JAMES DEMARS

TITO'S SAY

A Cantata in Five Movements

Text by Alberto Rios

for Soprano and Baritone Soloists, Chorus, Strings, Brass and Percussion

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I. The Industry of Hard Kissing	(page 1) Chorus, soloists, orchestra
II. The Bath	(page 29) Chorus with strings, harp and percussion
III. Listening Into Night	(page 40) Chorus and orchestra
IV. Her Secret Love, Whispered Late	e In Her Years (page 62) Soprano Solo
V. Ventura & Clemente	(page 75) Chorus, soloists, orchestra

Duration: approximately 24'

Instrumentation: 3 Trumpets in C 2 Trombones Bass Trombone

Harp Piano

Timpani

Percussion 1: Bass Drum, 3 Floor Tom-toms, Bongos, Conga (1), Mark tree, Cabasa, Medium suspended cymbal, Wood blocks, Claves, Triangle, Sand blocks, Maracas

Percussion 2:Tam-tam, Suspended cymbals: low, medium and high, Chinese cymbal, Wind gong, Marimba, Wood blocks (high and low), Temple blocks, Guiro, Crotales: F, G

Strings

Tito's Say was commissioned by the Arizona Choral Society and received its premiere at St. Mary's Basilica in Phoenix in May of 1990 under the baton of guest conductor, John Daly Goodwin. For this cantata composer James DeMars selected passages from five poems by the acclaimed Arizona poet, Alberto ("Tito") Rios, who is known for an insightful "magical realism" infused with the border town imagery of his youth. The poems provide five aspects of love and life; from the gritty twist of a cheating spouse to the poignant reflections of old age, the sensual flirtations of tango, humorous reflections on aging and finally the imagined childhood love of his grandparents Ventura and Clemente. During premiere performance the frequently suggestive or disturbing text led to a most unusual chase scene as the producer (Richard Romero) moved quickly and quietly around the hall staying just a step ahead of the church authority who was furious about the perceived sacrilege and intent on finding Richard to cut the work from the concert. Fortunately Richard prevailed and the audience heard our new work. JD

TITO'S SAY

For Solo Soprano, Bass, Chorus, Strings Brass and Percussion (Music by James DeMars, lyrics adapted from poetry by Alberto Rios)

1. The Industry of Hard Kissing

CHOR: The inquietude of this matter of love!
BASS: Oh. (obligato)
Knocking cows over when they sleep,
they get mad.
SOP: Oh. (obligato)
CHOR: Ordinary life falls the quickest,
is easy to make breathe hard.
BASS: The quiet of a sad desire
for someone you cannot have again,
this small cancer of the happy soul!
CHOR: You cannot have again, again, again.
Ordinary life falls the quickest,
is easy to make breathe hard.
BASS: So we kiss! Kiss harder or not at all;
Something saved for the other,
for the whistles and the cheeses of another life, another mouth,
SOP: Another woman!
BASS: and a thousand new words are what you must say now,
SOP: So suddenly,
BASS: Instead of the other woman,
CHOR: You cannot have again,
BASS: there is no other woman,
CHOR: Yes, there is!
SOP: No, no, no
BASS: there is no other woman, and there is.
SOP: Ah!
CHOR: Ordinary life falls the quickest,
is easy to make breathe hard.

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2. The Bath

The woman undressed and put her lashes on for decoration, so as to bather lavishly. She kept them in the water next to her bed where her teeth had been long ago. She floated in the water watching her skin fold again and again. These were her treasures, her only heirlooms left and she guarded them now like diamond earrings, She thought as she looked that she would like very much to be buried with them on. Slowly they float from her body as boats on the water.

3. Listening Into Night

Music drifts in from the street, Until it is the fourth wall of the room. So thin, maybe Brazilian, at first, A samba on the sand beneath the light. The quiet evening sun Settling all at once into shadow, Into the tight tango strain of a nervous night, Suddenly gathered at the neck, A flute, a clarinet, a girl who will cry, A thousand moons, a single sky.

I am sitting on a couch and dreaming of the outside, Ten things, ten songs, ten parts of a long, long woman, And the woman always walks tight, complex, Ten parts of a leg, the back of a head, The hair that she holds in her hand, Dreaming of the outside.

Dreaming of the music in the house, White curtains and the light, An open window, no morning here, Only late afternoons and that which follows, Always sand, and always clean and white and moveable, As if that part of an eye that is central and dark, That is for seeing into darkness is ignored, Suddenly swallows up it self, And the world it sways, It moves as is again, It is young and wants to be.

