

FULL SCORE  
(SAMPLE SCORE)

# O Beauty Ever Ancient Ever New

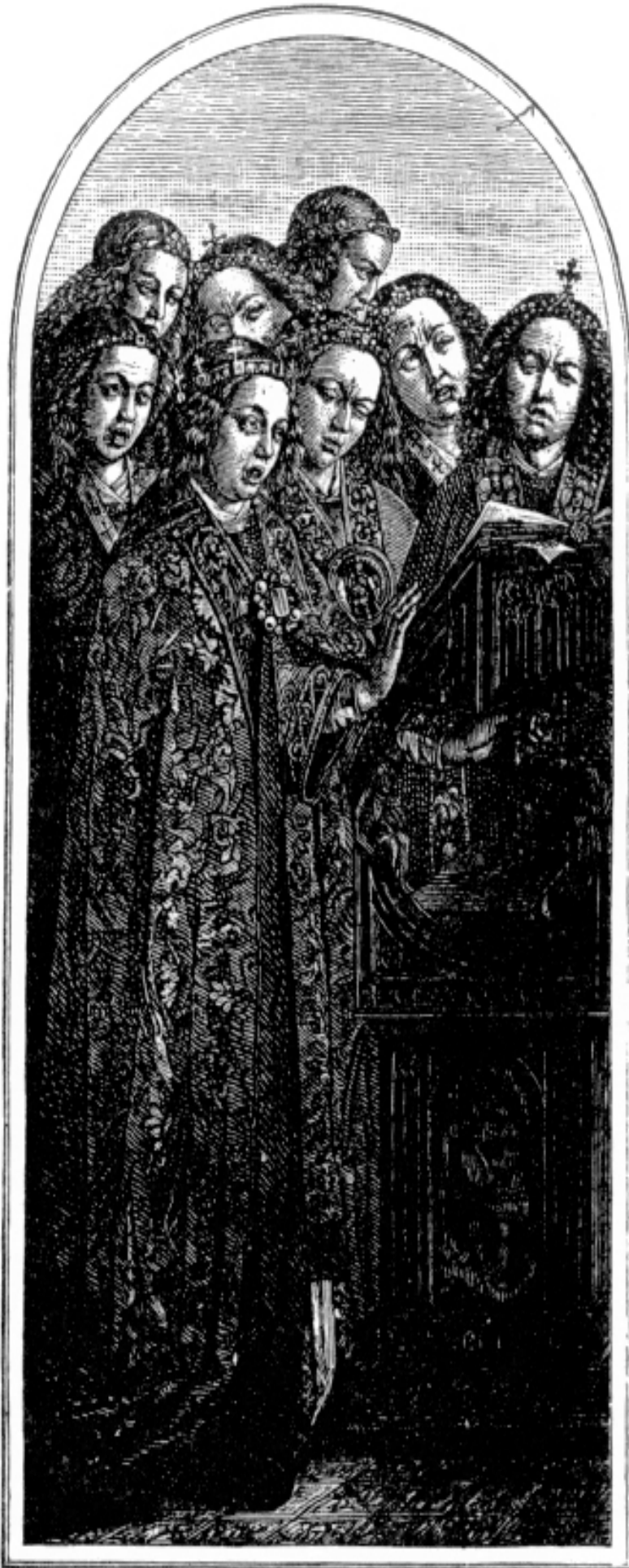
For SATB Choir  
Soprano & Baritone soloists  
optional Treble Choir

Orchestra of Strings  
with Oboe, French Horn  
Harp and Organ (optional)

---

JAMES BUONEMANI

MusicaBellaLuna



# O BEAUTY EVER ANCIENT EVER NEW

## *Notes by the composer*

Composed in 2012 for the Centennial of St. James' Church, Los Angeles, CA, *O Beauty Ever Ancient Ever New* is in memory of my father and brother.

The text chosen for this piece was suggested by the Rev. Paul J. Kowalewski, Rector of St. James' Church, with the words "Ever Ancient Ever New" as the theme for the centennial celebrations for the parish. I was immediately captivated by the passionate and vivid nature of this poetry composed by St. Augustine as part of his monumental *CONFESSIONS*.

The structure of this 13-minute work is informed by the poetry and is easy to follow: an opening introduction presents a 6-note motif, first announced by the oboe and echoed by the french horn, which forms the basis of the melodic and harmonic material which follows. The words (set in Latin) "Late have I loved thee, O Beauty ever ancient and ever new" are intoned over and over by the choir, rising to a fevered pitch before fading into the second section which develops the musical motive as St. Augustine's text delves into the deeper meaning of his opening sentiment.

