

SAMUEL BARBER

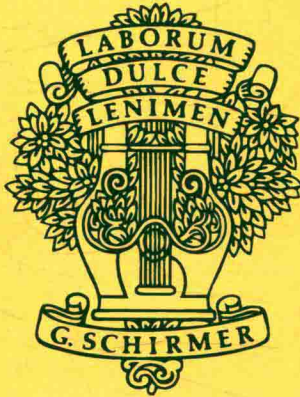
Complete  
Choral Music

REVISED EDITION

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'S' and 'B' intertwined.

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## ABOUT THIS EDITION

This collection includes choral works by Samuel Barber and choral transcriptions/arrangements made by Barber, including first editions of “Twelve Rounds” and “Ad Bibinem cum me rogaret ad cenam.” Arrangements by others of Barber choral pieces are not included in this collection. The following large choral works are available separately: The Lovers; Prayers of Kierkegaard.

Almost all of the pieces included in this collection are available separately.

# HISTORICAL NOTES

## TWELVE ROUNDS (1927)

- A Lament (words by Percy Bysshe Shelley)
- To Electra (words by Robert Herrick)
- Farewell (words anonymous)
- Dirge (author of words unknown)
- Not I (words by Robert Louis Stevenson)
- Of a Rose Is Al Myn Song (words anonymous)
- Sunset (words by Robert Louis Stevenson)
- The Moon (words by Percy Bysshe Shelley)
- Sun of the sleepless (words by Lord Byron)
- The Throstle (words by Alfred, Lord Tennyson)
- Late, Late, So Late (words by Alfred, Lord Tennyson)
- When day is gone (words by Robert Burns)

**The Moon** (words by Percy Bysshe Shelley)  
With added piano accompaniment

First edition, previously unpublished. Manuscript source: Library of Congress. The rounds were composed in February of 1927 as assignments in Barber's composition studies with Rosario Scalero at the Curtis Institute of Music. Barber scholar Barbara Heyman quotes from the composer's diary entries about the rounds: "I spend much more time looking for the poems than setting them." For one of the rounds, "The Moon," Barber created a second version with piano accompaniment.

## MOTETTO ON WORDS FROM THE BOOK OF JOB (1930)

Composed in 1930. Words from the Bible, Job 3, 5, 9, 11. An edition was not released as a publication until 2007 (ed. Harold Rosenbaum). From the preface of the 2007 edition:

- Job 3:17–19
- Job 5:1, 11:7–8. 5:7–8
- Job 9:16–17

"Motetto on Words from the Book of Job" was one of Barber's earliest choral works. It was composed as a four-movement piece in 1930, and until this publication, existed only as a manuscript in the Library of Congress. The third movement to a text by Gerard Manley Hopkins was first performed by the Westminster Choir at State Teacher's College, Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, on 31 January 1938 and first published in 1994. It is available separately under the title "God's Grandeur."

## THE VIRGIN MARTYRS (1935)

Op. 8, No. 1

Composition was completed in June, 1935. Words by Helen Waddell (1889–1965) from *Mediaeval Latin Lyrics*, after the Latin of Sigebert of Gembloux (ca. 1030–1112).

**LET DOWN THE BARS, O DEATH (1936)**

Op. 8, No. 2

Composition was completed in St. Wolfgang, Austria, on June 25, 1936. Words by Emily Dickinson. Barber was in Europe for several summers during his student years. Barber scholar Barbara Heyman quotes from a letter from the composer to his parents, written in 1936. "I wrote a little chorus the other morning, quite good, it will be all right for someone's funeral."

**GOD'S GRANDEUR (1938)**

Composition was completed on January 20, 1938. Words by Gerard Manley Hopkins. The piece was commissioned by Westminster Choir School for the Festival of American Music, held May 23–28, 1938. First performed by Westminster Choir on January 31, 1938 at State Teachers College, Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, which was the first concert of the choir's tour that year. "God's Grandeur" remained unpublished until 1994.

