

AN ANALYSIS OF “SEVEN LAST WORDS FROM THE CROSS” (1993)  
BY JAMES MACMILLAN

BY  
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DISSERTATION

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## ABSTRACT

James MacMillan is one of the most well-known and successful living composers as well as an internationally active conductor. His musical language is influenced by his Scottish heritage, the Catholic faith, and traditional Celtic folk music, blended with Scandinavian and European composers including Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992), Alfred Schnittke (1943-1998), and Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971).

His cantata for choir and strings *Seven Last Words from the Cross*, was commissioned by BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) television, composed in 1993, and premiered in 1994 by Cappella Nova and the BT (British Telecom) Scottish Ensemble. While this piece is widely admired as one of his best achievements by choral conductors and choirs, it is rarely performed, perhaps due to its high level of difficulty for both the string players and singers.

The purpose of this dissertation is to present an analysis of the *Seven Last Words from the Cross* by James MacMillan aimed to benefit choral conductors rather than audiences. Very little has been written about MacMillan's choral works. My hope is to establish a foundation on which future scholars may expand and explore other choral works by MacMillan.

Chapter one provides an overview of MacMillan's life focusing on his religious and political beliefs, education and musical influences, specifically how these characteristics appear in his choral music.

Chapter two discusses the development of Scottish traditional music with an emphasis on instrumental, vocal and choral music. By looking at Scottish traditional music, I will examine how aspects of MacMillan's musical language and identity come from traditional music.

Chapter three examines the history of the seven last words and passion story, including other settings of this text. This chapter also provides an overview of MacMillan's piece including the text setting and a translation.

Chapter four gives an in-depth analysis of the *Seven Last Words from the Cross*, examining compositional techniques, harmonic relationships, form/structure, unique features, text treatment, use of traditional or historic elements and comparison with other works.

For my research, I used two choral scores (a vocal score and a full score) published by Boosey & Hawkes and two CDs published by the Dmitri Ensemble (April 2014, under the direction of Graham Ross) and, Polyphony (August 2005, under the direction of Stephen Layton).

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1-1 A Biographical Sketch

James MacMillan is one of the most recognized living composers of the modern age, as well as an internationally active conductor. His works span both the choral and instrumental music spheres and include many commissioned works. MacMillan's compositional techniques are rooted in his Scottish heritage, Catholic faith and his close connection with Scottish traditional folk music.

MacMillan was born on July 16<sup>th</sup> 1959 at Kilwinning in North Ayrshire, Scotland. His father was a joiner and his mother a teacher. When MacMillan was four, his family moved to Cumnock in East Ayrshire where he joined St. John's Roman Catholic School. When he was ten, he took lessons on piano and trumpet, which inspired him to compose short piano pieces and some instrumental pieces.

In 1973, MacMillan attended the secondary school Cumnock Academy (founded in 1969).<sup>1</sup> While there, he performed and studied Renaissance sacred music with Bert Richardson, looking at works by Giovanni Palestrina (1525-1594), Tomas Victoria (1548-1611) as well as J. S. Bach (1685-1750). This training contributed to his strong foundation in ancient musical

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<sup>1</sup> "Cumnock Academy" <<http://www.cumnock.e-ayr.sch.uk/theschool.html>>

languages. In 1977 MacMillan moved to the University of Edinburgh where he studied composition with Rita McAllister (b.1946)<sup>2</sup> who introduced him to twentieth-century composers.

In 1981 MacMillan moved to Durham, England to begin graduate study in composition at the University of Durham, where he studied with John Casken (b.1949)<sup>3</sup> and earned his Ph.D. in 1987. While in Durham MacMillan studied ethnomusicology and was especially interested in the traditional music of East-Asia. One can often hear sounds resembling the Indonesian 'gamelan' in his music.<sup>4</sup>

In 1983 Macmillan returned to Ayrshire to work as a music teacher. At this time, he began to play and sing Scottish and Irish folk music, while also participating in local political and welfare activities during the miner's strike. He became a member of the group called Broadstone in which he played for several years.<sup>5</sup>

In 1986, MacMillan accepted a musical lecturer position for two years at Victoria University of Manchester. While there, his instrumental music was performed for the first time at the Musica Nova festival in Glasgow. Originally founded in 1961 as Musica Viva, the festival focuses on contemporary music and is presented by the University of Glasgow and the Scottish National Orchestra.

In 1988 MacMillan returned to Scotland and settled in Glasgow. This marked the beginning of an extremely creative period for MacMillan especially for his collaborations with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra which began as educational projects. In 1989, MacMillan

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<sup>2</sup> Scottish musicologist and composer

<sup>3</sup> English composer

<sup>4</sup> Kevin McCormick. "James MacMillan and His Sacred Music for Our Time" *Catholic World Report*, Musica Sacra, (2012)

<sup>5</sup> Stephen Andrew Kingsbury. "The Early Choral Music of James Macmillan: 1983-1993" (DMA thesis, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2003), p 2



attended the St. Magnus Festival in Orkney where his composition *Tryst* was premiered by the Scottish Chamber Orchestra under the direction of Paul Daniel and it was at this festival where MacMillan was appointed associate composer of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.<sup>6</sup>

In 1990, MacMillan's orchestral work *The Confession of Isobel Gowdie* was premiered by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under Jerzy Maksymiuk and earned him international recognition. In 1991, MacMillan conducted *The Confession of Isobel Gowdie* with the Philharmonia Orchestra in London and he was later appointed a visiting composer. Between 1992 and 2002 he worked as Artistic Director of the Philharmonia Orchestra's 'Music of Today' series of contemporary music concerts. His concerto *Veni, Veni, Emmanuel* for percussionist and orchestra was written for Eveyln Glennie (b.1965)<sup>7</sup> and premiered at the BBC Proms. This performance launched the 1992 Music of Today series.

In 1993, MacMillan composed *Seven Last Words from the Cross*, which was commissioned by BBC Television and was first screened in seven nightly episodes during Holy Week 1994. It was performed by Cappella Nova and the BT Scottish ensemble under Alan Tavener.<sup>8</sup> In the years 1994 through 1996, MacMillan traveled frequently. He visited Germany to hear the premiere of *Veni, Veni, Emmanuel* with the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra directed by Sian Edwards, and had his first U.S. performances with the National Symphony in Washington under direction of Mstislav Rostropovich, the Cleveland Orchestra under direction of Jahja Ling as well as the New York Philharmonic (Slatkin), Boston (Ozawa), Milwaukee (Elder), Philadelphia (Andrew Davis), Detroit (Järvi), St Louis (Alsop) and Los Angeles

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<sup>6</sup> Boosey & Hawkes, Composers, Classical Music and Jazz Repertoire

<sup>7</sup> Scottish percussionist

<sup>8</sup> Boosey & Hawkes,

<<http://www.boosey.com/cr/music/James-MacMillan-Seven-Last-Words-from-the-Cross/6108>>

(Gershon). Other international performances were given in Netherlands, France, Sweden, Denmark, Czechoslovakia, Japan and Australia. In 1997, *Veni, Veni, Emmanuel* reached its 100th performance in the five years since its premiere.

In 2000 MacMillan accepted the position as a composer and conductor of the BBC Philharmonic in Manchester, England. While working there, he led annual concerts and made several recordings of his own compositions. In 2009 MacMillan won the prestigious Ivor Novello Classical Music Award and the British Composer Award for Liturgical Music.<sup>9</sup> One of his major choral works, *St. John Passion* (2007), was performed at the City of London Festival under the direction of Sir Colin Davis.<sup>10</sup>

MacMillan was principal guest conductor of the Netherlands Radio Kamer Filharmonie from 2011 to 2012, and from 2012 to 2013 he conducted the NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) Symphony Orchestra and the Vienna Radio Symphony. He is also an associate composer for the Orchestral Ensemble de Paris. His most recently completed major choral work is a new setting of the *St. Luke Passion* for chorus including children choir and chamber orchestra. In October 2014 MacMillan launched a new music festival in his home town of Cumnock.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> "James MacMillan." <[www.intermusica.co.uk/macmillan](http://www.intermusica.co.uk/macmillan)>

<sup>10</sup> Anonymous "James MacMillan"

<sup>11</sup> Boosey & Hawkes,  
<[http://www.boosey.com/pages/cr/composer/composer\\_main.asp?composerid=Biography](http://www.boosey.com/pages/cr/composer/composer_main.asp?composerid=Biography)>

## 1-2 Education and Influences

MacMillan began composing in 1963 while at the Roman Catholic Primary School in Cumnock where he learned music theory, likely due to his studies of piano and trumpet. However he was also interested and inspired by popular music. In an interview with A&E, he said:

“Certainly, when I was younger I was hungry for musical experiences from all angles, and popular culture was one of those things which interested and inspired me.”<sup>12</sup>

His formal music education began at secondary school at Cumnock Academy in 1973. Through Bert Richardson, the head of music department, MacMillan was introduced to Renaissance sacred music as well as Baroque music especially J.S. Bach (1685-1750), and he became attracted to the music of G. Palestrina (1525-1594) and T.L. de Victoria (1548-1611). MacMillan also grew interested in working with large scale instrumental ensembles after he joined the school’s brass band and the County Youth Orchestra. During this time he developed contrapuntal techniques by studying the Baroque masters.

My best teachers were Bach and Palestrina. I studied them avidly at university. At school I tried little Bachian counterpoint exercises. Even though it was pastiche work I enjoyed it. It can provoke and activate the mind to work in a very musical way. Although the language has changed over the centuries, if composers could root themselves in the contrapuntal technique and ethos of that periods they would be doing themselves enormous favours. Yong composers need to be obsessed by inner working of

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<sup>12</sup> Jeremy S. Begbie. *Resounding Truth (Engaging Culture): Christian Wisdom in the World of Music* (2007), p.255; Stephen Andrew Kingsbury. p 8

music and at some state become train-spotterish about the very stuff of music...<sup>13</sup>

In 1977, MacMillan went to University of Edinburgh to study composition with Rita McAllister and earned a BM in composition. During this time MacMillan studied mostly twentieth-century composers such as Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992), Anton Webern (1883-1945), Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) and other Russian composers.<sup>14</sup> He studied instrumental music by Messiaen and ballet music by Stravinsky, especially *The Rite of Spring* (1914, rev. 1937/1967), *The Firebird* (1910, rev. 1919/1935) and *Petrushka* (1911, rev. 1947).

During interview in 1997 he said:

Yes, and for a while I found it quite hard to resist his influence. I can think of a piece I wrote ten years ago, like the orchestral piece 'Tryst', which make certain allusions to Stravinsky...the motoric aspect of the rhythms in pieces like 'Tryst', 'The Confession of Isobel Gowdie' and other pieces from that period certainly sprang from Stravinsky's influence...<sup>15</sup>

MacMillan also studied the music of avant-garde figures such as Luciano Berio (1925-2003) and, Pierre Boulez (b.1925). MacMillan explains:

"During my study, my main interest was studying the cosmopolitan masters, like Boulez and Elliot Carter....absorbing the modernist spirit and techniques"<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Shirley Ratcliffe. "MacMillan," *Choir and Organ* vii, no.3 (1999):38-42.

<sup>14</sup> George Grove, and Stanley Sadie, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Second ed. Vol. 15, p 514

<sup>15</sup> Julian Johnson, and Catherine Sutton. Chapter 2, *Raising Sparks: On the Music of James MacMillan*: 28 September-26 October 1997 (London: Royal Festival Hall. 1997)

<sup>16</sup> Stephen Andrew Kingsbury. "The Early Choral Music of James Macmillan: 1983-1993" (DMA thesis, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2003), 9-10

In 1981, MacMillan went to graduate school of University of Durham in composition (Ph.D) with John Casken (b.1949 English). This was the time that MacMillan developed an interest in *Gamelan music*, the traditional ensemble music of Java and Bali in Indonesia.<sup>17</sup> MacMillan uses gamelan instruments in two of his pieces; *Three Dawn Rituals (1983)* and *The Piper at the Gates of Dawn (1989)*.

Upon returning to Ayrshire in 1983, MacMillan became interested in the folk music of Scotland and Ireland. For example, he set William Soutar's poem *The Tryst* in the style of a Scottish folk ballad. This melody became a motive that reoccurred in later works such as *After the Tryst (1988)* for violin, piano and *Tryst (1989)* for orchestra.<sup>18</sup>

In 1988, MacMillan began drawing influences from Polish composers such as Henryk Górecki (1993-2010) while he was a student of John Casken at the University of Durham. In the 1990s, MacMillan was a guest composer of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and one of his compositions *The Confession of Isobel Gowdie* was premiered by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Jerzy Maksymiuk (b.1936). *The Confession of Isobel Gowdie*, which won him international acclaim, is considered MacMillan's most notable piece because it reflects his strong catholic faith and political beliefs. Isobel Gowdie was a Scottish woman who was tried for witchcraft in 1662. MacMillan had been disturbed by accounts of the executions of alleged 'witches' in his native Scotland after the Reformation, where it is estimated that around 4500 Scottish were murdered (most of them women) for being 'in league with the devil'. Most of these Scottish women were targeted simply because of their sex. In 1662, Isobel Gowdie was

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<sup>17</sup> Stephen Andrew Kingsbury. "The Early Choral Music of James Macmillan: 1983-1993" (DMA thesis, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2003), 9-10

<sup>18</sup> Boosey & Hawkes,  
<<http://www.boosey.com/cr/music/James-MacMillan-Tryst/5742>>

induced under torture to confess to all manner of diabolical acts, for which she was strangled and burned at the stake.<sup>19</sup> In the published score MacMillan wrote:

Initially I was drawn by the dramatic and programmatic potential of this insane and terrible story but the work soon developed a far more emotional core as I attempted to draw together various strands in a single, complicated act of contrition. On behalf of the Scottish people the work craves absolution and offers Isobel Gowdie the mercy and humanity that was denied her in the last days of her life. To do this I have tried to capture the soul of Scotland in music and outer sections contain a multitude of chants, songs and litanies (real and imagined) coming together in a reflective outpouring – a prayer for the murdered woman. This work is the Requiem that Isobel Gowdie never had.<sup>20</sup>

This quote sheds light on what MacMillan feels the responsibility of the composer should be. To MacMillan, a composer is an artist who explores interests and issues larger than composer's own thoughts and ideas.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> MacMillan: The Confession of Isobel Gowdie, Notes. Chandos.

<sup>20</sup> Scottish Music Centre, James MacMillan: Symphony No 3 'Silence' Nov.10. 2014.  
<<http://www.scottishmusiccentre.com/shop/p4629/>>

<sup>21</sup> Stephen Johnson, *Tempo*, New Series, no. 185 (Jun., 1993), pp. 2-5

## CHAPTER II

### 2-1 Traditional Music in Scotland

Studies of the origins of traditional instrumental, vocal and choral music in Scotland can shed light on the development of Scottish choral music. In order to examine the musical languages found in James MacMillan's contemporary choral work, *The Seven Last Words from the Cross*, it is important to research why he is using certain compositional techniques and where they originated. By studying traditional Scottish music resources one can occasionally discover significant musical ideas from Scottish history using non-traditional music theories.

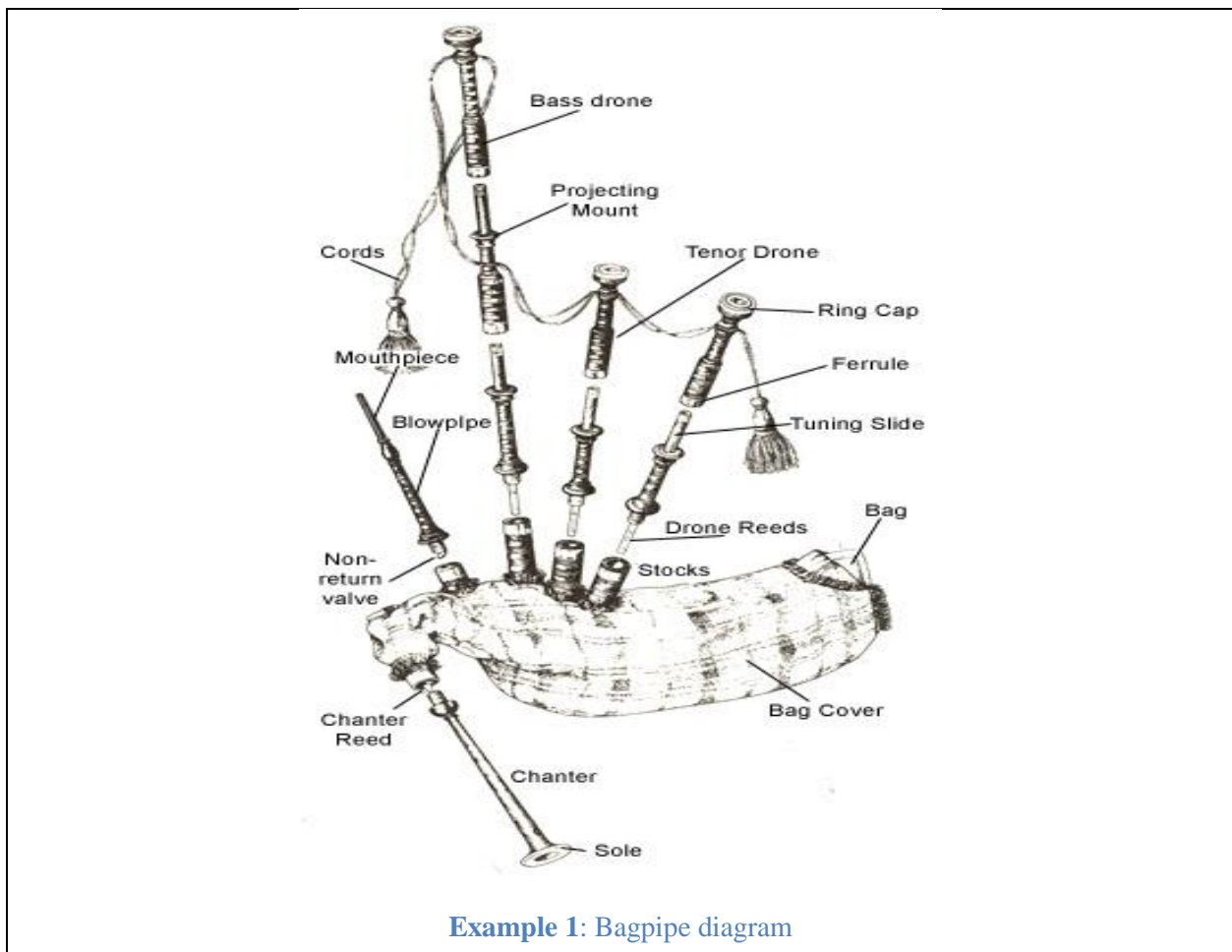
This chapter provides an overview of traditional Scottish music, especially Scottish vocal music focusing on musical characteristics, singing style, and the relationship of instrumental music, especially Scottish bagpipe. In this chapter, I will discuss the development of choral music using the history of early Scottish church music. Knowing the development of Scottish choral societies will also be an important clue to understanding Scottish choral music because the choral societies were the leaders of this genre.

