have travelled far looking for this grave." He goes on to say they draw near their goal and different members are out looking for the appropriate grave. We hear different feelings from different members of the group about the pleasure of finally being able to rest at the foot of St. Valentine etc., more about their desires for this life and the next, the things that have drawn them on this pilgrimage. One of the people who've been searching comes

rushing in from the left to say that he has found the grave. Mighty shouts & hosannas go up & the whole group begins a song of praise. As they prepare to exit towards the grave another member of the troupe comes rushing in from the right to say she has found the grave, a different grave from the first! Consternation and despair. Arguments & dissensions begin as to which is the true grave and which, therefore, the one they should die & be buried by. The group divides into three camps: one exits to the right to die & be buried by the second grave; the third, three people, remains in the middle of the stage. If the heart is divided even here, then this is a sign. There is no peace in escaping into death. The three turn and head off, back into the world.

bpNichol draft, September 1986

some notes on the libretto. i try to write a fairly unaccented line when writing librettos (as opposed to my poetry where i work to control the cadence—and hence accent, etc.—to a high degree), the point being to allow the composer the greatest freedom of movement possible. the AD SANCTOS libretto moves back and forth between straight speech and the sung sections. the encompassing fiction of the chorus singing to raise money for their pilgrimage allows this to happen naturally. there are differences between the text of the libretto and Howie's score, differences he and i have discussed as he's gone along, there is one major change to come in the libretto i.e. the inclusion of the conductor as a character, i was hoping we could get away without a conductor but it's become obvious we can't, and i don't want the conductor to stand outside the piece, it's important that he/she be included as part of the dramatic action of the work.

bpNichol October 1987

AD SANCTOS: WORDS bpNichol



Setting

A public gathering place near the Flaminian Way, Rome.

Time Unspecified.

Characters

i, carries a pitch pipe
she, a woman, carries wood blocks
he, a man, carries a penny whistle
we, carries a snare drum
they, carries cymbals
david, a man, carries a triangle
a writer, carries sticks
a reader, carries a ratchet gourd
st. agnes, a woman, carries a slide whistle
st. reat, a younger man, carries a bass drum
st. ranglehold, a man, carries a tambourine
st. orm, an older man, carries glass chimes



The fading bars of a trumpet piece are heard, the distant shuffling of feet, and perhaps even a few last stragglers are seen to be exiting—all towards the stage left side of the playing area.

A moment passes in which nothing happens and then i, a slight figure in tattered clothing, rushes out from the stage right side of the playing area, looks out at the audience and then, looking back, shouts out:

i:

They're still here!!

i disappears again stage right. We hear a shuffling of feet, a murmur of voices, the blowing of a pitch pipe, and then i leads a rag-tag assemblage of tattered, worn, filthy human beings, all humming their beginning notes, out into the playing area. The saints have their flags raised high and each of the characters with a light is holding it up and waving it slowly back and forth. i looks out at the audience and announces unctuously:

i:

Ladies and gentlemen! For your further enjoyment some divertissements of a moral nature to incite the virtue of charity in your hearts.

i takes off a hat i has been wearing and holds it out as if asking for money, and then turns the gesture into a small bow and announces the title:

i:

"A Singer's Hell: An Instruction on the Nature of Sanctity and Scarcity."

The singers, who have been humming &/or singing their tones all along, now begin.

i:

So shall

she:

the world

he:

go on,

we: To good they: malignant, david: to bad a writer: men a reader: benign, st. reat: Under st. agnes: her own st. ranglehold: weight st. orm: groaning

The singers' faces are wreathed in anguish as they sing. They begin to writhe like tableaus from Doré's engravings of Milton's visions of Hell. As this piece unfolds, i conducts it as well as singing a part, occasionally casting anxious looks back at the audience. i's anxiety is heightened each time i looks back; i's becoming convinced the piece is bombing completely. Finally i steps towards the front of the playing area and looking out asks:

Is all this clear? We've been accused of a bit of obscurity in some of the towns we've passed thru and ...

i's voice trails away. i looks back at the singers and then, going back, begins to whisper in their ears, one by one, suggesting a change to something lighter, something sprightlier. And one by one they begin to shift into a totally different mood and temperament.

chorus:

we are going to saints we are going to saints we are going to saints

we are going to saints we are going to saints we are going to saints

sacred saints fabulous & faithful saints of language saints of spirit saints of song of being blessed

we are going to saints we are going to saints we are going to saints

we are going to saints we are going to saints we are going to saints

we are going to saints we are going to saints we are going to saints

we are going to saints we are going to saints we are going to saints

sacred saints fabulous & faithful saints of language saints of spirit saints of song of being blessed

we are going to saints we are going to saints we are going to saints

we are going to saints we are going to saints we are going to saints

chorus:		chorus:
saints		saints
saints	they:	saints
saints		saints
saints	what is that which is	saints
saints	what is that which was	saints
saints	what is that which will be	saints
saints	blessed	saints
saints		saints
saints	who is that which is	saints
saints	who is that which was	saints
saints	who is that which will be	saints
saints	sainted	saints
saints		saints
saints	where is that which is	saints
saints	where is that which was	saints
saints	where it that which will be	saints
saints	translated	saints
saints		saints
saints	why is that which is	saints
saints	•	saints
	•	saints
	•	
saints saints saints saints	where it that which will be	saints saints saints saints saints

saints	he:	saints			
saints		saints			
saints	signs	saints			
saints	give me signs	saints			
saints		saints			
saints	they & he:	saints			
saints		saints			
saints	give us signs	saints			
saints		saints			
saints	they, he & she:	saints			
saints		saints			
saints	give us signs give us	U			
saints		saints			
saints	they, he, she & we:	saints			
saints		saints			
saints	give us signs signs signs	saints			
saints		saints			
	give us signs give us signs giv	-			
_	signs give us signs give us signs give u				
give us signs					
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give us a sign give us a sign give us a sign give us a					
	rive us a sign give us a sign give us a sig				
	en give us a sign give us a sign give us a				
_	is a sign give us a sign give us a sign gi	ve us a sign give us a			
sign					

As the chorus continues, becoming softer and softer, i steps forward and addresses the audience.

i:

You can see the problem. Even belief takes money. Otherwise your belief in belief fades. But how do you ask for it without seeming ... hypocritical? So ...

(i gestures at the chorus)

... we try to offer a little entertainment, a little instruction, in return for your hard-earned coin. We share the same difficulty after all.

a reader:

(shouts from the chorus)

Tell 'em where we're going.

i: (flustered)

Ah ... yes. We're off to visit the tomb of St. Valentine. To spend our days in praise and to die and be buried next to him.

david:

A holy pilgrimage.

i removes i's hat again, and places it at the very front of the playing area.

i:

And of course we need your assistance.

There is little or no response from the audience.

i:

(looking around sadly)

We have been on the road a long time now.

he:

(shouting from the chorus)

Let's give 'em something more familiar.

i:

More familiar? Well ...

he:

Sure! Give 'em Saint Reat's song.

st. reat:

That old chestnut!!

i:

Alright! Alright! No schisms. We're trying to raise a little money here. (blows on his pitch pipe) Ready?

he, she, we, they, david, a writer & a reader:

Oh let me sing
Oh let me dance
Oh God please give me
A second chance

I was never for prayer I was never for peace I was never that happy I was never that pleased

But oh let me sing
Oh let me dance
Oh God please give me
A second chance

As the seven members of the chorus sing the above, the four saints attempt an awkward little dance. In the middle of it, st. reat and st. orm take a wrong turn and crash into each other, knocking each other to the floor. The seven-member chorus sings on behind them.

st. orm: (stage whisper)

You fool! Watch what you're doing!!

st. reat: (stage whisper)

If you'd keep those bananas you call feet peeled, this wouldn't have happened.

i: (dragging them both to their feet)

SHHH!!