4. Her Secret Love, Whispered Late in Her Years

Solo Soprano: Gravity wants me. Gravity can't get enough of me. Every time I try to leave, it finds a way to bring me back. It shows up wherever I go. It's always been this way. Sometimes catching me by surprise at the ankle, trying to wrestle me to the ground. It makes me laugh and I give in. This thing that wants me, This amorous creature, This magnet to my body - it is a beast. But I would miss it if it weren't there. When I was young, headstrong and full of stars, Not ready for any embrace, More than the necklace those stars made for me. But gravity, not the stars, caught my tears. Each time I was with child, it whispered my name in the night. As I grew heavier through the years it only asked for me all the more. It brought my hair down And made my summer dresses fall from me. In every step I have taken, long companion unswerving, never leaving my side it has turned me. Gravity wants me. Gravity can't get enough of me. But now I am the one who's drawn to its arms, And I am the one who opened the door. Now I am the one, I am the suitor. I say very nice things. I'm desperate these days, I'm desp'rate and ready To lie down with it.

5. Ventura & Clemente

Ventura had hair of the jungle, long, long like words of the monkeys and parrots, long, long like vines and the roots without end; all pulled back, knotted and tight with the help, the insistence of her mother; her mother who had cheeks like persimmons, her face always tasting the peel, using the energy of their taste to pull

so the face of Ventura's young girl-head was skull white bone and big clack teeth like the cartoon, unconnected.

WOM: Almost sounding like fat ducks MEN: that every day she fed

WOM: clack, clack, clack-clacking so MEN: after she stopped her work in the peeling secretariat of a third but ambitious supervisor of federal railroads CHOR: ev'ry day she fed them popcorn ("palomitas") and one day she could not because of snow! Snow for the first time that she could remember this early, this far to the south, they opened their mouths and ate the snow, the white bits, ("palomitas") they thought had come from her, Ventura, Ventura's young girl-head, she laughed and laughed and opened her mouth without making a sound in the late afternoon so sacred in one freedom, the crickets stopped to listen, listen, listen, but no less than he.... Clemente, from behind the bouganvilleas had smoked his colored cigarette, watching her this moment then letting her go, simply letting her go, like smoke to its most secret place, to the place smoke always goes, this Ventura leaving a memory. This Ventura, sweet like the cane in his eyes so that the rest of his body caught fire with jealousy. MEN: The world had always erupted through him, WOM: and always bad! MEN: breaking through to the side of what might be, CHOR: Wishing, wishing, wishing to whisper the Spanish love songs, breaking through to the side of what might be, WOM: he dared not MEN: nothing could be WOM: he dared not MEN: nothing could be CHOR: nothing could be so, so simple! How he wanted her, he could not endure the inquietude of this matter of love! Ventura had hair of the jungle, long, long like words of the monkeys and parrots, long, long, long, long, ah. BASS: How she laughed out her true self SOP. Ah! CHOR: Ventura, Clemente, Ventura!

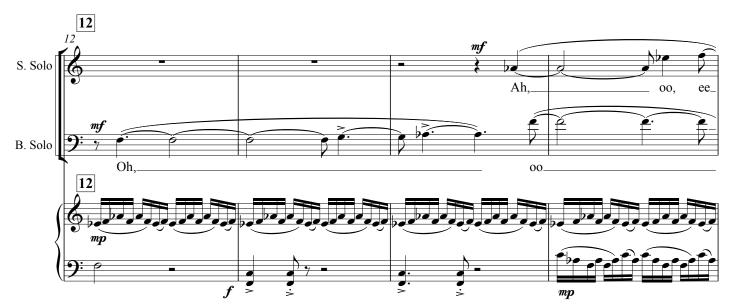
ALBERTO RIOS

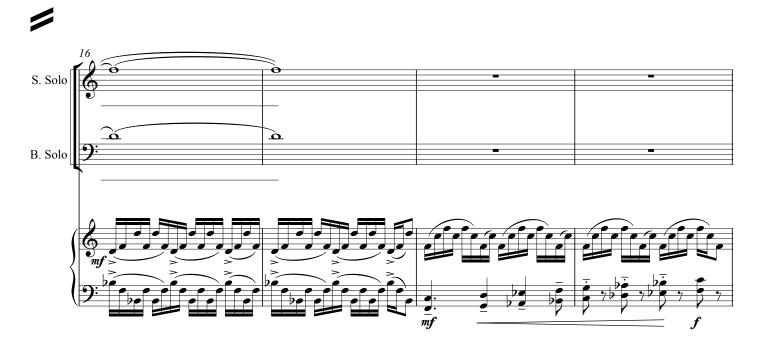
TITO'S SAY Mvt. I: The Industry of Hard Kissing