### 2-2 The Bagpipes

The bagpipes, fiddle, and *Clarsach* (Celtic harp) are regarded as the traditional instruments of Scotland. Since the bagpipe is predominant in Scottish tradition, it is important to

understand the mechanics and sounds produced by the instrument as it is helpful in analyzing most of MacMillan's compositions.

There have been different kinds of bagpipes in Scotland for many centuries, but much of the music heard today is connected to the military background, especially from the eighteenth-century when pipe bands were formed in the British army.



Example 1 shows bagpipe diagram by Kevin Auld.<sup>22</sup> The design of the bagpipe includes a blowpipe, an air-bag, a chanter, and drones (one bass and two tenors); sound is produced

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<sup>22</sup> bagpipe instructor and performer in Seattle, WA, USA



through a double reed. The chanter can produce a scale of nine notes G-A-B-C#-D-E-F#-G-A and the two tenor drones play on A and bass the drone plays an octave lower A.

## 2-2a Mode and Pentatonicism

The scale is known as Mixolydian mode (a diatonic scale with flat 7<sup>th</sup>) on A. Many pieces of bagpipe music consist of pentatonic character. Seamus MacNeill (1948-1996)<sup>23</sup> identified three pentatonic scales beginning on A, G, and D, each of which may be used in different ways so as to produce either a major or minor tonality<sup>24</sup>

The outside world is familiar with pentatonicism in Scottish traditional music.<sup>25</sup> Study of Scottish pentatonic melodies reveals that, in Gaelic folk song, three pentatonic scales can be identified all involving anhemitonic scales.<sup>26</sup> Pentatonic songs in Scotland include a greater number of five-note scales (ex. C-D-E-F-G).<sup>27</sup> However, in western music theory the pentatonic scale is constructed of five pitches from the circle of fifths (ex. C-D-E-G-A or M2-M2-m3-M2).<sup>28</sup> In this project the musical term “pentatonic” refers to five-note scales used in Scottish traditional music and is the term used by ethnomusicologists.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> MacNeill was founder of the college of piping, Scotland, 1944.

<sup>24</sup> Kenneth Elliott, “Scotland.” *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, Web. 20 May. 2015.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> These scales do not contain semitones. Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Kenneth Elliott, “Scotland.” *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press. Web. 21 May 2015. <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40113>>.

<sup>28</sup> Jeremy Day-O’Connell. “Pentatonic” *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press. Web. 21 May. 2015. <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/21263>>.

<sup>29</sup> Kenneth Elliott, “Scotland.” *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press. Web. 21 May. 2015. <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40113>>.

Although the pentatonic scale is predominant, other scales are used, such as hexatonic and heptatonic.<sup>30</sup> Based on the bagpipe scale the tonic pitch is A. However, that A is just the name of the note, not the actual sounding pitch. The bagpipe has grown sharper over the years so that the A note on most modern chanters is in the area of a B-flat (sometimes even slightly sharper).<sup>31</sup>

All these bagpipe scales are polytonal; at times the scales sound major while at other times they sound minor. Some of the difficult passages in MacMillan's melodies include chromaticisms and polytonality, which are derived from bagpipe scales. For example, the collection of five notes (F#-G-A-B-C#) in the chorus part of the first movement of *Seven Last Words from the Cross* is taken from the nine notes of the bagpipe scale. Example 2 shows a five note selection taken from the nine notes of a bagpipe scale in the first movement of *Seven Last Words from the Cross*.

The image shows a musical score for the first movement of *Seven Last Words from the Cross*. It features four staves: Soprano (S), Alto 1, Alto 2, and Alto 3. The Soprano staff begins at measure 15 with the lyrics "what they do, Fa-ther, for - give them, for they". The Alto 1 staff has the lyrics "give them, Fa-ther, for - give them, for they know not what they do, they". The Alto 2 staff has the lyrics "Fa-ther, for - give them,". The Alto 3 staff has the lyrics "Fa". A red box highlights a five-note sequence (F#, G, A, B, C#) in the Soprano, Alto 1, and Alto 2 staves. The score includes dynamic markings such as *poco*, *cresc.*, and *pp*.

**Example 2:** Selection of MacMillan's five note in first movement

<sup>30</sup> The hexatonic scale consists of six notes while the heptatonic contains seven.

<sup>31</sup> Kenneth Elliott, "Scotland." *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, Web. 21 May. 2015.

## 2-2b Harmonic Drones

The use of harmonic drones is characteristic of bagpipe music. The three drones use single reeds to play constant notes. The drone notes harmonize with the melody played on the chanter in a similar manner to pedal tones in organ music. This drone figure can be seen in MacMillan's choral and instrumental works, such as in Example 3.

Example 3: Harmonic drones, from third movement of *Seven Last Words from the Cross*

## 2-2c Ornamentations

On the bagpipe, ornamentations or grace notes are most frequently used to emphasize notes. They are also used to separate a single note played two or more times in a row. MacMillan uses this idea in his many compositions. These ornamentations derived from the *Pibroch*, a theme and variation form of bagpipe playing by virtuoso bagpipe players to demonstrate their mastery of the instrument. As MacMillan describes: “*Pibroch* is a form of bagpipe playing that has a lot of florid ornamentation punctuating the line....”<sup>32</sup> There are several types of general

<sup>32</sup> Ratcliffe, Interview with James MacMillan, p.39-42

ornamentation figures used in *Pibroch* including the *Siubhal*,<sup>33</sup> *Dithis*<sup>34</sup>, *Leumluath*,<sup>35</sup> *Taorluath*<sup>36</sup> and *Crunluath*.<sup>37</sup> Example 4 and 5 shows an example from *Pibroch* and an example from *Videns Dominus*, both of which use ornamentations.

The image contains two musical examples. Example 4, titled "Example 4: Pibroch", consists of four staves of music in a single system, each featuring a different ornamentation figure. Example 5, titled "Example 5: Ornamentations, measures 24-26, Videns Dominus by James MacMillan", shows a vocal line with lyrics "La - - za - - re, \_\_\_\_\_" and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a triplet of eighth notes and a grace note. The lyrics are repeated on three staves, and the piano accompaniment is shown on a fourth staff.

<sup>33</sup> A variation in which the theme note is preceded by the tonic A each time. (MacNeill, Seumas, and John MacFadyen. *Piobaireachd: The Classical Music of the Highland Bagpipe*. London: BBC, 1969. Sound recording)

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, A variation in which the theme note is followed by the tonic A each time

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, A leaping section where the theme note is followed is by a grip to the E

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, A combination of four grace notes

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, A combination of seven grace notes

Kenneth Elliott, et al. "Scotland." *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, Web. 21 May. 2015. <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40113>>.

Bagpipe music is one of the most varied forms of folk music in Scotland and characteristic aspects of the bagpipe are seen in many MacMillan's works.

## 2-3 Vocal Tradition

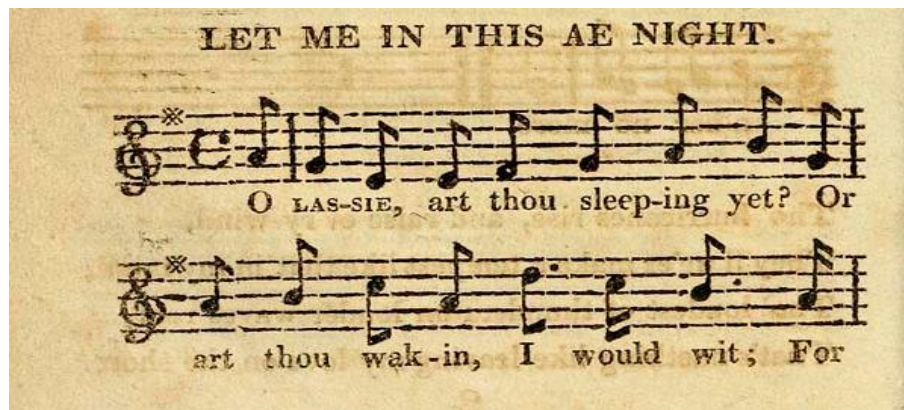
Scotland is well-known for its traditional folk music, which is in turn influenced by traditional English and Irish music. When studying Scottish folk music, it is important to consider vocal, instrumental, and dance music, since because these traditions often use the same material in different ways. Many songs also appear in instrumental versions and instrumental pieces can be danced to or have words to sing. In most cases, it is impossible to say which version is the original. For example, *O let me in this ae night* (Example 6) appears as a song in the Scottish Musical Museum in 1792,<sup>38</sup> but it is also recorded as a fiddle piece in different versions of the fiddle book of 1805.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Johnson, *The Scots Musical Museum*, vol. IV (1792) p.320

<sup>39</sup> *The Scots Musical Museum*, a collection of songs

<<http://www.bl.uk/collection-items/the-scots-musical-museum-a-collection-of-songs>>



Example 6: Manuscript of *Let me in this ae night* (Scottish Musical Museum)

## 2-3a Ballads

The main genres of vocal music are ballads and laments, which are very popular in Scottish vocal music and are generally sung by one singer with accompanying instruments such as the harp, fiddle, or bagpipes. Scottish vocal music was also used for special occasions such as weddings, kirns, and farewell parties. However, very little is known of the actual songs used and the versions may vary from one place to another. For example, *Good night and joy be with you all* was a farewell party song from southern Scotland in the eighteenth-century. We can find this piece in a number of song books in slightly different versions in Edinburgh but we can also find this song in Aberdeen's collection of nineteenth-century song which circulated all over Scotland.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Songs & Their History  
<<http://www.justanothertune.com/html/partingglass.html>>

Scottish vocal music has a very long history. The first collection of Scottish folk songs was written by John Forbes (d. 1675). The Scottish music publisher in Aberdeen published *Songs and Fancies, to Three, Four, or Five Parts, both Apt for Voices and Viols* in 1682 (Example 7). It was printed a total of three times over the next twenty years and it contained 77 songs with English text.<sup>41</sup>

1282 FORBES (JOHN) CANTUS, SONGS AND FANCIES to 3, 4 or 5 Parts, with brief introduction to Musick as taught by T. Davidsen, SECOND EDITION, morocco super extra, borders of gold, g. e. by C. Lewis, Aberdene, J. Forbes, 1666  
 \* \* An extremely rare Aberdeen Cantus, which cost £5. 12s. 6d.  
 1283 Forbes (J.) Cantus, Third Edition enlarged, morocco extra, g. e. very rare Aberdeen, 1682

THE FIRST SONG.

F care doth cause menery. Why do I not complain? It every wight bewails his woe, Why do I not the fame?

Since that amongst them all, I dare well say is none So far from joy, so full of woe, Nor hath more cause to mourne.	For all things living hith Sometime a quiet rest; The drawing Ox, the bearing Ass, And every other Beast.	The Peifand and the Post, Which are at all assayes, The Ship-boy, and the Galey flare, Halt time to take their ease.
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C Save

**Example 7:** *Songs and Fancies, to Three, Four, or Five Parts, both Apt for Voices and Viols*

Most of the Scottish ballads published in the book are anonymous which was common as Scottish folk music was just being printed beginning in the seventeenth-century. However, Scottish folk music started being printed en masse during the eighteenth-century and included great works, such as *Orpheus Caledonius*, a collection of Scottish songs published in 1733; James Oswald's (1711-1769, Scottish composer) *The Caledonian Pocket Companion*, published

<sup>41</sup> Folk Music, A Guide to Folk Music of the World  
 <<http://www.music-folk.com/scottish-folk-music/>>  
 <<https://archive.org/details/cantussongsfanci00forb>>

in 1751; and David Herd's (1732-1810, Scottish anthologist) *Ancient and modern Scottish songs, heroic ballads, etc. collected from memory, tradition and ancient authors*, published in 1776.<sup>42</sup>

The region most often associated with the Scottish ballads (also called bothy ballads) is East Scotland and in particular, the Grampian region of Aberdeen. This region holds a rural population who traditionally speak a strong dialect called *Doric* which is often included in song lyrics, such as those by Charles Murray (1864-1941 Scottish poet) who was one of the rural poets from the Aberdeen. One of his most popular songs was *Gin I was God* (If I were God).

Until a century ago, many ballad melodies were utilized by the agricultural workers who ventured to every part of the nation as migrant workers. They would use these songs at gatherings to comment on the issues of the day as well as maintaining historical accounts of heroic and dishonorable activities. The travelers are a very important source of the folk music in Scotland, where travelling folk are largely associated with gypsy or roving families. In the past, they would travel as a community from rural fairs and other agricultural events such as harvests and plantings. Their way of life was one of freedom, where at camp during the night they would gather around the fire tell ballads to the children and sing them among the group, thus preserving their way of life in song.

The vocal music of Scotland is considered monadic, consisting of a unharmonized solo vocal melodic line. Some Lowland folk song tunes are characterized by a dual modality or bitonality, where the melody apparently begins in one mode and ends in another mode.<sup>43</sup> Scottish vocal music is generally accompanied by bagpipe and percussion. However, in an orally transmitted state it does not have supporting harmony. Heterophony may have arisen when

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<sup>42</sup> David Herd, and George Paton. *Ancient and modern Scottish songs, heroic ballads*, Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press. 1973.

<sup>43</sup> Kenneth Elliott, "Scotland." *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, 19 May. 2015.



several instruments played a tune simultaneously, but with different ornamentation. This music occurred in the churches for the special occasion of singing metrical psalms. Metrical psalm is a regular syllabic meter which thus can be sung to a hymn-tune.<sup>44</sup> In home worship, the psalm singing is more ornamental, at times like the decorations.<sup>45</sup>

In Scottish vocal music, there was a specific folk singing style which differed from the classical music style. Scottish musicians in the eighteenth-century distinguished folk singing as a “chanting” described as follows;

In singing, or rather chanting, this ballad, the last two lines of every stanza are repeated. In 1786 I heard a lady then in her 90<sup>th</sup> year, sing the ballad in this manner.<sup>46</sup>

...these wild and monotonous strains so common in Scotland, to which the natives of that country chant their old ballads.<sup>47</sup>

The most brilliant [historical] episodes are occasionally chanted to monotonous legendary airs.<sup>48</sup>

It is interesting that Scott and Leyden uses the words “monotonous.” They are not just saying that the tunes consist of one note, or a narrow range. It could also mean that the songs were sung in an undemonstrative deadpan style.

Ballads were also sung slowly in free rhythm and highly ornamented style with no audible beat.<sup>49</sup> More evidence regarding the singing style is recorded by Robert Bremner (1713-

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<sup>44</sup> “Metrical Psalm” *The Oxford Dictionary of Music*, 2nd ed. rev. Ed. Michael Kennedy, *Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, Web. 19 May. 2015.

<<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t237/e6758>>.

<sup>45</sup> Rice, Timothy, James Porter, and Chris Goertzen, 2000 “Scotland.” *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music* Volume 8 – Europe, p. 391-409.

<sup>46</sup> William Stenhouse, 1820, Illustrations, no.203, ‘Gil Morice’

<sup>47</sup> Walter Scott, Waverley novels, Volume 6, p.288

<sup>48</sup> John Leyden, 1801, Preliminary dissertation, p.225

<sup>49</sup> Kenneth Elliott, “Scotland.” *Grove Music Online*, *Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press. Web 19 May 2015

1789 Scottish music publisher), in an essay published in 1762. He writes about the difficulties that such musicians faced. John Glenn (1801-1862) actually described country singers “make themselves ridiculous.”<sup>50</sup> Another difficulty was that country singers frequently sang out of tune, usually flat on the 7<sup>th</sup> degrees of the scale or a major second below the tonic note. For example, in the psalm tune in the region of Dundee, even when there is accompaniment, singers sing the 7<sup>th</sup> scale degree flat. William Daune (1800-1843 Scottish musician) also remarked about this flat 7<sup>th</sup> note in 1838:

The use of the flat, instead of the sharp, 7<sup>th</sup> for the penultimate note, is an ancient...practice...the remains of which still subsist in the psalm and even ballad singing of the uneducated, in all parts of the country.<sup>51</sup>

The reason singers sing the 7<sup>th</sup> scale degree flat is related to the bagpipe scale, which produces a Mixolydian scale.<sup>52</sup>

The timbre of most ballad songs may almost be considered to be in conversational style with tone qualities of informal speech, such as a more narrative tone. The singer's basic responsibility is to tell a story in a dialect and accent which can be understood by listeners. This more personal tone creates a warm and relaxing environment for the listener.

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<sup>50</sup> Glenn, John, 1900, *Early Scottish Melodies*, p.2

<sup>51</sup> William Daune, *Ancient Scottish Melodies*.

<http://www.wirestrungharp.com/library/daune.html>

<sup>52</sup> Diatonic scale with flat 7<sup>th</sup>

## 2-3b Laments

Another main genre of the Scottish vocal music was the Lament. A lament refers to any piece of music expressing grief, specifically music for bagpipes at Scottish funerals.<sup>53</sup> However, laments can be an interpretative approach to song or chant. Since this genre was often used for funerals in many rural communities, laments have a ritual character. The ritual lament accompanying a major rite of passage often involves weeping and cries of grief. A well-known lament was *Cumha na Cloinne* (Lament for the Children) composed by Padruig Mor MacCrimmon<sup>54</sup> in 1650s, composed for death of seven of MacCrimmon's sons (Example 8). This music is for the Scottish bagpipes.

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<sup>53</sup> "Lament" The Oxford Companion to Music. Ed. Alison Latham, *Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, Web. 27 May. 2015. <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e3820>>.

<sup>54</sup> Scottish piper

**CUMHA NA CLOINNE.**  
*THE CHILDREN'S LAMENT.*

5. *Moderate.*

Example 8: Beginning of *Cumha na Cloinne*<sup>55</sup>

It is important to understand the lament when studying MacMillan's *Seven Last Words from the Cross*, but traces of this genre are found in his other works, as well. In 1991, MacMillan composed the instrumental piece *Tuireadh*. *Tuireadh* is Gaelic for "lament" or "requiem" and attempts to musically capture this outpouring of grief by making allusions to the intervallic and ornamental archetypes of various lament styles from Scottish traditional music. After three years, this music became one most influential source of *Seven Last Words from the Cross*.