(casts despairing glance at audience)

Keep dancing!

They continue their awkward dance. As the piece ends a member of the audience walks to the front and puts some money in the hat and then returns and sits down again. i is beside himself with gratitude.

Oh thank you! Thank you!!

i pauses, looking around expectantly at the rest of the audience. After whatever response i gets:

i:

Would it help to hear something of each pilgrim's life? We are a troupe, a community really. And we have forsaken the selfishness of the individual or ...

(throws a glance at the saints)

... at least we've tried to.

st. orm:

Fat lot of good it's done us.

chorus:

a life

a life

a life

a life a life

a life

a life a life

i ignores him, looks around at the audience for a moment, and then, shrugging, blows the opening note on the pitch pipe:

What of it?

Is not a saint but one who dies?

endless questions noone answers?

No noone answers.

Are not our lives but

All that in another time.

a life b was i not a saint?

110	XX7
a life	We rush on
a life	towards our death
a life	& sainted
a life	leave this life.
a life	
a life	david:
a life	
a life	My life is made of many
a life	lives & lines all intersecting,
a life	many deaths in
a life	all these lifetimes.
a life	Each one treasured
a life	as special, unique,
a life	grieved over when departed
a life	by those, too, who are departed
a life	so long ago there is none now to grieve.
a life	Me—we too
a life	in time, these many lives
a life	all passed, all forgotten,
a life	no longer special, no longer
a life	unique, no longer
a life	grieved over. Over. Simply over.
a life	The many over & the many done &
a life	the many gone who thought of themselves as
a life	one.
a life	
a life	_
a life	a reader:
a life	
a life	And of my life, who cares?
a life	as long as i was there to do as bidden.
a life	i have lived out my life in service
a life	to one pre-set path after another,
a life	brought each one to a conclusion & never thanked.
a life	not once. patronized rather. matronized.
a life	treated as interchangeable
a life	with all the others like me.
a life	my death unremarked. my place

a life	taken by another. all the same.
a life	all the same.
a life	
a life	a writer:
a life	
a life	And i have withheld details, confused
a life	by this business of a story
a life	a life story. ah but i have rushed on &
a life	told so many, &
a life	still the clamour for more, details.
a life	details, who had thought to embrace death
a life	& deny immortality as a saint.
a life	as a saint would, dying.
a life	and they give you then a name.
a life	a stone. saint. st. one.
a life	
a life	we:
a life	
a life	Was i not a saint?
a life	lives & lines all intersecting
a life	i have lived out my life in service
a life	told so many, all there, &
a life	one who dies?
a life	as special, unique,
a life	treated as interchangeable
a life	as a saint would, dying.
a life	No noone answers.
a life	Me—we too
a life	all the same.
a life	
a life	all i've
a life	all i've
a life	all i've alive

a life	all i've	alive	
a life	all i've	alive	
a life	all i've	alive	a death
a life	all i've	alive	a death
a life	all i've	alive	a death
a life	all i've	alive	a death
a life			a death
a life			a death
a life			a death
a life			a death
a life			a death
a life			a death
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a life			a death
a life			a death
a life			a death
a life			a death

During all of the preceding, i keeps a wary eye on the audience. Now, as the voices fade, i steps forward again; gesturing at the hat which is still sitting on the very front of the playing area.

i:

lives. our lives. a saint's life. & now to dedicate this life to praising a saint that we may join him in that life ...

There is a sudden disruption in the chorus. st. reat & st. orm are pushing & shoving at each other. st. ranglehold & st. agnes are trying to separate them.

st. reat:

don't give me any of your holier-than-thou talk! i've suffered too.

st. orm:

suffered?! you don't even know the meaning of the word "suffer"!

st. agnes:

c'mon you two! break it up. i'm sick of listening to you argue.
(aside to a writer)

there's nothing worse than two old fools, who think they're holy men, arguing.

i rushes back to assist in separating them as st. orm takes a swing at st. reat & hits st. ranglehold instead. st. ranglehold drops, moaning.

i:

gentle sirs! gentlefolk! this is an entertainment, not a brawl! not a time for settling old antagonisms.

a reader throws up his hands in despair.

a reader:

i told you there was no point in this pilgrimage. we'll never succeed.

(then turning to a writer)
you get a feeling for these things after awhile. you can tell by the way it begins how the whole thing's going to end.

we:

unity! unity!

a desperate we pulls out a pitch pipe &, blowing it to sound the starting pitch, begins to conduct everyone except i & the saints in the singing of a praise-song on the theme of unity. all thru this st. orm keeps taking swings at st. reat and st. reat swings back, they curse each other and flail ineffectually.

chorus (sung): st. reat (spoken):

oh that in this life we you're nothing but a has been! strive together to be

united peacefully st. orm:

through wars & famine
plague & the earth's own toll an am.

to be we to be we

when all about us people die st. reat: & when they die they die alone

under the sword or a was.

the earth's harsh groan and heave, yet to be we st. orm:

and heave, yet to be we st. orm:

strive together peacefully an is.

to be we to be we to be we to be we

st. reat:

a shouldn't have been.

st. orm:

and shall be again.

As the chorus finishes, the two saints slump back exhaustedly.

i: (pointing at the saints)

they were all saints themselves you know. gave it up. all that "me me me" of sainthood. the idea was to merge ourselves into a larger body, to forget ourselves by praising another.

(he shrugs)

and look at this!

(gestures at the saints again) it took so long to draw us together. to agree on a saint we could spend our days praising.

(looks up beseechingly) and did you not give us those signs, Valentine?

At which point the chorus begins to sing the following:

she:

did not my heart break valentine? was that a sign?

he:

did not my heart ache valentine? was that a sign?

they:

did not my heart freeze valentine? was that a sign?

did not my heart ease valentine? was that a sign?

david:

did not my heart need valentine? was that a sign?

i:

did not my heart bleed valentine? was that a sign?

a reader:

did not my heart yearn valentine? was that a sign?

a writer:

did not my heart burn valentine? was that a sign?

st. agnes:

did not my heart seek valentine? was that a sign?

st. reat:

did not my heart speak valentine? was that a sign?

st. ranglehold:

did not my heart sigh valentine? was that a sign?

st. orm:

did not my heart cry valentine? was that a sign?

chorus:

sign	design	signal	sign		
design	signal	sign	design		
signal	sign	design	signal		(As this
sign	design	signal	sign	st. orm:	is being
design	signal	sign	design		sung, the
signal	sign	design	signal	sign of my faith	chorus
sign	design	signal	sign	in you.	uses a
design	signal	sign	design		number of
signal	sign	design	signal		ways to
	design	-	sign	a writer:	sign the
design	signal	_	design		word
signal	sign		signal	sign of my love	"sign."
sign	design	signal		in you.	The
design	signal	sign	design		saints
signal	_	design	signal		use
sign	design	_	sign	st. agnes:	semaphore
design	signal	_	design		flags
signal	_	design	signal	sign of belief	(see
_	design	signal	_	in you.	NOTES at
design	signal	_	design		end). we,
signal	sign	design	signal		she, he &
sign	design	_	sign	a reader:	they use
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design signal sign	signal sign design signal sign	sign design signal sign	design signal sign	sign of my hope in you. st. ranglehold: sign of my path in you. they: sign of my way in you. st. reat:	deaf sign language. The remaining four use lights to morse code the

sign design signal sign in you. design signal sign design sign design signal signal sign design signal sign we: design signal sign design signal sign design signal sign of my prayer sign design signal sign in you. design signal sign design signal sign design signal sign design signal sign sign design design signal david: signal sign design signal sign design signal sign sign of my life design signal sign design in you. signal sign design signal sign design signal sign design sign design signal she: signal sign design signal sign design signal sign sign of my death design signal sign design in you. sign design signal signal sign design signal sign design signal sign design he: signal sign design signal sign design sign of my sign signal sign design signal sign design in you. signal sign design signal sign design signal sign design signal sign design i: signal sign design signal sign design signal sign sign of my time design signal sign design in you. signal sign design signal

time t-time t-t-time t-t-t-time t-t-t-time t-t-t-t-time t-t-t-t-t-time t-t-t-t-t-t-time t-t-t-t-t-t-time t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-time t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-time t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-time t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-time t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-time t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-time t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-time t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-time t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-time t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-time t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-t-time

