

Lumen

for eight-part choir

(SSAATTBB)

Duncan MacLeod

Programme note

This work is a response to Handel's The People Walked in Darkness where the melodic line has been elongated, embellished and juxtaposed against itself. From this we hear indeterminate washes of sound within which moments of unison and harmony break through which ties to a central concept of the Messiah – that from darkness comes light.

DM 2009.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light:
they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon
them hath the light shined.

Isaiah 9:2

Performance directions

Barring

Each measure equates to one long breath length (circa 12 seconds), which can be divided into four subdivisions. This will result in a heterophonic performance with no individual singing strictly 'in time' but rather approximately with one another (in a swarm like fashion). Each section (part) however is to have a 'leader' as a point of reference so to avoid excessive slippage within a section. Therefore individuals should make every effort to be no more than a measure ahead, or behind, their section leader. This piece is to be performed without a conductor and starts with who ever enters first (those remaining should enter as soon as possible after this point).

Text

Where text is provided this should be sung freely (and independently of those in your section) along the breath length.

Measures 1 & 2

Each singer is to hum an individual pitch of their choice within the approximate range of the given cluster.

Measures 3, 4, 5 & 6

Each singer is to continue with their hummed pitch, but now singing the given text.

Measures 7 & 8

Each singer should gradually slide for the duration of the two measures (portamento) to the given F# notated in measure 9.

The penultimate four bars require the text to be whispered (at a dynamic that is near inaudible). Second altos should continue looping the second bar up until the point that all the whispers dissipate.

Key

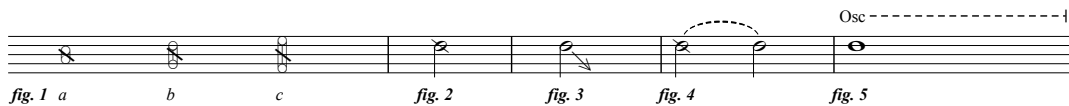


Fig. 1 Indeterminate note clusters. Each singer should choose a pitch of his or her choice within the given range (*a* - 3rd, *b* - 5th, *c* - octave). Effort should be made to avoid unisons. If a unison does occur look to bend the pitch higher or lower to alleviate this.

Fig. 2 Hum the given pitch

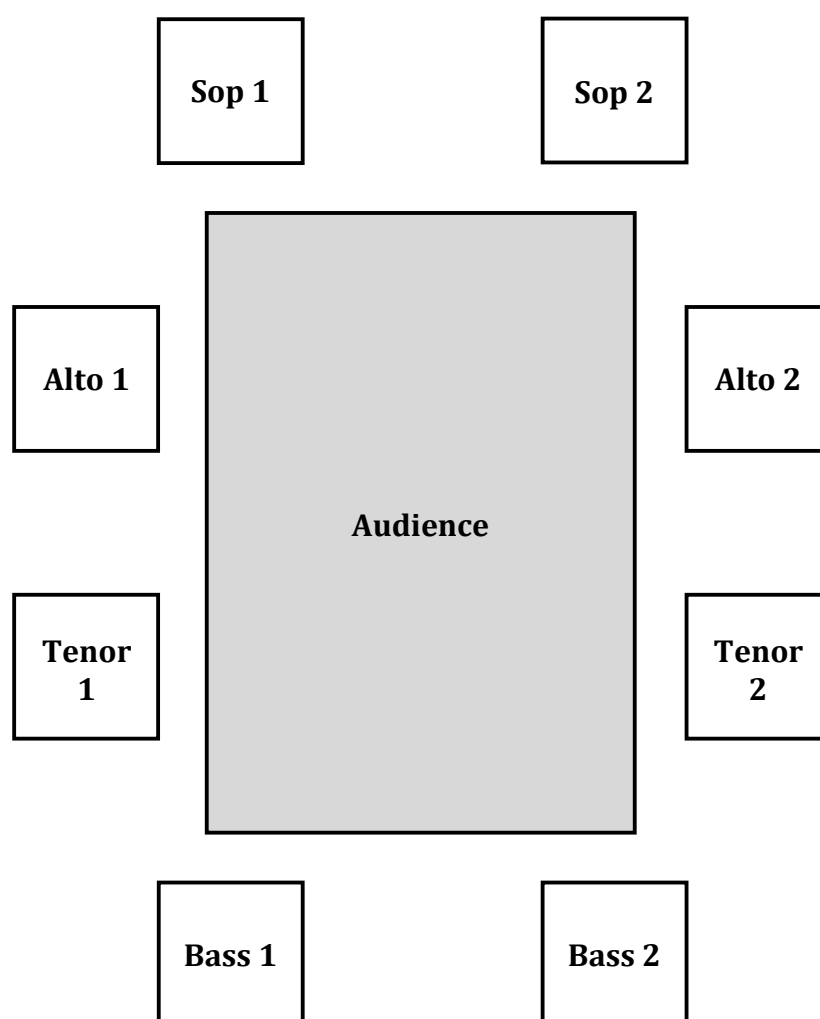
Fig. 3 Bend the pitch in the direction of the arrow, whilst adding a slight dynamic decay as you do so for the duration of note.