<sup>55</sup> The World's Largest On-line Collection of Bagpipe Music, <<http://www.ceolsean.net/alttitles.html>>

## 2-3c Gaelic Song

There are many folk singers who concentrate on Gaelic singing. Gaelic is a Celtic language brought from Ireland before 500AD that has survived to modern times because of a strong oral tradition. Vocalization and using the harp and the bagpipe are strong indicators of Gaelic singing character. Most Scottish Gaelic poetry is intended to be sung. The verses were syllabic with a fixed number of syllables to the line but without any regular stress-pattern, following instead the natural stresses of the language.<sup>56</sup>

The most famous Gaelic folk genres are *Waulking Songs* (“Walking Songs,” Example 9), generally sung by women folding the cloth after weaving and *Quern songs* for grinding grain, which were also sung by females. The *Waulking Songs*, which involve a call and response pattern are lengthy and draw their themes and melodies from diverse sources.<sup>57</sup> Some famous songs for male voices are the *Rowing song* and *Shearing songs* for cutting crops. All Gaelic folk songs have words of great importance that reinforced community and rhythm to keep the pace of work consistent.

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<sup>56</sup> Kenneth Elliott, “Scotland.” *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press. Web 19 May 2015

<sup>57</sup> Rice, Timothy, James Porter, and Chris Goertzen, 2000 “Scotland.” *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music* Volume 8 – Europe, p. 391-409.

### 33.—WAULKING SONG.

[LAMENT ON SETHAN MÒR, SON OF THE KING OF IRELAND.]

Noted by L. E. BROADWOOD.

Often heard at Arisaig.

*♩ = 60*  
VERSE (Hummed) CHORUS  
'S maireg thu-bhart rium-sa Gu'mb'n bhean shubh-ach mi! Hi ri, hur-ra-bhi Ò-hó.  
VERSE or *theirt* CHORUS  
Bean bhoichd, chràidht-each, dheur-ach, chumh-ach mi! Na hi a bhò O hao-o-o-ho!

*Cf. the tune with that of "Tha mo run air a 'Ghillie" in Celtic Lyre and Chotstr Chuil.—L. E. B.*

#### Example 9: Waulking Song

Aspects of Scottish traditional music can be found in MacMillan's *Seven Last Words from the Cross* and includes, use of the pentatonic scale and harmonic drones which often occurs in bagpipes, use of ornamentations found in traditional folk songs and instruments. MacMillan's use of Scottish traditional music material is a most important musical language in his works and it became a feature of MacMillan's personal style.

#### 2-4 Choral Tradition

Usually when people think of the music of Scotland, thoughts easily go to Skirl of bagpipes, the music of Celtic folksongs, or even the movie *'Brave heart'*. However, these musical and cultural traditions do not constitute all of Scottish music. Scotland also has a heritage of choral music, even though that heritage can be difficult to trace. According to many

church history resources, there was choral music in Scotland during the early medieval period. Unfortunately, very little evidence remains about Scottish choral music from that period.

Scotland's choral music begins with early medieval sacred music. According to Reese in his book *Music in the Middle Age*, Gregorian chant was introduced in Scotland by the eighth-century in Glasgow.<sup>58</sup> In the eleventh-century churches began to develop in a variety of ways including through church music, such as church choirs. Some cathedrals like the St. Machar's in Aberdeen (1256) founded a “choir (or song) school” to train boy singers; however enrollment at these institutions was quite small, with only two to six boys participating from the thirteenth to fifteen-centuries.<sup>59</sup>

Nothing is known about any secular Scottish music before the sixteenth-century, except some ballads and folk songs; however, very few vocal or instrumental pieces from that time are accessible today. Most of this music was enjoyed by the aristocracy. During this time, French influence was strong, as the Scottish adapted many French compositions from Dufay, Machaut and Lassus.

Scottish choral music began to flourish during the sixteenth-century in the collegiate churches of Edinburgh, St. Andrew, Glasgow, and Aberdeen despite near constant war with England. The influence of the Reformation and the Presbyterianism of John Knox, in general, showed some of the strides being made toward the development of the strong polyphonic tradition. Knox was one of the leaders of the Reformation in Scotland who had profound faith in Calvin's theologies and tried to apply them in Scotland. He was more open-minded than other leaders. For instance, there were other musicians who took Knox and Calvin's teachings to

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<sup>58</sup> Gustave Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages* (New York: Norton, 1940)

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.* p.14

extreme lengths, restricting church music to several plain settings of the psalms.<sup>60</sup> The revolution against the Catholic Church's perspective on music produced Psalters in Scotland as well as England and France. *The Scottish Psalter* of 1564 may be the most extreme example of Scottish Catholic style after the Reformation.<sup>61</sup>

In 1712, Handel permanently settled in England and primarily composed music with English texts, especially oratorios. Handel's most important innovation in the oratorio was the use of the chorus. His experience with choral music from Italy and Germany, led him to give the choral part more prominence. His early training familiarized him with the Lutheran chorale tradition. Chorales are typically four-part settings, which consist of a melody and three lower voices, and often include classical settings of hymns. These chorales tend to be simple tunes with the texts often sung in a rhyming scheme and are in strophic form. Handel was especially influenced by the English choral tradition,<sup>62</sup> which he had absorbed and extended in his choral composition, *Chandos Anthems* (1717-1718), and other works for Chapel Royal in England. Handel's music became so popular that even after his death, it was frequently performed. During the Baroque period, amateur choristers were rare. Amateur choral societies had not yet been created, and choristers came mainly from the cathedral as well as other well-known church choirs. Currently in Scotland, there are more than a hundred choral groups producing concerts actively in major cities such as Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen. As a result, they produced many great conductors as well as choral groups, after Handel's death.

After Handel's death, the Scottish organized various choral festivals toward the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth-centuries. From that time on, the amateur choral

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<sup>60</sup> Cedric Thorpe Davie, *Scotland's Music* (William Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1980) p.35-36

<sup>61</sup> The Scottish Psalter of 1635  
<<http://www.cgmusic.org/workshop/scot1635>>

<sup>62</sup> The anthems generally consist of 6-8 movement including instrument sinfonia or overture, solo and choruses



societies started to grow fast and became a fundamental part of society. Currently, amateur choral groups are spread throughout Scotland, because they have enough trained composers and choral conductors.

When Handel produced his first English oratorio *Esther* in 1720, there was no properly organized choral group in Scotland.<sup>63</sup> There were concerts occasionally, which were performed by well-known music groups such as the “Musical Society of Edinburgh.” According to Arnot in the *History of Edinburgh*, before that time several gentlemen performed a weekly club at the Cross Keys Tavern (kept by one Still, a great lover of music and good singer of Scotland songs), where the common entertainment consisted in playing the concertos and sonatas of Corelli, then just published, and the overtures of Handel.<sup>64</sup> That group expanded in 1728 into a society of seventy vocalists and instrumentalists for the purpose of performing weekly concerts. This society worked systematically and management was in the hands of the governor and also five directors. The concert was at first designated the “Gentlemen's Concert” and they had a concert in the St. Mary's Chapel.<sup>65</sup>

In 1762, the society became a much larger group, so they built St. Cecilia Hall at Wynd. They performed some operas and other concerts and, their programs contained the best music of the time. Famous artists were engaged, and during the eighteenth through the mid-nineteenth century, this organization was the center of concert production of musical art in Scotland.

Nineteen years after the Edinburgh Society was founded, the city of Aberdeen organized the music society in 1747. The members were from the district and it was managed by a mayor

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<sup>63</sup> Robert, A. Marr. *The Rise of Choral Societies in Scotland, Music for the People* (John Menzies & Co, Edinburgh, 1889), p 6

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* p.7

<sup>65</sup> Hugo Arnot. *The History of Edinburgh: From the Earliest Accounts to the Present Time* (London: Messrs Robinson & Co., 1788), p 379

and musical directors. They performed great music and artists of repute appeared at weekly concerts.<sup>66</sup>

The city of Dundee had a music society during the middle of the eighteenth-century, but very little is known about it. This society performed instrumental works including overtures by Handel. According to Thom in his book, *History of Aberdeen*, some music books or program notes from the eighteenth-century carry the stamp of the “Dundee Musical Society.”<sup>67</sup>

The Musical Societies of Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and Dundee were mainly instrumental societies. But the Edinburgh Music Society had additional distinctive features in its composition since several of its members were vocalists able to take part in singing choruses. For example, Handel gave his special permission for them to perform his oratorios. Unfortunately, there were no actual choral performances because the Italian opera was predominant and many songs in the society's library were arranged for orchestral accompaniment, including Handel's Italian operas.

In 1755, a funeral concert was performed by the Edinburgh Musical Society for the death of the Governor of the society under the direction of J.F. Lampe. The program consisted of choral music from Handel's oratorios such as *Samson*, *Deborah*, *Messiah*, and *Judas Maccabaeus* at the new concert hall, the “Canongate Theater.”<sup>68</sup>

The year 1772 was remarkable for the Edinburgh Music Society because their documented concert schedule was programmed with only choral works with orchestral

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<sup>66</sup> Robert, A. Marr. *The Rise of Choral Societies in Scotland, Music for the People* (John Menzies & Co, Edinburgh, 1889), p 9

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.* p 10

<sup>68</sup> Robert, A. Marr. *The Rise of Choral Societies in Scotland, Music for the People* (John Menzies & Co, Edinburgh, 1889), p 13

accompaniment.<sup>69</sup> For example, they performed, Jommelli's *La Passione*, in March; Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* during Easter week; Handel's *Acis and Galatea* in July; and in December, Handel's *Messiah*.

In 1815, there was a music festival held in the city of Edinburgh, which presented choral music. Later, this festival became a large choral festival. Many choral groups performed Psalm tunes, oratorios, and choral works by Handel and Haydn.<sup>70</sup>

By the middle of the nineteenth-century, most choirs were established in principal cities of Scotland. A significant feature of Scotland in the nineteenth-century was the establishment of music education. They built a music school and started to teach young musicians singing, harmony, and music theory. The development of choral festivals, the establishment of choirs, and music education were a distinct step of the musical evolution in Scotland.

## 2-5 MacMillan's Musical Identity

MacMillan's musical identity can be categorized into two parts: his strong Roman Catholic faith and his involvement in Scottish traditional music especially Celtic.

In most of MacMillan's compositions, he draws deeply on his Scottish heritage as motivation for his works. His interest in traditional Scottish music began when he was a university student. As MacMillan described in an interview with *The Thistle and the Shamrock*, National Public Radio program:

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid. p 23

<sup>70</sup> "The Choral Outlook in Scotland" *The Musical Herald* (2009), p 82

It wasn't anything that had any precedent in my earlier life. Scottish music wasn't a part of my family background. I discovered it afresh, and it was like a brand new discovery for me, aged twenty-two, twenty-three, which is quite an incredible thing for any Scottish musician to make that discovery of one's self at such a late stage.<sup>71</sup>

During his time at the university, he began to play and sing Scottish and Irish traditional music at folk clubs and pubs in western Scotland. MacMillan eventually joined a folk band called Broadstone. Later on when he returned to Scotland after studying in the University of Durham, England. He became interested in Scottish political issues too, MacMillan explains:

During my study....I thought maybe I had ignored something in the reservoir of cultural experiences Scottish people had. I think I speak for most Scottish composers when I say it's not an antiquarian or folklorist instinct that makes us delve into this, but to find a resonance, and do ever-changing things with it; it's not a conservative musical instinct.<sup>72</sup>

MacMillan's use of Scottish traditional music material became a central element in his "newly emerging fecundity of expression."<sup>73</sup> And it became a feature of MacMillan's personal style, appearing in most of his compositions.

MacMillan's Roman Catholic faith has a strong influence on both his personal and professional life as a composer. The majority of his music shows spiritual beliefs. MacMillan

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<sup>71</sup> Fiona Ritche. Interview with James MacMillan, on *The Thistle and the Shamrock: Classic Collaborations*

<sup>72</sup> Robinson. "Seven last words of wisdom: *Scottish composer James MacMillan shares his philosophy.*"

<sup>73</sup> Potter, James. "MacMillan in focus; *introduction to the music of James MacMillan*"

says: “my own music is inspired by spiritual and theological matters.”<sup>74</sup> MacMillan also mentions his love of sacred music:

I used to sing tenor in choirs at school, and later at university, and I loved it. Sacred music is something I’ve always enjoyed writing, ever since I was in school.<sup>75</sup>

MacMillan’s Catholic faith usually appears in his use of sacred text settings. The text setting originates not only from his familiarity with the liturgy, but also from the significance that these texts have for him. MacMillan also uses religious musical material like Gregorian chant, chorales. MacMillan frequently creates a musical structure derived directly from the liturgical practice. In crafting liturgical works, he is especially concerned with the way the music conveys the overall narrative.

He explains:

“I’ve always been interested in liturgy and inspired by it since I was a boy. The non-narrative aspect of it has influenced my music. Having said that, there is that in me which is interested in pure narrative in telling a story. I think that there may be a potential creative conflict in those two approaches: the stylized, ritualistic, non-narrative sense of theater which one can find, I think, in piece like *Seven last words*, (and) the human dimension that goes underneath the artificiality of pure liturgy.”<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> James MacMillan, *From the window; a worldwide magazine of journalism, poetry, travelogues, and experiential writing*.

<sup>75</sup> Roderic Dunnett. “Subtle Celebration: *James MacMillan talks to Roderic Dunnett about composing sacred and liturgical music*”, “Music and Vision Daily” (2000).

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

## CHAPTER III

### 3-1 History of the Seven Last Words and Other Compositions

The seven last words of Jesus Christ on the cross constitutes one of the most dramatic events in Christ's life. This theme has inspired many artists, especially choral composers for centuries. In my research, I have noted at least forty-five composers who used these words as inspiration in composing music for both voice and instruments.

The first known setting of "The seven last words" is *Septem verba Domini Jesu Christi* by Orlando di Lasso (1530-1594), Franco-Flemish composer of the late Renaissance. Perhaps the best known setting of this text is a German cantata by Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672), *Die sieben Worte Jesu Christi am Kreuz*, SWV 478 (1645, revised 1655). Schütz composed the work in Weissenfels Germany for a performance in Dresden. Joseph Haydn's (1732-1809) setting of the seven last words is also a well-known piece however, it was originally an orchestral work that premiered in 1786, for the Good Friday service at Oratorio de la Santa Cueva (Holy Cave Oratory) in Cádiz, Spain. In 1787 the Viennese music publisher Artaria requested that he create a string quartet version. From 1794-1795, Haydn again revised the work, this time creating a choral version with a German text. This version premiered on March 26, 1796 in Vienna and was published in 1801.

Musical settings of "The seven last words" form a sub-genre of the Passion genre which always contains the story of Jesus's suffering and crucifixion based on Biblical text. Passion

settings began during the Middle Ages, as a plain chant or plainsong, which was sung by the deacon. During the fifteenth-century, the three parts were often sung by three deacons and as a result, the dramatic nature of the text was amplified, and the congregation could follow the narrative easily. In the sixteenth-century, new types of passions were introduced. Popular in Italy was the Responsorial Passion in which the words of Jesus Christ were set in the polyphonic sections. The Motet Passion was also through-composed and set polyphonically. Lastly the Summa Passion, comprised of excerpts from the four gospels, was widely popular.<sup>77</sup>

The region that contributed the most to the development of “The seven last words” and the Passion during the seventeenth and eighteenth-centuries was Germany where Lutheran composers such as Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672), J.S. Bach (1685-1750) and Georg Telemann (1681-1767) wrote representative works. In the nineteenth-century “The seven last words of Jesus Christ” and passion texts were usually found in oratorios, which used a large orchestra and chorus.

In the modern age, “The seven last words of Jesus Christ” and the Passion are written in a variety of musical styles according to the composer’s background and interpretation of the crucifixion scene. This genre now stands as a major category of music.

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<sup>77</sup> Kurt von Fischer and Werner Braun, “Passion” *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online* <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40090>>

### 3-2 An Overview of MacMillan's *Seven Last Words from the Cross*

Like the music of Olivier Messiaen, an acknowledged influence, MacMillan's compositions are inseparable from his devotion to Roman Catholic Church. This sense of religious belief inspires much of his work, in which he seeks to combine the sacred with the everyday. In a 2004 interview, MacMillan said:

“To me, the very sense of the sacred that we are talking about is rooted in the here and now, in the joys and tragedies of everyday life, in the grit and mire of human existence”.<sup>78</sup>

Traces of this ideas are evident in the choral work, *Seven Last Words from the Cross*, where MacMillan attempts to come to terms with the violence and dramatic point of the events on the cross as well as to meditate on their spiritual significance. In a 2008, interview with Mandy Hallam, MacMillan mentions that the composers who inspired him the most in creating the work were Messiaen, Schnittke and those involved in the Catholic faith.

....whether they are Catholic or not, composers have inspired me, Messiaen, in particular, has been a great beacon for the rest of us. Schnittke's religion is never really talked about, but I think I'm right in saying that he and Sofia Gubaidulina<sup>79</sup> have had this relationship with Catholicism; maybe they converted or something, but they are very interested in Catholicism.....<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Robert Hugill *Classical source*, (2005)

<[http://www.classicalsource.com/db\\_control/db\\_features.php?id=2850](http://www.classicalsource.com/db_control/db_features.php?id=2850)>

<sup>79</sup> A profoundly spiritual person, Gubaidulina defines "re-ligio" as re-legato or as restoration of the connection between oneself and the Absolute.

<sup>80</sup> Mandy Hallam *Tempo* 62, no.245 (2008) 17-29.



*Seven Last Words from the Cross* was commissioned by BBC Television and first screened in seven nightly episodes during the Holy Week, March 26 to April 1, 1994. It was performed by Cappella Nova and the Scottish ensemble directed by Alan Tavener. However, in his 2008 interview, MacMillan revealed that he wanted the piece performed in a single concert rather than seven.

“This is very interesting thing because, in a sense, the televised version has been left behind. In my mind, *Seven Last Words* always was singular piece in seven movements, which have to be encountered as a unity, a completeness, but the way that the BBC decided to broadcast it – and I was aware of this right from the beginning – was they would put one movement per night on BBC2 during Holy Week. It started on Palm Sunday and finished on Saturday; it was still all within Lent. So actually, that did have a bearing on the first piece; because as I knew it was going out on Palm Sunday, I used Palm Sunday text in number one, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David’. But I was very aware that it was a very incomplete and unsatisfactory way of presenting the piece: it amounted to little five to seven minute programmes between the new and the cricket or something.”<sup>81</sup>

The first complete performance was on March 30, 1994 at the St. Aloysius Church in Glasgow featuring the same performers. A video of the performance won the Royal Philharmonic Society’s award for best music video of the year, and it was nominated as a finalist for the Mercury Prize at the Edinburgh International Festival.<sup>82</sup> When MacMillan received his commission from the BBC in late 1993, he found it difficult to start composing, but he was able to complete the work just two months before the concert. On the experience he recalls:

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<sup>81</sup> Mandy Hallam *Tempo* 62, no.245 (2008) 17-29.

<sup>82</sup> The Edinburgh International Festival is an annual performing arts festival of Scotland. The festival director invites world-class musicians, dancers, and actors from throughout the globe to perform.

