



The Choral Music of Ian Assersohn

CATALOGUE

2018

Ian Assersohn is an English composer and choral director whose music has been widely performed both in the UK and abroad. His work, which has won a number of prestigious awards, has been described as beautiful, haunting, and moving.

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Single pieces - How to buy:

Single pieces can be purchased directly from appletreemusic.net as PDF files or printed copies. The cost for PDF depends on the number of copies you wish to make: 1-20 £10.00, 21-40 £15.00, 41-60 £20.00, 61 or more £25.00. PDF inspection copies are now available free of charge.

Printed music is £1.60 per copy plus p&p or £1.25 for the shortest pieces. Bundled prices are also available.

Introduction

Hello. It's been a busy time compositionally at Apple Tree Music HQ since the last catalogue was published, as the list at the bottom of the page attests. Highlights include the new cycle of John Donne settings *Air and Angels*, commissioned by Epworth Choir, the secular celebration of science and the natural world *Ionian Mass*, a cycle of Oscar Wilde settings *Verses from Panthea* and quite a number of new shorter works and new arrangements of old favourites.

Connoisseurs of the Apple Tree Music catalogue will notice that this one is longer than before. There are three reasons for this: firstly that it contains new works, secondly that it contains a complete list rather than just a selection, and thirdly that the works have now been broken down into different voice groupings for ease of reference, meaning that works which exist in more than one voicing are listed more than once.

List of new works

The following list contains all the works not previously included in a catalogue:

Longer works

- Air and angels
- Ionian Mass
- Verses from Panthea

Shorter works

A winter night

- By the rivers of Babylon
- Do not stand at my grave and weep
- Dwell on the beauty
- Elegy (fear no more)
- Everyone sang
- Gather ye rosebuds
- In the midst of earthly life
- John Anderson my jo
- Longing: bring back my bonnie
- Loveliest of trees
- Meeting and night
- No time to stand and stare
- Silver
- Softness and peace
- Still, small voice
- Sudden light
- The choir invisible
- The dance of Mahanaim
- The song of Wandering Aengus
- The widow bird
- These I can promise
- Thy mouth a rose shall be
- We'll go no more a-roving

Longer works

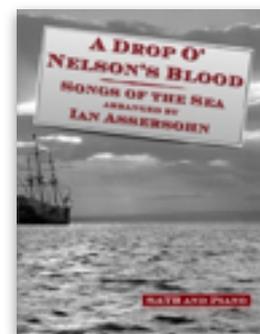
A Drop O' Nelson's Blood

Sea shanty arrangements for SATB choir and piano

A collection of authentic-sounding arrangements of traditional sea shanties and fore-bitters, including: Ten thousand miles away; Maggie May; Haul away Joe; A drop o' Nelson's blood; A-roving; Spanish ladies; The capstan bar; Leave 'er Johnny.

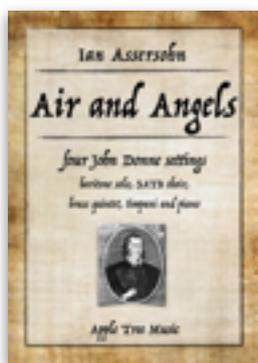
Some of these arrangements are also available separately.

Duration: 30 minutes.



Air and Angels

Baritone solo, SATB choir, brass quintet, timpani and piano



A setting of four love poems by Metaphysical poet John Donne. The sequence makes a satisfying whole but may also be performed separately.

1. Air and angels
2. The good morrow
3. The expiration
4. The anniversary

Commissioned by Epworth Choir, Surrey and first performed by them at Holy Trinity Church, Guildford in April 2018.

Duration: 20 minutes

Dies Irae

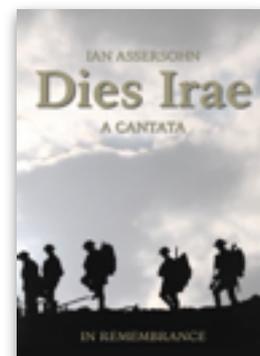
A remembrance cantata for soprano and baritone soli, choir and small orchestra

This unique and multi-faceted work presents a moving response to the pity of war by imagining it through the eyes of those caught up in the fighting, and those they left behind.

