

Cherubikon

(Cherubic Hymn)

for

Seven Solo Voices (SSAATBB)

or

Mixed Choir (SSAATBB)

by

John Muehleisen
(2001)

PERUSAL SCORE

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www.johnmuehleisen.com

Cherubikon Text

English Translation

We who mystically represent the Cherubim, and who sing the thrice-holy hymn to the life-giving Trinity, let us lay aside every care of this life so that we may receive the King of all invisibly escorted by the angelic ranks. Alleluia.

Greek Transliteration in Western Characters

I ta chérupim mistikós ikonízontes, ke ti
zo-opió Triáda ton trisájion ímnon prosádontes,
pasan tin biotikín apothómetha mérimnan. Os
ton Basiléa ton ólon ipodexómeni
tes angelikés aorátos doriforúmenon táxesin. Allilúia.

Literal English translation above *Greek transliteration*

We the Cherubim mystically (we) representing, and the
I ta chérupim mistikós ikonízontes, ke ti

life-giving Trinity the Trisagion Hymn singing to
zo-opió Triádi ton trisájion ímnon prosádontes,

all things of this life (biology) let us lay aside the cares. As
pasan tin biotikín apothómetha mérimnan. Os

the King of all receive
ton Basiléa ton ólon ipodexómeni

by Angelic invisible escorting (the King) hosts Alleluia
tes angelikés aorátos doriforúmenon táxesin. Alayilúia.

Pronunciation of Transliterated Greek Text

The transliteration above endeavors to create the sound in English closest to the Greek pronunciation. Because it is difficult to cover the correct pronunciation of Greek in this short section, the conductor should consult a Greek dictionary for a more thorough explanation of proper pronunciation or consult a Greek language coach. The following brief pronunciation guide will help with the pronunciation of the Greek-to-Roman character transliteration.

Vowels

Letter used	Pronunciation
a	a as in father
e	e as in get
i	generally a short vowel; i as in bit if followed by a vowel, i is used as a consonant: y as in yellow
o	In modern Greek o is always long: o as in o bey; however, because liturgical Greek is an ancient form of Greek, the o is probably always short: o as in not .
u	in the Cherubikon text, represents the Greek diphthong ou as in soup .

Consonants

Letter used	Pronunciation
b	b as in B ible
d	d as in d og
f	f as in f at
g	g as in G od
j	ge as in mir age
k	k as in k ee p
l	l as in l aw
m	m as in m arriage
n	n as in n ew
p	p as in p ut
r	r as in r od
s	s as in s tudy
t	t as in t ouch

Letter used	Pronunciation
x	x as in axe
z	z as in zero if first character in a word; dz or ds as in cards if not first character
ch	h as in hummus ; or ch as in German Ach (guttural)
th	th as in theology

Diphthongs

Combination used	Pronunciation
ao	ow as in now
ay	ay as in lay

Cherubikon Performance Notes

Background, Style and Performance Notes

The Cherubic Hymn is sung at a pivotal moment in the Divine Liturgy on Sunday mornings in the Orthodox Church and represents the blending of the worship of the Earthly Church with the Heavenly worship as described in the biblical book of *The Revelation of St. John*, as well as in passages from Isaiah and other Old Testament scriptures. Settings of the Cherubic Hymn represent some of the most extended musical treatments of text in the Divine Liturgy. The music is typically divided into two parts, the first being quite extended and frequently slow in tempo, comprising the first 75% or so of the text; while the second section is shorter, frequently in a faster tempo, and includes only about the last line of the text plus the Alleluia.

Cherubikon blends elements of Byzantine chant style with my own style. The Byzantine chant elements include:

- Use of ison (drone) techniques.
- Several types of melodic ornaments.
- Highly melismatic and florid lines.
- Chromatically inflected melodic lines, esp. inflections of raised and lowered 2nd, 3rd, and 7th scale degrees
- Breaking and resumption of phrases in the middle of vowels.
- Alternation of solo (cantor) passages over group ison with choral passages over ison.
- Predominantly step-wise melodic motion with occasional leaps.
- Distension and segmentation of text with frequent repetition of syllables.