“I dried up and it felt like a creative block. *Seven last words* was the next piece – deadlines were looming. By October into November of that year (1993) not a note had been written although I had been thinking about it. The commissioner and performers were getting worried. Suddenly those seven movements came very quickly and by January it was finished.”<sup>83</sup>

For Christians, the events of Holy Week and particularly Good Friday have a very special significance. Though there are many dramatic and violent moments in MacMillan’s work, one is constantly brought back to a sense of silence. In this respect the strings have an important role to play as they are not treated as accompaniment, but rather provide significant interludes and linking passages that support, comment on and amplify the choir’s contribution. Its aura of deep melancholy is intermittently amplified by moments of thorny grief, occasionally relieved by passages of soul-comforting beauty. MacMillan fleshes out the stark brevity of Jesus Christ’s final sentences in this piece with assorted traditional sacred Latin texts, which is mostly translated into English and includes Tenebrae responsories for Good Friday. MacMillan sets this piece in the style of Bach’s great Passions, using the chorale to present commentary and reflection.<sup>84</sup>

Overall, MacMillan’s *Seven Last Words from the Cross* is a combination of old and new compositional styles. While this piece might be classified as inaccessible due to the high-level of technical skill required of the singers and string players, these same skills contribute to the uniqueness of the work. For example, though MacMillan writes an *ostinato* in the strings, a

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<sup>83</sup> Shirley Ratcliffe. “MacMillan” *Choir & Organ*, 7, no.3 (1999): 38-42

<sup>84</sup> Lindsay Koob, *American Record Guide* 69 no.2 (2006) p 123

technique that is rooted in Baroque music, he requires modern string bowing techniques such as *col legno battute ricochet*,<sup>85</sup> *sul ponticello*<sup>86</sup> and *flautando*.<sup>87</sup>

MacMillan was inspired by traditional Scottish instrumental music such as the bagpipes, and depicts this sound in the chorus through grace note trills and use of the high-tessitura. He also looks back to early music styles such as chant singing and punctuated by extended caesura.

Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of the piece is the text used. In a 2009 interview with *Fanfare*, MacMillan says he was aware of the Haydn and Schütz settings of the work, but more influential to him was the liturgical observance of Good Friday that he experienced since childhood. This explains the additional liturgical text that he adds to the work.<sup>88</sup>

An interesting aspect of MacMillan's compositional technique in the *Seven Last Words from the Cross* is his use of ornamentation in a manner that does not disturb the vocal and string lines. He describes this compositional technique writing:

“This may come from a number of sources; the natural Western tradition, the Baroque style of ornamentation and my interest of Celtic folk tradition of singing, fiddle playing and the bagpipes. The *Pibroch* is a form of bagpipe playing that has a lot of florid ornamentation punctuating the line.”<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Hit with wood, drooping

<sup>86</sup> Near the bridge

<sup>87</sup> Flute like, bow at the finger board

<sup>88</sup> Graham Ross. *Fanfare*, October, p193, 2009

<sup>89</sup> Shirley Ratcliffe. *Choir & Organ*, Jun.1999, Vol.7, p38

Example 10 shows the Scottish traditional *Pibroch*.



**Example 10:** Scottish Traditional *Pibroch*

MacMillan was also inspired by Gaelic psalm singing from the Hebrides, which is mostly modal, and sounds akin to Semitic or Persian music. During worship, a precentor leads the singing and the voices follow in a canonic design heterophonically covering and ghosting the line. We can hear a bending of the pitches and somewhat expressive *glissandi*. While this might sound unusual, the compositional procedure has continually appealed to Scottish composers, including MacMillan. He said:

“If I look at my music objectively I can see the Celtic influence: a solid line punctuated by little flurries of ornaments.”<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Shirley Ratcliffe. *Choir & Organ*, Jun.1999, Vol.7, p39

The compositional techniques MacMillan uses in this work create an overwhelming effect. Some of the passages deliver a feeling of the Scottish lament, especially the long instrumental postlude concluding the last movement.

MacMillan tried to balance what is ugly and painful about the story of Crucifixion against the beauty of its more transcendental spiritual aspects. He says;

‘Sometimes I look for a simple idea that could either be repetitive or form patterns that go round in circles. This can focus attention and create atmosphere giving a bed rock of sound from which other things emerge. It could be a repeated set of chords or a melodic phrase. That sense of focusing on a thought is good because it allows you to narrow your material down. I try to make the most out of limited resources, which is not to say it’s minimalist.’<sup>91</sup>

Thus, when we listen this piece, MacMillan gives us moments of jagged torment, pain, and despair that makes us want to run and hide from the cross. But later he draws us back with more comfortable, yet just as piercing episodes of loveliness and sacred beauty.<sup>92</sup>

In MacMillan’s music, especially the *Seven Last Words from the Cross*, one will hear realistic expressions and heightened emotions emphasized through drastic dynamic changes and contrasting textures.

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<sup>91</sup> Ratcliffe. p38

<sup>92</sup> Koob, Lindsay *American record Guide*; Sep 2009; 72, 5, p139

### 3-3 Text Setting and Translation

The Passion story chronicles the last week of Jesus's life, from his way to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to his crucifixion on Good Friday and resurrection on Easter Sunday. The texts are excerpted from the Gospel messages as they are deserving of independent and individual thought, particularly during Holy Week. "The seven last words" in particular, is a significant ceremonial expansion celebrated once a year, on Good Friday. The Passion story is also one of the few stories that is told through all four Gospels however, all of "The seven last words" cannot be found in any one of the gospel narratives. As a result, they provide an interesting pietistic attempt to blend the story present in every one of the four. Settings of the Passion have been routinely celebrated in ceremonial services for quite a long time, yet since they are expected from the Gospels, they are only presented from an Evangelist's point of view. Musical settings of the seven last words are substantially more uncommon than settings of the Passion story. Denis Arnold and Basil Smallman comments on this development in their article on Passions in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music*:

Early in the 16th century there evolved a further type of setting (described as through-composed) in which the entire account is drawn, in compressed form, from all four gospels and set in continuous choral polyphony. Usually sections of the traditional chant are woven into the choral texture and distinctions between individual and crowd utterances created by the disposition of the voice parts. The earliest known example is a Latin St Matthew Passion (so called, but based on all four gospels) by Antoine de Longueval (fl 1507-22), who served as maître de chapelle to Louis XII of France. This form was subsequently cultivated by numerous minor composers, Catholic and Protestant, including Johannes Galliculus, Jacob Regnart, and Bartholomäus Gesius. Invariably these settings comprised several (from three to five) partes, the last

of which embraces all the Seven Last Words of Christ from the Cross.<sup>93</sup>

Even though the text setting of “The seven last words” is related to the Passion, they are not in fact Passion stories, despite the fact that they would normally be introduced or composed during Passion Week Settings of “The seven last words of Jesus Christ” consequently constitute their own particular artistic and musical genre.

The texts of the seven last words of Jesus Christ are all taken from the first four books of the New-Testament (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). These four gospels each recount the life and death of Jesus from different perspectives.

MacMillan took the basic text of the seven last words of Jesus Christ on the cross from the gospels of the New-Testament, however, in the first, third, fifth and sixth movements, he added additional text taken from the Palm-Sunday exclamation, Good Friday Responsory for Tenebrae and Good Friday liturgy, alternating the texts in a complex manner that still allows each to resonate. His devout Catholicism informs the piece, giving the setting added drama and resonance. For MacMillan, the combination of those texts stemmed from both practical and artistic considerations. He says:

When I realized I’d committed myself to making 45 minute piece around seven sentences I was horrified! Then I began to think. Some of them could be done on their own, a starkly repetitive setting maybe, but there was also scope for amplification. So I found words from the service of Tenebrae, the Good Friday liturgy, that could act either as a reflection on the words or as a direct

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<sup>93</sup> Denis Arnold and Basil Smallman, “Passion music” in *The Oxford Companion to Music*, ed. Alison Latham, *Oxford Music Online*

counterpart-like the versicle *Ecce lignum Crucis* (Behold the Wood of the Cross).<sup>94</sup>

In MacMillan's *Seven Last Words from the Cross*, these additional texts provide commentary on the main text. For example, in the first movement the original text setting according to the Bible is "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*" from Luke 23:34, to this text he adds "*Hosanna filio David benedictus qui venit in nomine Domine Rex Israel, Hosanni in excelsis*" from the Good Friday Responsories for *Tenebrae*, also traditionally used for a 'Palms blessing'.

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<sup>94</sup> Stephen Johnson, "Harnessing Extremes" *Gramophone* 72, no. 864(1995)



## CHAPTER IV

### Analysis

In 1991, MacMillan composed *Tuireadh*, for clarinet quintet or solo clarinet and string ensemble, to commemorate the victims of the Piper Alpha disaster and their families. On the evening of July 6<sup>th</sup> 1988, a fire broke out on the Piper Alpha off-shore oil and gas platform located in the North Sea. With the blaze out of control and evacuation virtually impossible, the disaster became the world's deadliest ever oil rig accident and resulted in 167 deaths.<sup>95</sup> Shortly after, a ceremony was held for the families and friends of those lost; MacMillan attended this event and drew inspiration for a musical composition.

*Tuireadh* is Gaelic for a lament (or requiem) for the dead, and the piece was written as a musical complement to the memorial sculpture created by Sue Jane Taylor and performed in Aberdeen.<sup>96</sup> MacMillan was inspired by a letter sent to him by the mother of one of the dead workers in which she wrote movingly of her visit to the memorial service. *Tuireadh* attempts to musically capture this outpouring of grief and makes allusions to the intervallic and ornamental archetypes of various lament-forms from Scottish traditional music. Three years later MacMillan composed *Seven Last Words from the Cross*.

It is important to know about *Tuireadh*, because MacMillan borrows musical ideas found here with *Seven Last Words from the Cross*, including use of solo instruments and the rhythmic patterns of both strings and voices.

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<sup>95</sup> Macalister, Terry. *The Guardian News and Media*, Jul.2013. UK

<sup>96</sup> Boosey & Hawkes,  
<<https://www.boosey.com/cr/music/James-MacMillan-Tuireadh/1603>>

In *Seven Last Words from the Cross* and *Tuireadh*, MacMillan drew on his knowledge of Scottish folk music for some of his expressive devices. Usually Gaelic folk songs and instrumental music are especially rich in emotionally charged melodic ornamentation. A unique feature in analyzing this piece is examining the concepts MacMillan borrows from early music, especially from the Renaissance period. Although most of MacMillan's choral compositions are written in tonal harmony, this work differs in that it cannot be analyzed in functional harmony. However, it is possible to analyze the stylistic melodic line and techniques that MacMillan uses, as well as the sources of melodies.

In this analysis the musical term "pentatonic scale" refers to Scottish traditional pentatonic as the term is used by ethnomusicologists.

#### 4-1 I. Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do

The first movement begins with a figure derived from the middle of the ① section, measures 133- of *Tuireadh*, which is repeated as the rest of the piece unfolds. The first violins begin with a sustained F-sharp, which becomes a pedal tone, as the other string parts lend support with a repeated two bar cadential ostinato called a "weeping cadence" an idea that came from *Tuireadh* (Examples 11 and 12). This passage creates a feeling of sorrow with a deep sigh. The *ostinato* suggests the learned style, and MacMillan uses this short motivic pattern throughout the movement to unify and create a sorrowful feeling throughout the movement.

Example 11: Weeping cadence. Measures 1-7. I 'Father, forgive them..'

The image shows a musical score for five string instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. The tempo is marked 'Largo' with a quarter note equal to 54 beats. The music is in 4/4 time. The Violin I part starts with a *fff* dynamic and a long, sustained note. The other instruments enter in measure 1 with a *pp* dynamic, playing a rhythmic pattern of quarter notes. A red box highlights measures 1 through 7, which correspond to the vocal entry.

Example 12: Weeping cadence, measures 129-136. *Tuireadh*

The image shows a musical score for five instruments: Clarinet (Cl.), Violin I (VI. I), Violin II (VI. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The score begins at measure 129 with the instruction 'imperceptible, as if from nowhere'. The Clarinet part starts with a *ppppp* dynamic and a long, sustained note. The other instruments enter in measure 129 with a *pp* dynamic. A red box highlights measures 129 through 136, which correspond to the vocal entry. The vocal entry is marked 'J' and 'as before'. The instruments play a rhythmic pattern of quarter notes. The dynamic is *pp* and the mood is 'lontano e misterioso'. The score ends with a 'G.P.' (Grave) marking.

After seven measures of introduction, atop the string ostinato, the first word of Jesus Christ “*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*” begins in the women’s voices. The sopranos are imitated by the altos and each syllable of text matches a single note with ascending motion. As MacMillan was influenced by Scottish traditional music especially Celtic



Examples 14 illustrate Fanfare effect;

The image displays a musical score for measures 23 and 25. Measure 23 is marked with a red box containing 'm.23'. It features three vocal parts: TENOR 1, TENOR 2, and a vocal line starting with 'Fa'. All parts play a triplet of eighth notes on a sharp F. Measure 25 is marked with a red box containing 'm.25'. It features two bass parts, BASS 1 and BASS 2, and the vocal line. BASS 1 and BASS 2 play a triplet of eighth notes on a sharp F. The lyrics 'Ho-san-na fi-li-o Da-vid' are written below the vocal line in both measures.

**Example 14:** Fanfare effect, measures 23 and 25. *I 'Father, forgive them.....'*

In measure 25, the first violins begin to play independently after 24 measures of sustaining the F-sharp pedal. This is very similar to the patterns MacMillan used in his earlier work *Tuireadh*. In *Tuireadh*, the solo clarinet is used like the first violin in this movement. Both instruments seem to depict murmurs from beyond; MacMillan even writes, 'like distant murmurs' in measure 137 on the score of *Tuireadh*. As seen in the examples 15 and 16, the rhythmic patterns, dynamics and role of other instruments (the *ostinato*) are very similar between the two pieces.

Example 15 Measure 137, *Tuireadh*

Example 16 Measures 26-27. I 'Father, forgive them..'

Additionally, both pieces use trills and tremolos in the solo instruments (Example 17).

Example 17: Clarinet in m.137 *Tuireadh* (Left) and Violin in m.28 *I. Father forgive them..*(Right)

While the men's chorus sings *Hosanna filio David*, part of the women's chorus joins the *ostinato* in measure 25. The sopranos continuously sing syllabic pentatonic<sup>99</sup> scales while the first and, second violins play independent lines at measure 25 and 29. Compared to the other parts including the choruses, the two violin parts stand out for their use of a high tessitura, with rhythmic density and frequent leaps. MacMillan treats these two violin parts with a variety of dynamics from *pp* to *ff* and utilizes techniques including tremolos, accented notes, syncopated triple motion and use of very high tessitura. This creates the image of Jesus Christ on his way into Jerusalem surrounded by people shouting "*Hosanna filio David....Rex Israel...*" as in Matthew 21:9 ("Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"). The men join the women's *ostinato*, singing '*Hosanna filio David*' and eventually their cries of '*Rex Israel*' dominate at measure 30. When the men's chorus sings out '*Rex Rex Israel*' MacMillan treats this text as the Scottish traditional instrument, the bagpipes by adding ornamentations at the word '*Rex*' with '*ff*' and an accented note on '*Israel*' is harmonically Pandiatonic, which shows the scene of chaos with people around Jesus (Example 18).

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<sup>99</sup> As the term is used by ethnomusicologists

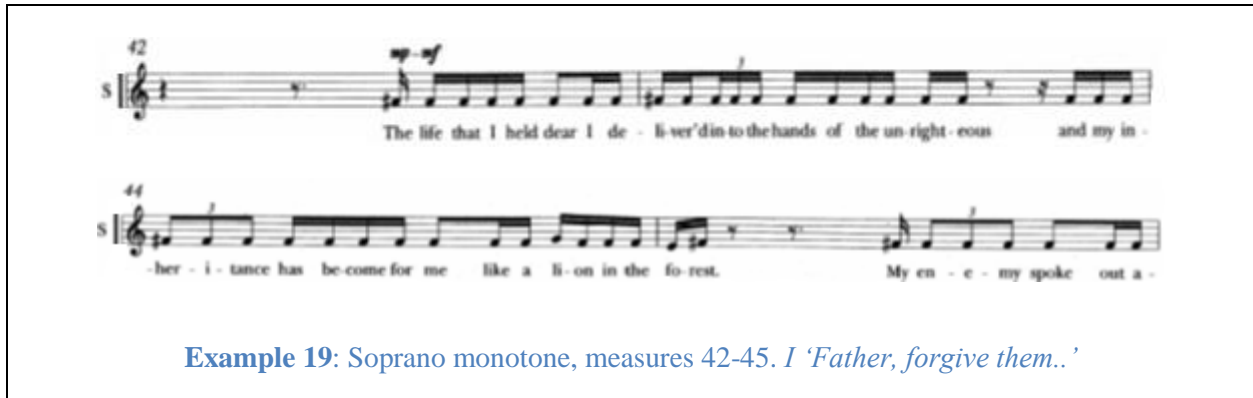
The image displays a musical score for Example 18, which is a continuation of measure 36 from measure 30. The score is divided into two systems. The upper system features four vocal staves: Soprano (T), Alto (A), Tenor (B), and Bass (B). Each staff contains the lyrics 'el. Rex. Is - ra-ell.' with corresponding musical notation. Three red rectangular boxes highlight specific musical passages in the vocal parts. The lower system consists of two string staves, VI. I and VI. II, with dynamic markings of *f* and *pp*. The entire score is enclosed in a black rectangular border.

**Example 18:** Measure 36, continue from measure 30. I 'Father, forgive them..'

MacMillan's preparation for the end of movement is reminiscent of Renaissance music including the responsories and the offertories of Gregorian chant. He writes passages in chant singing, usually with one or two main reciting tones and repetition of a short phrase. In this case, MacMillan chooses to use F-sharp as a reciting tone and repeats the phrase through to the end of the movement. In measure 42, the sopranos begin to sing a monotone chant-like passage on the new text from one of the Good Friday Responsories for Tenebrae (Example 19). At this point, the activity of the movement starts to gradually stable. The men's chorus begins to move in unison, eventually joining the *ostinato* figure. At measure 47 the entire chorus joins the *ostinato* except the sopranos.



Example 19 illustrate chant-like passage



The image shows a musical score for soprano (S) in two systems. The first system starts at measure 42 and ends at measure 43. The second system starts at measure 44 and ends at measure 45. The lyrics are: "The life that I held dear I de - liver'd in to the hands of the un-right - eous and my in - her - i - tance has be come for me like a li - on in the fo - rest. My en - e - my spoke out a -". The music is a monotone line with a steady eighth-note rhythm.

**Example 19:** Soprano monotone, measures 42-45. *I 'Father, forgive them..'*

After the sopranos begin singing the final chant-like theme, the opening theme originally sung by the sopranos is heard in the viola and violoncello. Thus, the opening pentatonic theme occurs throughout the entire movement in either the chorus or the strings.