**A STOPWATCH AND AN ORDNANCE MAP (1940)**

Op. 15

Composition was completed on January 28, 1940. Words by Stephen Spender. Composed for the men's voices of the Curtis Institute of Music Madrigal Chorus, a chorus Barber was directing at the time. First performed at Curtis Institute of Music, Philadelphia, on April 23, 1940. A performance of the piece was broadcast on NBC radio the following day.

**REINCARNATIONS (1940)**

Op. 16

**Mary Hynes**  
**Anthony O'Daly**  
**The Coolin**

"Mary Hynes" was completed on August 8, 1937 in St. Wolfgang, Austria. "Antony O'Daly" was completed on December 17, 1940. "The Coolin" was completed on November 10, 1940. The 2010 edition by Joshua Parman is reproduced in this collection. Irish poet James Stephens collection *Reincarnations*, published in 1918, presents original poetry in English that embellished, or "reincarnated," the thoughts and style of traditional Gaelic poets. Two further Stephens poems from *Reincarnations* were abandoned and left unfinished in Barber's choral settings, "Peggy Mitchell" and "Mary Ruane." See the 2010 edition of *Reincarnations* (G. Schirmer, Inc./Hal Leonard Corporation publication number 50490067) for extensive historical and critical notes.

**AD BIBINEM CUM ME ROGARET AD CENAM (1943)**

Composed in 1943 for a *Festschriften* in honor of G. Schirmer president Carl Engel's sixtieth birthday. (A *Festschriften* is a volume of articles, essays, and in this case music, contributed by many authors in honor of a colleague, usually published on the occasion of retirement or an important personal occasion.) The Latin text is adapted from Venantius Fortunatus. Barber substitutes the word Bibi, Engel's nickname, for the Latin word "Gogo." The words are a personal description of Engel.

Translation:

*Nectar, wine, wit and learning, such is your fashion, Bibi.*  
*But even beyond these plentiful gifts, you charm us.*  
*You are Cicero and Apicius reborn.*  
*You Overwhelm us with words and food.*

*But no more please!  
 Bursting with ragout, I succum,  
 For there is war in my stomach when mixed foods growl at each other.  
 Already my eyes begin to droop and slowly my songs go to sleep.*

## **TWO CHORUSES (1968)**

Op. 42

### **Twelfth Night**

#### **To Be Sung on the Water**

“Twelfth Night” was completed on December 25, 1968. Words by Laurie Lee from the poetry collection *My Many-coated Man*. “To Be Sung on the Water” was completed on December 14, 1968. Words by Louise Bogan, from *Collected Poems*. “To Be Sung on the Water” was among the music performed at the memorial service for Barber held at St. Bartholomew’s Church, New York City, on February 9, 1981.

## **Choral Transcriptions and Arrangements by Barber**

*In chronological order of creation*

### **AVE MARIA (Josquin de Prez) (1521; Barber’s edition created c. 1940)**

First edition, previously unpublished. Manuscript source: Library of Congress. Barber directed the Madrigal Chorus of the Curtis Institute of Music from 1939 to 1941. He created this edition of Josquin’s “Ave Maria” for the chorus. First performed on February 19, 1940, Curtis Institute of Music Madrigal Chorus, broadcast on CBS radio.

### **UNDER THE WILLOW TREE (from the 1958 opera *Vanessa*; choral setting 1961)**

The opera *Vanessa*, with a libretto by Gian Carlo Menotti, was composed from 1952 to 1957, and premiered at the Metropolitan Opera on January 15, 1958. “Under the Willow Tree” is an ensemble in the opera. Barber made the choral adaptation in 1961.

### **HEAVEN-HAVEN (A Nun Takes the Veil) (SATB) (1937 art song; choral setting 1961)**

### **HEAVEN-HAVEN (A Nun Takes the Veil) (SSAA) (1937 art song; choral setting 1961)**

### **HEAVEN-HAVEN (A Nun Takes the Veil) (TTBB) (1937 art song; choral setting 1961)**

Barber originally composed an art song, with the same title, in 1937, with words by Gerard Manley Hopkins. In 1961 he made choral settings of the art song: SATB chorus, SSAA chorus, and TTBB chorus.

