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# Eight Gypsy Songs after Brahms

for SATB chorus *a cappella*

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Jonathan Santore

## Performance Notes

- 1) The entire work should be performed as a single movement, with caesuras indicating short pauses between certain songs.
- 2) In song II, the initial *p* in *pum* and *plum* should be pronounced with relaxed cheeks, which should inflate slightly with each attack. When sustained, both these syllables and the held *-in* which ends 16th note runs in this section should be sung on the closed final consonant.
- 3) In song V, after holding the note in m. 65 as indicated by the conductor, each soprano/alto should repeat the figure in parentheses for her part independently and *ad lib.* during the measures indicated by the horizontal line, returning to her indicated sustained tone no later than m. 74. A similar figure occurs in mm. 79-82, with the initial note before the *ad lib.* figures begin fixed at a quarter note.

## Program Note

*Eight Gypsy Songs after Brahms* was commissioned by the New Hampshire Master Chorale for a concert featuring Brahms' *Zigeunerlieder*, op. 103. I decided to set English translations of some of the texts from this work. Once I selected the texts (from songs 1, 5, 10, 7, 8, 4, and 2 in the original work), they began to form a coherent story in my mind – a story of passionate love, deep sorrow, and tragic misunderstanding. It seems to me that this is also an apt metaphor for the experience of the Roma people throughout history.

My thanks to Dr. Antony Green of Berlin for his assistance with the translations.

Written for the New Hampshire Master Chorale  
Dan Perkins, Music Director

# Eight Gypsy Songs after Brahms

Jonathan Santore

*poco rall.*

## I. Angrily (♩ = 66)

Soprano  
Alto  
Tenor  
Bass

Hey, Gyp-sy, strike the strings! Play the song of the un-faith-ful maid-en!

Detailed description: This block contains the vocal and bass parts for the first section of the piece, 'I. Angrily'. It is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of ♩ = 66. The key signature has three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The Soprano, Alto, and Tenor parts begin with a forte (f) dynamic. The lyrics are: 'Hey, Gyp-sy, strike the strings! Play the song of the un-faith-ful maid-en!'. The Bass part starts with a forte (f) dynamic and the lyrics 'Hey! Strings, play!'. There are triplets in the vocal lines.

## More broadly (♩ = 63)

S  
A  
T  
B

Let the strings weep, wail, weep, wail,

Strings weep, wail, weep, wail,

Detailed description: This block contains the vocal and bass parts for the second section, 'More broadly'. It is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of ♩ = 63. The key signature has three flats. The Soprano, Alto, and Tenor parts begin with a mezzo-piano (sub.mp) dynamic. The lyrics are: 'Let the strings weep, wail, weep, wail,'. The Bass part starts with a mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic and the lyrics 'Strings weep, wail, weep, wail,'. There are crescendos and accents in the vocal lines.

S  
A  
T  
B

woe-ful, anx-ious, woe-ful, anx-ious, Till hot tears wet this cheek!

weep, wail, woe-ful, anx-ious, Till hot tears wet this cheek!

woe-ful, anx-ious, woe-ful, anx-ious, Till hot tears wet this cheek!

weep, wail, woe-ful, anx-ious, Till hot tears wet this cheek!

Detailed description: This block contains the vocal and bass parts for the final section. It is written in 3/4 time with a tempo of ♩ = 63. The key signature has three flats. The Soprano, Alto, and Tenor parts begin with a forte (f) dynamic. The lyrics are: 'woe-ful, anx-ious, woe-ful, anx-ious, Till hot tears wet this cheek!'. The Bass part starts with a forte (f) dynamic and the lyrics 'weep, wail, woe-ful, anx-ious, Till hot tears wet this cheek!'. There is a 'rall.' marking at the end of the section.

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## II. - Broadly (♩ = 72)

10 *div. mf*\*) Ke-plum - plum! Ke-plum - plum! Ke - plum - plum!