A reprise by the choir of this "Sero te amavi" theme ("Late have I loved thee" theme) ushers in an introspective transitional section, featuring a solo cello in a brief duet with a baritone soloist singing the words "Thou wast with me, but I was not with thee." This leads the way to an "ostinato" (short repeated 16<sup>th</sup> notes) in the strings and harp propelling the choir's recitation of the text to the climactic section "Thou didst gleam and shine" (in Latin, "corucasti splenduisti") above which the 6-note motif soars in the violins.

This climax yields to the concluding section with the words "and now I pant for thee" ("et anhelio tibi"). Here is introduced a quotation of the plainsong melody "O Sacrum Convivium" ("O sacred communion") by the tenors and basses underpinning the sopranos and altos hovering above them with the words "I tasted and now hunger and thirst" ("gustavi et esurio et sitio"). The harmonic shifts imposed upon the chant melody reflect the *ancient-new* dichotomy of the poetry, during which the 6-note motif is hinted at over and over by the violins and harp in a calm, crystalline pattern. All dissolves into the words "Thou didst touch me" ("tetigisti me") followed by a brief rising choral texture "and I burned for thy peace."

A coda reprises the opening 6-note motif now taken up by a soprano soloist singing "Ever ancient, ever new, O beauty" over the choir's "Sero te amavi" theme now rephrased as "in peace . . . I love thee . . . I burn . . . for thy peace."

Sero te amavi,  
pulchritudo tam antiqua et tam nova,  
sero te amavi!

et ecce intus eras  
et ego foris,  
et ibi te quaerebam,  
et in ista formosa,  
quae fecisti,  
deformis inruebam.

mecum eras,  
et tecum non eram.

ea me tenebant longe a te,  
quae si in te non essent, non essent.

vocasti et clamasti  
et rupisti surditatem meam:

coruscasti,  
splenduisti et fugasti caecitatem meam:

fragrasti,  
et duxi spiritum,  
et anhelo tibi,

gustavi  
et esurio et sitio,

tetigisti me,  
et exarsi in pacem tuam.

Late have I loved thee  
O Beauty so ancient and so new,  
late have I loved thee.

Behold, thou wast within  
and I was without,  
and I sought thee out there;  
And among the lovely things  
that thou hast made,  
unlovely that I am, I heedlessly rushed .

Thou wast with me,  
but I was not with thee.

These things kept me far from thee  
they that would not be, were they not in  
thee.

Thou didst call and cry aloud,  
and didst force open my deafness.

Thou didst gleam and shine,  
and didst chase away my blindness.

Thou didst breathe fragrant odors  
and I drew in my breath;  
and now I pant for thee.

I tasted,  
and now I hunger and thirst.

Thou didst touch me,  
and I burned for thy peace.

-St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430),  
from his CONFESSIONS

For the 100th anniversary of St. James' Church, Los Angeles, California.  
In memory of Raymond Anthony and Raymond Nicholas, father and brother.

# O Beauty Ever Ancient Ever New

St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430) from his CONFESSIONS

James Buonemai

Andante e calmo ♩ = 61

The musical score is arranged for a full orchestra and vocal soloists. It begins with a tempo marking of 'Andante e calmo' and a metronome marking of ♩ = 61. The vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) are initially silent. The Harp and Organ (with CH and PP markings) provide a sustained accompaniment. The Oboe enters with a 'solo' part marked 'mp molto espressivo'. The strings (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, Contrabass) play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, with some triplets and dynamic markings like 'con sord.', 'p', and 'pp'. The Violoncello part includes a 'vib.' marking.

6

*p* Se - ro te a - ma - vi, \_\_\_\_\_  
Se - ro \_\_\_\_\_  
Se - ro  
Se - ro

Detailed description: This section contains four vocal staves. The top staff is a soprano line with lyrics. The second staff is an alto line. The third staff is a tenor line. The bottom staff is a bass line. All staves begin with a rest for four measures, followed by a melodic phrase starting on the fifth measure. Dynamics include *p* and crescendo markings.

Detailed description: Two piano staves (treble and bass clef) showing accompaniment for the first system. Both staves contain whole rests for the first four measures.

*p*

Detailed description: Two piano staves showing accompaniment for the second system. The bass staff features a series of chords with a *p* dynamic marking. The treble staff has whole rests.

