

OXFORD

Christmas

BC174

SSAATTBB

unaccompanied

Bob
Chilcott

BEFORE THE ICE
(MAGNUM MYSTERIUM)

Commissioned for the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus, Philip Barnes, Artistic Director
by Dorsey and Sondra Ellis in celebration of their fiftieth wedding anniversary

Before the ice (O magnum mysterium)

Emily Dickinson (1830–86)
Latin Responsory for Matins on Christmas Day

BOB CHILCOTT

Soft and expressive ♩ = c.66

SOPRANO 1 *pp* Be - fore the ice is in the pools, Be - fore the skat - ers__

ALTO 1 *pp* Be - fore the ice is in the pools, Be - fore the skat - ers__

TENOR 1 *pp* Be - fore the ice is in the pools, Be - fore the skat - ers__

BASS 1 *pp* Be - fore the pools, the skat - ers

SOPRANO 2 *pp* Be - fore the ice is in the pools, Be -

ALTO 2 *pp* Be - fore the ice is in the pools, Be -

TENOR 2 *pp* Be - fore the ice is in the pools, Be -

BASS 2 *pp* Be - fore the ice in the pools, the

(for rehearsal only) *pp*

4

p

go, _____ Or a - ny cheek at night - fall. _____

p

go, _____ Or a - ny cheek at night - fall _____ Is tar - nished by the

p

go, _____ Or a - ny cheek at night - fall, _____ tar - -

p

go, _____ Or cheek at night - fall, _____ is

p

- fore the skat - ers go, at night - fall, at night - fall.

p

- fore the skat - ers go, at night - fall, at night - fall, night - fall. _____

p

- fore the skat - ers go, at night - fall, at night - fall, _____

p

skat - ers go, , at night - fall, night - fall, is tar - nished, is

p

The piano accompaniment is written for the right and left hands. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, and includes several trills. The left hand provides a harmonic foundation with chords and moving bass lines, including some sixteenth-note patterns. The piece concludes with a final chord in the right hand and a sustained bass note in the left hand.

9

Be - fore the fields_ have_

snow, by the snow. Be - fore the fields_ have_

- nished by the snow. Be - fore the fields_ have_

tar - nished by the snow. Be - fore the

Be - fore, be -

Be - fore, be -

tar - - nished by the snow. Be - fore the

tar - nished_ by the snow. Be - fore the

pp

13

p *f*

fi - nished, Be-fore the Christ - mas_ tree, Won-der u-pon won - der,

p *f*

fi - nished, Be-fore the Christ - mas_ tree, Won - der u - pon_

p *f*

fi - nished, Be-fore the Christ - mas_ tree, Won - der, won-der u-pon

p *f*

fields, the Christ - mas tree, Won - der u - pon

p *f*

- fore the fields have fi - nished, the Christ - mas tree, Won-der u-pon won - der_

p *f*

- fore the fields have fi - nished, Be - fore the Christ - mas_ tree, Won - der,

p *f*

fields, the fields have fi - nished, Be - fore the Christ - mas_ tree, Won - der u-pon

p *f*

fields have fi - nished, Be - fore the Christ-mas tree, Won - der,

f

17

won-der u-pon won-der Will ar-rive to me! _____

won - der, u - pon won - der, ar - rive, ar -

won - der Will ar - rive, ar - rive to me, ar -

won - der Will ar - rive to me, will ar -

Will ar - rive, ar - rive to me!

won - der Will ar - rive to me, to

won - der Will ar - rive to

won - der Will ar - rive, ar - rive to

dim.

mp

dim.

mp

dim.

dim.

dim.

dim.

dim.

dim.

21

p

We touch the hems of, On a sum - mer's,

p

- rive to me! We touch the hems of, On a sum - mer's,

p

- rive to me! We touch the hems of, On a sum - mer's,

p

- rive to me! We touch the hems of, On a sum - mer's,

mp

What we touch the hems of On a sum - mer's day;

mp

me! What we touch the hems of On a sum - mer's day;

mp

me! What we touch the hems of On a sum - mer's day;

mp

me! What we touch the hems of On a sum - mer's day;

p mp

26 *f*

sum - mer's day; Just a bridge a - way; *mp* That which sings so,

f *mp*

sum - mer's day; Just a bridge a - way; *mp* That which sings so,

f *mp*

sum - mer's day; Just a bridge a - way; *mp* That which sings so,

f *mp*

sum - mer's day; Just a bridge a - way; *mp* That which sings so,

f *mp*

What is on - ly walk-ing Just a bridge, a bridge a - way.

f *mp*

What is on - ly walk-ing Just a bridge, a bridge a - way.

f *mp*

What is on - ly walk-ing Just a bridge, a bridge a - way.

f *mp*

What is on - ly walk - ing Just a bridge a - way.