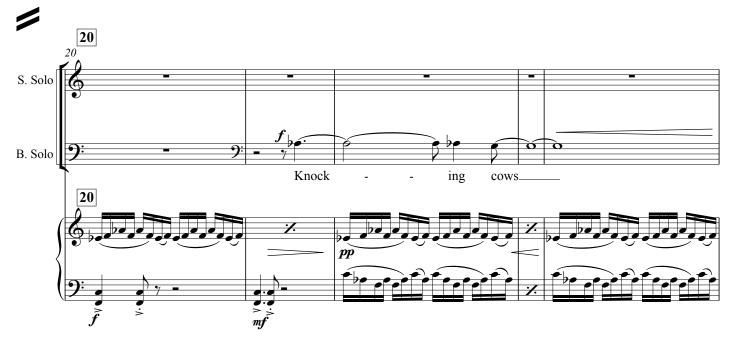
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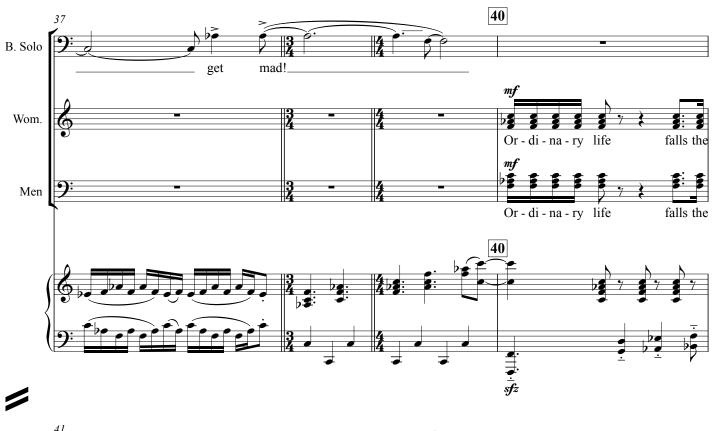


