TENOR NOTES FOR HANDEL “DIXIT DOMINUS” AND “THE GRAPES OF WRATH”

March 4 rehearsal

Dixit Dominus

Please mark in your score the places where we “loop” (repeat) certain measures/beats — details are in the members’ section of the MV website.

Generally, try to make the vowels as distinct from each other as possible … don’t slump toward making everything a neutral mushy-sounding schwa (ə).

Movement 1

P. 5 and following – keep the dynamics down a step. Where you have a pattern of sixteenth/sixteenth/eighth/eighth notes, barely sing the two sixteenth notes, emphasize the first eighth note, and back off (de-emphasize) the second eighth note.

Movement 4

P. 13 – measure 2, the target/goal is the “*Do-*” of “*Dominus*”.

P. 14 – measures 26 and 29, watch Ted for the cutoffs — he’s going to stretch to make the cutoffs as late as possible.

Movement 5

P. 18 and following – sing the long lines “like a rippling brook” — not sustaining each note, but pressing-and-lifting like a baroque violinist.

Pp. 20-21 – measure 16, *crescendo* … and measure 18, *decrescendo*.

Movement 6

P. 29 and following – really roll the “*r*” in “*confregit*”.

Movement 7

P. 32 and following – flip the “*r*” in “*ru-i-nas*” and back off (de-emphasize) the “*-nas*”.

P. 33 – the *piano* in measures 33-35 is like telling a secret or gossiping, it’s not weak … and the *forte* in measures 36-38 is like denying you were gossiping.

P. 34 and following – the second syllable in “*na-ti-o-ni-bus*” is pronounced “*-tsee-*”*.*

P. 39 – measures 105-end, do NOT slow down in a cadence — resist the (natural) urge!

Movement 8

Pp. 40-41 – keep it on the quieter side, and go straight to the “*-a*” in “*prop-te-rea*”.

February 26 rehearsal

Dixit Dominus

6. Coro

Pp. 28-29 – make the notes on “a dex-tris tu-is” staccato.

P. 29 – measure 98, accent the notes on “in di-e” like bell tones.

7. Coro

Generally, we want a more mature, cultured operatic sound; tall vowels; roll the initial r’s.

P.37 – in measure 79, be sure to pronounce the “-bit” on the first beat; don’t get carried away and continue saying the “ah” of “con-quas-sa . . . . “

9. Coro

P, 53 – make the “et nunc” staccato in measure 53.

February 12 rehearsal

Grapes of Wrath

17 – Square Dance

P. 167 – for our entrance in measure 25, listen for the octave C-sharps by the soloist in measure 24, and our B is a whole step down from that.

P. 169 – at the end of the page make some note to be ready to come in on the downbeat of the next page, measure 41.

P. 177 – we will be pronouncing it “prom -e – NAYD” in measure 105, not “prom-e-NAHD.”

Dixit Dominus

9. Coro

From beginning to measure 24 on p. 44, it will be soli only (chorus tacet). Chorus enters at measure 24. Throughout, Julie suggests in the long melisma passages that we circle the first sixteenth note of each set of four notes.

P. 48 –Starting at measure 55, this section will be sung by a semi-chorus to be chosen. Chorus will re-enter at p. 53, measure 110, second half of the bar.

P. 58 – watch for an allargando (slowing) in the last three measures of the piece.

February 5 rehearsal

Grapes of Wrath

1 – The Last Time There Was Rain

P. 17 – measure 75, slight lift/catch breath at the last moment after “*rags*”.

P. 18 – big sound here; we need both the rich beauty of opera and the clarity of theater singing;. “full Paul Bunyan.” Make it sound like a community of people of all ages.

P. 18 – measure 81, long “*e*” in “*the electric*”.

P. 19 – measure 82, hold the note for a dotted half-note, not just a half-note. At measure 83, “grab the moment.”

P. 20 – the second eighth note on the page, a C, will be your entering pitch in measure 88. “In the pitch black nights” should be like a whisper. All cutoffs in this section should be with the basses.

P. 22 – make sure the A-natural in measure 98 is not flat, and cut off “*break*” with the basses (not as written). In measure 100, shorten the note on “day” by an eighth note so that tenors cut off with everyone else.

