



Jesús López Moreno

En Paz

MUSIC RESOURCE GUIDE
VocalEssence ¡Cantaré! Series



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Music Resource Guide

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En Paz

by *Jesús López Moreno*

Difficulty Level

En Paz is a six-part mixed chorus work with adventurous harmonic language, exposed part writing and flexible rhythms that impeccably set the fluid meter of this introspective, poetic text. Paired with a virtuosic piano accompaniment, this haunting choral work would be a stunning showcase for a mature collegiate chorus or professional-level community ensemble.

Ranges



Composer's Note

This piece is an introspective reflection by the poet Amado Nervo on his own life, allowing us to see through a quick analysis how he built the environment around his life, summed up in the following statement: "I was the architect of my own destiny." The piece is written for a mixed choir of six voices and piano. The character of the music is rather placid and reflexive, without accent marks and dynamic contrasts or polyphonic elaborations, however the homophonic weaving of the voices comes closer to serenity than (in my opinion) the poem suggests. Although initially the harmonic portion lies within the traditional principles, little by little this texture is transformed into a less orthodox harmonic language, without losing the overall character of the piece. At the end of the piece, we find again the initial theme but now with humming, accompanying a member of the choir who recites the final verses of the poem, trying to express gratitude for life, for all the troubles and joys that life has provided.

Composer Biography:

Jesús López Moreno



Serving as artistic director of the children's choir at Valle de Chalco in the Estado de México and the principal organist of the Cathedral Metropolitan in Mexico City, Jesús López Moreno has extensive experience working with school-age children. His compositions for children's choir have been featured on several recordings throughout Mexico, and he recently won a national children's choir composition contest organized by Conaculta, the National Council for Culture and the Arts in Mexico. He has also composed works for organ, choir, baroque orchestra, and harpsichord as well as a concerto for organ and orchestra. He was a member, and later acting director, of the Niños Cantores de Morelia. He founded the Cantate Domino children's choir of the Parroquia Del Espiritu in Ecatepec Edo Mex and conducted the children's choir at the Cantorum school of Mexico. Jesús graduated from the Conservatorio de las Rosas de Morelia

with a specialty in composition, and studied organ at the Antique Mexican Music Academy for Organs and the National School of Music of the National Autonomous University of México. In 2009-2010 he participated as a composer-in-residence in Minnesota schools through the VocalEssence ¡Cantaré! program.

Texts/Translations

En Paz

Artifex vitae, artifex sui

Muy cerca de mi ocaso, yo te bendigo, Vida,
porque nunca me diste ni esperanza fallida,
ni trabajos injustos, ni pena inmerecida;
porque veo al final de mi rudo camino
que yo fui el arquitecto de mi propio destino;
que si extraje la miel o la hiel de las cosas,
fue porque en ellas puse hiel o mieles sabrosas:
cuando planté rosales coseché siempre rosas.

Cierto, a mis lozanías va a seguir el invierno:
¡mas tú no me dijiste que mayo fuese eterno!

Hallé sin duda largas las noches de mis penas;
mas no me prometiste tan solo noches buenas;
y en cambio tuve algunas santamente serenas...

Amé, fui amado, el sol acarició mi faz.
¡Vida, nada me debes! ¡Vida, estamos en paz!

—Amado Nervo

Architect of life, architect of himself

*So near to my end, I bless you, Life,
because you never gave me false hope,
unjust work or undeserved sorrow;
for I see at the end of my rough road
that I was the architect of my own destiny;
and if I extracted honey or gall from things,
it was because I myself gave them gall or delicious honey:
when I planted rosebushes I always gathered roses.*

*True, my youthful vigor shall be followed by winter:
but you never said May would be eternal!*

*I discovered without a doubt the long nights of my sorrows;
for you never promised me only good nights;
and yet I had some that were serenely sacred...*

*I loved, I was loved, the sun caressed my face.
Life, you owe me nothing! Life, we are at peace!*
—Translation by Katie Villaseñor