The image shows a musical score for Viola (Vla.) and Violoncello (Vc.) in two systems. The first system shows measures 48 and 49. The second system shows measures 60 and 61. The Viola part in measure 60 is highlighted with a red box. The Violoncello part in measure 48 is also highlighted with a red box. The music is a pentatonic theme.

**Example 20:** Violoncello, measure 48 (up) and Viola, measure 60 (down) opening theme. *I 'Father, forgive them..'*

In the last seven measures of the movement, the *ostinato* in both the choir and strings becomes a single sustained open fifth, comprised of F-sharp and C-sharp over an E pedal tone in the double bass at measure 67. At measure 70, all the music fades away with only the soprano chant remaining audible.

Example 21 shows pedal tone;

Example 21: Pedal tone, measure 67. I 'Father, forgive them..'

MacMillan's preparation for the ending is very similar to the ending of *Tuireadh*. Example 22 shows the last 8 measures of *Tuireadh*. MacMillan uses viola as a solo instrument and selects F as a reciting tone with repetition through the end, while the other instruments sustain their note over an F pedal tone or harmonic drones in the double bass.

**Example 22:** Measure 261. *Tuireadh*

The first movement is a combination of early and contemporary musical styles with some Scottish traditional ideas as well as many ideas that come from his earlier work, *Tuireadh*. Harmonically it is difficult to determine if this movement is in C major or D major; however, according to a score analysis of first movement, MacMillan selects F-sharp as a pitch centricity<sup>100</sup> and it creates unity of the movement. All 72 measures of the first movement contain F-sharps either in the chorus part or the instrumental part and the movement begins and ends on F-sharp.

<sup>100</sup> Roig-Francolí, Miguel. 2008, *Understanding Post-tonal Music*, Boston : McGraw-Hill, p.5

#### 4-2 II. Woman, behold thy Son!...Behold, thy Mother!

*'Woman, behold thy Son!...Behold, thy Mother!'* is traditionally also called the word of relationship, and refers to the moment when Jesus introduced his mother Mary to the disciples. The main characteristic of this movement is MacMillan's use of a chorale figure, similar to what J.S. Bach used in his Passions. Chorales have a tendency to be basic, singable tunes with texts that are frequently sung to a rhyming plan. The text is organized in a strophic structure and most chorales follow A-A-B form just like German chorale. MacMillan seems to follow these basic principles along with contemporary stylistic techniques.

The last note of the previous movement, F-sharp, becomes the leading tone in the first chord of the second movement. As the movement begins we can hear a strong, half note G major chord. The basic structure of the second movement is a three measure theme which is repeated eleven times in a cadential figure.

The chorus begins singing without accompaniment in a *ff* dynamic level, compared to the quiet opening of the first movement, this is a drastically contrasting expression. While Bach included a fermata after each phrase of his chorales, MacMillan writes a lengthy caesura, lasting about three or four measures. This creates a forceful, dramatic silence. During this time the chorus must keep in mind their last notes so that they can reenter after the caesura.

Example 23 shows beginning of second movement

The image shows a musical score for a four-part vocal choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in 4/4 time. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 60. The score begins with a forte (ff) dynamic. The lyrics are: "Wo - man be - hold thy son! Wo - man be - hold thy". The music features a three-measure phrase that repeats. The score is enclosed in a rectangular box.

**Example 23:** Measures 1-8, beginning of II. 'Woman, behold thy Son!... Behold, thy Mother!'

The second movement can be analyzed as a traditional chorale in A-A-B form. MacMillan sets a three measure-long theme, which repeats either with or without accompaniment. In the typical setting of a chorale in Baroque period, the soprano sings the melody along with other lower voices. It is important to examine the soprano part because MacMillan uses the pentatonic scale<sup>101</sup> differently in each phrase. MacMillan's five note melodic selections is G - F# - E - D - C.

<sup>101</sup> As the term is used by ethnomusicologists

Table 1 is structure of the second movement:

**Table 1:** Structure of II. 'Woman, behold thy Son!... Behold, thy Mother!'

A	A	B
Measure 1-30	Measure 31-72	Measure 73-85
'Woman, behold thy Son!...'		'Behold, thy Mother!'
SSAATTBB		Base, Tenor only
Repetition of pentatonic motive Contrast of accompaniment		Use of weeping motive

The 'A' section begins at measure 1 with a descending pentatonic scale<sup>102</sup> without accompaniment.



**Example 24:** Measures 1-6, II. 'Woman, behold thy Son!... Behold, thy Mother!'

The second phrase starts at measure 7 without accompaniment.



**Example 25:** Measures 7-13, II. 'Woman, behold thy Son!... Behold, thy Mother!'

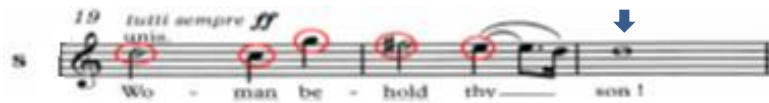
The third phrase starts at measure 14, and at measure 16 the lower strings begin accompanying with a gently sustained C-sharp.

<sup>102</sup> As the term is used by ethnomusicologists



**Example 26:** Measures 14-16, II. ‘Woman, behold thy Son!... Behold, thy Mother!’

The fourth phrase starts at measure 19.



**Example 27:** Measures 19, II. ‘Woman, behold thy Son!... Behold, thy Mother!’

The fifth phrase starts at measure 27.



**Example 28:** Measures 27, II. ‘Woman, behold thy Son!... Behold, thy Mother!’

The A section ends at measure 30 and the soprano melody comprised of pentatonic scales<sup>103</sup> rotates, the first note of each phrase is ordered G - F# - E - D - C and the ending note of each phrase is marked ↓ in the same order.

Similarly, the next A section begins at measure 31; however, it contains more string accompaniment in a very contrasting way. Here, the strings begin playing slow and relatively straightforward material which gradually builds in fervor and complexity, growing in intensity and speed (Example 29) until the movement evaporates on the words “Behold, thy Mother!”

<sup>103</sup> As the term is used by ethnomusicologists

The image shows a page of a musical score for Example 29, measures 55-56, II. The score is for an orchestra and includes the following parts: V.I. div., V.II div., V.III div., Vla. div., Vc. div., and Db. The music is written in treble clef for the upper strings and bass clef for the lower strings. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The tempo and dynamics are marked with 'mf' (mezzo-forte). The score features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. There are also markings for 'trem.' (trémolo) and 'gliss.' (glissando) in the lower strings. The overall texture is dense and rhythmic.

**Example 29:** Accompaniment, measures 55-56, II. *'Woman, behold thy Son!... Behold, thy Mother!'*

The B section starts at measure 73 and with the word “Behold thy Mother!” and MacMillan introduces new vocal material. MacMillan uses the weeping motive in this section to create a crying sound and uses certain techniques to enhance this effect, such as quarter tone inflections.



Example 30 shows a weeping motive;

The image displays a musical score for measures 73-74, II. The score is arranged in a system with multiple staves. At the top, the Tenor (T) and Bass (B) parts are shown with lyrics: "Be - hold, be - hold,". Below these are the Violin I (VLI div.) and Violin II (VII div.) parts, both marked *pp*. The Violin II part includes the instruction "col legno battute, ricochet" and "sul ponticello". The Viola (Vla div.) and Violoncello (Vc div.) parts are also present, with the Vc part marked *pp* and including the instruction "arco sul pont.". The Double Bass (Db.) part is at the bottom, marked *ff*. A legend at the bottom left indicates that a sharp symbol (♯) represents 1/4 tone sharp and a flat symbol (♭) represents 1/4 tone flat.

**Example 30:** Weeping motive, measures 73-74, II. 'Woman, behold thy Son!... Behold, thy Mother!'

MacMillan's weeping motives can also be found in the chorus part. As the string accompaniment fades away, the tenors and basses sing a chant-like passage in half step motion

(B-flat to A) to the text “Behold thy Mother”. This half-step motion is also used for solo clarinet in *Tuireadh*.

**Example 31:** tenor & bass, measures 75-76, II. ‘Woman, behold thy Son!... Behold, thy Mother!’

**Example 32:** solo clarinet, measures 80-82, *Tuireadh*

There is not much use of traditional Scottish tunes in this movement, while there are a few measures in which MacMillan uses grace notes, it is difficult to clearly link these passages to the Scottish tradition.

Additionally, the second movement begins with a full chorus singing a cappella followed by a long caesura. MacMillan uses a similar chorale figure in the middle of *Tuireadh* (Example 33) with a fermata followed by a grand pause.

Example 33: Strings, measures 65-70, *Tuireadh*

Throughout the second movement the chorus and accompaniment seem to depict two different aural worlds. The role of the chorus consists of a simple repetition of a three measure motive, while the string accompaniment consists of dense layers of sound which do not support the chorus part.

#### 4-3 III. Verily, I say unto thee, today thou shalt be with me in Paradise

The third movement is the longest movement of the piece, with 117 measures, and is also structurally the most distinguished of the seven. In this movement, MacMillan introduces tonal harmony in both the chorus and accompaniment for the first time in the piece. Even though the third movement is titled “*Verily, I say unto thee, today thou shalt be with me in Paradise*” this text does not appear until the very end of the movement, sung in a high tessitura by a soprano and violin duet. The rest of the movement is a setting of the Good Friday Antiphon ‘*Ecce lignum*

*crucis*'. During the liturgy, this text is typically sung three times by soloists, each time a little higher and each time they are answered by the full choir or congregation, also at a gradually higher pitch as the cross is slowly unveiled and revealed to the congregation in three stages.

Table 2 shows the structure of the movement.

**Table 2:** Structure of III. "*Verily, I say unto thee, today thou shalt be with me in Paradise*"

Section	A	B	A'	B'	A''	B''	Interlude	D
Measure	1-17	17-29	30-46	46-58	59-76	77-87	88-105	106-117
Text	A - <i>Ecce Lignum Crucis in quo salus mundi pependit</i> B - <i>Venite adoremus</i>						none	<i>Verily, I say unto thee, today thou shalt be with me in paradise</i>
Choral Texture	Duet Bass	Tutti Bass	Duet Tenor	Tutti Tenor, Bass	Duet Alto	Tutti Alto, Tenor, Bass		Duet Soprano
Strings	Violoncello Double Bass	Tutti	Violoncello Double Bass	Tutti	Viola Violoncello Double Bass	Tutti	Tutti	Violins

Sections A, A' and A'' are using the same materials, all duets with the low strings. The text '*Ecce Lignum Crucis in quo salus mundi pependit*' comes from the liturgy of Good Friday Antiphon (Gregorian chant). These A sections always begin with a duet and the melody is the same. MacMillan borrows the melody of the A sections from the Gregorian chant melody; however when he transcribes the passage from the original chant melody, he adds some traditional Scottish ideas.

Example 34 shows the original chant score including the ‘Omnes’ (‘B’ sections).

VI  
**E**cce li- gnum Cru- cis, in quo sa- lus mun-  
 di pe- pên- dit.  
 Omnes :  
 Ve- ní- te, ad- o-ré- mus.

**Example 34:** *Ecce Lignum Crucis in quo salus mundi pependit*, Gregorian chant

$\text{♩} = 69-72$   
*p*  
 1 Ec - ce, ec - ce Lig - num Cru -  
 2 Ec - ce, ec - ce Lig - num Cru -  
 7 cis in quo sa - lus mun -  
 B cis in quo sa - lus mun -  
 12 di pe - pen - dit, pe - pen - dit, pe - pen -  
 B di pe - pen - dit, pe - pen - dit, pe - pen -

**Example 35:** bass duet, measures 1-15. III. “*Verily, I say unto thee...*”

The melody in bass I in Example 35 is an imitation of the chant melody seen in Example 34. The role of low strings during the A sections is very limited and gently accompanying, and MacMillan uses the violoncello, double bass and viola only in A'' (measure 59-76).

Sections B, B' and B'' are settings of the 'Omnes' (Example 34) portion of the chant, which is sung by the full chorus or congregation as a response, '*Venite adoremus*'. MacMillan uses *tutti* strings in the B sections with a beautiful arpeggio technique and rising solo violin melody. The chorus part in the B sections has an additive feature; the chorus parts increases by one part in each section except for the recently included chorus part. The repetition of the B section forms a thoughtful echo of the Good Friday liturgy, during which the cross is slowly revealed to the congregation.

Example 36 shows the B'' section.

The musical score for Example 36, B'' section, measures 77-79, is presented in a multi-staff format. The vocal parts are arranged as follows:

- Alto (A):** The vocal line begins with a rest, followed by the instruction "Tutti div." and a dynamic marking of *pp*. The lyrics are "Ve - ni - te".
- Tenor (T):** The vocal line begins with a rest, followed by the instruction "Tutti div." and a dynamic marking of *pp*. The lyrics are "Ve-ni-te a-do-re-mus, ve-ni-te a-do-".
- Bass (B):** The vocal line begins with a rest, followed by the instruction "Tutti div." and a dynamic marking of *pp*. The lyrics are "Ve - ni - te a - do -".

The instrumental parts are arranged as follows:

- Solo VI. I:** The violin part begins with a dynamic marking of *p* and features a triplet of eighth notes.
- VI. I and VI. II:** The violin parts begin with a dynamic marking of *pp* and feature a triplet of eighth notes.
- Vla.:** The viola part begins with a dynamic marking of *pp* and features a triplet of eighth notes.
- Vc.:** The cello part begins with a dynamic marking of *pp* and features a triplet of eighth notes.
- Db.:** The double bass part begins with a dynamic marking of *pp* and features a triplet of eighth notes.

The score includes various musical notations such as rests, dynamic markings (*pp*, *mp*), and articulation marks (triplets).

Example 36: B'' section, measures 77-79. III. "Verily, I say unto thee..."

The first violin melody in the B section comes from the original chant in augmentation. MacMillan uses this melodic style in all B sections in the first violin and in the last section of the first soprano line.

Example 37 and 38 illustrates the first violin melody and original chant melody.

The image contains two musical examples. Example 37, titled "Original plain chant", shows a single staff of music with the lyrics "Omnes : Ve- ni- te, ad- o-ré- mus." written below it. The notation consists of square neumes on a four-line staff. Example 38, titled "First Violin, measures 16-29. III. 'Verily, I say unto thee...'", shows four staves of music for the first violin. The top staff is labeled "Solo VII" and begins with a *ppp* dynamic marking. The subsequent staves show the continuation of the melody with various dynamics including *p*, *mp*, and *pp*. The notation includes slurs, accents, and triplet markings.

**Example 37:** Original plain chant

**Example 38:** First Violin, measures 16-29. III. "Verily, I say unto thee..."

After introducing the A and B sections three times each, MacMillan writes a short interlude section (measures 88-105) for the *tutti* string orchestra, just before Jesus's next words. This 18 measure-long string interlude section consists of learned compositional techniques, such



as the drone in the double bass, but it also includes many grace notes, arpeggios, and dynamic variety which suggest traditional Scottish ornamentation techniques. This section is full of energy and dramatic expression, which greatly contrasts the words of Jesus in the next section.

MacMillan explains his intent for the string interlude:

.....I think that was the reason why, suddenly, the direction has been interrupted. The direction is still going on towards the final statement, the Versicle is complete, so there's a vacuum that could be filled with something else before moving on, hence the quite emotional string interlude, compared to the detachment of what comes before and after. There's a liturgical detachment from the three statements previous to it and the last one, and there's subjectivity that fills the gap. It moves in to a kind of mental space for that string interlude.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Mandy Hallam, Conversation with James MacMillan, *Tempo* 62 no.245 (2008), 20

Example 39 shows a portion of interlude section.

The image displays a musical score for an interlude section, measures 88-90. The score is organized into two systems. The first system includes parts for Solo, VI. I, gli altri, VI. II, Vla., Vc., and Db. The second system includes parts for Tutti, VI. I, VI. II, Vla., Vc., and Db. The music features various dynamics such as *pp*, *ff*, and *sfz*, and includes markings for tremolos (*trem.*) and sforzando (*sf*). The Solo part is in a high tessitura, and the string parts (Vla., Vc., Db.) play in a high range, sustaining the music until the end of the movement.

Example 39: Interlude, measures 88-90. III. "Verily, I say unto thee..."

The last section forms the conclusion of the movement in which the actual words of Jesus Christ are sung by a soprano duet accompanied by two violins, immediately following the string interlude. The soprano duet is set in a high tessitura and for this section virtuosic vocal techniques are required. Similarly, the two violins also play in a high range which they sustain until the end of the movement. The first soprano melody comes from the portion of Gregorian chant which is indicated in Example 34.

Example 40 and 41 illustrates the comparison of first soprano and original chant.

*Omnes :*

Ve- ni- te, ad- o-ré- mus.

Example 40: Original plain chant.

SOPRANO 1\*

106 *mp*

Ve - ri - ly, I say un - to you, to - day thou shalt be with

111 *mp*

me in Pa - ra - dise, thou shalt be with me

114

in Pa - ri - dise.

Example 41: First soprano melody, measures 106-117. III. "Verily, I say unto thee..."

Structurally, the third movement is well-organized and the music from each section is easily identifiable. The development process is clear in both the chorus and string parts, because MacMillan adds the parts one by one in each section. The use of both Latin and English texts in this piece is a unique feature of the movement; however it is nearly impossible to distinguish the text due to the high tessitura in the sopranos.

#### 4-4 IV. Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani

“*Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani*”, is probably the most frequently heard movement of the seven. The text humanizes Jesus, showing his weakness before death. In this movement MacMillan chooses to use imitation and canon, which usually occur in early Renaissance motets. Robert Carver (1485-1570) was a Scottish monk and sacred music composer, considered as Scotland’s greatest composer of the sixteenth-century and best known for his motets and masses. The characteristics of Carver’s choral music include a gradual build-up of musical ideas and a highly ornamented style which occurs in MacMillan’s choral music too.<sup>105</sup> The fourth movement is full of imitation, canonic motion and ornamentation.

The fourth movement can be divided into three sections A-B-C. Table 3 shows the whole structure of the movement.

**Table 3: Structure of fourth movement**

Section	A	B	C
Measure	1-48	48-67	68-90
Text	<i>Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani</i>		
Texture	-Alternative chorus entrance -Alternative strings -Imitation in chorus part -Gradual development of music	-Polyphony section -Tutti string except double bass (play only six times of pizz.)	-Canonic motion (S-A-T-B) -Tutti string

Section A starts with a very dark timbre and a low register. An imitative figure emerges with the parts entering in the order of double bass -violoncello - basses - tenors - altos - sopranos. The pattern gradually rises from low to high and then descends into the dark timbre again.