P. 23 – measure 103, *diminuendo*.

P. 23 – in measure 110, pronounce both “d’s” at the end of “wind” and the beginning of “died.”

P. 25 – in measures 133 and 135, pronounce both “t’s” at the end of “next” and the beginning of “time.”

4 – The Plenty Road

(NEW) Pp. 41-43, chorus tacet. Start singing at measure 35 on p. 44.

Pp. 47-48 – don’t lose energy in the rests; make these phrases (“Wolf at the door…got no abode . . . not on the plenty road”) tied together even though there are rests in between.

(NEW) Pp. 49-53 chorus tacet. Start singing at meaasure146 on p. 53. Tenors on middle staff, basses on bottom staff.

P. 55 – measure 161, cut the tied note to a dotted half (3 beats) with a quarter note rest.

(NEW) P. 55 – chorus tacet from measure 162 to 176. Sing at pickup to measure 177.

P. 58 – starting in measure 190, tenors sing the second staff down from the top, dividing in Tenor 1 and Tenor 2 where there are divisions. (More roadmap to come from Ted.)

January 29 rehearsal

Grapes of Wrath

1 – The Last Time There Was Rain

P. 11 – measures 29 and 31, emphasize the meaning … e.g., “gone” and “no one”.

P. 11 – measure 32, change character on third beat to tenderness & intimacy; don’t punch the notes.

P. 15 – measures 66-68, again, don’t make the notes “poky” or “punchy”.

Pp. 16-17 – measures 70-77, should be a sense of inexorability, like the massive dust storms.

Dixit Dominus

Copies of Movement 9 were distributed at the end of rehearsal; if you didn’t pick up a copy last night, you can download a PDF from the MV members’ site or get a copy at the beginning of next week’s rehearsal.

Movement 7

Pp. 36-38 – measures 63-102, drop the “*S*” at the end of the second syllable of “*con-quas-sa-bit*”. All of the repeated quarter notes should *staccato.*

Movement 8

Although this begins with Sop I and Sop II soloists, the bass and tenor parts beginning on p. 40 are for the chorus sections (not soloists).

January 22 rehearsal

Dixit Dominus

General note: We do not have to memorize the whole piece … but we must AVOID being heads-down in the score — the more we memorize, the more we can watch Ted and keep up with the click-track. Long/held notes should ebb and flow. Repeats — especially “call and response” repeats — should be quieter, like an echo.

Movement 1

P. 1 – measure 19, dynamics start out strong (but not *fortissimo*).

P. 6 – measure 65, “*scabellum*” is the important word, it should stand out when each section starts.

P. 7 – measure 77, *piano* starting on the second beat; it’s an echo of the previous measure.

P. 7 – measure 78, *crescendo* starting on the second beat,through the beginning of measure 80.

P. 8 – measure 80, *piano* starting on the fourth beat,and then slowly crescendo to *forte* at the beginning of measure 86.

P. 9 – measure 91, start *forte*.

P. 10 – measure 105, *subito piano* starting on the second beat.

P. 10 – measure 106, *pianissimo* starting on the fourth beat.

P. 11 – measure 108, *forte* starting on the third beat.

P. 11 – measure 115, *diminuendo* starting on the first beat.

P. 12 – measure 119, *piano* starting on the second beat.

P. 12 – measure 121, *forte* for the last three “*dixit*”.

Grapes of Wrath

1 – The Last Time There Was Rain

Pp. 10-11 – measures 25-31, don’t flatten the syncopated rhythm.

P. 11 – measure 33, first beat, second note is an E♮ not an E♭.

P. 15 – measures 67 and 69, make sure to put the “kd” cutoffs (“*cloaked*” and “*choked*”) in the rests.

P. 15 – measure 68, change “he” to “he’d”.

P. 18 – tenors sing the middle line of each system.

P. 19 – measure 82, last beat, switch to singing bottom line of each system.

Pp. 20-22 – measures 90-96, cut off with the basses (i.e., not as written for the tenors). Should sound hollow, “dusty”.