Dies Irae may be performed by a single mixed-voice choir, but for full dramatic effect it needs three choirs: a mixed voice choir, a male voice choir and an upper voice children's choir. The instrumental requirements are: strings, piano, organ/keyboard, percussion and trumpet.

Commissioned jointly by Leatherhead Choral Society and Epsom Male Voice Choir the work was premiered in 2016 at a concert to mark the centenary of the Battle of the Somme.

Duration: 70 minutes



In Memoriam

For soprano and baritone soloists, small orchestra and chorus

A secular requiem in one movement which juxtaposes poetry by Tennyson and Wordsworth with part of the Jewish memorial service for the dead.

Duration: 35 minutes.

Ionian Mass

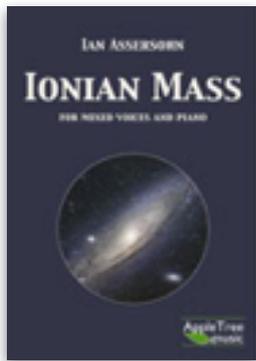
A joyful celebration of science and the natural world. Scored for SATB choir and piano

The work is in five movements, borrowing from the traditional form of a mass setting, but using a new, secular text by the composer.

The five movements are:

1. **Mercy.** A view of earth from space: slow, stately music.
2. **Glory.** The wonder of the universe; a joyful movement.
3. **Truth.** A statement of belief in the rational and the pursuit of knowledge.
4. **Sun.** A raw, almost pagan, hymn to the sun as earth's source of power and life.
5. **Peace.** A plea to the crew of "spaceship earth"; gentle and calming.

Duration: 20 minutes.



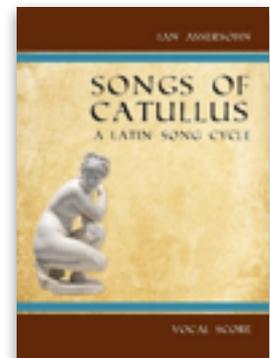
Songs of Catullus

For SATB choir and chamber ensemble or small orchestra

A cycle of settings, sung in Latin, of poems by the Roman poet Catullus (c. 84-54 BC). Commissioned and first performed by Concordia Singers, the work evokes the world of ancient Rome whilst remaining both contemporary and accessible.

"It is a wonderful piece. I thoroughly enjoyed singing it as the tunes are fantastic and the accompaniment is divine!" - choir member

Duration: 35 minutes.



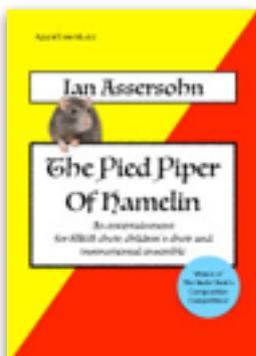
The Pied Piper of Hamelin

An entertainment for SATB choir, children's choir and 4-piece instrumental ensemble (piano, flute, double bass and percussion).

Winner of The Bach Choir's composition competition.

The Pied Piper of Hamelin sets Browning's famous retelling of the story to tuneful, rhythmical music.

The work was premiered in 2017 at St. John's, Smith Square by the Bach Choir and children from London schools conducted by David Hill.



Duration: 20 minutes

The Song of Songs

For soprano and tenor soloists, SATB choir, two pianos and percussion

A full-length setting of one of the Old Testament's most glittering treasures and the world's most beautiful and mysterious love poem.

The colourful yet affordable instrumentation evokes the exotic perfumes of the ancient middle east and also help to make the work an ideal companion piece to the ensemble version of Carmina Burana.

Duration: 40 minutes.



Verses from Panthea

A cycle of settings taken from a long, early poem by Oscar Wilde. Scored for SATB choir a cappella.



A set of 4 songs for mixed voices a cappella, each a setting of a verse from Oscar Wilde's early transcendental poem *Panthea* (1881). The songs are:

1. We are resolved into the supreme air (2' 40")
2. Earth's giant heart (2' 20")
3. Thy mouth a rose shall be (2' 40") - also available for Soprano Solo and SATB
4. We shall not die (2' 20")

Each song may be performed on its own or as part of the set.

This work received an Honourable Mention ("exemplary and deserving of special recognition") in the Boston Choral Ensemble Commission Competition 2017. First performed by Harlequin Chamber Choir in June 2018.