*div. mf*\*) Ke-plum - plum! Ke-plum - plum! Ke - plum - plum!

Pum, \_\_\_\_\_ pum, \_\_\_\_\_ pum, \_\_\_\_\_

*mf* The bronzed boy leads his

The bronzed boy leads his

13 *sfz* Ke-plum - plum! Ke-plum - plum! Plum! *rall.*

Ke-plum - plum! Ke-plum - plum!

pum, \_\_\_\_\_ pum, \_\_\_\_\_ pum!

*sfzmf*

3 beau - ti - ful blue - eyed maiden to the dance, strikes his spurs togeth-er \_\_\_\_\_ (a

3 beau - ti - ful blue - eyed maiden to the dance, strikes his spurs togeth-er \_\_\_\_\_ (a

16 *mp* unis. Did - dle - id - dle - id - dle - id - dle - in!

*mp* unis. Did - dle - id - dle - id - dle - id - dle - in! Did - dle - id - dle - id - dle - id - dle - in!

*mp*\*) czar - das mel - 3 - 0 - dy starts), pum, pum,

*mp*\*) czar - das mel - 3 - 0 - dy starts), pum, pum,

\*) See Performance Note 2).

VII.

Come prima

*rall.* ----- *A tempo*

111 *f* *sub. mp*

S High-tow-er-ing Ri-ma tide, how bleak, bleak \_\_\_ you are; \_\_\_ on, wail, \_\_\_

A High-tow-er-ing Ri-ma tide, how bleak, bleak you are; on the shore I wail, \_\_\_

T High-tow-er-ing Ri-ma tide, how bleak, bleak \_\_\_ you are; \_\_\_ on the shore I wail, \_\_\_

B *f* *mp*  
 High tide, how, on, wail,

*accel. poco a poco* -----

115 *cresc. unis.*

S wail, you, love! Waves \_\_\_ flee, \_\_\_ surge, \_\_\_ roar \_\_\_

A wail a-loud for you, my love! Waves *cresc.* flee, surge, roar \_\_\_

T wail a-loud for you, my love! Waves *cresc.* flee, surge, roar \_\_\_

B wail, you. Waves flee, \_\_\_ surge, roar \_\_\_

*molto rall. Bitterly* (♩ = 72)

119 *fff*

S on - to the shore, \_\_\_ o - ver to me - on Ri - ma's shore let me weep for her for - ev - er! \_\_\_

A on - to the shore, \_\_\_ o - ver to me - on Ri - ma's shore, weep for her for - ev - er! \_\_\_

T on - to the shore, \_\_\_ o - ver to me - on Ri - ma's shore, weep for her for - ev - er! \_\_\_

B on - to the shore, \_\_\_ o - ver to me - on Ri - ma's shore, weep for her for - ev - er! \_\_\_

14 VIII.  
Brokenly (♩ = 48)

124 *mp*

S Hey, Gyp-sy, strike the strings! Play the song of the un-faith-ful maiden! Let the strings

A Hey, Gyp-sy, strike the strings! Play the song of the un-faith-ful maiden! Let the strings

T Hey, Gyp-sy, strike the strings! Play the song of the un-faith-ful maiden! Let the strings

B Hey, Gyp-sy, strike the strings! Play the song of the un-faith-ful maiden! Let the strings

*poco rall.* -----

126

S weep, wail, woe - ful, anx - ious, Till hot tears wet this cheek!

A weep, wail, woe - ful, anx - ious, Till hot tears wet this cheek!

T weep, wail, woe - ful, Till hot tears wet this cheek!

B weep, wail, woe - ful, Till hot tears wet this cheek!

A tempo

128 (*p*)

S Hey, Gyp - sy, strike the strings! *rall.* ----- *pp*

A *sub. mp* Hey, Gyp - sy, strike the strings! *p*

T (*p*) Hey, Gyp - sy, strike the strings! *pp*

B (*p*) Hey, Gyp - sy, strike the strings! *pp*