Fig. 4 Dotted slur represents a smooth transition between notes and their respective techniques (i.e. no break in between).

Fig. 6 Gradually oscillate by bending the pitch up and down by no more than a quartertone (much like a very slow vibrato).

Performance layout.

The choir should be placed in each section around the audience (as shown in the diagram below). If this is not possible the choir is encouraged to perform at the rear of auditorium, behind the audience.





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Lumen

Isaiah 9:2

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|| = one breath (c.12")

Musical score for the first system of 'Lumen'. It features eight vocal parts: Soprano I, Soprano II, Alto I, Alto II, Tenor I, Tenor II, Bass I, and Bass II. Each part begins with a *pp* dynamic and a 'HUM' section. A breath mark (||) is placed before the 'SUNG' section, which starts with a *p* dynamic and the lyrics 'The peo-ple'. The lyrics are written below the notes, with a dashed line indicating the breath mark's position.

Musical score for the second system of 'Lumen'. It continues the eight vocal parts from the first system. The lyrics are: Soprano I: 'walk-ing', Soprano II: 'that walked', Alto I: 'who went', Alto II: 'who are walk-ing', Tenor I: 'who are walk-ing', Tenor II: 'who went', Bass I: 'that walked', Bass II: 'walk-ing'. The score includes dynamics (*mp*, *cresc.*, *mf*) and breath marks (||) with dashed lines indicating the breath mark's position. The lyrics are written below the notes.