f *mp*



31

cresc. *ff*

speaks so, When there's no one here, Will the frock, the

cresc. *ff*

speaks so, When there's no one here, Will the frock, the

cresc. *ff*

speaks so, When there's no one here, Will the frock, the

cresc. *ff*

speaks so, When there's no one here, Will the frock, the

ff

That which sings so, speaks so, When there's no one here, Will the

ff

That which sings so, speaks so, When there's no one here, Will the

ff

That which sings so, speaks so, When there's no one here, Will the

ff

That which sings so, speaks so, When there's no one here, Will the

cresc. *ff*

35

f dim.

frock I wept in An - swer me, an - swer me?

f dim.

frock I wept in An - swer me to wear,

f dim. *mp dim.*

frock I wept in An - swer me, an - swer me,

f dim. *mp dim.*

frock I wept in An - swer me, an - swer me to

f dim. *mp dim.*

frock I wept in, the frock I wept in An - swer me?

f dim. *mp dim.*

frock, the frock I wept in An - swer me,

f dim. *mp dim.*

frock, the frock I wept in, the frock I wept in.

f dim. *mp dim.*

frock, the frock I wept in An - swer, an - swer,

f dim. *mp dim.*

40

Be-fore the ice is in the pools,

p an - swer me? *pp* Be-fore the ice is in the pools,

an - swer me? *pp* Be-fore the ice is in the pools,

wear? *pp* Be-fore the pools,

p dolce O ma - gnum my - ste - ri-um, O

p an - swer me? *p dolce* O ma - gnum my - ste - ri-um, O

p dolce O ma - gnum my - ste - ri-um, O

p an - swer me? *p dolce* O ma - gnum my - ste - ri-um, O

p dolce

45

Be-fore the skat - ers_ go, Or a - ny cheek at night - fall.

Be-fore the skat - ers_ go, Or a - ny cheek at night - fall Is

Be-fore the skat - ers_ go, Or a - ny cheek at night - fall,

the skat - ers go, Or cheek at night - fall

ma - gnum my - ste - ri-um et ad - mi - ra - bi - le sa - cra - men - tum,

ma - gnum my - ste - ri-um et ad - mi - ra - bi - le sa - cra - men - tum,

ma - gnum my - ste - ri-um et ad - mi - ra - bi - le sa - cra - men - tum,

ma - gnum my - ste - ri-um et ad - mi - ra - bi - le sa - cra -

50

Be-fore the fields have

tar - nished by the snow, by the snow. Be-fore the fields have

tar - - nished by the snow. Be-fore the fields have

Is tar - nished by the snow. Be-fore the

ut a - - ni -

sa - cra - men - - tum, ut a - - ni -

sa - cra - men - - tum, ut a - - ni -

men - tum, sa - cra - men - tum, ut a - - ni -

ut a - - ni -

55

fi - nished, Be-fore the Christ - mas tree, Won-der u-pon won - der,

fi - nished, Be-fore the Christ -- mas tree, Won - der u - pon

fi - nished, Be-fore the Christ - mas tree, Won - der, won - der,

fields, the Christ - mas tree, Won - der, won - der,

-ma - li - a vi - de - - rent Do - mi - num na - tum, ja -

-ma - li - a vi - de - - rent Do - mi - num na - tum, ja -

-ma - li - a vi - de - - rent Do - mi - num na - tum, ja -

-ma - li - a vi - de - - rent Do - mi - num na - tum, ja -

59

won-der u-pon won-der Will ar-rive to me!_____

won-der Will ar-rive to me, ar-rive_____ to

won-der Will ar-rive,_____ ar-rive to me!_____

won-der Will ar-rive, ar-rive_____ to_____

-cen-tem in prae-se-pi-o.

-cen-tem in prae-se-pi-o, ja-cen-tem in prae-

-cen-tem in prae-se-pi-o, ja-cen-tem in prae-

-cen-tem in prae-se-pi-o, prae-

63

mp

What we touch the hems of On a sum-mer's day;

me! What we touch the hems of On a sum-mer's day;

mp

What we touch the hems of On a sum-mer's day;

me! What we touch the hems of On a sum-mer's day;

mp

Be - a - ta vir - go, be - a - ta

p *mp*

- se - pi - o. Be - a - ta vir - go, be - a - ta

p *mp*

- se - pi - o. Be - a - ta vir - go, be - a - ta

p *mp*

- se - pi - o. Be - a - ta vir - go, be - a - ta

p *mp*

- se - pi - o. Be - a - ta vir - go, be - a - ta

68 *f* *dim.* *mp*

What is on - ly walk-ing just a bridge a - way; That which sings so,

f *dim.* *mp*

What is on - ly walk-ing just a bridge a - way; That which sings so,

f *dim.* *mp*

What is on - ly walk-ing just a bridge a - way; That which sings so,

f *dim.* *mp*

What is on - ly walk-ing a bridge a - way; That which sings so,

f *dim.* *mp*

vir - go, be - a - ta vir - go, vir - go, cu - jus

f *dim.* *mp*

vir - go, be - a - ta vir - go, vir - go, cu - jus

f *dim.* *mp*

vir - go, be - a - ta vir - go, vir - go, cu - jus

f *dim.* *mp*

vir - go, be - a - ta, vir - go, vi - go, cu - jus

f *dim.* *mp*

f *dim.* *mp*