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<sup>105</sup> Richard McGregor, James MacMillan’s O Bone Jesu, *Scottish Music Review* 2, no.1(2011), p 2

Example from 42 to 45 illustrates a point of imitation;

The image displays four musical examples from a score, each illustrating a different voice part's entrance in a point of imitation. The tempo is marked 'Largo' with a quarter note equal to 60 beats per minute. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4.

- Example 42:** Shows the beginning of the movement (measures 1-13). The Bass part (BASS) enters first with a *pp* dynamic, playing a half note E. The Violoncello (Vc.) and Double Bass (Db.) parts follow with a similar melodic line. A red line highlights the imitative entry of the Bass.
- Example 43:** Shows the Tenor entrance (measure 19). The Tenor part (TENOR) enters with a *pp* dynamic, playing a half note E. A red line highlights the Tenor's entry.
- Example 44:** Shows the Alto entrance (measure 30). The Alto part (ALTO) enters with a *pp* dynamic, playing a half note E. A red line highlights the Alto's entry.
- Example 45:** Shows the Soprano entrance (measure 39). The Soprano part (SOPRANO) enters with a *pp* dynamic, playing a half note E. A red line highlights the Soprano's entry, which includes a crescendo marking.

**Example 42:** Point of imitations on 'Eli', Beginning of the movement, measures 1-13. IV. 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani'

**Example 43:** Tenor entrance, measure 19. IV. 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani'

**Example 44:** Alto entrance, measure 30. IV. 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani'

**Example 45:** Soprano entrance, measure 39. IV. 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani'

MacMillan treats the text 'Eli' with an ascending step-wise motion from the low range however, when he treats the text 'sabachthani' he puts ornamentation on it with descending motion.

Example 46 illustrates ornamented descending motions of the basses and tenors.

The image displays three staves of musical notation for basses (B), tenors (T), and altos (A). Each staff shows a melodic line with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: B: - li, E - - - li, la - - - ma - - - sa - - - bach - ta - - - ; T: - la - ma - - - sa - - - bach - ta - - - ni? ; A: - ma - - - sa - - - bach - ta - - - ni?. The 'sabachthani' portion of each staff is highlighted with a red bracket. Ornamentation is indicated by a '3:2' triplet bracket over the 'bach' syllable in each part. A blue arrow points to a glide-technique mark (a downward-pointing arrow) at the end of the 'sabachthani' phrase in each part. Dynamics include *mp* and *p*. Measure numbers 26 and 72 are marked at the beginning of the tenor and alto staves respectively.

**Example 46:** Ornamented texts on 'sabachthani'. basses (measures 20-21), tenors (measures 27-29) and altos (measures 72-75). IV. 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani'

At the end of the 'sabachthani' phrase, MacMillan puts a glide-technique (Example 46, ↓), which can be found in the string part too. We can also find this technique in his motet *Pascha nostrum immolates est* (Example 47 from The Strathclyde Motets).

7  
Chris - tus, al - le - lu -

11  
- ia, \_\_\_ al - le - lu - ia, \_\_\_ al - le - lu -

*p lontano floating*  
*gliss. p mf*

**Example 47:** Ornamented descending motion with gliss. soprano, measure 7-14, *Pascha nostrum immolates est*

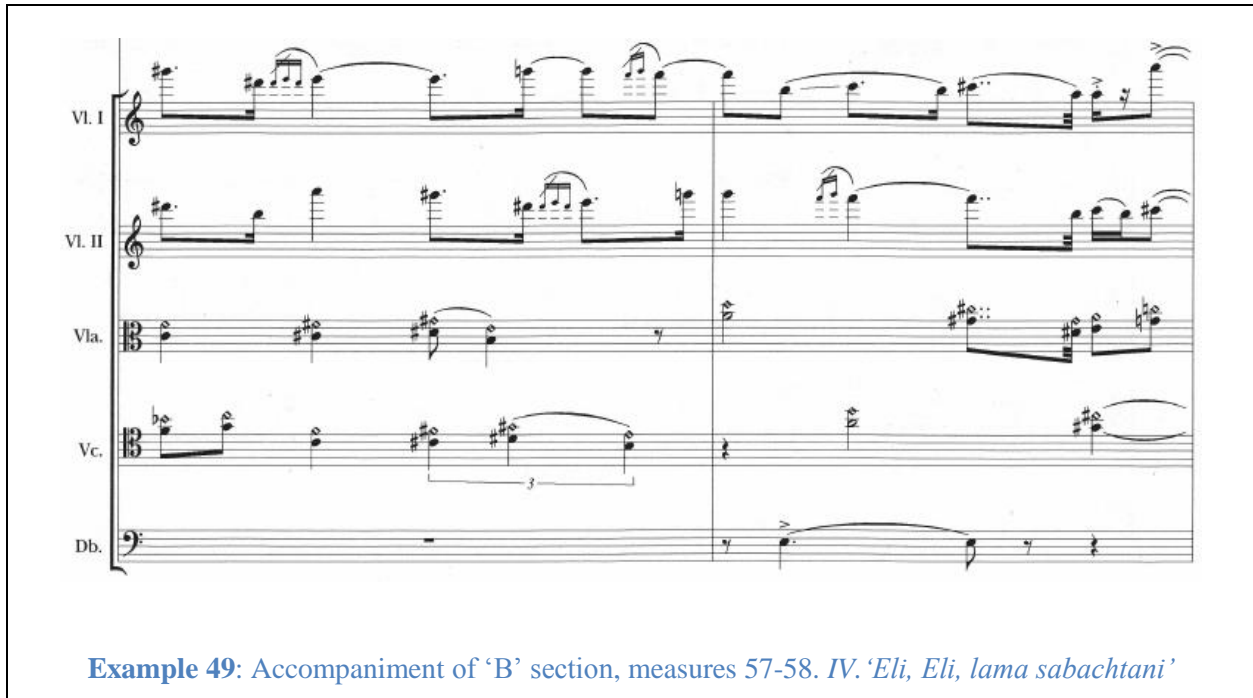
After the imitative section A, the music continues to the B section, which MacMillan describes as an impassioned, full-throated lament above which the strings float and glide.<sup>106</sup> Section B consists of an ornamented note, imitation, iso-rhythmic motion, and is through composed.

<sup>106</sup> James MacMillan, Liner Notes: *James MacMillan, Seven last words from the cross*. CD, p.7, London, 1994.





under the lament. For that reason, MacMillan writes *flautando* in the *p* level, which prescription a soft flute like sound effect (Example 49) through the use of harmonics as well.



The image shows a musical score for five instruments: Violin I (VI. I), Violin II (VI. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Db.). The score is for measures 57-58 of the 'B' section of the IV. movement, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani'. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The Violin I part features a melodic line with many natural harmonics, indicated by a 'v' above the notes. The Viola part provides harmonic support with chords and some melodic fragments. The Violoncello part has a triplet of eighth notes in measure 57. The Double Bass part has a long note in measure 58. The overall texture is soft and flute-like, as indicated by the *flautando* and *p* markings.

**Example 49:** Accompaniment of 'B' section, measures 57-58. IV. 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani'

The final section C consists of descending canonic motion in both the chorus and string parts (Example 50). The sopranos begin singing the descending melodic line followed by the altos, tenors and finally basses who finish the movement. The string parts also move in a descending canonic motion that is staggered from the violin, viola, violoncello and double bass. For the strings, MacMillan uses a short note to long note value pattern. Because of the descending canonic motion of the chorus and strings, the last section begins to go back into the dark timbre and also mirrors the beginning of the movement. This mirror structure occurs in early motets such as those by Machaut.

**Example 50:** Descending canonic motion of 'C' section, measures 68-75 (Bass entrance at measure 81). IV. 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani'

The most unique feature of this movement is the use of Renaissance materials despite the fact they are difficult to analyze in tonal harmony. For chorus parts, finding their pitches is the key as the same pitches are not doubled in the string parts. The chorus lines sometimes take on

highly ornamented and melismatic figures, which may be linked back to the Scottish traditional heritage.

#### 4-5 V. I thirst

The fifth movement is musically and texturally the shortest of the seven. MacMillan uses texts in English and Latin. *'I thirst'* (John 19:28) is treated in a long note values in a slow tempo with focus on the perfect 5<sup>th</sup> interval. Additional text written in Latin comes from the Good Friday Reproaches *'Ego te potavi aqua salutis de petra: et tu me potasti felle et aceto.'* This text is set to a chant in a fast monotone similar to those in the early Renaissance period and seems to mimic a person whispering.

Example 51 shows the beginning of the movement.

The image shows a musical score for the beginning of the fifth movement, measures 1-6, V. 'I thirst'. The score is in 4/4 time and has a tempo marking of ♩ = 52. The instruments are Bass, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Doublebass. The Bass part starts with a half note G2, marked with a red box and the dynamic *p*. The Violoncello part starts with a half note G2, also marked with a red box and the dynamic *p*. The Doublebass part starts with a half note G2, marked with a red box and the dynamic *p*. The Violin I and II parts start with a half note G2, marked with *ppp* and *pizz.*. The Viola part starts with a half note G2, marked with *p*. The text 'thirst.' is written below the Bass part. The score is enclosed in a black box.

**Example 51: Beginning, measures 1-6. V. 'I thirst'**



a recitation on a chord, followed by a cadence.<sup>107</sup> MacMillan's *falsobordone* is incomplete because there is no cadence after the recitation; instead there is a continuation of the chord. 'II. *Dixit Dominus' Vespers 1610* by Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643) is great example of *falsobordone* (Example 53 and 54)

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<sup>107</sup> Murray C. Bradshaw, "Falsobordone" *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, accessed May 18, 2015,  
< <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/09273>>

35 *pp*

S Ego te potavi aqua salutis de petra: et tu me potasti felle et aceto. *pp*

A Ego te potavi aqua salutis de petra: et tu me potasti felle et aceto. *pp*

T Ego te potavi aqua salutis de petra: et tu me potasti felle et aceto. *pp*

B et tu me potasti felle et aceto. *pp*

Db major ————— C minor 7th ————— 6th

VI. I *ppp*

VI. II *ppp*

Vla. *ppp*

Vc. *ppp*

Example 53: MacMillan's recitation, measure 35-38. V. 'I thirst'

43

C - o - rum. Tecum principium in die virtutis

Sext. - o - rum. Tecum principium in die virtutis

A. Tecum principium in die virtutis tu - - -

T. Tecum principium in die virtutis

Quint. Tecum principium in die virtutis tu - - -

B. - rum. Tecum principium in die virtutis tu - - -

B. gen. - rum. Tecum principium in die virtutis tu - - -

C : vi ————— vi ————— V ————— I

m.45-50 m.51 m.52

Example 54: Monteverdi's Falsobordone, measures 43-47. Vesper 1610

The final section is an impressive instrumental postlude, which occurs right after the Altos and Tenors sing a major 2<sup>nd</sup> interval on the text 'I thirst.' The postlude begins with a sustaining note in the double bass while the other strings starts to play a *ppp* tremolo, which gradually crescendos up to *ffff* like a violent shuddering, before it gradually decrescendos going back to *ppp*.

Example 55 illustrates an instrumental postlude

Example 55: Postlude, measures 52-63. V. 'I thirst'

MacMillan describes the fifth movement as “deliberately bare and desolate”<sup>108</sup> In this short movement, MacMillan shows a stark contrast in the dynamics of the music, preferring extremely loud or soft indications rather than those in between.

He writes a very soft and gentle sound and then rapidly changes the dynamic up to *ffff*. MacMillan’s treatment of the additional text is a unique feature, and the fast monotone, chant-like, and sometimes whispering text creates a dramatic effect which is meant to depict Jesus Christ trying to speak when his mouth is completely dry. The role of the strings in the fifth movement is stable with mostly sustained long notes.

#### 4-6 VI. It is finished

The previous movement, *‘I thirst’* ends with a dynamic level of *ppp*. In the sixth movement, MacMillan changes the color and breaks the mood with a violent string stroke in an accented *ff*, which is hammer-stroke or bow-stroke. This aggressive nine measures repeats sharp cluster chords containing all 12 chromatic notes and is meant to dramatically represent the nails being smashed into Jesus Christ’s hands and feet. The nine measures of hammer strokes opens gradually into a rhythmic heterophony texture.

This heterophonic texture is frequently a characteristic of *gamelan* music which is also characterized by the simultaneous variation of a single line.<sup>109</sup> As mentioned previously MacMillan also studied ethnomusicology and was especially interested in the traditional music

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<sup>108</sup> James MacMillan. Program note from recording: *Seven last words from the cross*. London, p.8, 1994

<sup>109</sup> Margaret J. Kartomi and Maria Mendonça, “*Gamelan*” Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online



of East Asia such as the *gamelan* of Indonesia. There are two possible sources for the hammer-strokes idea: the *gamelan* or *The Rite of Spring* (1913) by Igor Stravinsky, who was one of the most influential composers to MacMillan. MacMillan uses this hammer stroke technique in his earlier work, *Tuireadh* too.

Table 4 illustrates the hammer strokes chord spelling in MacMillan’s selection of the nine notes in *VI. It is finished*, *Tuireadh* and Stravinsky’s selection in melodic order.

**Table 4:** Hammer strokes chords selection

Piece	Notes selection
<i>VI. It is finished</i> by MacMillan	C - C# - D - D# - E - F - F# - G - G# - A - A# - B (12)
<i>Tuireadh</i> by MacMillan	C - D - Eb - E - F# - G - Ab - Bb - B (9)
<i>The Rite of Spring</i> by Stravinsky	Cb - Db - D - Eb - E - Fb - F - Gb - G - Ab - Bb - B (12)

Example from 56 to 58 shows the similarities of these three pieces.

Violin I  
div. *ff*

Violin II  
div. *ff*

Viola  
div. *ff*

Violoncello  
div. *ff*

Double Bass  
*ff*

*d = 48*

Example 56: Opening. measures 1-3. *VI. It is finished*

VL. I

VL. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Example 57: Measures 80-82. *Tuireadh*

13 Tempo giusto  $\text{♩} = 50$   
 I. II. III. IV (I. II senza sord.)

Cor. V. VI. VII. VIII *sf sempre*

V-ni II *arco (non div.)* *sempre simile*  
*(non div.)* *sempre stacc.*

V-le *tutti* *arco (non div.)* *sempre simile*  
*(non div.)* *sempre stacc.*

V-c. *tutti* *arco (non div.)* *sempre simile*  
*(non div.)* *sempre stacc.*

C-b. *tutti* *arco (non div.)* *sempre simile*  
*(non div.)* *sempre stacc.*

**Example 58: Rehearsal no.13. *The Rite of Spring***

After the nine measure violent opening, the sopranos sing ‘*My eyes were blind with weeping*’ which is additional text from the Good Friday Responsories for Tenabrae. MacMillan treats this additional text in the sopranos only, delivering a beautiful comforting continual melody based on the soprano line of the first movement. The other vocal parts repeatedly sing Jesus’s words ‘*It is finished*’. MacMillan treats the choral part mostly unaccompanied throughout.

Example 59 shows the entrance of the sopranos.

10

SOPRANO *p*

S My eyes were blind, my eyes were

ALTO *ppp*

A Mmm It is

TENOR *ppp*

T Mmm

BASS 1 *ppp* Mmm

BASS 2 *ppp* Mmm

**Example 59:** Entrance of chorus, measures 10-13. VI. *It is finished*

MacMillan treats Jesus's three words 'It is finished' in alto, tenor and bass parts as accompaniment or back-ground to the soprano melody in the absence of a string accompaniment.

MacMillan uses a repeated weeping cadence *ostinato* just as in the first movement.



Example 61 illustrates the beginning of the ending section.

67  
S a - ny sor - row like mine? Is there

V.I. div. *ff*

V.II. div. *ff*

Vla. div. *ff*

Vc. div. *ff*

Db. *ff*

**Example 61:** Beginning of ending, measures 67-68. VI. *It is finished*

Even though the soprano stops singing, MacMillan keeps the hammer strokes for another two measures, meaning the nailing effect with all chromatic notes is heard five times. Perhaps, MacMillan wants the audience to experience Jesus's crucifixion in which nails were driven through his hands and feet, while a crown of thorns was placed on his head and a sword pierced his side.

Example 62 illustrates the last two measures of the movement.

The image shows a musical score for the last ending of a movement, measures 76-77. The score is for VI. It is finished and includes staves for V.I. div., V.II div., Vla. div., Vc. div., and Db. The music is in 4/4 time and features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The score is presented in a standard musical notation format with a double bar line at the end of measure 77.

**Example 62:** Last ending of the movement, measures 76-77. VI. *It is finished*

#### 4-7 VII. Father, into Thy hands I commend my Spirit

In some of the Requiems throughout history, composers reuse material written in earlier movements. For example, in Mozart's *Requiem K626*, the last two movements *Lux Aeterna* and *Cum sanctis tuis*, have reused music materials from the first two movements. In *Ein deutsches Requiem Op.45* by Johannes Brahms (1833-1897), the first movement and last movement also shares musical materials.

Traces of reused materials can be found in this piece too. In the last movement, the musical materials from the second movement reappear. The structure of movement seven is A-B. Section A includes the last words of Jesus Christ sung mostly a cappella by the chorus; this material is shared with the second movement. Section B is an instrumental postlude, which comprises the majority of the movement. Since *Seven Last Words from the Cross* is a choral work, the structural setting of the last movement is unusual. MacMillan says of the last movement:

“In this final movement, with its long instrumental postlude, the liturgical detachment breaks down and gives way to a more personal reflection: hence the resonance here of Scottish traditional laments music”<sup>110</sup>

Section A begins with extremely painful shouting chords on the word *‘father’* which is repeated three times. MacMillan treats this repeated *‘father’* the same as *‘Woman, behold thy Son!’* in the second movement. Here, it is still a descending pentatonic scale,<sup>111</sup> but in augmentation with a lengthy caesura. MacMillan uses whole notes with fermatas rather than short notes and the sustained chord on *‘father’* draws a parallel to the final cry of Jesus on the cross. After three repetitions, the chorus fades through a long *decrescendo* on the text *‘into Thy hands I commend my Spirit.’* The descending melody ends on F-sharp, the same note as the opening of the piece. MacMillan describes this final chorus section as “the music descends in resignation”<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> James MacMillan. Program note from recording: *Seven last words from the cross*. London, p.9, 1994

<sup>111</sup> As the term is used by ethnomusicologists

<sup>112</sup> James MacMillan. Program note from recording: *Seven last words from the cross*. London, p.9, 1994



Example 63 illustrates the music descends in resignation.

The musical score for Example 63 is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 1-4) is marked "Very slow" and features a *lunga* (long note) for each voice part. The lyrics are "Fa - - - ther! Fa - - - ther!". The second system (measures 5-14) begins at measure 10 and includes the lyrics "Fa - - - ther, in - to thy hands I com - mend my spi - - - rit." with dynamic markings *ff* and *ff unis.*. The third system (measures 15-18) includes the lyrics "my spi - - - rit." with dynamic markings *pp < mf > pp* and a *rit.* (ritardando) marking.