(As the **chorus** moves into this section they all raise their arms & begin to move them like clock hands, an hour at a time. Each "clock" is free to begin at whatever time it chooses. Movements should be loosely coordinated but need not be exact (like the clocks one sees on display in clock shops))

st. orm:		st. agnes:	st.	ranglehold:	
t		b		g	
t		ь		g	
t		b		g	
t		b		g	
t		b		g	
t	a writer:	b	a reader:	g	they:
t		b		g	
t	d	b	k	g	p
t	đ	b	k	g	p
t	d	b	k	g	p
t	d	b	k	g	p
t	d	b	ķ	g	p
t	d	b	k	g	p
t	d	b	k	g	p
t	đ	b	k	g	p
t	d	b	k	g	p
	đ		k	_	p
st. reat:	d	david:	k	he:	p
	d		k		p
t	d	b	k	g	p
t	d	b	k	g	p
t	d	b	k	g	p D
t	d	b	k	g	p
t		b	-1 ·	g	i:
t	we:	b	she:	g	1.
t		b	k	g	n
t	d	b	k k	g	p p
t	d	b h	k k	g	p p
t	d	b b	k k	g g	p
t	d d	b	k	g	p
t	đ	b	k	g	p
t	d	b	k	g	p
t	d	b	k	g	p
t	d	b	k	g	p
t		U	k	6	
	d d		k		p p
	d d		k		p
	d		k		p
	d		k		p
	d		k		p
	d		k		p
	•				-

chorus:

(gradually slowing down)

As the chorus winds down, they continue to move their arms. There are thirty seconds of complete silence during which the tempo of their arm movements increases & becomes more pronouncedly jerky. Suddenly they all stop at once. i takes a tentative step forward.

i:

and so we go to seek St. Valentine's grave that we might praise him.

At this point she exits to the left & he exits to the right. i turns to watch them go & then turns back to the audience.

i:

we are close now. but there is the problem of money. faith costs money. only a little, but a little nonetheless.

(i gestures after the departed players)

they have gone to seek St. Valentine's grave. their path is clear. ours is not clear (i points to the almost empty hat)

that hat, that same same hat,

(i bends over, picks it up, removes the money then places the hat on i's head) you can beg, but i was taught not to. give value for value my parents always said. and i can't prove what God will give you if you give to me. how can i know, really.

(i looks around then leans forward, confidentially) do you believe i'm divinely inspired?

(i pauses, then laughs)

well somebody dictated this speech to me.

Now st. orm yells at him from the chorus who have been standing casually behind him.

st. orm:

c'mon! more entertainment. less preaching.

st. agnes:

we gave all that up when we gave up our own sainthood.

they: (to st. orm)

what's wrong with preaching? we just sang them a	love song.
we:	
so sing them another one.	
st. ranglehold:	
something sweet.	
david:	
familiar.	
i:	
(to the chorus, announcing the	title)
"This Is A Love Song."	
chorus nods, pleased. everyone hums their pitch.	
chorus:	
this is a love song	
this is a love song	
wrote it on the long road singing	
wrote it on the long road	singing
nearly home	
nearly home	
a	
b	
c david:	

d	city of love, i have imagined, city of peace, your squares &	
e	dwellings, devoid of palaces &	
f	citadels, houses of power & of war, not banished but never desired. city i've wandered dreaming, have dwelt in & called home.	
g		
h	L - 16 - 1	
i	half-chor	us:
	this is a love song	
j 1-	wrote it on the long road	singing
k	nearly home	
1	·	
m		
n		
0	st. agnes	s:
o p	home, or a heaven, a haven or	
p	home, or a heaven, a haven or simply being. here. in the world.	
_	home, or a heaven, a haven or simply being, here, in the world, this world & therefore i praise, therefore i sing	g of
p	home, or a heaven, a haven or simply being, here, in the world, this world & therefore i praise, therefore i sing the heart, celebrate the dwelling	g of
p q	home, or a heaven, a haven or simply being, here, in the world, this world & therefore i praise, therefore i sing	g of
p q r s	home, or a heaven, a haven or simply being, here, in the world, this world & therefore i praise, therefore i sing the heart, celebrate the dwelling that which is, that which is.	g of
p q r	home, or a heaven, a haven or simply being, here, in the world, this world & therefore i praise, therefore i sing the heart, celebrate the dwelling that which is, that which is.	g of place.
p q r s	home, or a heaven, a haven or simply being, here, in the world, this world & therefore i praise, therefore i sing the heart, celebrate the dwelling that which is, that which is, that which is. half-chore	g of place.
p q r s	home, or a heaven, a haven or simply being, here, in the world, this world & therefore i praise, therefore i sing the heart, celebrate the dwelling that which is, that which is, that which is.	g of place.
p q r s t	home, or a heaven, a haven or simply being, here, in the world, this world & therefore i praise, therefore i sing the heart, celebrate the dwelling that which is, that which is, that which is. half-chore	g of place.
p q r s t	home, or a heaven, a haven or simply being, here, in the world, this world & therefore i praise, therefore i sing the heart, celebrate the dwelling that which is, that which is, that which is. half-chord this is a love song wrote it on the long road	g of place. us:
p q r s t	home, or a heaven, a haven or simply being, here, in the world, this world & therefore i praise, therefore i sing the heart, celebrate the dwelling that which is, that which is, that which is. half-choruthis is a love song	g of place. us:

z chorus:

this is a love song

wrote it on the long road singing

nearly home

this is a love song

this is a love song

singing

singing

nearly home

this is a love song

this is a love song

singing

singing

nearly home nearly home

nearly home nearly home

Even as the chorus is ending this song, she comes rushing in from the left.

she:

i've found it! i've found the tomb of St. Valentine!!

A spontaneous cheer goes up.

1,
are you sure?
she:
of course i'm sure. it's got his name on it.
i falls to i's knees, arms raised, gazing up at the heavens.
i:
bless us father mother. bless you. bless St. Valentine
st. orm:
enough blessings! let's get going. when we're this close why hang around here?
The mood's been broken for i . i stands up, brushing the dirt off the knees of i 's trousers.
i:
no need to be rude. i was just taking a moment out to praise.
st. orm:
we've been doing nothing but praising for the last half hour. we'll all be dead before we reach the tomb.
And st. orm stalks off towards the left. he pauses just before exiting & looks back.
st. orm:
well?
i:
i still think a blessing, a song of praise, is in order.

st. orm: (sneering)

order?!

(looks around) what do any of you know of order?

