

“And This Shall Be For Music” - Cambiata Arrangement

For this assignment I had the pleasure of working with Victor C Johnson’s “And This Shall Be For Music,” a gorgeous setting of Robert Louis Stevenson’s poem. Originally arranged for SATB, I eliminated the TB parts and arranged a third cambiata friendly vocal line using Barresi’s guidelines for the changing voice.

The cambiata line is particularly well suited for Midvoice II and IIA in range, flexibility, and complexity. I chose not to arrange it for Midvoice I because the existing alto part fits the criteria well enough to not warrant an additional part created, though small edits to dynamics and breathing could be made to the alto part to accommodate a Midvoice I singer. Premutation voices can continue to sing to soprano line until maturation begins.

The range for the cambiata part is quite limited, extending only from A3-E4, which falls completely within the ideal range for Midvoice II and mostly within the ideal range for midvoice IIA (there are three E4’s in the first three measures of the piece, which could be changed to double the melody line in the soprano part if that note is inaccessible). The tempo of the piece is slow enough to avoid any rapid changing of pitches, yet not so slow that the sustained lines will cause problems with pitch or quality of sound. I did not alter the dynamics on the arrangement as they do not go beyond a p or f, but care will be given to ensure in rehearsals and performances cambiatas do not push their part or go too far off the voice in softer dynamics.

I left two areas that may be difficult for them on “Only you admire” and “broad road” to break up what otherwise might be a monotonous part. If it proves to be beyond their skill set, there are alternative pitches that can be sung from the alto/soprano line that would make the rhythm and chromatic pitches simpler. I still want them to be challenged, though, so my hope is that they will be able to handle those passages that give the piece such wonderful color so they feel they are an important part of the work too.