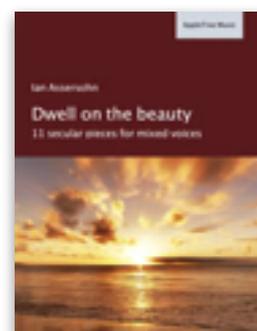
"We all think that the music is wonderful...your music is making rehearsals a pleasure...I cannot tell you how grateful I am to have found some deep-thinking secular music of such beauty." - Harlequin Chamber Choir's Musical Director.

Duration: 10 minutes.

Dwell on the beauty collection

Brings together eleven short works on the big themes of life's journey. These songs are all suitable for concert use and the book will also provide a useful resource for a choral contribution to humanist weddings, funerals and other events.

Includes: My true love; As the rain hides the stars; Love's philosophy; Crossing the bar; Elegy; Soles occidere; Like a dial hand; John Anderson my jo; Dwell on the beauty From so simple a beginning; Softness and peace.



Works for mixed voices



As the rain hides the stars

SATB *a cappella*

5' 07"

An atmospheric setting of a Gaelic prayer. Winner of the 2014 Nicola Dando Prize.

A winter night

SSAATTBB *a cappella*

3' 40"

A setting of Sara Teasdale's poem on the plight of the homeless in winter. For advanced choirs.

By the rivers of Babylon

SATB *a cappella*

2' 56"

An emotionally-charged setting of the old testament Psalm 137. The harmony is quite chromatic, making this setting more suitable for experienced choirs.

Come down, o love divine

SATB and piano

2' 53"

An ethereal original setting of the first verse of the ancient hymn, based around Vaughan Williams' melody 'Down Ampney'.



Crossing the bar

SATB and piano.

2' 56"

This setting of a poem by Alfred, Lord Tennyson won the 2014 Cornwall International Male Voice Choral Festival composition competition. Adjudicator Alan Bullard called it "*An effective and moving work which represents the best of the Male Voice Choir tradition.*"

Do not stand at my grave and weep

SATTBB *a cappella*

3' 10"

A setting of the optimistic and much-loved sonnet by American poet Mary Elizabeth Frye.

Dwell on the beauty

S(A)(B) and piano/keyboard

3' 10"

A secular anthem on an inspirational quotation from the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius: "Dwell on the beauty of life. Look at the stars and see yourself running with them".

Flexibly written, the S(A)(B) edition may be performed by unison voices, sopranos and altos divisi, 2-part mixed voices or 3-part SAB. The keyboard part is suitable for piano or organ.

Elegy: fear no more (*from Dies Irae*)

SATB and piano with optional strings

3' 52"

A gently lyrical setting of the famous funeral song from Shakespeare's Cymbeline - "Fear no more the heat o' the sun, nor the furious winter's rages". This song forms a poignant movement in the cantata Dies Irae.

Everyone sang

SATB and piano

2' 50"

The emotions of Siegfried Sassoon's Armistice Day poem are vividly captured in this approachable setting.

From so simple a beginning

SATB and piano

3' 50"

A setting of the final few words from Darwin's masterwork *On The Origin of Species*. Written for the British Humanist Choir who called "*haunting and uplifting*" and "*a real treat for the ears and the heart*".

Futility

SATB *a cappella*

3' 22"

The bleakness and anger of Wilfred Owen's text is both offset and highlighted by the music's warm harmonies and tender dissonances. Suitable for remembrance-themed concerts.

Gather ye rosebuds

SATB *a cappella*

3' 00"

Robert Herrick's 17th century poem is here given a surprisingly Latin American makeover.

High flight

SATB and piano

3' 49"

Written to a text by John Gillespie Magee, the song expresses the joy and exuberance of a young airman tasting the freedom of flight. Suitable for remembrance-themed concerts.

In flanders fields

SATB *a cappella*

4' 43"

A melodic setting of the famous threnody by John McCrae which evokes both the poem's evocative, elegiac mood and its fervent call to arms. Suitable for remembrance-themed concerts.

In the midst of earthly life (*from Dies Irae*)

SSATB *a cappella*

3' 10"

A new arrangement freely adapted for mixed choir from the 'Hymn' movement in *Dies Irae*. The text is from a hymn by Martin Luther with additional text by the composer.