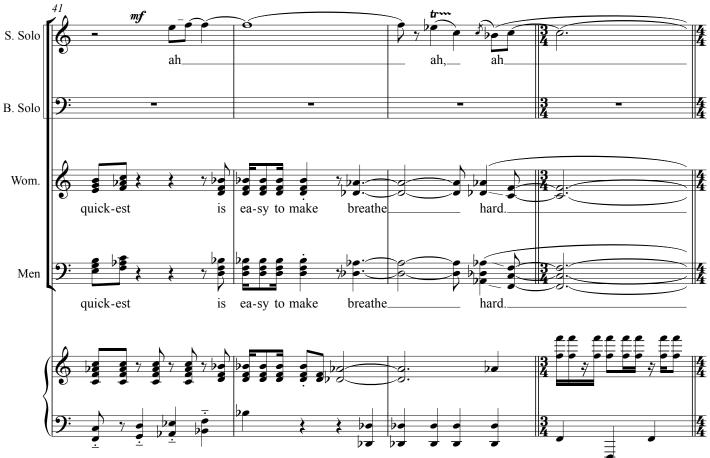






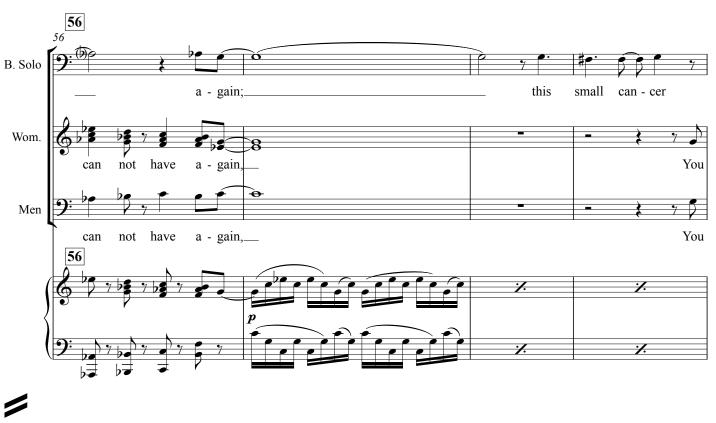


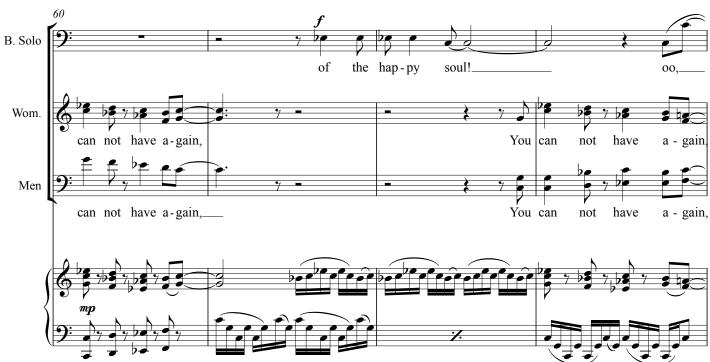






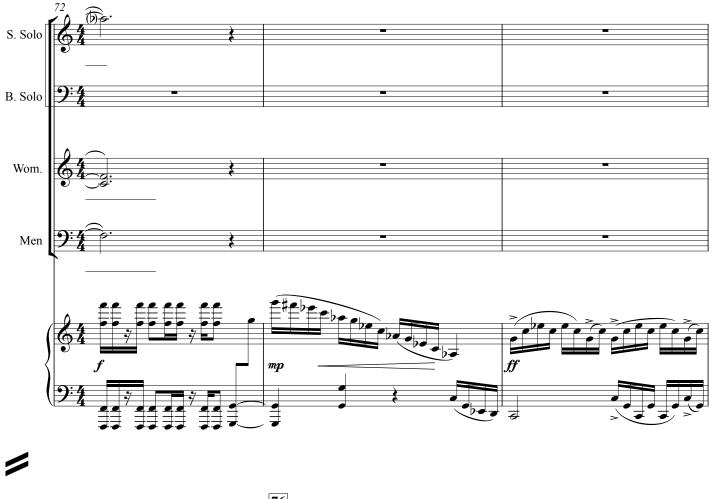


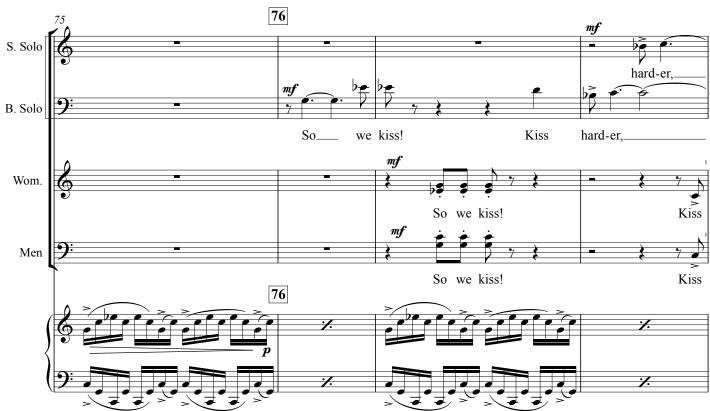


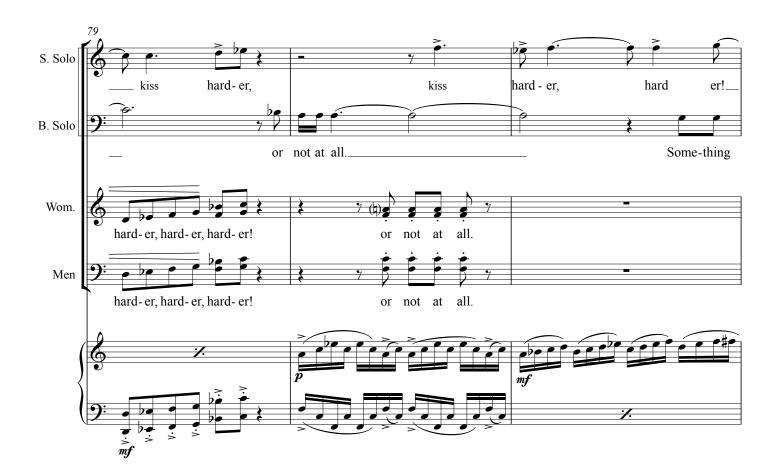




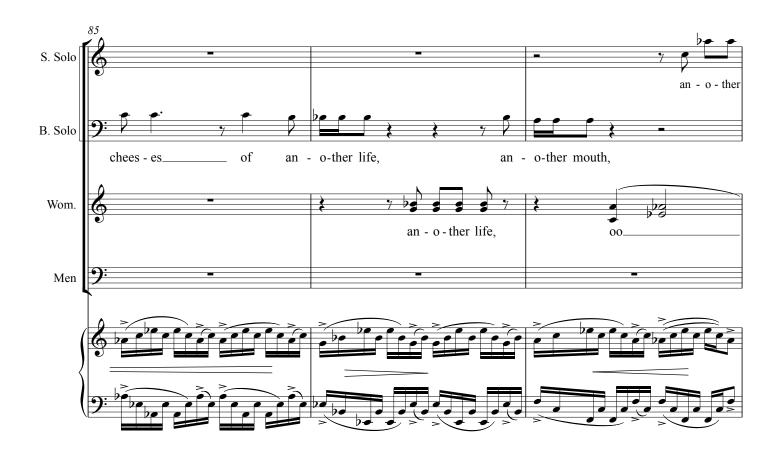