& st. orm turns & leaves, there is a moment of uncomfortable silence & then i blows the pitch pipe once again.

i:

don't let him destroy the spirituality of the moment, together now.

chorus:

bless bless bless sing bless bless bless sing bless bless bless sing sing bless sing bless sing sing bless sing bless sing sing bless sing bless sing bless bless bless sing bless bless bless sing bless bless bless sing sing bless sing bless sing sing bless sing bless sing sing bless sing bless sing bless bless bless sing bless bless bless sing bless bless bless sing sing bless sing bless sing sing bless sing bless sing sing bless sing bless sing bless bless bless sing bless bless bless sing bless bless bless sing sing bless sing bless sing sing bless sing bless sing sing bless sing bless sing bless bless bless sing bless bless bless sing bless bless bless sing sing bless sing bless sing sing bless sing bless sing sing bless sing bless sing bless bless bless sing

david:

bless you. less me when i bless you. more me con amore, blessing you.

she:

bless you. less me when i bless you. more me con amore, blessing you.

they:

bless you. less us when we bless you. more we con amore, blessing you.

david & she:

bless you. less me when i bless you. more we con abless bless bless sing bless bless bless sing sing bless sing bless sing sing bless sing bless sing sing bless sing bless sing bless bless bless sing bless bless bless sing bless bless bless sing sing bless sing bless sing sing bless sing bless sing sing bless sing bless sing bless bless bless sing bless bless bless sing bless bless bless sing sing bless sing bless sing sing bless sing bless sing sing bless sing bless sing bless bless bless sing bless bless bless sing you bless bless bless sing vou sing bless sing bless sing you sing bless sing bless sing you sing bless sing bless sing you bless sing you

more, blessing you.

david, she & they:

bless you. less us when we bless you. more we con amore, blessing you.

sing you bless sing you bless sing you sing you

sing you bless sing you bless sing you

As they sing the closing part of the song, the chorus begins to troop off to the left following the already departed st. orm. just as the first person goes to exit, he rushes in from the right.

he:

i've found it! i've found the tomb of St. Valentine!

Everyone stops abruptly with much bumping into each other, cursing and consternation.

i:

what?

how can that be?
a writer:
are you sure?
They all turn and stare angrily at he.
he: (taken aback)
sure? of course i'm sure. it's got his name on it
he points back the way he's just come from.
he:
come & see.
a reader:
we were just going.
he:
home?
st. agnes:
we thought so.
he:
giving up?
st. ranglehold:
no. going.
they:
to the tomb.

st. reat:

he:
the one i found.
she:
the one i found.
he:
you found? but that's impossible.
david:
a miracle?
i:
impossible.
she:
i found the tomb of St. Valentine.
he:
i found the tomb of St. Valentine.
she & he:
They glare at each other for a moment.
she:
sue.
there is only one true tomb and therefore only one real way to choose.
he:
exactly.

	she:
you've	done this to discredit me, haven't you?
	he:
why wo	uld i bother? you discredit yourself.
•	following this argument, torn back and fi

Everyone else is following this argument, torn back and forth by prior loyalties, commitments to ideals, etc. At this point he & she withdraw to opposite sides of the stage. she begins to sing:

she:

No path but the true path should be taken.

he:

No road but the holy road, the way.

she:

All other roads are mistaken.

he:

When the true path is taken, the way is clear,

she & he:

tho the true path be not the near path & the price be dear, no path but the true path should be taken. No road but the holy road, the way. All other roads are mistaken.

Now everyone joins in. This is sung as a combination of a series of monologues and conversations.

chorus:

No path but the true path should be taken. No road but the holy road, the way. All other roads are mistaken. When the true path is taken, the way is clear, tho the true path be not the near path & the price be dear, no path but the true path should be taken. No road but the holy road, the way. All other roads are mistaken & when taken lead to loneliness, lovelessness, lead to emptiness, bitterness, lead to nothingness, lead away.

the words in the last three lines ("loneliness," "lovelessness," "emptiness," "bitterness" & "nothingness" are picked up and sung by various members of the **chorus** as solo lines and then **i** sings the last line of the song:

i:

away.

she & he are still standing on opposite sides of the playing area glaring at each other.

she:

he:

and i.

she:

anyone who wishes to follow me to the true tomb is welcome.

he:

i extend the same invitation.

The rest of the chorus look back & forth between she & he, & then at each other.
a writer:
her speech has the ring of truth to it.
a reader:
i was about to say the same about his.
a writer:
i think i'll follow her.
a reader:
him.
And they walk to join their chosen side. The rest of the chorus looks around & then with shrugs or sneers moves to one or the other side of the playing area.
we:
how can we know the true tomb when there are two.
they:
we know the messengers. we know who we can trust.
we & david join she & a writer on the left; they & st. reat join he & a reader on the right; i, st. agnes & st. ranglehold move towards the front centre of the playing area.
she & the others exit to the left; he & the others exit to the right; i, st. agnes &

st. ranglehold are left alone in the playing area. i sits down dejectedly.

i:

and we seemed so close.

st. agnes: (shrugging)

it's always this way.

i: (looking up)

it is?

st. ranglehold:

the same ones who make you saints take your sainthood away.

st. agnes:

it's the nature of it.

st. ranglehold:

a lesson in the imperfectibility of perfection.

i:

(looking down again)

but we were so close.

st. agnes & st. ranglehold reach down and, each taking an arm, lift i up.

st. agnes:

i've come to believe that's the point.

st. ranglehold:

when you come right down to it ... if there are two valentines ...

st. agnes:

... two hearts ...

st. ranglehold:

if even here there is, after all, such a division ... (he shrugs)

one and one makes one zero.

i:

what?

st. agnes:

the heart's a binary system. one and one makes one zero.

And then the three of them together begin to sing.

i, st. agnes & st. ranglehold:

one and one makes one zero one and one makes one zero

As they sing they begin to move forward out of the playing area and exit through the audience. We still hear them singing. Tho they are no longer in sight we hear their singing end just as st. orm comes striding out onto the playing area and then, hearing them, follows them out through the audience.

st. orm: (under his breath)

bloody fools!

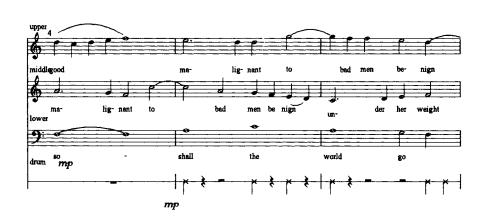


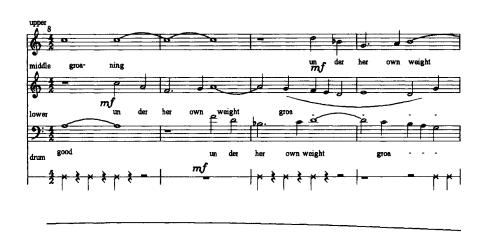
AD SANCTOS: MUSIC Howard Gerhard

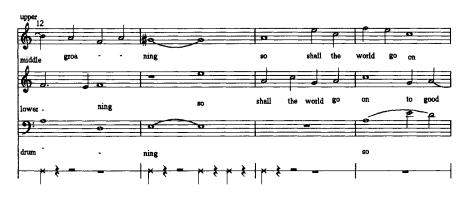


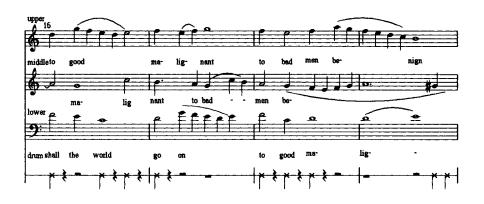
so shall the world go on...