P. 22 – measure 96, do not sing the fourth beat (“*And when*”) with the basses.

P. 22 – measure 98 is an A♮ (awkward interval) but measure 100 is an A♭.

Pp. 23-24 – measures 110-119, *legato;* support your tone and sing the line, otherwise the pitch sags.

P. 24 – measures 116-119, use as little vibrato as possible.

January 8 rehearsal

General note: Ted says the Handel will have “crazy fast tempos” and it will be crucial to stay completely together AND with Ted & the electronic click-track. Making things more difficult, Ted & the orchestra will be far from the chorus because the dancers will be performing in between. Do your homework — practicing tempos & notes — independently by listening to (and singing along with) the *Dixit Dominus* recording posted on the members’ site several times.

Grapes of Wrath

17 – Square Dance

Generally — tenors need to blend and remember to sing as a section. This is literally a dance; not every beat has the same stress/emphasis. Be “twangy”, not “proper” pronunciation.

P. 168 – measure 29, hold for the full 2 beats — and then remember to cut off as written.

P. 170 – measures 41-44, should be *piano* and warm.

P. 171 – measure 56, cutoffs (and placement of the final “*S*”) should match the basses — don’t sing over the rest in the middle, and don’t cut off the last note too soon.

Pp. 172-173 – measures 66-72, sing phrases instead of note-to-note, and lift slightly between phrases (but don’t drag).

P. 175 – measure 87 it’s a C♯ but measures 90-93 are a C♮.

Pp. 175-176 – measures 88-93, enunciate the final “*N*” in “*gun*” and “*fun*” separately — and the last “*fun*” is longer than the previous ones.

Pp. 177-178 – measures 105 & 117, Ted to advise on how to pronounce “*promenade*”.

Dixit Dominus

Movement 7

Generally — the recording on the members’ site combines our #6 and #7. *Dixit Dominus* is fundamentally a dance piece, so for this performance the text/meaning are essentially irrelevant.

Pp. 32-36 – circle/bracket the first note of each run of four 16th notes, and use those first notes as guideposts in case you get lost (or the chorus ends up diverging from the click-track and needs to get back on track).

Pp. 36-38 – everything is *staccato*. Julie to advise whether we should drop the “*S*” at the end of the second syllable of “*con-quas-sa-bit*”.

December 11 rehearsal

Dixit Dominus

Movement 5

Generally — think in arcs and waves; don’t mechanically hammer out each individual note. Be “fleet of foot.”

P. 23 – measure 23, support that F on “*es*”, don’t let it sag or blat.

P. 23 – measures 24-25, it’s a short (sixteenth) tied note in m. 26, don’t be surprised (and late) in moving.

Grapes of Wrath

4 – The Plenty Road

Generally, watch the cutoffs; they are as important as the attacks. Be conscious of the measures when we are all in unison.

P. 48 – measure 73, remember to cut off as written — don’t expect Ted to spoon-feed us all the cutoffs.

P. 49 – measures 96-97, tenors sing the top staff (divide into T1 and T2), basses sing the bottom staff.

P. 50 – All men sing at measure 105. Measures 107-113, tenors sing the bottom staff with the basses (sing top notes when there’s a divisi). And mind the cutoffs — the “*z*” of “*Okies*” on the 4th beat, the “*k*” of “*croak*” on the 3rd beat — don’t hang onto “*me*” into measure 114.

P. 53 – measures 146-161, tenors sing the middle staff. Ted needs to think about who will sing which staffs beginning measure 162, so stay tuned.

1 – The Last Time There Was Rain

P. 11 – measures 35-36, lighter in tone than preceding measures; and taper/decrescendo in measure 36. Note that we have a D-natural on the last eighth note of measure 35 gut a D-flat on the second beat of the following measure. Be precise about the cutoff of “*is*” on downbeat of measure 37.

December 4 rehearsal

Dixit Dominus

Movement 1

P. 1 and throughout – do not put the same stress on all the syllables … when singing a weak syllable (like *“-it”* in *“dix-it”*) the volume should almost die away.

P. 5 – measures 54-70, avoid being stodgy or robotic … again, everything should dance, either stressing strong syllables or releasing weak syllables.