En Paz Pronunciation/Translation Guide

[moo-ee sehř-kahdey mee oh-kah-soh yoh tey behn-dee-goh vee-dah]
Muy cerca de mi ocaso, yo te bendigo, Vida,
(So[very] near to my end, I you bless, Life,)

[pohř-kay noon-kah meh dee-stey nee ehs-pehř-ahn-sah fah-ee-dah]
porque nunca me diste ni esperanza fallida,
(because never me you-gave [nor] hope false,)

[nee trah-bah-hohs een-yoo-stohs nee pey-na een-mehř-see-dah]
ni trabajos injustos, ni pena inmerecida;
([nor] work unjust [n]or sorrow undeserved,)

[pohř-kay vey-oh ahl fee-nahl dey mee řoo-doh kah-mee-noh]
Porque veo al final de mi rudo camino
(for I-see at the-end of my rough road)

[kay yoh fwee ehl ař-kee-teyk-toh dey mee přoh-pee-oh dehs-tee-noh]
que yo fui el arquitecto de mi propio destino;
(that I was the architect of my own destiny,)

[kay see eks-trah-hey lah myehl oh lah yehl dey lahs koh-sahs]
que si extraje la miel o la hiel de las cosas,
(and if I-extracted [the] honey or [the] gall from [the] things,)

[fwey pohř-kay ehn ey-yas poo-sey yehl oh myeh-lehs sah-bröh-sahs]
Fue porque en ellas puse hiel o mieles sabrosas:
(it-was because [in] them I-gave gall or honey delicious:)

[kwahn-doh plahn-tey řoh-sah-lehs koh-she-chey syehm-přey řoh-sahs]
Cuando planté rosales coseché siempre rosas.
(when-I planted rosebushes I-gathered always roses.)

[syehř-toh ah mees loh-sah-nyahs vah ah seh-gweeř ehl een-vyehř-noh]
Cierto, a mis lozanías va a seguir el invierno:
(True, [to] my youthful-vigor shall be followed by winter:)

[mahs too noh mey dee-hees-the keh mah-yoh fweh-seh eh-tehř-noh]
¡mas tú no me dijiste que mayo fuese eterno!
(but you never [to-me] said [that] May would-be eternal!)

[ah-yey seen doo-dah lahř-gahs lahs noh-cheys dey mees pey-nahs]
Hallé sin duda largas las noches de mis penas;
(I-discovered without a-doubt long the nights of my sorrows;)

[mahs noh mey přoh-meh-tees-teh tahn soh-loh noh-cheys bweh-nahs]
mas no me prometiste tan solo noches buenas;
(for never me you-promised only [alone] nights good;)

[ee ehn kahm-bee-oh too-veh ahl-goo-nahs sahn-tah-mehn-tey seh-řeh-nahs]
y en cambio tuve algunas santamente serenas...
(and on-the-other-hand[yet] I-had some sacred serenely...)

[ah-mey fwee ah-mah-doh ehl sohl ah-cah-řee-see-oh mee fahs]
Amé, fui amado, el sol acarició mi faz.
(I-loved, was I-loved, the sun caressed my face.)

[vee-dah nah-dah mey dey-behs vee-dah ehs-tah-mohs ehn pahs]
¡Vida, nada me debes! ¡Vida, estamos en paz!
(Life, nothing me you-owe! Life, we-are at peace!)