S. I *mp*
walk-ing walk-ing in dark-ness
Osc

S. II *p*
that walked that walked in dark-ness
Osc

A. I *mp*
who went who went in the dark
Osc

A. II *p*
who are walk-ing are walk-ing in dark-ness
Osc

T. I *mp*
who are walk-ing are walk-ing in dark-ness
Osc

T. II *p*
who went who went in the dark
Osc

B. I *mp*
that walked that walked in dark-ness
Osc

B. II *p*
walk-ing walk-ing in dark-ness
Osc



S. I
walk-ing in dark-ness in dark-ness

S. II *port.*
that walked in dark-ness in dark-ness

A. I
who went in the dark the dark

A. II *mp*
who are walk-ing in dark-ness in dark-ness

T. I *port.*
who are walk-ing in dark-ness in dark-ness

T. II *mp* *port.*
who went in the dark the dark

B. I
that walked in dark-ness in dark-ness

B. II *mp*
walk-ing in dark-ness in dark-ness

S. I
have seen a a great light great light

S. II
mp have seen a a great light *pp* HUM Osc

A. I
have seen a a great light *pp* HUM

A. II
have seen a a great light *pp* HUM

T. I
have seen a a great light *pp* HUM light

T. II
have seen a a great light *pp* HUM light

B. I
port. have seen a a great light *pp* HUM

B. II
port. have seen a a great light *pp* HUM

S. I
have seen a great light *pp* HUM

S. II
have seen a great light *mp* *p* HUM they that dwell *mp*

A. I
have seen a great light Dwel-lers in a land

A. II
mp have seen a great light Dwel-lers in a land

T. I
mp have seen a great light *pp* HUM

T. II
mp have seen a great light *p* HUM those who *mp*

B. I
mp seen a great light they that dwell

B. II

S. I

S. II
in the land **p** **HUM** *dwell in the land* **mp** *of the sha-dow*

A. I

A. II
in the land *land of death shade* **HUM** *the land of* **p** **mp**

T. I
 land of death shade **mp** **HUM** *Osc*

T. II
 were liv-ing **p** **HUM** **HUM** *who were liv-ing* **mp** **HUM** **HUM** *the land of* **p** **mp**

B. I
 in the land **pp** **HUM**

B. II
 Osc

S. I
 the sha-dow **mp** *the shadow of death* *sha-dow* **pp** **HUM** *Osc*

S. II
 the sha-dow *the shadow of death* **pp** **HUM** *Osc*

A. I
 the deep-est night *night* **pp** **HUM** *Osc*

A. II
 death shade **p** **HUM** **HUM** *land of* **mf** *of death shade*

T. I
 death shade *the land of* *of death shade* **mp**

T. II
 deep-est night **pp** **HUM** *Osc*

B. I
 shadow

B. II
 the sha-dow **mp** *the shadow of death* *the sha-dow*

S. I

S. II *mf* upon them *p* the light shined [HUM]

A. I *mf* light *mp* the light has shined [HUM] [HUM] shined

A. II *p* light hath shone hath shone [HUM] shone

T. I light hath shone hath shone up-on them

T. II *mf* the deep-est night *p* the light has shined [HUM] Osc

B. I *mf* upon them hath light shined [HUM]

B. II *mp* a light has dawned has dawned [HUM] [HUM] *mf* has dawned

S. I Osc *mf* dark *mp* The peo-ple walk [HUM] [HUM] *mf* walk-ing

S. II Osc *mf* that walk

A. I *mf* the light has shined [HUM] [HUM] *mf* people who went in

A. II *mf* shone up-on them [HUM] [HUM] *mf* people The peo-ple who

T. I shone up-on them The peo-ple who are walk-ing

T. II *mf* light has shined *p* The people [HUM]

B. I *mf* the light shined *p* The peo-ple that [HUM]

B. II *port.* a light has dawned The peo-ple walk walk-ing

S. I
The peo-ple walk-ing in dark-ness dark-ness

S. II
The peo-ple HUM HUM that walked that walked in

A. I
people HUM HUM dark the dark who went in HUM

A. II
are walk-ing HUM HUM who are walk-ing are walk-ing in HUM

T. I
walk HUM who are walk-ing in

T. II
Osc -----

B. I
Osc ----- that walked that walked in HUM

B. II
The peo-ple HUM

mp *mf* *mp* *p* *mf* *mp*

S. I
walk-ing in dark-ness dark-ness have seen

S. II
dark-ness walked in dark-ness have seen a

A. I
HUM dark have seen have seen a

A. II
HUM dark-ness who are walk-ing in dark-ness HUM

T. I
dark-ness who are walk-ing in dark-ness

T. II
dark have seen have seen a HUM

B. I
HUM darkness walked in dark-ness have seen a

B. II
walk-ing in dark-ness dark-ness have seen HUM

mf *mf* *p* *port.* *mf* *p*

S. I
a great light great light have seen a

S. II
seen a great *p* HUM have seen *f*

A. I
great light seen a great light great light

A. II
mf a light have seen a

T. I
have seen a light have seen a

T. II

B. I
seen a great light have seen a

B. II
seen a *f*



S. I
great light light have seen a

S. II
a great light great light have seen a

A. I
f a great light light light

A. II
a great light *f* light light light light

T. I
f a great light seen a great light great light

T. II
light *f* seen a great light great light

B. I
f a great light great light have seen a

B. II
great light light have seen a

S. I
great light light have seen a

S. II
great light great light have seen a

A. I
light light light

A. II
light light light light light light

T. I
a great light seen a great light great light

T. II
a great light *f* seen a great light great light

B. I
great light great light have seen a

B. II
great light light have seen a

S. I
dim. great light light *pp* whisper seen a great light seen a great light

S. II
dim. great light light *pp* whisper seen a great light seen a great light

A. I
dim. light light *pp* whisper seen a great light seen a great light

A. II
light light light light loop until whispers dissipate

T. I
dim. a great light light *pp* whisper seen a great light seen a great light

T. II
dim. a great light light *pp* whisper seen a great light seen a great light

B. I
dim. great light light *pp* whisper seen a great light seen a great light

B. II
dim. great light light *pp* whisper seen a great light seen a great light