

to Evelyn Wagner

VELUM TEMPLI

Liber usualis, Good Friday matins, Resp. 2

Paul Nicholson (b. 1963)

Andante, molto legato

S, A

mp

Ve - lum, ve - lum, ve - lum, —

T, B

mp

5

— ve - lum, ve - lum tem - pli

p

A little faster

scis - sum, scis - sum, scis - sum, scis - sum est,

10 *mf* *mf* *ff*

scis - sum, scis - sum, scis - sum est, et

scis - sum, scis - sum, scis - sum est,

mf *mf* *ff*

scis - sum, scis - sum, scis - sum est,

From the Composer

The text of “Velum templi” is taken from the Good Friday matins, as found in the *Liber usualis*. In addition to this specific, liturgical moment in the church year, the piece can certainly be used in a choral concert setting to great effect. Any performance of this composition will be enhanced by underscoring the text painting. The initial phrase, with its repetition of “velum,” should evoke the image of a smooth, flowing and loosely hanging fabric; rhythmic freedom will help in achieving this. When the curtain is torn, the piece becomes strictly measured and clearly defined, thus destroying the feeling of freedom. When the rocks are broken apart and the tombs are opened, there is a sense of upheaval, angularity, shock and unevenness. Finally, the plea of the dying thief is soft, barely audible, and fading away, as it would be when succumbing to asphyxiation on a cross.

—Paul Nicholson

Translation

The veil of the temple was ripped in two and all the earth trembled. The thief cried out from the cross, saying: Remember me, Lord, when you come into your kingdom.

Rocks were split and tombs were opened, and the bodies of many holy ones, who had died, were raised to life.

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15 *a tempo* *mf*

o - mnis ter - ra tré - mu - it, et o - mnis ter -

a tempo *mf*

21 *dim.* *mp* *mf* **Tempo primo**

ra tré - mu - it: la - tro de cru - ce cla -

dim. *mp* *mf*

tré - mu - it:

26 *dim.* *p*

má - bat, di - cens: — Me - mén - to

dim. *p*

31

me - i, Dó - mi - ne, dum vé - ne - ris in re - gnum tu - um.

A little faster *marcato* *f* *molto legato* *mf*

Pe - trae, pe - trae scis - sae sunt, et mo - nu - mén - ta a - pér - ta sunt, et

marcato *f* *molto legato* *mf*