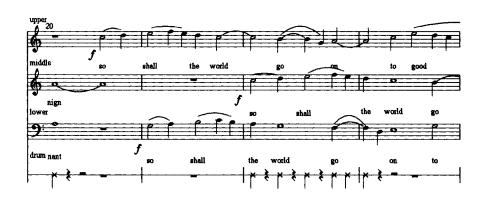


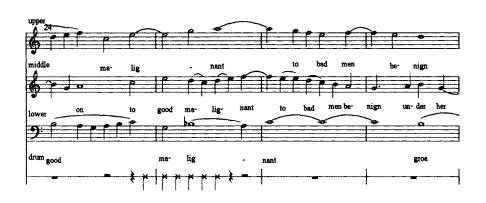


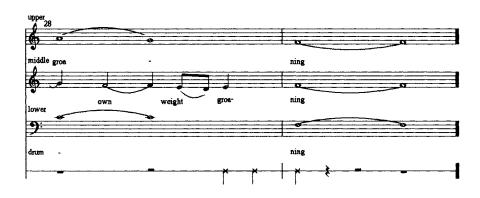








































































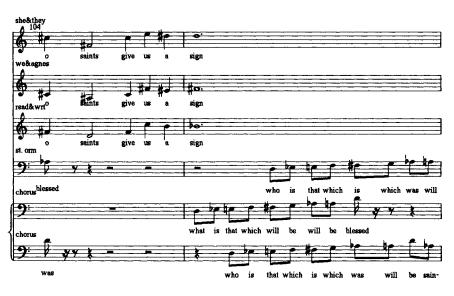


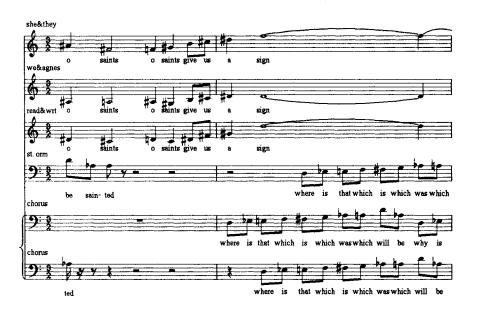


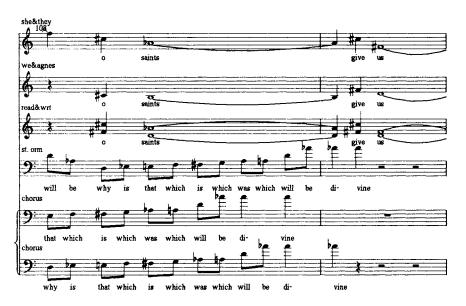


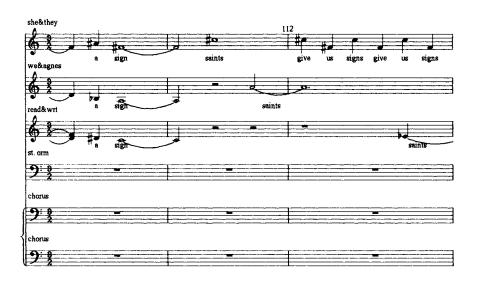






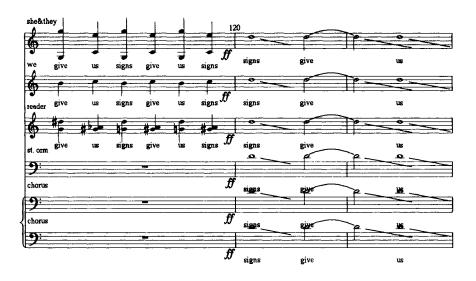


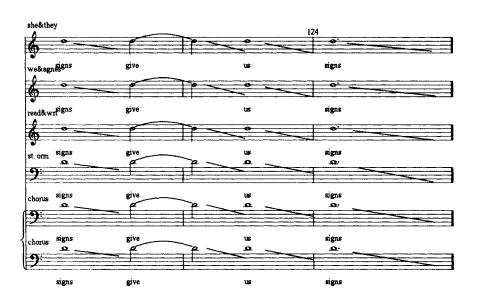




































































































































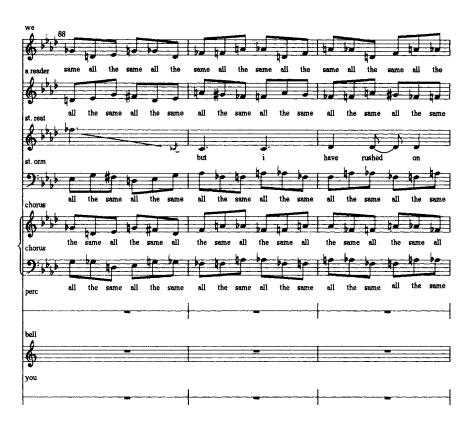








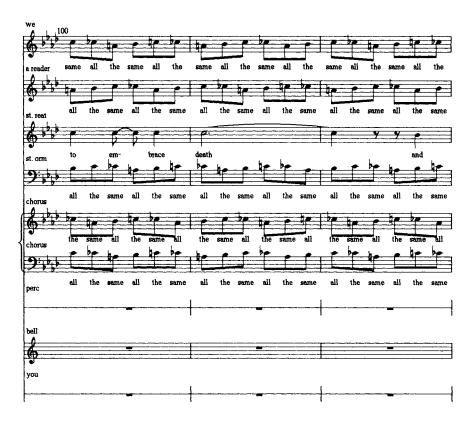




























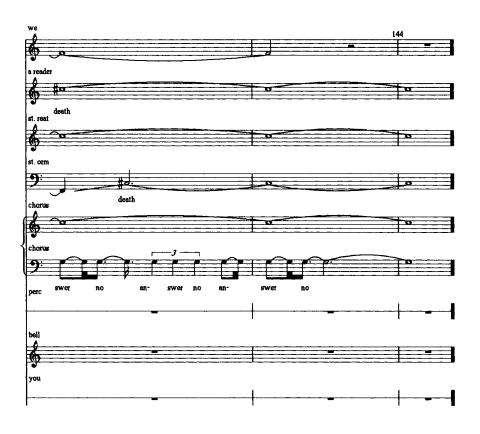






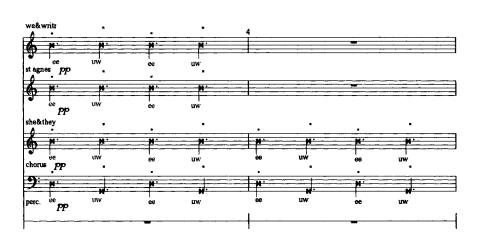


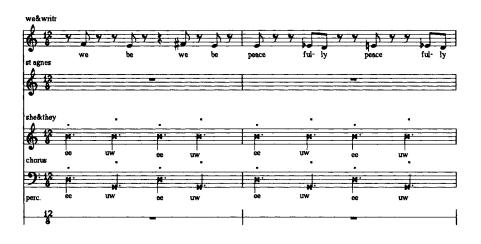


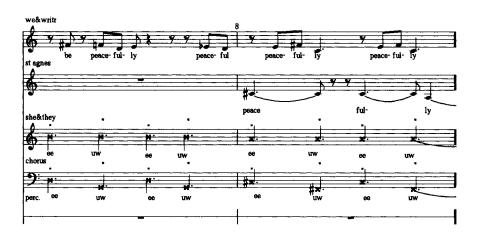


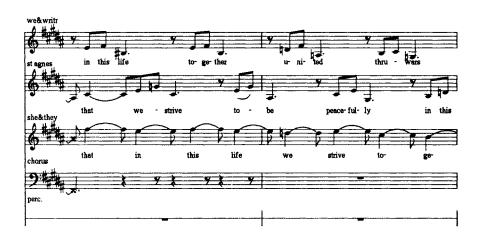


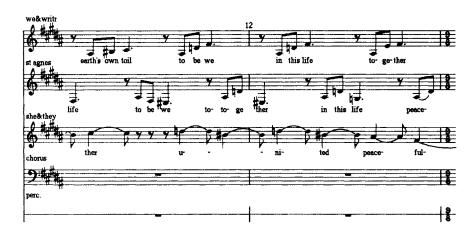


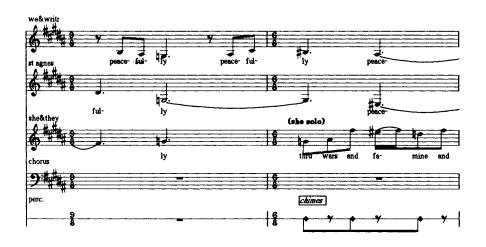


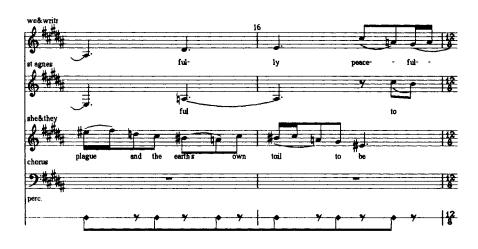


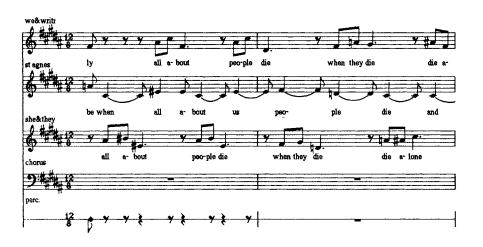


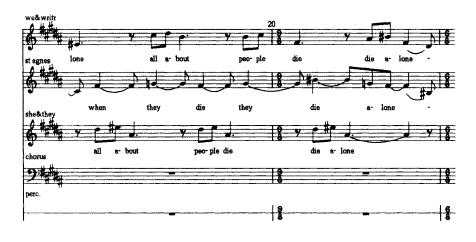


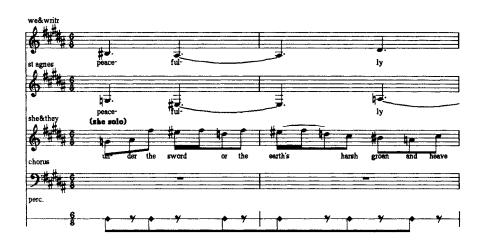