Example 63: The music descends in resignation, measures 1-18. VII. "Father, into Thy hands I commend my Spirit"

Here again MacMillan uses the pentatonic scale of G-F#-E-D-C in the soprano line and descends to an F-sharp ending note while the other chorus parts sing an E major chord at measure 16. The sopranos begin and end the piece with an F-sharp. The B section of the instrumental postlude begins at measure 15, when the soprano sings their last note. The music moves in a very peaceful motion and from measure 19, two violins continue the lament in a canonic texture with ornamentation.

Example 64 illustrates the middle of the instrumental postlude.

**Example 64:** Violin duet, Postlude, measures 32- 39. VII. *“Father, into Thy hands I commend my Spirit”*

At measure 40, other instruments join, however the violin duet keeps playing in a very high register while other strings play just two measures of a sustained note. At measure 69, all strings except the violin duet fade out and MacMillan begins to depict the last moments of Jesus

Christ on the cross. As seen in the example 65 below, the violin duet plays long chords that gradually become shorter with more space in between.

Example 65: The last breath sounds of Jesus Christ, measures 69-82. VII. "Father, into Thy hands I commend my Spirit"

## CHAPTER V

### Conclusion

There are many ways in which artists have addressed the suffering of Jesus Christ on the cross, including painting, film making, writing books, and music; these mediums allow people to indirectly experience Jesus's final moments on the cross. One question one might ask is "does the person who is depicting Jesus's last moments on the cross transmit his or her religious faith?" The choral music of James MacMillan is infused with the spiritual aspects of his Catholic faith. *Seven Last Words from the Cross* represents one of his sacred works in which he tries to come to terms with the violence and drama of the occasion as well as meditating on its spiritual significance. It is one of his longest pieces lasting approximately forty-seven minutes. Because the Biblical text of "The Seven last words" is short, MacMillan includes in some movements additional texts from the Palm Sunday Exclamation, Good Friday Responsories for Tenebrae, Good Friday Versicle and Good Friday Reproaches, some in Latin, some in English.

MacMillan's *Seven Last Words from the Cross* is an inaccessible piece for an amateur group since it requires virtuosic singers and experienced string players. Therefore, for the choral conductor it is a great challenge. Most of MacMillan's choral works are sung a cappella with diatonic harmonies, but in this case the music is highly dissonant with complex rhythms, suggesting the work was meant for professional groups, notably Cappella Nova and the BT Scottish Ensemble. Cappella Nova was a Scottish based group that MacMillan frequently collaborated with. Scottish Ensemble is a group of 13 string players who don't normally work with choirs. MacMillan took great care in creating a balance for both groups.

He writes:

In bringing them together I was very aware of the two different worlds. Nevertheless, both groups can produce a sustained sound, and have the facility for purity of sounds. There was a kind of intersection area, I suppose, aesthetically, in the way that the music was imagined, so that there could be certain blends of sounds, brought about subconsciously perhaps, more than simply juxtaposing one sound against the other so that the differences were heard.<sup>113</sup>

Harmonically, this piece is not a tonal piece but it is also not atonal. In the light of the harmonic ambiguity, the role of the notes or chords chosen by MacMillan is crucial to the general shaping of this piece. MacMillan mostly uses chromaticism which is evident not only in the scalar passages, but also in the frequent use of cluster chords.<sup>114</sup> He uses chromaticism as a method for building up tension.

MacMillan mentioned regarding his harmonic language;

“a sense of a kind of fluid complementarity about the 12 pitches that can shape my harmony... I think I am concerned about a triadic root to my harmony but with sense of colour, a sense of potential of tension within that triad, or within that root....”<sup>115</sup>

Therefore harmonically, MacMillan’s *Seven Last Words from the Cross* is impossible to analyze in terms of functional harmony; however, it is possible to analyze the timbre of melodic line, the dissonant chords, and the intervallic relationship.

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<sup>113</sup> Mandy Hallam, Conversation with James MacMillan, *Tempo* 62, no. 245 (2008), p.19

<sup>114</sup> Don Richard Campbell. *An Annotated Bibliography of Contemporary Scottish Choral Music* (1998), 64

<sup>115</sup> Richard McGregor, *Scottish Music Review* 2 no. 1 (2011)

Sometimes there are several dramatic and violent moments, which are characterized by the use of dynamics (*ppp* to *ffff*). MacMillan sets off his dramatic moments with meditations and sorrowful thoughts, and while this piece is not a minimalistic work, it delivers a great sense of space.

The role of the string accompaniment is important even though harmonically it never doubles the chorus. The strings do, however, create great images of Jesus's suffering ambiences. Writing an interlude and postlude supports the piece, and sometimes the strings amplify the chorus's contribution. The string accompaniment is exceptionally complex due to the rhythms and harmonies, and also the importance of creating sounds and sentiment rather than playing many notes.

One of the interesting facts is that MacMillan uses just simple regular meter throughout the piece. (Table 5)

**Table 5:** Meter chart

<i>I</i>	<i>II</i>	<i>III</i>	<i>IV</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>VI</i>	<i>VII</i>
<i>4/4</i>	<i>4/4</i>	<i>4/4</i>	<i>4/4</i>	<i>4/4</i>	<i>4/2</i>	<i>4/2</i>

While the meter is very simple, the rhythms in the piece are highly complex both in the chorus and string accompaniment. For instance, in the string part MacMillan uses triple to septuplet rhythms, sometimes with ornamentations, grace notes and syncopation. There are many places MacMillan uses sudden leaps with grace notes that might create a technical issue for both the chorus and strings. For example, in the second movement in the chorus part, the first bass

parts have to sing a quintuplet rhythm against a triple rhythm in the second bass parts. Combining the parts proves an even harder task.

To MacMillan, Scottish traditional music is an important compositional tool for both choral and instrumental works.

MacMillan said:

One of the things I've managed to do, one of many, is to try and absorb what I call musical vernaculars into the music. That is not in a kind of crossover way, or even a fusion way, but certainly to draw, absorb, on a very deep reservoir of Scottish traditional music, Celtic music, so that it infuses the character of some of the music.<sup>116</sup>

Aspects of Scottish traditional music can be found in this piece and includes, use of the pentatonic scale<sup>117</sup> which often occurs in Celtic folk song as well as use of ornamented notes found in bagpipe and fiddle tunes. The most characteristic aspect of traditional Scottish music is the use of harmonic drones, well-known in bagpipe playing.

In MacMillan's music, this technique is heard particularly in the pedal tones played by the violoncello and double bass in the *Seven Last Words from the Cross*, Such techniques as pedal tones or drones are common in MacMillan's other music like *So Deep* (1992).

In his interview with Richard McGregor, MacMillan explains:

I love drones... I'm writing choral music just now where I just can't get away from it ... It's something about the rootedness of music that draws me to the importance of drones ... The suspension of time which can bring about a cleaning of the ears, a

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<sup>116</sup> Fiona Ritchie. Interview with James MacMillan, on *The Thistle and the Shamrock*

<sup>117</sup> As the term is used by ethnomusicologists

new impetus to listening, a new way of listening to what is to come.<sup>118</sup>

In analyzing the piece the *Seven Last Words from the Cross*, there are clear stylistic similarities with Stravinsky's compositions. Both composers are interested in the traditional folk music of their respective countries and incorporate folk tune-like passage into their works. Many of their compositions draw inspiration drawn from Catholic traditions. For example, MacMillan's devotion to his religious belief is seen in not only his choral music, but also his instrumental music, such as *The World's Ransoming* and *Veni, veni Emmanuel*. Those compositions are based on religious subjects, derived from plainchant, and correspond with specific liturgical occasions. Similarly, Stravinsky employs Catholic treats<sup>119</sup> in his sacred works.

One of the key characteristics of contemporary choral music is sheer the variety of compositional and musical styles, which makes it difficult to describe and define in simple terms. For this reason, choral conductors should be aware not only of the technical demands and stylistic influences of the music, but also the historical background of the piece and composer when preparing a choral concert with this repertoire.

In the case of MacMillan's *Seven Last Words from the Cross*, the technical demands required of the conductor and performers are great because of the complexity of the rhythms and pitches and the importance of the conductor in giving clear beat patterns and cues. When preparing this piece, the conductor should think about who in the ensemble needs what information and plan his gestures and interpretation of the piece accordingly. In addition,

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<sup>118</sup> Richard McGregor. Interview with James MacMillan (2005) p.8

<sup>119</sup> Such as texts, ideas



knowing MacMillan's background and influences can enhance and inform the conductor's interpretation of the music.

MacMillan's composition *Seven Last Words from the Cross*, though each section is modest in scale, each presents a microcosm of the elements which support his compositional thinking in his much larger works, and particularly those with any kind of overtly religious sentiment such as *Veni Veni Emmanuel* (1992), *St. John Passion* (2007) and the *Magnificat* (1999).

MacMillan's popularity is still growing and over the past few years, he has written many choral pieces and accepted further commissions, which will hopefully strengthen his place in choral repertoire. I hope that my analysis of the *Seven Last Words from the Cross* by James MacMillan will benefit choral conductors who are preparing this music and encourage scholars to expand on my research and explore other choral works by this important composer.

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APPENDIX A

List of MacMillan's Choral Works

Year	Title	Instrumentation	Detail
1997	<i>Missa Brevis</i>	SATB	First complete performance - Capella Nova under Alan Tavener on November 22. 2007
1979	<i>The Lamb has come for us from the House of David</i>	SATB, Organ	First performance - Schola Sancti Alberti by the composer at St. Peter's, Edinburgh on June 9. 1979
1983	<i>On Love</i>	Solo/unison trebles, Organ	First performance - Chapel of St Albert the Great, Edinburgh on August 18. 1984
1985	<i>St. Anne's Mass</i>	Unison, Piano or Organ with optional SATB choir	
1989	<i>Cantos Sagrados</i>	SATB, Organ	Commissioned by the Scottish Arts Council for the Scottish Chamber Choir. First performance - Old St Paul's Church by Colin Tipple, Edinburgh on February 10.1990 (1998,with Orchestra)
1990	<i>Catherine's Lullabies</i>	SATB, Brass, Percussion	First performance - John Currie Singers in Glasgow on February 10.1991
1991	<i>Divo Aloysio Sacrum</i>	SATB, optional organ	First performance - Royal Scottish National Choir and the Edinburgh Festival Ensemble by Christopher Bell at St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh on August 27. 1993
1992	<i>So Deep</i>	SSAATTBB, optional Oboe ,Viola	Arrangement of O my love's like a red, red rose by Robert Burns
1993	<i>...here in hiding...</i>	ATTB Soli or Choir	Commissioned by the Hilliard Ensemble First performance - Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, Glasgow on August 10. 1993
1993	<i>Seven Last Words from the Cross (Cantata)</i>	SSAATTBB, Strings	Commissioned by BBC Television First performance - Capella Nova, Scottish Ensemble by Alan Tavener,1994
1994	<i>Christus Vincit</i>	Sop. Solo, SSAATTBB	First performance - combined choirs from Westminster Abbey, Westminster Cathedral and St Paul's Cathedral by John Scott at St Paul's Cathedral, London on November 23. 1994
1995	<i>Màiri</i>	16 part choir	Commissioned by the BBC First performance - BBC Singers by Bo Holten at St John's, Smith Square, London on May 19. 1995
1995	<i>Seinte Mari moder milde</i>	SATB, Organ	Commissioned by King's College, Cambridge First performance - Choir of Kings College by Stephen Cleobury in Cambridge on December 24.1995

1996	<i>A Child's Prayer</i>	Two Soloists, SATB	First performance - Choir of Westminster Abbey by Martin Neary in Westminster, London on July 4. 1996
1996	<i>The Galloway Mass</i>	Cantor & Choir, Organ	First performance - Congregation of Good Shepherd Cathedral, Ayr on March 25. 1997
1996	<i>The Halie Speerit's Dauncers</i>	Unison Children choir, Piano	Composed for the Corpus Christi Primary School, Glasgow on April 28. 1997
1996	<i>On the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin</i>	SATB, Organ	First performance - Choir of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge by Geoffrey Webber at Caius Chapel, Cambridge on April 27. 1997
1997	<i>Changed</i>	SATB, Organ, Harp String	First performance - Cunninghame Choir and members of the North Ayrshire Youth Band by Dorothy Howden at Walker Hall, Kilbirnie, Ayrshire on December 12. 1998
1997	<i>The Gallant Weaver</i>	SATB	First performance - Paisley Abbey Choir by George McPhee at the Thomas Coats Memorial Church, Paisley on April 14. 1997
1997	<i>A New Song</i>	SATB, Organ	First performance - Robert Marshall on March 1. 1998. Composed for the choir of St Bride's Church, Glasgow
1997	<i>The Prophecy</i>	Two part choir, Instruments	First performance - children from the Haringey Schools and members of The Philharmonia by Nicholas Wilks, John Cooney and the composer at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southbank Centre, London on October 11. 1997
1998	<i>Quickening</i>	Soloists, Children choir, SATB, Orchestra	Commissioned by the BBC Proms and the Philadelphia Orchestra First performance - Hilliard Ensemble, the Westminster Cathedral Boys' Choir, the BBC Symphony Chorus, and the BBC Symphony Orchestra by Sir Andrew Davis at the Royal Albert Hall, London on September 5. 1999
1999	<i>Heyoka Te Deum</i>	Three part treble voices, Flute, Bells, Piano	Composed for the Brooklyn Youth Chorus First performance - by Dianne Berkon in New York on May 3. 2001
1999	<i>Magnificat</i>	SATB, Organ	Commissioned by the BBC for the first choral evensong of the Millennium. First performance - Choir of Winchester Cathedral by David Hill at Winchester Cathedral on July 15. 2000
1999	<i>Magnificat</i>	SATB, Orchestra	First performance - Wells Cathedral Choir, the St. John's College Choir, and the BBC Philharmonic under the composer at Wells Cathedral, Wells on January 5. 2000
1999	<i>The Company of Heaven</i>	Children choir, Organ	Commissioned by Partick 2000, a grouping of churches and community organizations in the Partick area of Glasgow, to celebrate the Millennium
2000	<i>Mass</i>	SATB, Organ	Commissioned by Westminster Cathedral for the Millennium

			First performance - Choir of Westminster Cathedral by Martin Baker at Westminster Cathedral, London on June 22. 2000
2000	<i>Nunc Dimittis</i>	SATB, Organ	Commissioned by Winchester Cathedral First performance - Choir of Winchester Cathedral by David Hill in Winchester on July 15. 2000
2001	<i>The Birds of Rhiannon</i>	SATB, Orchestra	Commissioned by the BBC Proms First performance - The Sixteen and the BBC Philharmonic by the composer at the Royal Albert Hall, London on July 26. 2001
2001	<i>Dutch Carol</i>	Unison treble, Piano	From traditional Dutch Christmas text
2001	<i>Nunc Dimittis</i>	SATB, Orchestra	First performance - BBC Singers and the BBC Philharmonic by the composer at Bridgewater Hall, Manchester on November 16. 2001
2001	<i>Te Deum</i>	SATB, Organ	Composed for the choir of the Chapel Royal, HM Tower of London First performance - Stephen Tilton at the Tower of London on February 3. 2002
2001	<i>Tremunt videntes angeli</i>	SATB	Commissioned by Sir Eduardo Paolozzi in the Resurrection Chapel of St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Edinburgh. First performance - Choir of St. Mary's Cathedral by Matthew Owens in St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Edinburgh on May 9. 2002
2002	<i>O bone Jesu</i>	SATB	Commissioned by The Sixteen First performance - Harry Christophers at Southwark Cathedral, London on October 10. 2002
2002	<i>To My Successor</i>	SATB	First performance - Choir of Canterbury Cathedral by David Flood at Canterbury Cathedral, Canterbury on February 27. 2003
2003	<i>Chosen</i>	SAATTB, Organ	First performance - Choir of Paisley Abbey by George McPhee in Glasgow on December 24. 2003
2003	<i>Give me justice</i>	SATB	Introit
2004	<i>Give me justice, O God</i>	Unison	Chant
2004	<i>Gospel Acclamation</i>	Unison	Chant
2004	<i>Laudi alla Vergine Maria</i>	SSAATTBB	First performance - Netherlands Chamber Choir by Stephen Layton at St Janskerk, Gouda on October 6. 2004
2004	<i>The Lord is my life my help</i>	Unison	Chant
2004	<i>Remember your mercies</i>	Unison	Chant
2005	<i>Bless the Lord, my soul</i>	SATB	Psalm
2005	<i>Nemo te condemnavit</i>	SATB	Commissioned by the Yale Glee Club

			First performance - Jeffrey Douma at Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut on November 18. 2005
2005	<i>Out of the depths</i>	SATB	Psalm
2005	<i>The Spirit of the Lord</i>	SATB	Antiphon
2005	<i>Factus est repente (The Strathclyde Motets)</i>	SATB	First performance - Strathclyde University Chamber Choir by Alan Tavener in Glasgow on May 15. 2005
2005	<i>In splendoribus sanctorum (The Strathclyde Motets)</i>	SATB, Trumpet, Organ	First performance - St Columba's RC Parish Church, Glasgow on December 24. 2005
2005	<i>Sedebit Dominus Rex (The Strathclyde Motets)</i>	SATB	First performance - Strathclyde University Chamber Choir by Alan Tavener in Glasgow on November 20. 2005
2005	<i>Videns Dominus (The Strathclyde Motets)</i>	SATB	First performance - Strathclyde University Chamber Choir by Alan Tavener in Glasgow on March 13. 2005
2005	<i>When he calls to me, I will answer</i>	Unison	Chant
2006	<i>After Virtue</i>	SSAATBB	Commissioned by the Oslo International Church Music Festival First performance - the Oslo Soloists Choir by Grete Pedersen on March 18. 2007
2006	<i>Invocation</i>	Double choir	Composed for the Oriel Singers First performance - by Tim Morris in Tewkesbury Abbey on July 11. 2006
2006	<i>Let the sons of Israel say</i>	SATB	Responsorial Psalm
2006	<i>O Lord, you had just cause</i>	SATB	Chan
2006	<i>Dominus dabit benignitatem (The Strathclyde Motets)</i>	SATB	First performance - Strathclyde University Chamber Choir by Alan Tavener in Glasgow on December 3. 2006
2006	<i>Mitte manum tuam</i>	SATB	First performance - Strathclyde University Chamber Choir by Alan Tavener in Glasgow on April 23. 2006
2006	<i>Success</i>	SATB	
2006	<i>Sun Dogs</i>	SATB	Commissioned by Indiana University First performance - Indiana University Contemporary Vocal Ensemble by Carmen Téllez at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana on August 6. 2006
2006	<i>Tenebrae Responsories</i>	SSAATTBB	Commissioned by Capella Nova First performance - at St Andrew's in the Square, Glasgow on April 4. 2007
2007	<i>...fiat mihi...</i>	SSAATTBB	Composed for the Bath Camerata First performance - at Wells Cathedral, Wells on March 21. 2008
2007	<i>Our Father</i>	Unison, Organ	
2007	<i>St. John Passion</i>	Solo, SATB, Orchestra	Commissioned by the London Symphony Orchestra and the Boston Symphony