P. 6 – measures 65-88, differentiate the “tenor sound” from basses; try for more of a cutting, clarion quality.

P. 9 – measures 94-95, blend with the basses here, using a darker tone.

Grapes of Wrath

1 – The Last Time There Was Rain

Throughout — remember to be mindful of all cutoffs, and don’t expect Ted to cue endings.

P. 10 – measures 24-36, keep everything moving, don’t drag. It should be “epic, a wall of sound” when the chorus enters.

P. 18 – measures 78-82, tenors sing the middle line until the pickup to measure 83, at which point we start singing the bottom line.

P. 23 – measure 112, pronounce *“ruined”* as *“roon’d”* to rhyme with *“marooned”*.

4 – The Plenty Road

P. 42 – measures 14-15, pronounce *“California”* as *“Cal-i-for-nye-ay”*.

P. 43 – measure 22, be particularly mindful of the cutoff here — put the final consonant on the next beat (i.e., the quarter rest on beat 4).

November 27 rehearsal

“Dixit Dominus”

General note: Julie will email links to 2 learning/rehearsal aids (similar to Cyber Bass) later this week.

Movement 1

P. 5 – measure 59, in the last half of the measure it’s “*donec donec*”, not “*donec ponam*”.

P. 9 – measures 91-92, watch out for the major-third interval — C♯ to F♮ — it’s wider apart than you might think.

Movement 4

P. 13 – measure 5, just for now — Ted might change this — cut the last note to a dotted quarter with an eighth rest.

November 20 rehearsal

“Dixit Dominus”

General note: Movement 1 was distributed at rehearsal — presumably, a PDF will be posted on the website

Movement 4

Pp. 13-17 – the “*juravit*” sections should be weighty, but the “*non poenitebit*” sections should flow instead of being sung note-to-note.

Movement 5

Pp. 17-24 – it may be helpful to put slashes in to mark the beats in a measure, to avoid losing track.

Movement 6

Pp. 25-30 – always put the stress on the first syllable of “*su-ae*”.

P. 30 – breathe at the commas, and also mark a breath at the end of measure 122, right before “re-ges.”

Movement 1

P. 1 – measure 19 and throughout, it’s “*Domino meo*”, not “*Dominus meo*”.

P. 5 – the “*donec ponam*” sections should bounce, not plod.

Pp. 8-9 – measures 88-90 are for the soloist, not the chorus. We re-enter in measure 91.

November 13, rehearsal

“Dixit Dominus”

General reminder – we are not aiming to convey the message of the words, but only to provide a musical accompaniment to the dancing.

Movement 4

P. 15 – measures 33 and 34, make the “non” in each case long, the full quarter note. Also in measures 53 and 54 on pp 16-17.

P. 16 – measure 49, watch out for the F-sharp.

Movement 6

P. 29 – measure 92, watch out for the D.

November 6 rehearsal

“Dixit Dominus”

General note: as in most baroque music, sing it like a dance. Find a good recording (there are several available) and listen to it.

All tenors — but especially high tenors — make sure to blend, don’t stick out.

Movement 4

P. 13 – measure 1 and elsewhere, pronounce “*ju-ra-vit*” as “*yu-ra-veet*”.

P. 13 – dynamic at beginning is *forte*, which continues through measure 17.

P. 13 – measure 2, hold “Dominus” full length and put the “s” on the downbeat of the next measure.

P. 13 – measure 7 and elsewhere, pronounce “*poe-ni-te-bit*” as “*peh-nee-teh-beet*”.

P. 14 – measure 15, make sure to tune the unison D with the sopranos & altos.

P. 14 – measures 18 and 19, make each*“non”* short but weighty (and *piano*/*pianissimo*!).

P. 15 – Tenors, don’t yodel in this Allegro section.

Movement 5.

P. 18 – starting with pickup to measure 8, build this *“ tu es”* phrase in a continuous *crescendo*; don’t plod or let the energy become stagnant.

P. 20 – measure 16, watch out for the descending augmented fourth (tritone) leap from F to B-natural.

P. 23 – again, build this *“ tu es”* phrase in a continuous *crescendo.*