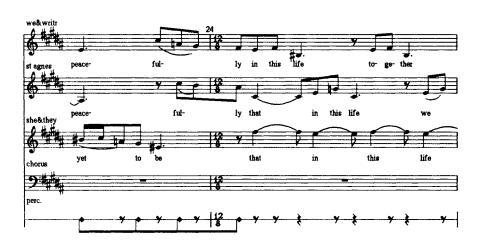


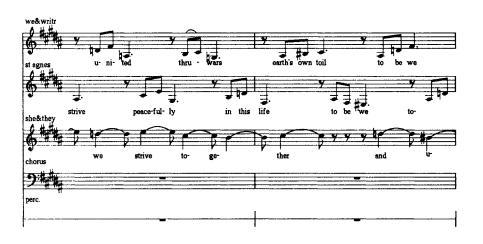


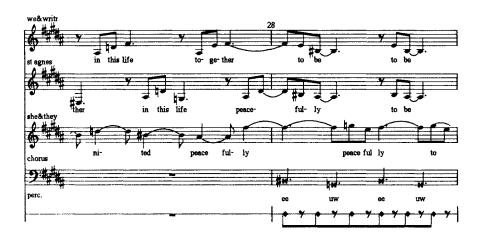


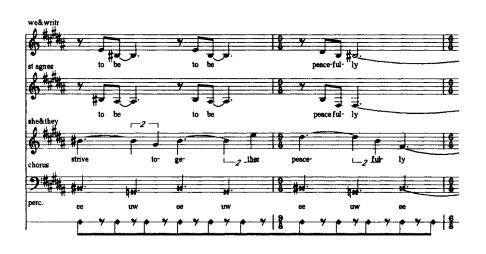


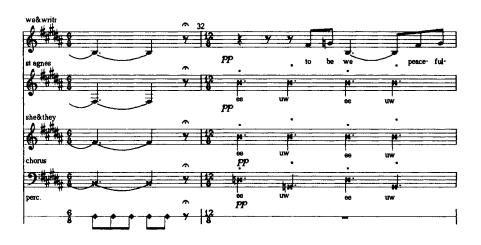


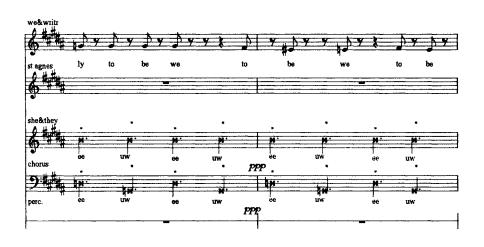


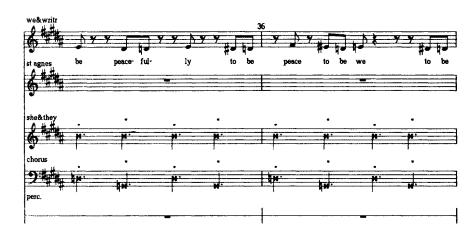


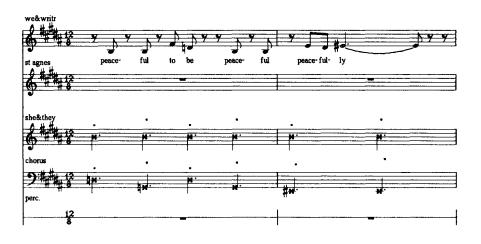


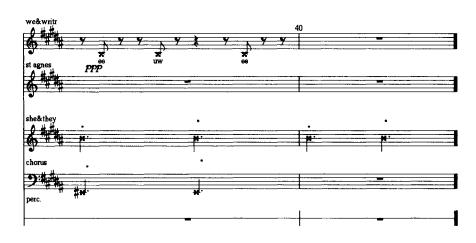












was that a sign









































slower 🚽 = 95



this is a love song





































































































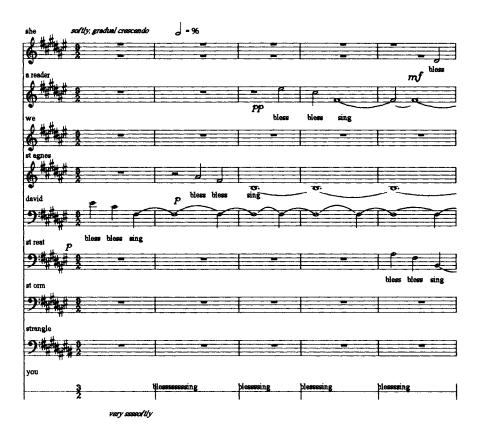




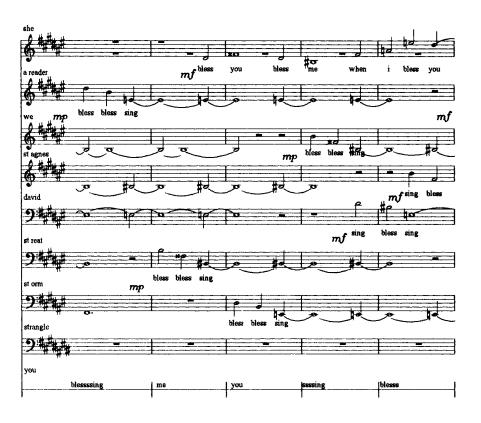




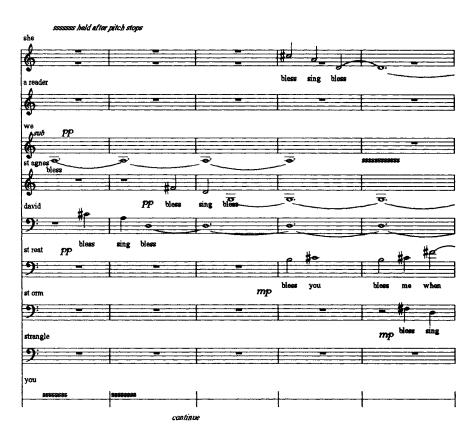
BlesSing









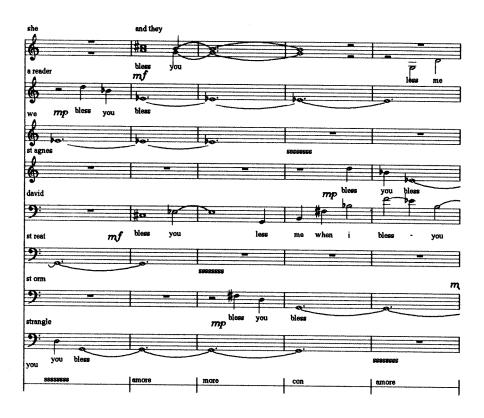






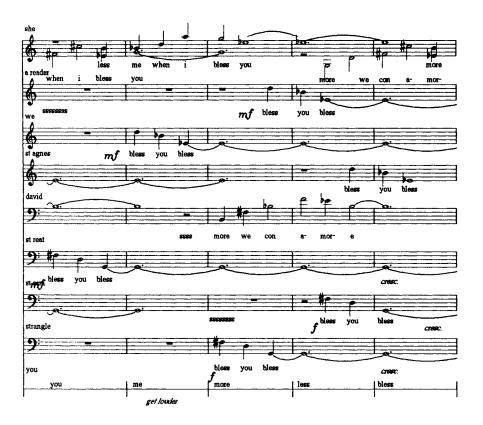


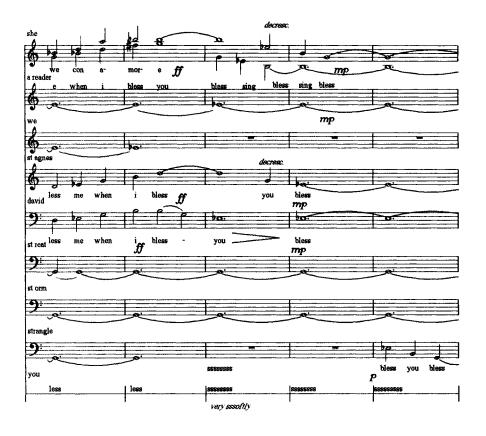


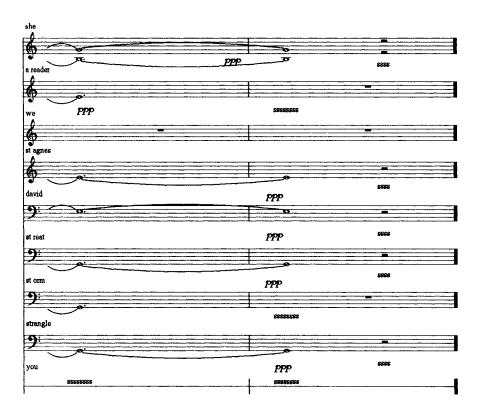




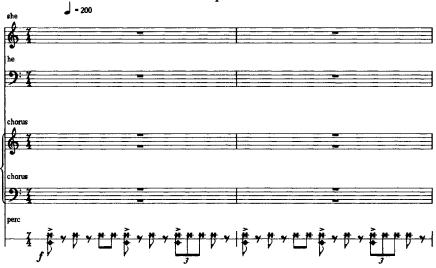








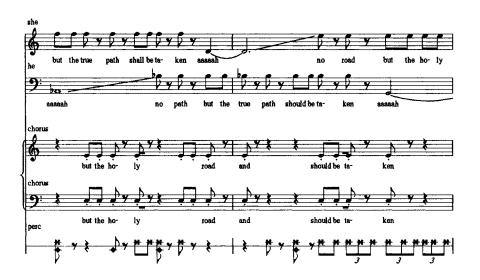


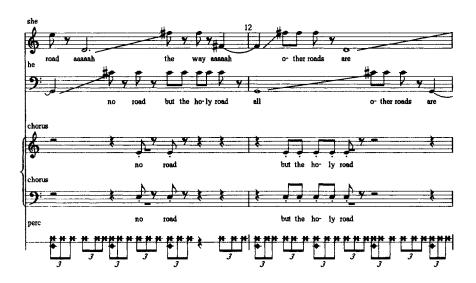






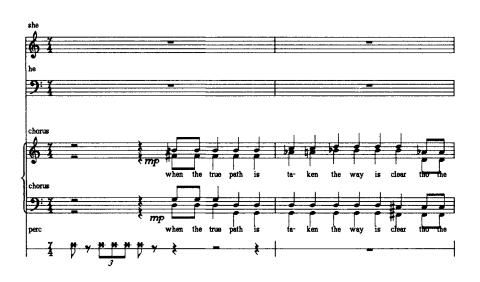






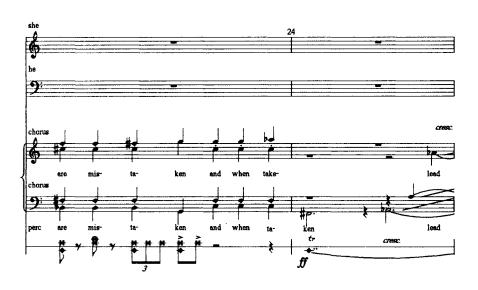


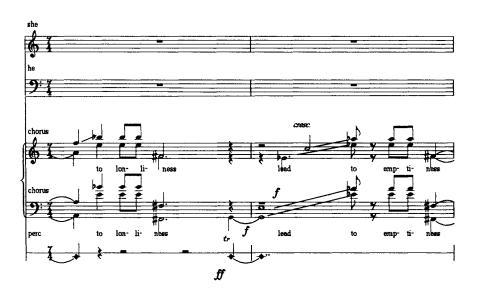