John Anderson my jo

SATB and piano

2' 21"

A simple, haunting, setting of the Robert Burns poem to an original melody in a folksong style.

Like a dial hand

SATB *a cappella*

3' 15"

A bittersweet setting of Shakespeare's sonnet number 104 which begins: "To me, fair friend, you never can be old".



Loveliest of trees

SATB and piano

2'50"

A lyrical, wistful setting of poem 33 from A.E. Housman's 'A Shropshire Lad'.

Love's philosophy

SATB and piano

2' 25"

A romantic setting of a poem by Shelley. The TTBB version of this work was a "highly commended" runner-up in the 2016 Cornwall International Male Voice Festival's composition competition.

Lullaby

SATB *a cappella*

3' 28"

A gently melodic setting, with luxuriant harmonies, of a song from "The Woman Hater" by Jacobean playwrights Francis Beaumont & John Fletcher.

Mary Bateman

SATB and piano

4' 29"

A melodic and haunting setting of John Clare's folksong-like poem of lost love.

My true love

SATB and piano

3' 01"

Text by Sir Philip Sidney. A gentle song with a simple, graceful melody. Written for the BHA Choir as a wedding song and selected as a competition piece for the 2016 Leith Hill Musical Festival.

O Death! Rocke me asleep

SATB (with optional soprano solo) and piano

5' 28"

A gentle, lilting song with a slow quasi-gospel feel on a text often attributed to Anne Boleyn.



Sing as one

SATB and piano

3' 15"

A joyful song about the pleasures of choral singing. Winner of the 2010 Making Music composition competition. Selected as a competition piece for the 2013 Leith Hill Musical Festival.

"The jewel of the short pieces was undoubtedly Sing as One. It was wonderfully rhythmic and uplifting, as it celebrated the joys of singing together. Nothing could better express the pleasure of participating in the Festival."

Softness and peace

SAB and piano

1' 57"

A short anthem, to words taken from the poem Prayer by the metaphysical poet George Herbert.

Soles occidere

SATB *a cappella*

3' 37"

This is a setting, in Latin, of lines from poem 5 by the ancient roman poet Catullus: *"Suns may set, and suns may rise again: but when our brief light has set, night is one long everlasting sleep."*

Still, small voice

S(A)(T)(B) and keyboard

2' 38"

A setting of an anthem to words by John Greenleaf Whittier. Published by Oxford University Press in the Oxford Book of Easy Flexible Anthems.

Sudden light

SATB *a cappella*

3' 30"

An unusual and suitably haunting setting of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's dreamlike poem.

The choir invisible

SATB and piano

4' 10"

An uplifting setting, in an approachable style, of George Eliot's impassioned poem.

The dance of Mahanaim

SATB and piano

3' 10"

An infectiously tuneful klezmer-inspired setting of words from the biblical Song of Songs. Suitable for all mixed choirs, including community choirs.

The song of Wandering Aengus

SATB *a cappella*

4' 56"

A dream-like setting of Wiliam Butler Yeats' enigmatic, surreal poem based on Celtic legend.

Thy mouth a rose shall be

Soprano solo and SATB *a cappella*

2' 40"

A version of a song from *Verses from Panthea* arranged for soprano solo and chorus. The work from which it is taken is a set of 4 settings for SATB a cappella of verses from Oscar Wilde's early transcendental poem *Panthea*. This work won an honourable mention ("exemplary and deserving of special recognition") in the Boston Choral Ensemble Commission Competition 2017.

We'll go no more a-roving

SSAATTBB *a cappella*

3' 20"

A highly singable 8-part setting of Lord Byron's gloomy, folk-like poem in a deceptively pop-like style.

Works for upper voices (SSA, unison & 2-part)



Crossing the bar

SSA and piano.

2' 56"

This setting of a poem by Alfred, Lord Tennyson won the 2014 Cornwall International Male Voice Choral Festival composition competition. Adjudicator Alan Bullard called it "*An effective and moving work which represents the best of the Male Voice Choir tradition.*"

Dwell on the beauty

2-part upper voices and piano/keyboard

3' 10"

A secular anthem on an inspirational quotation from the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius: "Dwell on the beauty of life. Look at the stars and see yourself running with them".