*mp*

Detailed description: Two piano staves showing accompaniment for the third system. The treble staff has a melodic line starting with a *mp* dynamic. The bass staff has whole rests.

*p* *pp* *pp* *pp* *mp espr.*

Detailed description: This section contains four piano staves (treble and bass clef) for the fourth system. It features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. Dynamics range from *p* to *pp* and *mp espr.* There are also *V* (accents) and *∩* (crescendos) markings.

12

Se - ro te a - ma - vi, Se - ro te a - ma - vi, Se - ro ro Se - ro

SW  
p

Se - ro

p mp pp p p pp p pp

*mf*  
pul-chri-tu - do \_\_\_\_\_ pul-chri-tu - do\_\_\_\_

*mf*  
pul-chri-tu - do \_\_\_\_\_ pul-chri-tu - do\_\_\_\_

*mf*  
tam an-ti - qua et tam\_ no - va, tam an-ti - qua et tam\_ no - va, an-

*mf*  
tam an-ti - qua et tam\_ no - va, tam an-ti - qua et tam\_ no - va, an-

Empty piano staves for the first system.

*mp* 3

Empty piano staves for the second system.

*mp*

Empty piano staves for the third system.

senza sord. *f ma dolce* *p* *mp* *mf*

senza sord. *f ma dolce* *p* *mp* *mf*

senza sord. *f ma dolce* *p* *mp* *mf*

*f* 3 *mp* 3 3 *mf*

*f ma dolce* *p* *mp* *mf*

Empty piano staves for the fourth system.

24

— tam an - ti - qua et tam no - va,  
 — tam an - ti - qua et tam no - va,  
 ti - qua et no - va, no - va,  
 ti - qua et no - va, no - va,

*mf*

*mf*

V unis. V

3 3 3 3 3 3 6 6



27 *poco piu largamente*

*ff* Se-ro te a-ma - vi, Se-ro te a-ma - vi, *f* Se-ro te a-ma - vi, *mf* te a-ma - vi, *mp* a - ma -

*poco piu largamente*

*ff* Se-ro te a-ma - vi, Se-ro te a-ma - vi, *f* Se-ro te a-ma - vi, *mf* te a-ma - vi, *mp* a - ma -

*poco piu largamente*

*ff* Se-ro te a-ma - vi, Se-ro te a-ma - vi, *f* Se-ro te a-ma - vi, *mf* te a-ma - vi, *mp* a - ma -

*poco piu largamente*

*ff* Se-ro te a-ma - vi, Se-ro te a-ma - vi, *f* Se-ro te a-ma - vi, *mf* te a-ma - vi, *mp* a - ma -

*poco piu largamente*

*poco piu largamente*

*poco piu largamente*

*poco piu largamente*

*poco piu largamente*

*f* *poco piu largamente* *mf* *poco non vib.* *p*

*f* *poco piu largamente* *mf* *poco non vib.* *p*

*f* *poco piu largamente* *mf* *p*

*f* *poco piu largamente* *div.* *p*

*f* *poco piu largamente* *div.* *p*

Andante con moto

♩ = 66

32

vi!  
vi!  
vi!  
vi!

et  
et  
et

Andante con moto

♩ = 66

p  
mp  
div.  
p  
mp  
p dolce  
mp  
p  
mp

37 *mp*

Et ec - ce in - tus e - ras et e - go for - is,  
ec - ce in - tus e - - - ras et e - go for - is,  
ec - ce in - tus e - - - ras et e - go for - is,  
ec - ce in - tus e - - - ras et e - go for - is,

*div.* *sim.* *pizz.* *V*



47  $\text{♩} = 69$   
*poco piu mosso* *mf*  
 in\_\_ i - sta for-mo - sa, quae fe - - ci - sti,  
*poco piu mosso*  
 in\_\_ i - sta for-mo - sa,  
*poco piu mosso*  
 - sta\_\_ for - mo - sa,  
*poco piu mosso*  
 - sta for mo - sa,

*poco piu mosso*

*poco piu mosso*

*poco piu mosso*

$\text{♩} = 69$   
*poco piu mosso* *mf*  
*poco piu mosso* *mf*

*poco piu mosso* *mf* *mp*  
*poco piu mosso* *mf* *sim.*  
*poco piu mosso* *mp* *sim.*  
*div. poco piu mosso* *mf*  
*poco piu mosso* *mf*