

Josquin des Pres – Missa Pange Lingua

A performance edition by Helen Deeming

Introduction:

The purpose of this edition is to enable performance by SATB choirs of a work that has often been inaccessible owing to its difficulties of range and scoring. The second part down in the original version would probably have been intended for a very high tenor or countertenor with very wide range, both kinds of voice which are rare amongst modern singers. This edition has endeavoured to make this second part suitable for modern (female or male) altos, by removing many passages that would sit uncomfortably low in the voice. This has been achieved often through simple switching of phrases between alto and tenor, and occasionally by transposition of phrases up an octave, where this has been deemed not to affect the counterpoint adversely. There have been a few occasions where it has not been possible to remove low Fs and Es altogether, and the edition overall still requires considerable agility and a broad range from both altos and tenors. The changes that have been made are listed individually below, following a brief guide to the general editorial method. It is the editor's hope that the present edition will make the work known to more singers.

This edition is dedicated to Anastasia Scrutton and Stuart Foyle, for whose wedding service in July 2005 it was originally made.

Editorial Method:

Note-values have been halved. Time-signatures and barlines are editorial, as are any resultant ties. Underlay and dynamics are editorial. Accidentals on the stave are original; those above the stave are editorial suggestions.

Specific Alterations:

(references are to bar number and beat, in the form 1 – 1 (for bar 1, beat 1); and to the voice-parts S[oprano], A[lto], T[enor] and B[assus].)

Kyrie:

26 – 2 to 29 – 1: A and T switched

33 – 2 to 45 – 2: A and T switched

68 – 2 to 69 – 1: A could sing *b* as an alternative

Gloria:

78 – 1 to 79 – 1: A transposed an octave higher (for the notes *e-g-e-g-e*)

Credo:

73 – 1 to 82 – 2: first *g* in T shortened from semibreve to crotchet plus crotchet rest to permit a breath; thereafter T sings phrase originally allocated to A. Last *g* shortened from a semibreve to a dotted minim to allow a breath.

95 to 110: breaths should be taken between each of these homophonic phrases, either by a pause on the last note followed by a breath, or by reducing the value of the last note of each phrase.

111 – 1 to 120 – 2: A and T switched

128 – 2 to 131 – 2: A and T switched

147 – 2 to 150 – 2: A and T switched

Sanctus:

21 to 91: this duet was originally for the two upper voices; it is suggested for S and T here.

Agnus Dei I:

1 – 1 to 5 – 1: T sings original line up until the *c* in bar 5.

3 – 1 to 5 – 1: A sings original T line transposed up an octave; switches back to original A part at *c* of bar 5.

8 – 1 to 11 – 2: A and T switched. Minim *c* at start of bar 8 in original T omitted. Semibreve *a* at start of bar 11 in original T shorted to minim.

Agnus Dei II:

2 – 2 to 5 – 2: T sings original A phrase. Original T phrase would begin at 5 – 2 with minim *e*; this has here been dovetailed onto the end of the previous phrase.

25 – 1 to 35 – 2: A and T switched. Original T phrase in bars 25-26 transposed up an octave for A, and first note shortened from original dotted minim to minim. Reverts to original scoring on final crotchet of bar 35.

68 – 1 to end: A and T switched.