Flexibly written, the S(A)(B) edition may be performed by unison voices, sopranos and altos divisi, 2-part mixed voices or 3-part SAB. The keyboard part is suitable for piano or organ.

From so simple a beginning

2-part upper voices and piano

3' 50"

A setting of the final few words from Darwin's masterwork *On The Origin of Species*. Written for the British Humanist Choir who called "*haunting and uplifting*" and "*a real treat for the ears and the heart*".

Gather ye rosebuds

SSA *a cappella*

3' 00"

Robert Herrick's 17th century poem is here given a surprisingly Latin American makeover.

John Anderson my jo

2-part upper voices and piano

2' 21"

A simple, haunting, setting of the Robert Burns poem to an original melody in a folksong style.

Longing: bring back my bonnie

2-part upper voices and piano

4' 05"

A haunting setting of the folk melody "Bring back my bonnie". This song forms a movement in the cantata *Dies Irae*. Suitable for Remembrance-themed concerts.



Love's philosophy

SSA and piano

2' 25"

A romantic setting of a poem by Shelley. The TTBB version of this work was a "highly commended" runner-up in the 2016 Cornwall International Male Voice Festival's composition competition.

Meeting at night

Solo or unison voices and piano

2' 05"

An accompanied setting for solo voice or unison upper or lower voices of a mysterious love poem by Robert Browning that begins; *The grey sea and long black land; And the yellow half-moon large and low.*

My true love

SSA and piano

3' 01"

Text by Sir Philip Sidney. A gentle song with a simple, graceful melody. Written for the BHA Choir as a wedding song and selected as a competition piece for the 2016 Leith Hill Musical Festival.

No time to stand and stare

2-part upper voices and piano

2' 35"

A setting of Walter de la Mare's ode to moon-light. Suitable for children's or community choirs.

Silver

Solo or unison voices with optional divisi and piano

1' 45"

An enchanting duet very useful for school or youth choirs. Published by Tim Knight Music.

Sing as one



SSA or 2-part upper voices and piano

3' 15"

A joyful song about the pleasures of choral singing. Winner of the 2010 Making Music composition competition. Selected as a competition piece for the 2013 Leith Hill Musical Festival.

"The jewel of the short pieces was undoubtedly Sing as One. It was wonderfully rhythmic and uplifting, as it celebrated the joys of singing together. Nothing could better express the pleasure of participating in the Festival."

Softness and peace

SSA and piano

1' 57"

A short anthem, to words taken from the poem Prayer by the metaphysical poet George Herbert.

These I can promise

Solo/unison voices and piano

2' 05"

A lyrical setting of a beautifully simple love poem by Mark Twain.

Waving

SSA, unison or 2-part upper voices and piano

3' 52"

A moving song, with text by the composer, about the loved ones left behind when the men go to war. Suitable for community choirs and for remembrance-themed concerts.

Works for lower voices (TTBB, unison & 2-part)

Crossing the bar

TTBB and piano. 2' 56"

This setting of a poem by Alfred, Lord Tennyson won the 2014 Cornwall International Male Voice Choral Festival composition competition. Adjudicator Alan Bullard called it "*An effective and moving work which represents the best of the Male Voice Choir tradition.*"

Elegy: fear no more (from Dies Irae)

TTBB and piano with optional strings 3' 52"

A gently lyrical setting of the famous funeral song from Shakespeare's Cymbeline - "Fear no more the heat o' the sun, nor the furious winter's rages". This song forms a poignant movement in the cantata Dies Irae.

Gather ye rosebuds

TTBB *a cappella* 3' 00"

Robert Herrick's 17th century poem is here given a surprisingly Latin American makeover.

Love's philosophy

TTBB and piano 2' 25"

A romantic setting of a poem by Shelley. The TTBB version of this work was a "highly commended" runner-up in the 2016 Cornwall International Male Voice Festival's composition competition.

Meeting at night

Solo or unison voices and piano 2' 05"

An accompanied setting for solo voice or unison upper or lower voices of a mysterious love poem by Robert Browning that begins; *The grey sea and long black land; And the yellow half-moon large and low.*

Sing as one

TTBB and piano 3' 15"

A joyful song about the pleasures of choral singing. Winner of the 2010 Making Music composition competition. Selected as a competition piece for the 2013 Leith Hill Musical Festival.

