

Lorem Ipsum

for spatialized choir

Jordan Nobles

*Commissioned by **C4: The Choral Composer/Conductor Collective**, with the assistance
of the David and Minnie Berk Foundation and the Yale School of Music alumni Ventures Fund*

Dedicated to Andy and Danae McKay
North Vancouver, October 2010

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Premiered by **C4** on March 3, 2011, New York City

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About the Piece

Lorem Ipsum was completed in October 2010 in North Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

It is slightly over **5 minutes** in duration.

Program Note

I have always found voices singing words in a language I do not understand to be haunting and beautiful. Perhaps because I am paying more attention to the sound of the voice itself and not trying to follow the meaning of the poetry. When I compose for voice I usually use only vowel sounds or vocalize but recently have found that limiting. So I went off in search of a text with all of the timbral richness of speech but without an overt meaning. And then I found, in my computer already, the Lorem Ipsum text.

The *Lorem Ipsum* text is a commonly used series of fragmented Latin words that has been used, possibly since the sixteenth century, to provide a ‘filler text’ during typesetting. Where text is visible in a document, people tend to focus on the textual content rather than upon overall presentation. Because it is ‘nonsense text’ publishers use *lorem ipsum* when displaying a typeface or design elements and page layout in order to direct the focus to the publication style and not the text itself.

I am using it here for the same reason. Rather than focusing on the meaning of the words I wish to draw your attention to the sound of the words. The sound of the human voice itself.

Text Source

It is not known exactly when the text acquired its current standard form; but it appears to have come from a fragmented version of Cicero’s treatise *De finibus bonorum et malorum* (*On the Extremes of Good and Evil*) written in 45 BC.

The text should be performed with standard Italianate Latin, or ‘church’, pronunciation.

*Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit,
sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.
Sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.*

Performance Notes

SPATIALIZATION

Lorem Ipsum is written for the singers to be spatially spread about the performance space, preferably surrounding the audience. The exact layout will vary depending on the venue and is not important as long as they are evenly distributed throughout the space. Also the sections (soprano, alto, tenor, bass) should not stand together as would be the norm but instead should be separated so each soprano, etc. is in a different area of the space from the others. Balconies, lofts, etc. can also be utilized as well.

CONDUCTOR

A conductor can be used but only to cue entrances (at every rehearsal letter) but not to conduct time. This will cause slight variations in tempo and rhythm and an unsynchronized blurring of the melody as the individual spatialized singers will not line up exactly. As well the entrances need not be precise and the rhythm can be slightly flexible. As long as the singers are within a beat of everyone else it will work.

However, the conductor can beat time at rehearsal letters **L** & **M** if that helps to keep the ensemble together in the tutti section.

Note: It may be beneficial to rehearse the piece, at least at first, in the standard format with all of the singers together and the conductor beating time. Then, once the piece is learned, it can be rehearsed spatialized.

SOLO PARTS

The solo parts are not to sound soloistic but rather as a moment where the texture thins to a single voice. Is it desired, if possible, that the soloist is different every time. For instance a different soprano sings each time there is a different isolated soprano solo.

The solo sections are:

Soprano - Rehearsal letters **C, E, G, K, L, M, Q & R**

Alto - Rehearsal letters **G, I-J & R**

Tenor - Rehearsal letters **E, H & N-P**

Bass - Rehearsal letter **H**

PERFORMANCE OPTIONS

A performance can start with the singers together on stage and immediately once the piece has begun they can slowly spread throughout the venue. Or alternatively they can come physically together for the large tutti section (Rehearsal letters **L** & **M**) and disperse again by the end.

It is desired that in the final 'Free Time' section (Rehearsal letters **Q** & **R**) that the singers, *once they begin singing*, slowly walk offstage, or away from the audience, in different directions. Slowly dispersing as they fade out.

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Text: traditional

Andante ♩ = 100

Start together at the beginning, and at each rehearsal letter, but proceed unsynchronized

Altos

pp

Mmm

A

8

S.

pp

Mmm

A.

pp

Mmm

B

13

S.

p

Mmm

A.

p

Mmm

C

19

S.

p

Mmm

A.

p

pp

Mmm

SOLO

26 *p* *mp* *p*

S. Solo
Lo - rem Ip - sum

A.