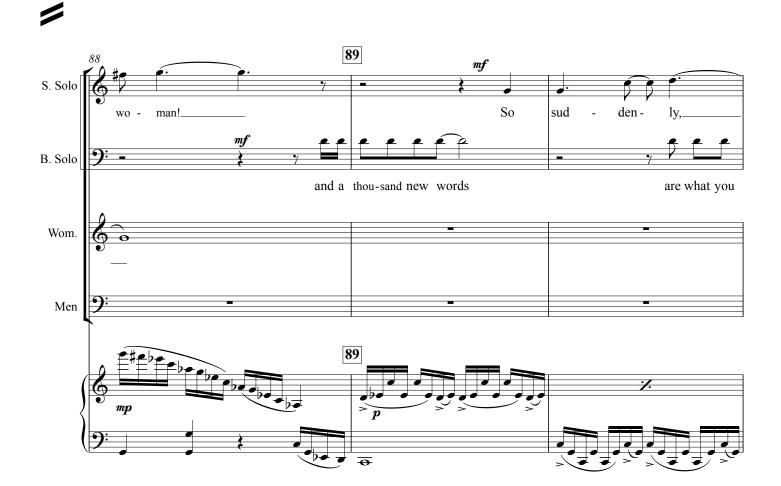




















Mvt. II The Bath



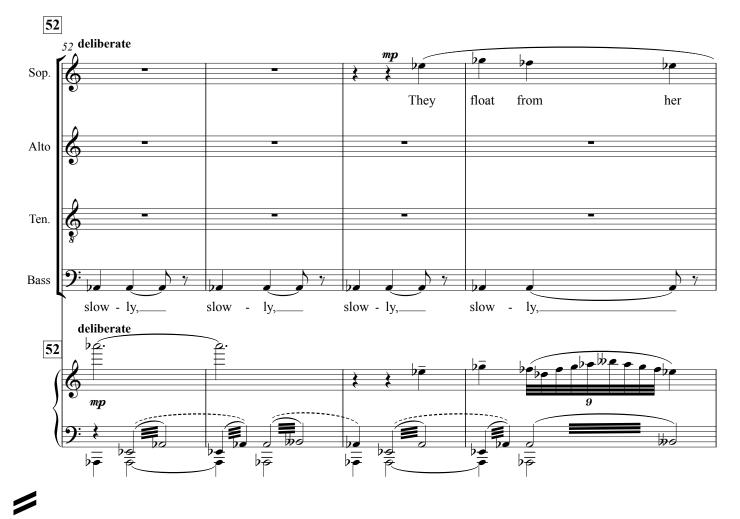


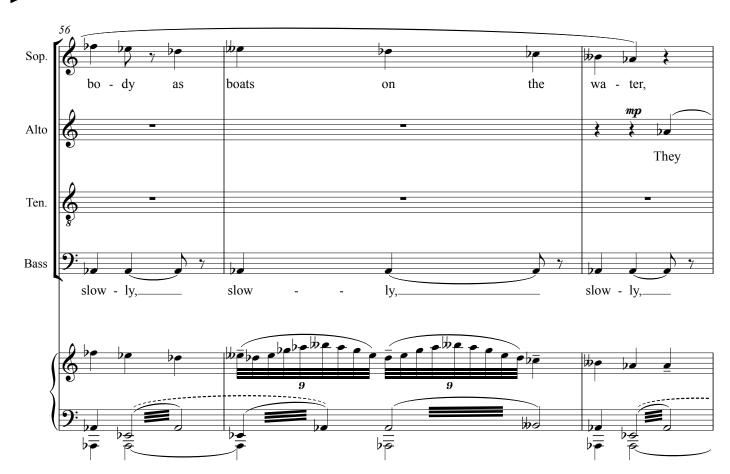






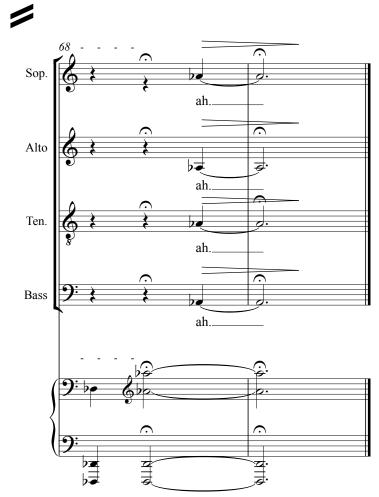












Mvt. III Listening Into Night