### **SURE ON THIS SHINING NIGHT (1938 art song; choral setting 1961)**

Barber’s art song, “Sure on this shining night,” with words by James Agee from the poetry collection *Permit Me Voyage*, was composed in 1938. Barber made the choral arrangement in 1961.

### **EASTER CHORALE (1964; arrangement for chorus and brass choir 1964)**

*Chorale for Ascension Day* (3 trumpets, 2 horns, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani) was composed for the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. in honor of the dedication of the Gloria in Excelsis Tower. It was first performed at the cathedral on May 7, 1964 by members of the National Symphony Orchestra. Later that year, in October, Barber created the choral version, adding words by Pack Browning. An *ad lib.* organ part was also added to the original chorale.

**THE MONK AND HIS CAT** (1953 art song; choral setting 1967)

Barber's art song, "The Monk and His Cat," was composed on February 16, 1953, part of the cycle *Hermit Songs*. The text is by an anonymous 8th or 9th century Gaelic poet, translated by W.H. Auden. Barber himself made the choral arrangement in 1967.

**AGNUS DEI** (Adagio from string quartet, 1936; choral setting 1967)

Barber composed his String Quartet in 1936, begun in May at the American Academy in Rome. As had been his custom for several years, he spent part of the summer in St. Wolfgang, Austria, which is where he completed the second movement (Adagio) on September 19, 1936. The quartet was completed by the end of October, 1936. A new last movement was composed in 1938. Barber extracted the second movement and adapted it for string orchestra in 1938 for conductor Arturo Toscanini, who premiered Adagio for Strings with the NBC Symphony Orchestra in a radio broadcast of November 5, 1938. The "Adagio" became Barber's most often performed and recorded music. Barber created the choral arrangement, using the traditional Latin text "Agnus Dei," in 1967. A Latin version was published simultaneously with an English version, "Lamb of God."

**LAMB OF GOD** (Adagio from string quartet, 1936; choral setting 1967)

See Agnus Dei above.

**TWO CHORUSES FROM ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA** (from the 1966 opera; choral adaptation 1968)**On the Death of Antony****On the Death of Cleopatra**

Barber's opera, with a libretto by Franco Zeffirelli based on Shakespeare, was commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera and premiered at the opening of the new opera house in Lincoln Center, New York City, on September 19, 1966. The adaptations of these two choruses were of made by Barber in 1968. A substantial revision of the opera, with revised libretto adapted by Gian Carlo Menotti and Barber, was completed in 1976.

**TO BE SUNG ON THE WATER** (SSAA) (1969)

"To Be Sung on the Water," for SATB chorus, was completed on December 14, 1968. Words by Louise Bogan, from *Collected Poems*. Barber made the adaptation for SSAA chorus in 1969. "To Be Sung on the Water" (in its original version) was among the music performed at the memorial service for Barber held at St. Bartholomew's Church, New York City, on February 9, 1981.

# CHORAL WORKS

# TWELVE ROUNDS

## 1. A Lament

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Samuel Barber  
February, 1927

Voice 1

O World! O Life! O Time! ——— On whose last

Voice 2

Voice 3

Piano  
*(for rehearsal purposes only)*

5

steps I climb, — Trem - bling at that where I have\* stood be - fore; —

\*“had” in Shelley’s poem.



9

When \_\_\_\_\_ will re - turn \_\_\_\_\_ the  
O World! O Life! O Time! \_\_\_\_\_

13

glo - ry of your prime? No  
\_\_\_\_\_ On whose last steps I climb, \_\_\_\_\_ Trem - bling at that where I have

17

more, no more, no more—  
stood be - fore; \_\_\_\_\_ When \_\_\_\_\_ will re -  
O World! O Life! O