			First performance - London Symphony Orchestra and Chorus byr Sir Colin Davis at the Barbican Centre, London on April 17. 2008
2007	<i>The Canticle of Zachariah (The Strathclyde Motets)</i>	SATB	First performance - Strathclyde University Chamber Choir by Alan Tavener at St Columba's RC Parish Church, Glasgow on December 2. 2007
2007	<i>O Radiant Dawn</i>	SATB	First performance - The choir of St Columba's RC Parish Church, Glasgow on December 2. 2007
2007	<i>Data est mihi omnis potestas</i>	SATB	First performance - Strathclyde University Chamber Choir by Alan Tavener at St Columba's RC Parish Church, Glasgow on May 14. 2007
2008	<i>O</i>	Three part choir, Trumpet, String or Organ	First performance - Students of the St. Mary's Music School in Queen's Hall, Edinburgh on June 23. 2008
2008	<i>Padre Pio's Prayer</i>	SATB, Organ	Commissioned by The Sixteen First performance - Harry Christophers at Westminster Cathedral, London on June 3. 2008
2008	<i>The Song of the Lamb</i>	SATB, Organ	First performance - Choir of The House of Hope Presbyterian Church by Andrew Altenbach in St. Paul, Minnesota on March 9. 2008
2008	<i>Pascha nostrum imolatus est</i>	SATB	First performance - Strathclyde University Chamber Choir by Alan Tavener at St Columba's RC Parish Church, Glasgow on March 23. 2008
2008	<i>Os mutorum</i>	Two part, Harp	First performance - Cauty at St Columba's RC Parish Church, Glasgow on June 22. 2008
2008	<i>Lux Aeterna</i>	SATB	First performance - Strathclyde University Chamber Choir by Alan Tavener at St Columba's RC Parish Church, Glasgow on November 2. 2008
2009	<i>And lo, the Angel of the Lord came upon them</i>	Three part Choir	First performance - Jeffrey Skidmore at St Paul's Church, Birmingham on December 19. 2009
2009	<i>Benedictus Deus</i>	SATB	First performance - Westminster Cathedral Choir by Martin Baker at Westminster Cathedral, London on May 21. 2009
2009	<i>Bring us, O Lord God</i>	SATB	Commissioned by Schola Cantorum First performance - James Burton at the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford on May 1. 2010.
2009	<i>Jubilate Deo</i>	SATB, Organ	First performance - Choir of Wells Cathedral by Owens at Wells Cathedral on May 17. 2009
2009	<i>Miserere</i>	SATB	Commissioned by The Sixteen First performance - Harry Christophers in Antwerp on August 29. 2009
2009	<i>Serenity</i>	SATB, Organ	First performance - Students of St. Aloysius' College in Glasgow on June 21. 2009
2009	<i>Summae Trinitati</i>	SATB, Brass,	First performance - Choir of Westminster

		Timpani, Organ	Cathedral by Martin Baker at Westminster Cathedral, London on May 21. 2009
2009	<i>Tota pulchra es</i>	SATB, Organ	First performance - Choir of the Basilica at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington on July 8. 2010
2009	<i>Who are these angels?</i>	TTBBB, Strings	First performance - DoelenKwartet and ensemble amarcord in Laurenskerk, Rotterdam on April 28. 2009
2010	<i>Ave Maria</i>	SATB, Organ	First performance - Boys, Girls and Men of All Saints Northampton by Lee Dunleavy at St George's Chapel, Windsor on July 27. 2010
2010	<i>Lassie, wad ye loe me?</i>	SATB	
2010	<i>Mass of Blessed John Henry Newman</i>	Cantor, Organ	Commissioned for Pope Benedict XVI's visit to the UK First performance - in Bellahouston Park, Glasgow on September 16. 2010
2010	<i>Sonnet</i>	SS	
2010	<i>Qui meditabitur</i> <i>(The Strathclyde Motets)</i>	SSATTBB	First performance - Strathclyde University Chamber Choir by Alan Tavener at St Columba's RC Parish Church, Glasgow on February 17. 2010
2010	<i>Benedicimus Deum caeli</i> <i>(The Strathclyde Motets)</i>	SSATTB	First performance - Strathclyde University Chamber Choir by Alan Tavener at St Columba's RC Parish Church, Glasgow on May 30. 2010
2010	<i>Think of how God loves you</i>	SATB	First performance - Choir of St Columba Church of Scotland, Glasgow by the composer on August 22. 2010.
2010	<i>Tu es Petrus</i>	SATB, Brass, Percussion, Organ	Introit
2010	<i>Since it was the day of Preparation...,</i>	B solo, mixed soli or small chorus and ensemble	First performance - Greyfriars Kirk, Edinburgh William Conway, August 22. 2012
2011	<i>Gloria</i>	SATB, children's choir, Organ, Brass, Timpani	First performance - Choral Society of Coventry Cathedral, Saint Michael's Singers at Coventry Cathedral on June 23. 2012
2011	<i>Credo</i>	SATB, Orchestra	First performance - BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, Manchester Chamber Choir, Northern Sinfonia Chorus, Rushley Singers at Royal Albert Hall, London on August 7. 2012
2011	<i>Hodie Puer Nascitur</i>	SATB	First performance - Amsterdam Huelgas Ensemble, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra on April 13. 2012
2011	<i>Children are a heritage of the Lord</i>	SSATB	First performance - The Sixteen at Hatfield House on September 11. 2011
2011	<i>Alpha and Omega</i>	SSSAATTBB	First performance - Rockefeller Chapel Choir and Chicago University Motet Choir at Rockefeller Chapel on June 4. 2011
2011	<i>I Am Your Mother</i>	SATB	First performance - Oxford Choir of Blackfriars

			on September 17. 2011
2011	<i>Missa Dunelmi</i>	SSAATTBB	First performance - Durham Cathedral Choir at Durham Cathedral on February 27. 2011
2012	<i>Cum vidisset Jesus</i>	SSSSAATTBB	First performance - Notre Dame Festival Chorus by Carmen-Helena Téllez at Leighton Hall, DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, University of Notre Dame on September 15. 2012
2012	<i>Cecilia Virgo</i>	Double choir	First performance - Egham, Surrey Choir of Royal Holloway, University of London at Royal Holloway on November 24. 2012
2013	<i>St. Luke Passion</i>	SATB, Orchestra	First performance - Amsterdam Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, Netherlands Radio Choir Amsterdam on March 15. 2014
2013	<i>Deus noster refugium</i>	SSAATTBB, Organ	First performance - Leeds Festival Chorus by Simon Wright at Leeds Town Hall, on March 29. 2104
2013	<i>A Rumoured Seed</i>	SATB	First performance - The Kings Singers at Perth Concert Hall on April 2. 2014
2014	<i>Emitte lucem tuam</i>	SSAATTBB	First performance - London Choir of Cardinal Vaughan School at Westminster Cathedral on September 19. 2014
2014	<i>I will take you from the nations</i>	SSAATTBB	First performance - Oxford Merton College Choir on June 8. 2014
2014	<i>Playing the Skyline</i>	Children's choir, Marimba	
2014	<i>Seven Angels</i>	Solo, SATB, Instruments	First performance will be on January 31. 2015 at Town Hall, Birmingham by Ex Cathedra



APPENDIX B

Other Settings of “The seven last words”

<b>Composer</b>	<b>Title (Year)</b>	<b>Detail</b>
Orlando di Lasso (1530-1594)	<i>Septem verba Domini Jesu Christi (?)</i>	Mottets 5 voices
Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672)	<i>Die sieben Worte Jesu Christi am Kreuz, SWV 478 (1645, revised 1655)</i>	Passion setting SATTB soloists SATTB choir Five instruments, B.C.
Augustin Pflieger (1635-1686)	<i>The seven last words from the cross (unknown)</i>	Oratorio
Giovanni B. Pergolesi (1710-1736)	<i>Septem verba a Christo in cruce moriente prolata (1730-1736)</i>	STTB soloists Strings (?)
Christoph Graupner (1683-1760)	<i>Die sieben Worte des Heilands am Kreuz (1743)</i>	Cantata
Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)	<i>Die sieben letzten Worte unseres Erlösers am Kreuze, Hob. XX/1:A (1787, String quartet)</i>	Oratorio (1796) SSATB soloists SATB choir Orchestra
Francisco Javier (1730-1809)	<i>The seven last words of Christ on the cross (1787)</i>	Oratorio SSATB soloists SATB choir Orchestra
Francesco Galeazzi (1758-1819)	<i>Strofe per le tre ore di agonia di Nostri Signor Gesu Christo (1812)</i>	Oratorio TTB soloist Piccolo
Christian F. H. Uber (1781-1822)	<i>Die letzten Worte des Erlösers (1822)</i>	Oratoria
Saverio Mercadante (1795-1870)	<i>Le sette ultime parole di Nostro Signore Gesù Cristo (1838)</i>	Oratorio SATB soloists SATB choir Pianoforte Accompagnamento di quartetto d'archi
Charles Gounod (1818-1893)	<i>Les Sept Paroles de Notre Seigneur Jesus-Christ sur la Croix (1855)</i>	SATB soloists, Choir (pianoforte o organo ad libitum)
Eugene Gautier (1822-1878)	<i>Les Sept Paroles de Christ (1855)</i>	T solo, Choir Orchestra
César Franck (1822-1890)	<i>Les Sept Paroles du Christ sur la Croix (1859)</i>	STTB soloists SATB choir Orchestra
Théodore Dubois (1837-1924)	<i>Les Sept Paroles du Christ (1867)</i>	Oratorio SATB soloists

		SATB choir Orchestra
Adolphe Deslandres (1840-1911)	<i>Les Sept Paroles du Christ (1883)</i>	B solo, Choir String, Organ
Fernand de La Tombelle (1854-1928)	<i>Les sept Paroles de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ</i>	
Pater Hartmann (1863-1914)	<i>Septum ultima verba Christi in cruce (1908)</i>	Oratorio
Lorenzo Perosi (1872-1956)	<i>Le sette parole di Gesu sulla Croce</i>	Solo Orchestra
Giuseppe Ramella (1873-1940)	<i>Le sette parole di Gesu sulla Croce (1908)</i>	
Lorenzo Maria Falduti (1897-1937)	<i>Le sette Parole dell'agonia di Nostro Signore Gesù Cristo</i>	Oratorio
Luigi Bottazzo (1845-1924)	<i>Le sette parole di Croce (1926)</i>	CTB
Charles Tournemire (1870-1939)	<i>Sept Chorals-Poèmes pour les sept Paroles du Christ Op. 67 (1935)</i>	Organ
Robert James Dvorak (b.1919-)	<i>The Seven Last Words (1945)</i>	T solo, choir Orchestra
Lino Liviabella (1902-1964)	<i>Le sette parole di Gesù sulla Croce (1958)</i>	Cantata T solo, choir Orchestra
Knut Nystedt (1915-2014)	<i>Die Sieben Worte Jesu am Kreuz op. 47 (1961)</i>	Passione mottetto SATB choir
Alan Ridout (1934-1996)	<i>The Seven Last Words (1965)</i>	Organ
Douglas Allanbrook (1921-2003)	<i>The Seven Last Words (1970)</i>	S.B. soloists, choir Orchestra
Eberhard Wenzel (1896-1982)	<i>Die sieben Worte Jesu Christi am Kreuz Op. 53 (1971)</i>	SAB choir
Sofia Gubaidulina (b.1931-)	<i>Sieben Worte (1982)</i>	Cello
Tristan Murail (b.1947-)	<i>Les Sept Paroles du Christ en Croix (1986-9)</i>	Oratorio Choir Orchestra
James MacMillan (b.1959-)	<i>Seven Last Words from the Cross (1993)</i>	Cantata Choir Strings
Ian Wilson (b.1964-)	<i>The Seven Last Words (1995)</i>	Trio Pianoforte
Ruth Zechlin (1926-2007)	<i>Die sieben letzten Worte Jesu am Kreuz (1996)</i>	Organ
Nancy Hill Cobb (b.1951-)	<i>The Seven Last Words (1998)</i>	SATB choir
Idin Samimi Mofakham (b.1982-)	<i>Seven Last Words From the Cross (2008)</i>	
Benjamin Cornelius-Bate (b.1978-)	<i>The Seven Last Words of Christ on the Cross (2009)</i>	B. solo, choir Orchestra
Tawnie Olson	<i>The Seven Last Words from the Cross (2009)</i>	Soloists, SATB choir Orchestra
Jerome Malek	<i>Seven Last Words (2010)</i>	Cantata Soloists, choir Orchestra
Tristan Murail (b.1947-)	<i>Les Sept Paroles for orchestra, chorus and</i>	

	<i>electronics (2010)</i>	
Gareth Wilson	<i>Logos (2010)</i>	Choir
Daan Manneke (b.1939-)	<i>The Seven Last Words (2011)</i>	Oratorio Choir
Sascha André Heberling (b.1975-)	<i>Die sieben letzten Worte (2012)</i>	B. solo, choir Strings, Timpani
Daniel Elder (b.1986-)	<i>Seven Last Words from the Cross (2012)</i>	Choir
Fabrizio Bastianini	<i>Sette parole (2013)</i>	STB soloists, choir Strings
Bernard Salles (b.1970-)	<i>Les sept dernières paroles du Christ en Croix (2013)</i>	SATB soloists, choir Orchestra

## APPENDIX C

### Texts Translations and Original Chants

#### *I. Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*

##### Original Text

Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do

-Luke 23:34

##### Additional Text

Hosanna filio David benedictus qui venit in nomine Domine  
Rex Israel, Hosanni in excelsis

(Tr) Hosanna to the Son of David blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord,  
The King of Israel, Hosanna in the Highest

-The Palm Sunday Exclamation (Matthew 21:9 / The Liber Usualis 1961, page 580)

The life that I held dear I delivered into the hands of the unrighteous and my inheritance has  
become for me like a lion in the forest.

My enemy spoke out against me,

'Come gather together and hasten to devour him'.

They placed me in a wasteland of desolation, and all the earth mourned for me.

For there was no one who would acknowledge me or give me help.

Men rose up against me and spared not my life.

-The Good Friday Responsories for Tenebrae (The Liber Usualis 1961, page 704-705)

##### Chants

Ant.  
7

Osánna \* fí-li-o Dávid : benedí-ctus qui vé-nit  
in nómine Dómi-ni. Rex Is- ra- òl : Hosánna in  
excél-sis.

Resp. 6  
8

**A** -nimam mé-am \* di-lé-ctam trá-di-di in má-  
 nus iniquó-rum, et fácta est mí-hi herédi-tas  
 mé-a sic-ut lé-o in sílva : dédit contra  
 me vóces adver-sá-ri-us, dí-cens : Congregá-  
 mini, et prope-rá-te ad devorán-dum íllum :  
 po-su-érunt me in de-sérto so-li-túdi-nis,  
 et lú-xit super me ómnis tér-ra : \* Qui-a non est in-  
 véntus qui me agnó-sce-ret, et fá-ce-ret be-ne.  
 V. Insurrexé-runt in me ví-ri absque mi-se-ricór-  
 di-a, et non pepercé-runt á-ni-mae mé-ae.  
 \* Quia. R. Animam.

*II. Woman, Behold Thy Son!...Behold, Thy Mother!*

Woman, Behold Thy Son!...Behold, Thy Mother!

-John 19:26-27

*III. Verily, I say unto thee, today thou shalt be with me in Paradise*

Original Text

Verily, I say unto thee, today thou shalt be with me in Paradise

-Luke 23:43

Additional Text

Ecce Lignum Crucis in quo salus mundi pependit

Omnes: Venite adoremus

(Tr) Behold the Wood of the Cross on which The Saviour of the world was hung

Come let us adore him

-Good Friday Versicle (The Liber Usualis 1961, page 735-736)

Chant

VI  
**E** Cce li- gnum Cru- cis, in quo sa- lus mun-  
di pe- pén- dit.  
Omnes : Ve- ní- te, ad- o-ré- mus.

*IV. Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani*

Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani

(Tr) My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?

-Matthew 27:46

*V. I thirst*

Original Text

I thirst

-John 19:28

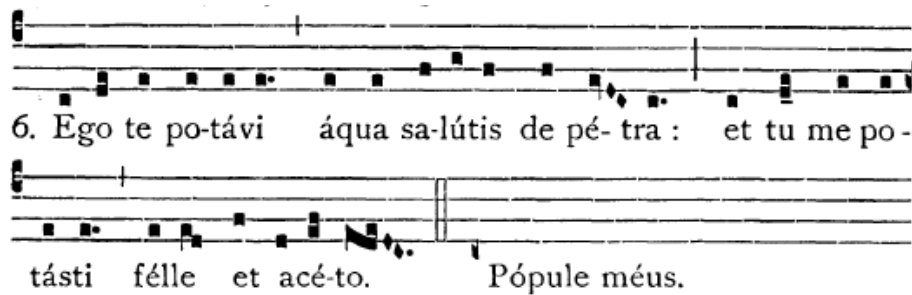
Additional Text

Ego te potaviaqua salutis de petra:  
et tu me postast felle et aceto

(Tr) I gave you to drink of life-giving water from the rock:  
and you gave me to drink of gall and vinegar

-The Good Friday Reproaches (The Liber Usualis 1961, page 740)

Chant



6. Ego te po-távi áqua sa-lútis de pé-tra : et tu me po-  
tásti félle et acé-to. Pópule méus.

*VI. It is finished*

Original Text

It is finished

-John 19:30

Additional Text

My eyes were blind with weeping, for he that consoled me is far from me:  
Consider all you people, is there any sorrow like my sorrow?  
All you who pass along this way take heed and consider if there is any sorrow like mine.

-The Good Friday Responsaries for Tenebrae (The Liber Usualis 1961, page 712)

Chant

Resp. 9



Aligavérunt \* ócu-li mé- i a flé- tu  
 mé- o : qui- a e-longátus est a me, qui conso- la-  
 bá- tur me : Vidé-te, ómnes pó-pu- li, \* Si est dó- lor  
 sí- mi- lis sic-ut dó- lor mé- us. V. O vos  
 ómnes, qui transí-tis per ví- am, atté-ndi-te et vi-  
 dé- te. \* Si est. R. Ca- ligavérunt.

*VII. Father, into Thy hands I commend my Spirit*

Father, into Thy hands I commend my Spirit

-Luke 23:46