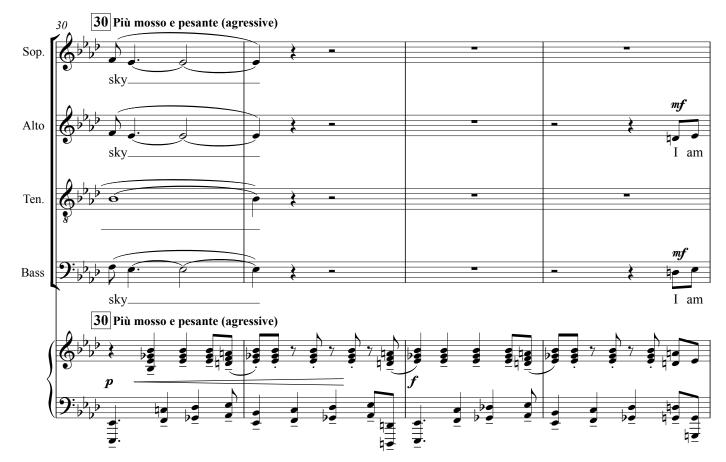














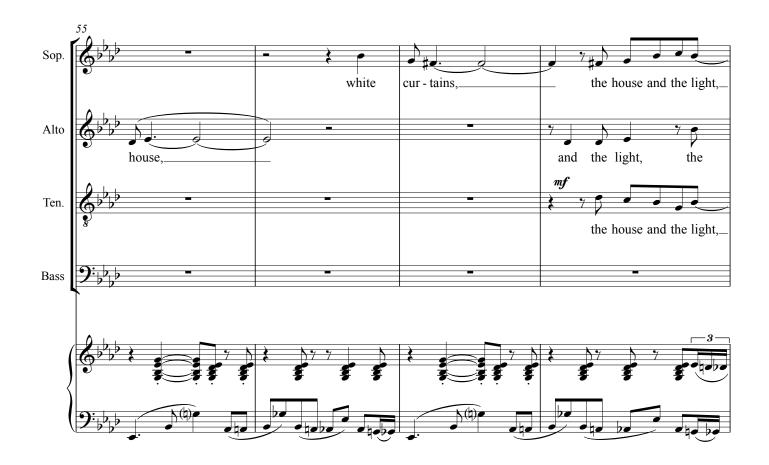


























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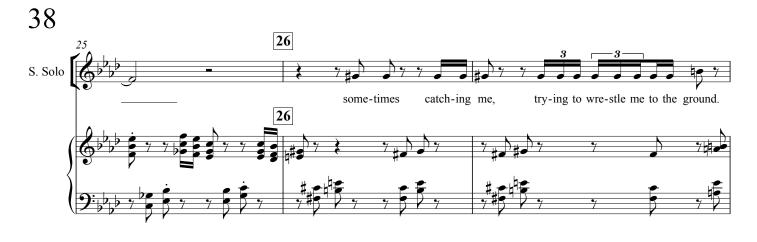
Piano-Vocal

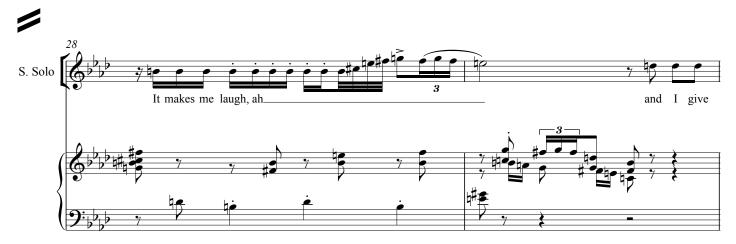
Mvt. IV Her Secret Love, Whispered Late In Her Years