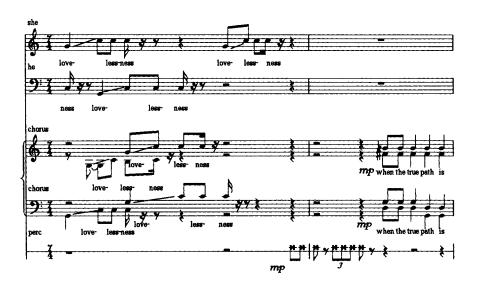


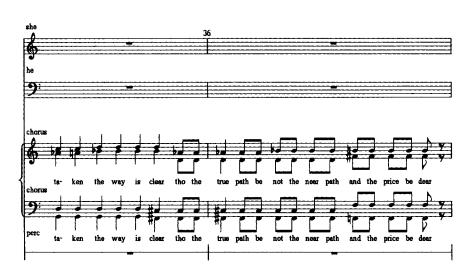








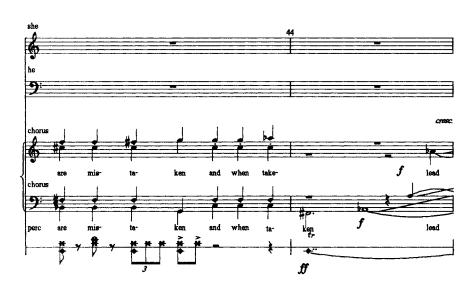


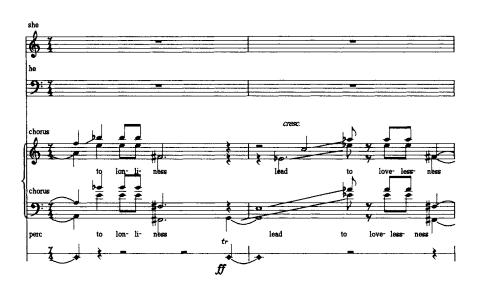


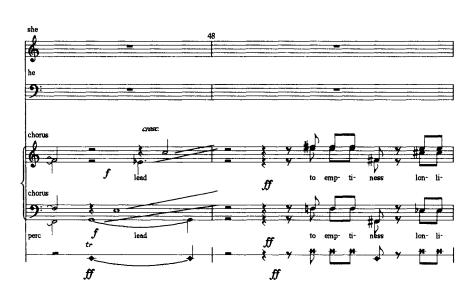




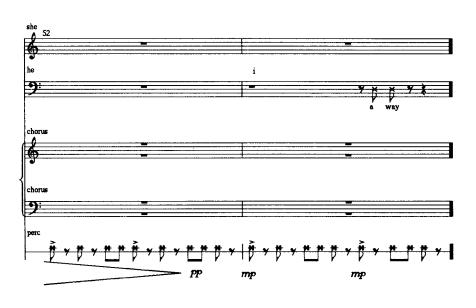




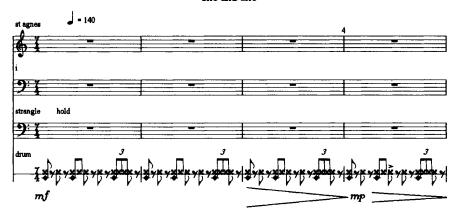


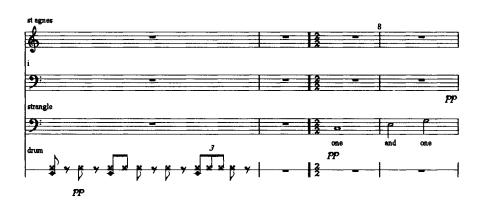


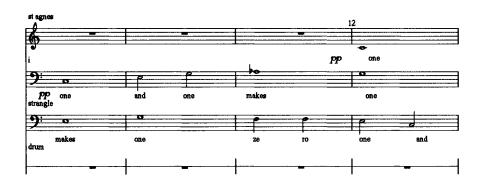


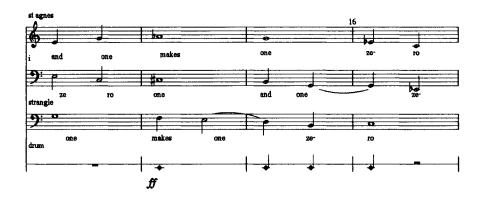


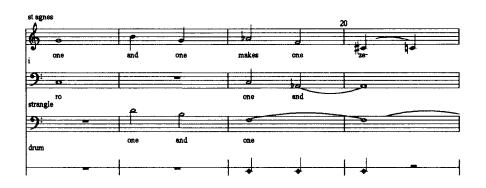
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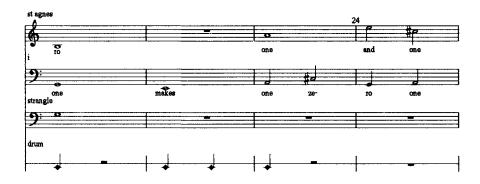


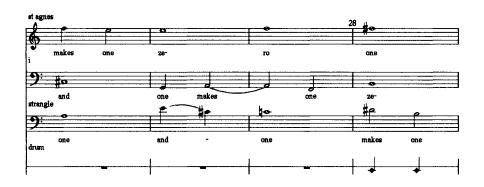


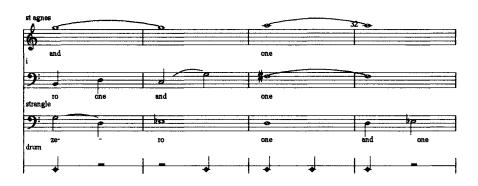


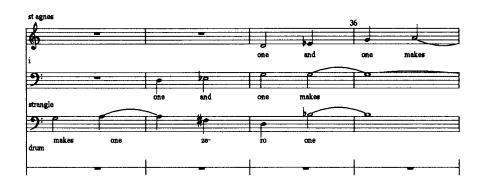


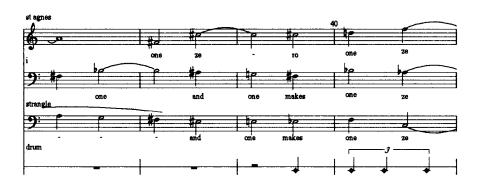


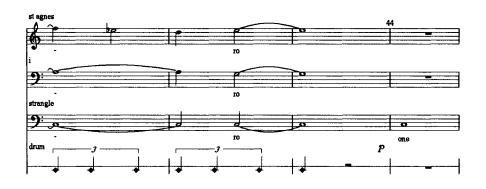


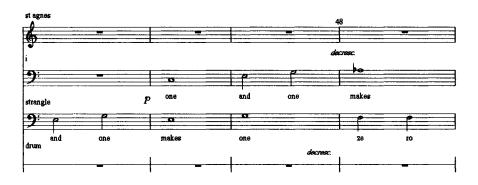


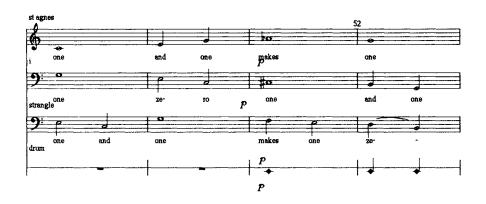


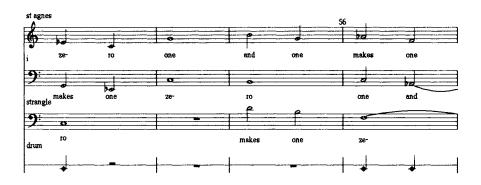


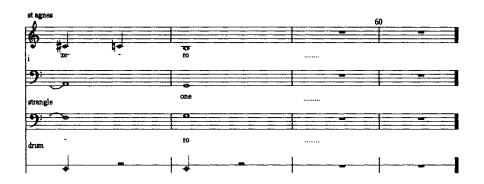












PRODUCTION NOTES bpNichol



- 1) This piece is imagined as being performed in the kinds of halls & spaces choirs normally perform in. The performers' relationship to their audience should always remain that of itinerant chorus to moneyed audience.
- 2) In every performance there should be at least one person placed in the audience who will get up after "St. Reat's Song" and place some money in the hat and then go back to her/his seat.
- 3) The characters *never* call each other by name. Nor should their names be printed in any programme that accompanies the performance. Names exist as a guide to performers, and/or as part of the experience of reading the work, only.
- 4) The chorus should behave as a real chorus and leave space after each number for applause, acknowledging it if it comes. i should always be encouraged by any and all applause. It makes him even more ingratiating if there's a lot, and more depressed if there's a little.
- 5) Flags should be a variation on the following design:





The flags are always grouped in colour pairs i.e. black & red/red & black should be held by the same performer. The flags should always have black and at least one of the colour pairs should be red & black.

6) Performers get to keep all money they manage to collect from the audience by way of donation.



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