"The jewel of the short pieces was undoubtedly Sing as One. It was wonderfully rhythmic and uplifting, as it celebrated the joys of singing together. Nothing could better express the pleasure of participating in the Festival."

The widow bird

Solo or unison voices or TTBB and piano 1' 35"

A setting of Shelley's short, wintry 2-verse ballad.

Waving

TTBB or unison voices and piano 3' 52"

A moving song, with text by the composer, about the loved ones left behind when the men go to war. Suitable for community choirs and for remembrance-themed concerts.

Original Christmas Songs

Blah Blah Bethlehem

SSA, SAB, or SATB and piano

"The all-purpose Christmas carol". A warm-hearted satire which gently pokes fun at those traditionally cosy carols.

Deck the hall, stairs and landing

SATB, SAB or 2-part mixed voices and piano

A humorous song in which a husband and wife discuss her lavish Christmas decoration plans.

Every Christmas is a new beginning

SATB and piano

An original Christmas song with text by the composer. An unhappy man is inspired with new hope when he hears distant voices raised in Christmas songs.



Light a candle

SATB or 2-part mixed voices and piano

A secular carol, with text by the composer, reflecting on the symbolic meaning of a midwinter festival of light. Finalist in the 2010 Waverley Care Carol Competition. Available from *Shawnee Press*.

Make we joy now in this fest

SATB a cappella

An exciting, rhythmic setting of a 15th century "macaronic" text from the Selden manuscript. Rough, raw and infectiously joyous.

On the Feast of Stephen

SATB or 2-part upper voices and piano

A lively, humorous carol with text by the composer which provides a sequel to the story of Good King Wenceslas and his long-suffering page.

Try to remember

Unison or 2-part mixed voices and piano

An original Christmas song, with text by the composer, about a nostalgic yearning for the excitement that Christmas held when we were children.

Arrangements

Christmas Concert Collection for Choirs

Thirty of the best-known traditional carols in new, flexible arrangements suitable for almost any group of voices. Written with practicality in mind to help choirs quickly craft successful and effective performances.

A drop o' Nelson's Blood

SAB or TTBB, and piano.

A rumbustious setting of a traditional English sea song.

A-roving

Tenor and (optional) soprano solos, SATB, and piano, *or* Tenor solo, TTBB and piano.

A rousing sea song with optional opportunities for audience participation.

I want to go home

SATB, SSA, SAB, or TTBB *a cappella*.

A moving song that captures the surface humour and darker emotion behind this WWI soldiers' song

It's a long way to Tipperary

SATB, SAB, or TTBB, and piano.

An unusual arrangement of the famous WWI song, including some of the soldiers' lyrics.

Papir is dokh vays (Paper is white)

SATB, 2-part upper voices, or 2-part lower voices, and piano.

A 2-part arrangement of a traditional Yiddish folk-song: paper is white, ink is black.

Sha, Shtil (Hush, quiet)

SAB, SSA, or TTBB, and piano.

A traditional and unforgettable Yiddish folksong. English translation included.

Shenandoah

SATB (with divisi) *a cappella*.

A sonorous setting of the American folksong evoking the wide vistas of the Missouri river.

Spanish Ladies

SATB or SAB, and piano.

An 18th century sea song describing a voyage from Spain and along the English Channel.

Steal Away

SATB and piano.

A straightforward but effective Spiritual arrangement. Perfect for less confident choirs.

Sumer is icumen in

SAB, SSA or TTBB, and piano.

Retains all the exuberant energy of the mediaeval round, but with a few new twists.

Ten thousand miles away

SATB or TTBB, and piano.

A traditional English "shore ballad" with an unforgettable melody in an authentic-sounding arrangement

The Skye boat song

2-part lower voices and piano

A straightforward, gentle arrangement of this famous Scottish song.

Tumbalalaika

SATB, SAB, or TTBB, and piano.

A klezmer-inspired arrangement of a traditional Yiddish folksong.

Yarmouth Town

SATB or TTBB, and piano. (The SATB version is published by Novello in The Novello Book of British Folksongs for mixed-voice choirs and is also available separately from them.)

A fast-paced, light-hearted arrangement of this famous, and slightly ribald, folk song.