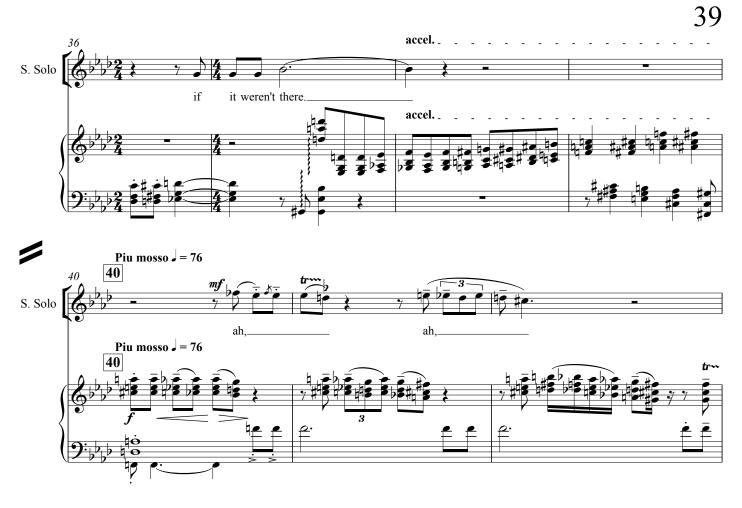










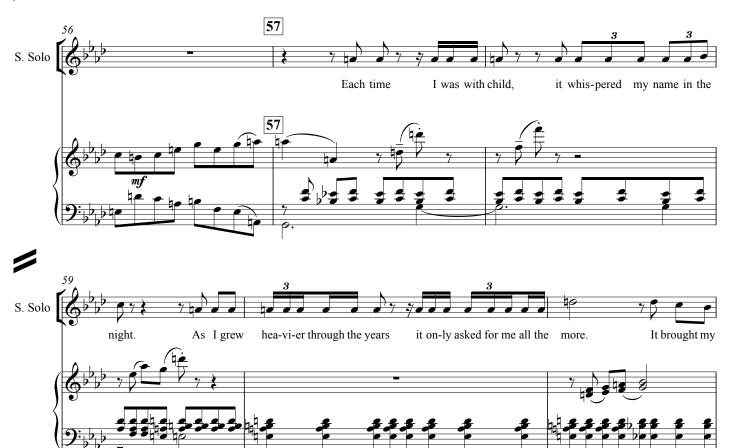










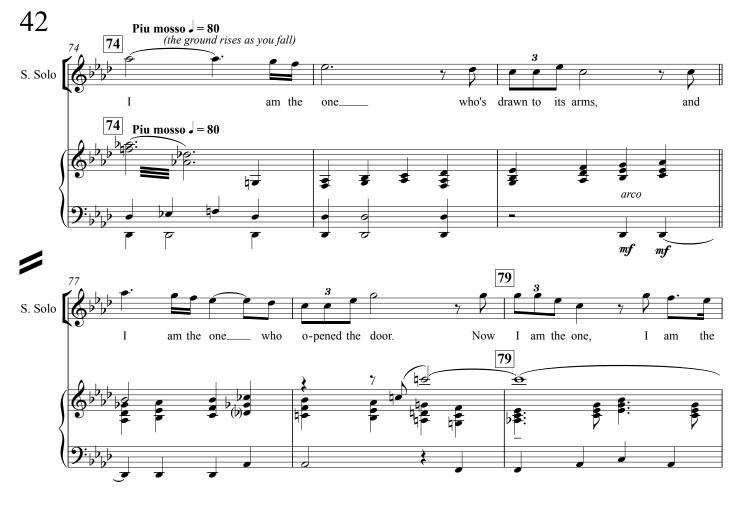








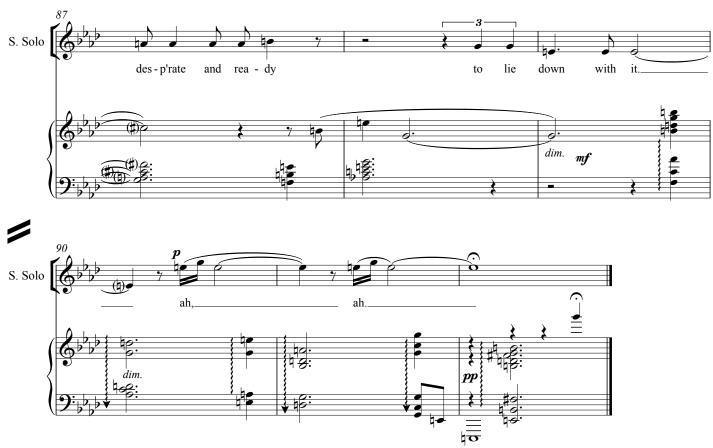










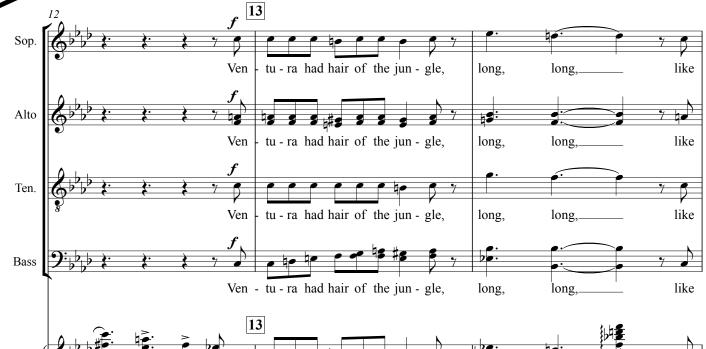


Mvt. V Ventura & Clemente

