En Paz - Musical Analysis

Measure	m. 1-24	m. 25-48	m. 49-60	m. 61-67	m. 68-86	m. 87-end
Poetry Section	Lines 1-3 (muy cerca deinmerecida;)	Lines 4-5 (porque veo al final... ...propio destino;)	Lines 6-8 (que si extrañe... ...siempre rosas)	Lines 9-10 (Cierito, a mis lozanías... ... mayo fuese eterno!)	Lines 11-13 (Hallé sin duda largas... santamente serenas...)	Lines 14-15 (Amé, fui amado... ...estamos en paz!)
Tempo	12/8 Andante	2/4 (piano) C [4/4] chorus	Unmetered (piano-m.49-53) Veloce 5/4 (piano-m.54-56) Maestoso Quarter = 65	C[4/4] (chorus)	2/4 (piano) C[4/4] (chorus-m.81 2/4)	12/8 Andante
Meter	Dotted quarter = 88	Quarter = 80	Unmetered (chorus m.57-60) Maestoso	Quarter = 60	Quarter = 60: piano Quarter = 50: chorus	Dotted quarter = 88
Key	A Major	Piano: C Major Chorus: c minor	C Major/c minor unstable	C Major (unstable)	C Major (unstable, pushing to Db)	A Major
Texture	8-measure piano introduction sets up new melodic motive (in eighth note figure and chromatic coloring) m.9-16 SSA enters with simultaneous text declamation m.17-24 TBB enters in almost direct echo of SSA parts but with new text	16-measure piano interlude sets up new melodic motive (in upper notes of left hand) and new key center m.41-48 Chorus enters with a two-beat staggering of SSA versus TBB entrances in m.41 and this is reversed in m.45	8-measure piano interlude uses a series of altered augmented, diminished and suspended chords in extended arpeggios to create harmonic instability that somewhat resolves with cadence m.53-54 and m.56-57 Three choral rhythmically unison statements in quasi-recitative style	Tenor section takes on a lead role with the other chorus parts responding to the first two petitions and the piano responding to the third (m.61-64) SSA/TTB staggered textures reminiscent of m.41 with supportive harmonic triads in piano as the chorus navigates another chromatic passage (F# Major, f minor, c, minor, g minor, d minor)	8-measure piano interlude explores the ongoing instability between C Major and various chromatic inflections (mostly flat-related keys) Chorus again has three basically rhythmically unison statements in quasi-recitative style with florid piano interjections between. The second statement is preceded by a staggered SSA/TTB "ah" interjection (not in the original poem) and while the SAA continues in the text, the TBB punctuate with two more "ahs" on low-register, chromatically descending triads (E Maj, Eb Maj)	Return of initial musical material from m.1-24 with piano interlude m.87-94 Chorus enters with all parts <i>bocca chiusa</i> (closed mouth, i.e., humming), while the final two lines of poetry are spoken at appointed points in the score
Timbre	Piano introduction dramatically traverses dynamic range (<i>pp-fmp</i>) while chorus is <i>mp</i>	Piano interlude has <i>pp</i> arpeggiated figure accompanying the <i>mf</i> melody Chorus enters at <i>forte</i> with dramatic taper on last bar	Rising dynamic level throughout piano interlude, then builds again in choral statements	Each initial rhythmic shift is highlighted dynamically, then recedes into background; m.86-90 all parts build; m.91-99 all parts decresc.; finally <i>ff</i> with a subito <i>pp/cresc.</i> to <i>ff</i>	Piano interlude is <i>p</i> with final two chords (c minor with added chord tones and C Major 9) rise in intensity Chorus enters <i>mf</i> and grows to <i>ff</i>	Soft, subdued ending

Meet the Poet: Amado Nervo



Amado Nervo was born August 27, 1870 in Tepic, the capital of the Mexican state of Nayarit. His father died when he was just 13, his brother (also a poet) committed suicide and his wife died after only eleven years of marriage. Perhaps because of these immense losses, Nervo's primary legacy is of introspective poetry exploring themes of inner struggle, religious reflection (both his native Catholicism and Buddhist teachings) and their intersections in the path to find peace. He managed to carve out time for this creative work in the midst of a career in journalism both in Mexico and in Europe (as part of Mexico's national diplomatic staff), as a literary professor in Mexico, and finally as a diplomat himself to Argentina and Uruguay, where he died in 1919.

Born Juan Crisóstomo Ruiz de Nervo, Amado's works include novels, essays, reviews, short stories as well as many collections of poetry. He was an important figure in the *modernismo* literary movement popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a uniquely Latin American style that eventually spread to Spain. Using exotic locales, symbolic animals (swans, peacocks, etc) and influences from European movements (symbolism, romanticism), *modernismo* writers self-consciously forged a style to celebrate Latin American culture, religion, and languages.

Tepic's international airport is named after this great poet and he is buried in the National Rotunda of Illustrious Persons in Mexico City.