32 *p* *mp* *p*

S. Solo
do - - - lor sit a - - - met,

A.



D **TUTTI**

37 *mp* *p*

S.
Lo - rem Ip - sum

A. *mp*
Lo - rem Ip - sum

T. *p*
Lo

B. *p*
Lo

44

S. Solo

S.

A.

T.

B.

do - - lor sit a - - met,

do - - lor sit a - - mmm

do - - lor sit a - - met,

a - - met,

a - - met,

a - - met,

mf *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

49

E

S. Solo

S.

A.

T. Solo

T.

B.

Lo - rem (mm)

Lo - rem Ip - sum

Lo - rem Ip - sum

Lo - rem Ip - sum

mp *mp* *mp* *mp*

F

55

mf ————— *f* ————— *mp*

S. Solo
do - lor sit a - met,

S.
do - lor sit a - met,

A.
do - lor sit a - met,

T.
do - - lor sit a - met,

B.
do - - lor sit a - met,

G

60

SOLO
p

S. Solo
con - sec - te - tur

SOLO
p

A.
Con - sec - te - tur

TUTTI

A.
a - di - pi - si - ci

TUTTI

65

S.
a - di - pi - si - ci e - - lit.

A.
e - - lit.

H

SOLO
mp

T. 69
Sed do e - ius - mod - tem - por

B. **SOLO** *mp*
Sed do e - ius - mod



I

A. Solo **SOLO** *p*
ut

T. **TUTTI** *mp*
in - ci - di - - - dunt.

B. **TUTTI**
tem - por in - ci - di - - - dunt.



J Free Time

K

approx. 10 sec. approx. 10 sec.

S. Solo *p* et do - lor - e

S. *mp* do - lor - e

A. Solo *mp* la - bor - e

A. *mp* la - bor - e

T. *p* (e)

Repeat independantly (similar to altos)

Repeat independantly

Repeat independantly avoid rhythmic unisons

Repeat independantly avoid rhythmic unisons

6/4

L A tempo

87

S. Solo *f* Mag - na Al - i - qua *mf* Al - i - qua

S. *f* Mag - na Al - i - qua *mf* *mp*

A. *f* Mag - na Al - i - qua *mf* *mp*

T. *f* Mag - na Al - i - qua *mf* *mp*

B. *f* Mag - na Al - i - qua *mf* *mp*

M

91

S. Solo *pp* cul - pa qui o - ffi - ci - a *mp* *mf* *p*

S. *pp* cul - pa fi - ci - a *mp* *mf* *p*

A. *pp* cul - pa fi - ci - a *mp* *mf* *p*

T. Solo *mf* sunt in cul - pa fi - ci - a *mp* *mf* *p*

T. *pp* cul - pa ci - a *mp* *mf* *p*

B. *pp* cul - pa a *mp* *mf* *p*

N

O

97

S. de - se - runt

A. de - se - runt

T. Solo de - se - runt

T. de - se - runt

B.



P

103

S. mol - lit a - nim mmm

A. mol - lit a - nim

T. Solo mol - lit a - nim mmm

T. mol - lit a - nim mmm

B. a - nim mmm

Q

Free time

approx. 10 sec.

109

p *mp* *mp*

S. Solo
id est la - bo - rum

S.
la - bo - rum

A.

T.
(mmm)

B.
(mmm)

Repeat independantly
avoid rythmic unisons

Repeat independantly
avoid rythmic unisons



R

approx. 20-30 seconds

S. continue singing, more and more sparsely and then drop out independantly

ppp

A. Solo
id est la - bo - rum

p *mp* *mp* *ppp*

Repeat independantly
avoid rythmic unisons

drop out

A.
la - bo - rum

mp *ppp*

Repeat independantly
avoid rythmic unisons

drop out

T. continue humming

(mmm) *ppp*

B. continue humming

(mmm) *ppp*