

## 2018 7th/8th Opus Bass Clef Select Honor Choir Directors Notes

I am humbled and honored to be your guest conductor for this year's event! I am looking forward to working with these fantastic young musicians in November, and I hope that the preparation is as enjoyable as the performance. This level of excellence doesn't happen without you, so thank you in advance for all you have done and will do to make this event a success. If I can be of help, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours,  
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### Yonder Come Day

*My family has ties to the Georgia Sea Islands and I have fond memories of these songs. Take seriously Mr. Rudoj's marking of "allegro, full of joy" because that's what we want to demonstrate to our audience. It will be the first piece of our portion of the concert, so this sets the tone for the rest of our set.*

I know the key of F# might be dicey. Depending on how our group is constituted, I might move the song up a half step. You should practice in F# and G just so we have options.

I'd also like to add in some simple movement (walking, thigh slaps, clapping). Practice singing and walking in time. When you add thigh slapping (m. 26, second time) or clapping (m. 43), remember that those are on the *off-beats* (2 and 4, not 1 and 3). I'll give specific instructions when we're all together in Ames.

The opening measure-and-a-half will (probably) be a solo. There is another (longer, definite) solo beginning at measure 34.

As for the choral parts, the ends of words and phrases are going to be critical:

- Watch that you don't punch the ends of phrases (like "day" at m. 6)
- The "k" of "broke" (m. 9, etc.) should be audible and precisely on the sixteenth rest
- Be sure to give the rhythms their full time ("hush" in m. 12 (etc.) gets a full quarter note with the "sh" on the rest)
- When you put the "m" on "name" (m. 13, for example), think "mih" instead of "muh". (Shadow vowels FTW.)

Lastly, look at the A<sup>4</sup>s vs. A<sup>5</sup>s on the first page. He's got these all over the music, and we'd really like to hear the difference between the two notes. Pay special attention to the A<sup>4</sup>s if you have them in your line.

## Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

*This is a beautiful, perhaps underused, song for the Advent and Christmas seasons. If you're not familiar with this song, I hope you will enjoy learning it and performing it with our instrumentalists.*

mm. 7–28 will be sung by the baritone section

m. 9: breath after “silence”

m. 20: no breath between “earth” and “descending”

mm. 32–37 will be sung by all voices (regular parts afterwards)

mm. 32–52: no breaths unless you've got a rest

mm. 56–78: same thing

mm. 83–96: same thing

m. 68: the first word should be “Comes” (T2 & B1 parts have a typo)

m. 84: the word will be “winged,” **not** “wing-ed”

Now, about those splits...

- If you live north of I-80, take the upper notes; southerners take the lower notes. (T2 notice the split at m. 67.)
- On page 11 (mm. 97–end) T2 and B1 will take the divisi in the six-part sections. So, for example, at m. 97 beat 1, T1 has the D, T2-north has the A, and T2-south has the F#. Likewise, at m. 97 beat 3, B1-north has the D, B1-south has the A, and B2 has the F#. Et cetera.

## The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere

*I hope you will take some time to read the Longfellow poem in its entirety. I also hope you will do some research on the actual events of that night, April 18, 1775.*

Diction will be of the utmost importance in this song, since there are so many words to get out. Also, be careful to not let the *forte* sections get jelly. It's easy to oversing this piece, so just keep that in mind.

m. 8: no breath between “hear” and “of”

mm. 68–78: make room (dynamically) for each new voice/thought that enters

mm. 94–end: of course you'll crescendo through to the end, which means that you can't start

m. 93 at your absolute loudest level

## 'O Sole Mio

*If you haven't seen Pavarotti sing this beloved Neapolitan song, stop what you're doing and watch this: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F5q7113ACWA>. The joy and simplicity with which he sings is what we'll try to mimic when we get together.*

This is another one that's easy to oversing, so be mindful of that.

mm. 10–25: the baritones (B1) will sing this as a section

mm. 35–39: we have a bit of three-part writing here (also happens at mm. 67–69 and 85–end). **In these sections only** use the three-part directions you were assigned in your acceptance letter; otherwise, stay on your regular part.

mm. 42–57: the basses (B2) will sing this as a section

m. 75: this is a false ending, and I intend to let the audience *almost* believe the song is over before bringing the tenors in for a rousing recapitulation of the chorus. We will be hamming it up from this point forward, especially at *epico* (m. 92). I'll hold the fermata at 94 for **a while**, so be prepared to continue your fantastic sound after we move from that chord.

Now, about the pronunciation: c'mon... it's just Italian... you've got this. Wait, no, it's actually Neapolitan. There's a guy on the Interwebs who created ***an entire site*** about it, so let me just point you there: <https://sites.google.com/site/howtopronounceosolemio/>. (Caution: there are a few inappropriate words on that page.)

## Da Coconut Nut

*A student of mine a few years ago introduced me to this song (shout-out to Jack S.) and I've never had the right group to pull it off, until now. This will be our closing song and it absolutely will not work without some "choralography", so be ready. We are going to borrow heavily from the Baylor Men's Choir: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OrVwwrkrjx0>*

Where to begin with this one... Let's start with tempo. No way are we going to do this at half note=84. It'll be closer to 74.

Next up, words. Diction will be critically important (which is—in part—why I'm slowing the song down). Try your best to get *all* of the consonants out and on time. Basses: m. 6 is not a typo. You *did* read the notes in the octavo, *right?* Also, basses, m. 5 second time should be "nut".

Next up, solos. I'll be looking for five T2s to sing the lines in mm. 9–22, 23–36, 41–52 (one per verse). Those same five will comprise the small group at mm. 59–end.

Last, divisi. In mm. 67–74 and 83–end we have to deal with five-part writing. As before, and only in these sections, we will use a similar concept as in *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*:

- T1-north will take the top line (T1)
- T1-south will take the second line (T2)
- Tenor 2s will take the third line (B1)
- Baritones will take the upper notes of the fourth line (B2-top)
- Basses will use the lower notes of the fourth line (B2-bottom)