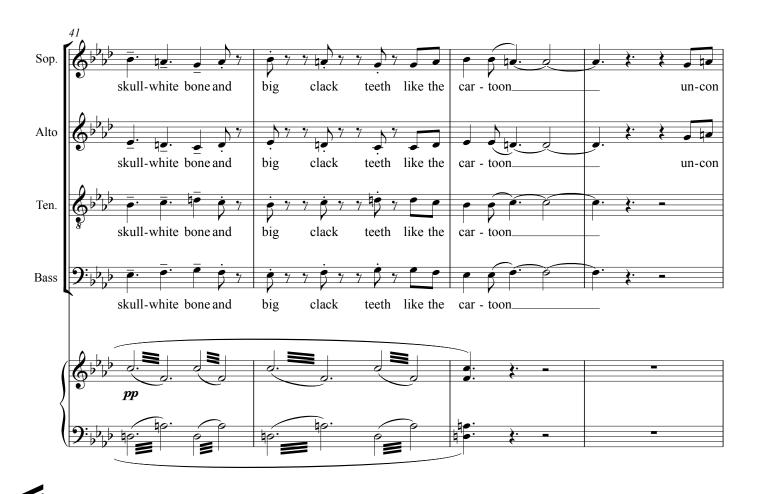


























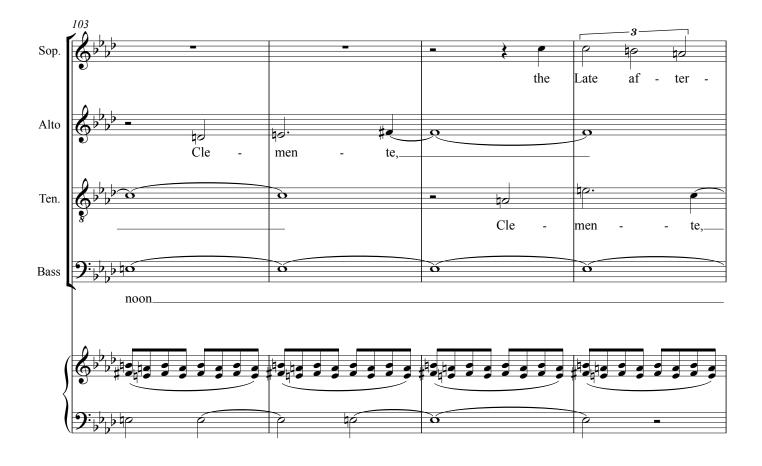


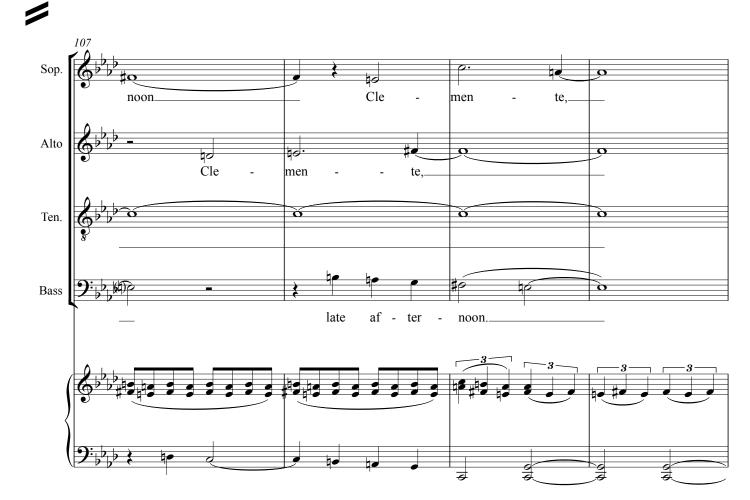




























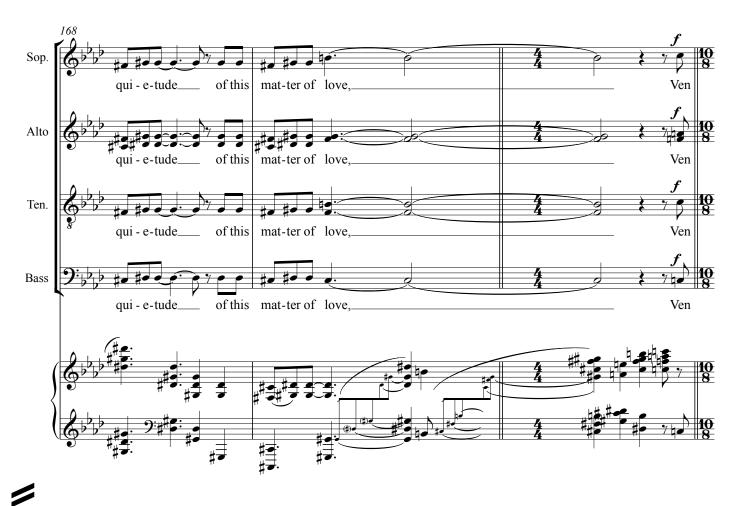
V.S.















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