The influence of elements of my own style on the *Cherubikon* include:

- Diatonic clusters, frequently derived from the resonance of particular notes in a melodic line (like notes of a melody that “get stuck” in the on position). For example, the ison, which begins either as a single pitch or as a 5th gradually accrues other pitches to become a cluster
- Lydian inflection of 4th scale degree (not typical in Byzantine chant).
- Frequent use of text-painting.

In performance, the style should be patterned after the manner of Byzantine chant. Listening to recordings of authentically performed Byzantine chant would be a great aid to performing this work in the style intended by the composer. One particularly good recording is:

Title: *Byzantine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom*

Group: The Greek Byzantine Choir

Conductor: Lycourgos Angelopoulos

Label: OPUS 111 (OPS 30-78)

One aspect of Byzantine chant that should also be followed is staggered breathing when singing the ison. I have not notated the phrasing for the ison parts, instead leaving those decisions up to the individual singers or the conductor.

John Muehleisen (January 2001)

Cherubikon Program Notes

The Cherubic Hymn (*Herubikon* in Greek) is sung at a pivotal moment in the Divine Liturgy on Sunday mornings in the Orthodox Church and represents the blending of the worship of the Earthly Church with the Heavenly worship as described in the biblical book of *The Revelation of St. John*, as well as in passages from Isaiah and other Old Testament scriptures. Settings of the Cherubic Hymn represent some of the most extended musical treatments of text in the Divine Liturgy. The music is typically divided into two parts, the first often being quite extended (especially in Byzantine settings) and frequently slow in tempo, comprising the first 3/4 or so of the text; the second section is shorter, frequently in a faster tempo, and includes what amounts to the last line of the text plus the Alleluia.

Two of the great traditions of Cherubic Hymn settings are found in the European-inspired Russian Orthodox settings (some of which blend ancient Russian Znameney chant with European homophony and polyphony) and in the Byzantine-chant settings of the Greek and Arabic Orthodox churches. Muehleisen's *Cherubikon* setting blends elements of the Byzantine-chant style with his own musical language. The Byzantine-chant elements in the setting include:

- Use of ison (drone) techniques.
- Several types of melodic ornaments.
- Highly melismatic and florid lines.
- Chromatically inflected melodic lines, esp. inflections of raised and lowered 2nd, 3rd, and 7th scale degrees
- Breaking and resumption of phrases in the middle of vowels.
- Alternation of solo (cantor) passages over a group ison with choral passages over the ison.
- Predominantly step-wise melodic motion with occasional leaps.
- Distension and segmentation of text with frequent repetition of syllables.

The influence of elements of Muehleisen's own style in the setting include:

- Diatonic clusters, frequently derived from the resonance of particular notes in a melodic line (like notes of a melody that "get stuck in the On position"). For example, the ison, which begins either as a single pitch or as a 5th gradually accrues other pitches to become a diatonic cluster or other more complex chord.
- Lydian inflection of 4th scale degree (not typical in Byzantine chant).
- Frequent use of text-painting.

John Muehleisen (March 2001)

Cherubikon

for Paul Barnes & Dulces Voces

text from The Divine Liturgy
of the Eastern Orthodox Church

John Muehleisen
2001

Adagio (MM = 60)

The musical score is arranged for seven vocal parts: Soprano 1, Soprano 2, Alto 1, Alto 2, Tenor, Bass 1, and Bass 2. The first system (measures 1-7) features a melodic line for all parts, with dynamics ranging from *mf* to *f*. The Tenor part has lyrics "I ta" at the end of the system. The second system (measures 8-11) includes lyrics for all parts: "che - ru - vim" for Soprano and Alto parts, and "I ta che - ru - vim" for the Tenor and Bass parts. Performance instructions include *mf*, *f*, and "bocca chiusa norm." for the Tenor and Bass parts. The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat signs.

15

S 1 *ff*
che - - - ru - vim mis - ti - kos

S 2
che - - - ru - vim mis - ti - kos

A 1 *mf* *f*
mis - ti - kos

A 2 *mf* *f*
mis - ti - kos

T *mf* *f*
- - - - - ru - vim mis - ti - kos

B 1 *mf* *f*
- - - - - ru - vim mis - ti - kos

B 2 *mf* *f*
- - - - - ru - vim mis - ti - kos

22

S 1 *mf* *f* *ff*
I - - - - - kon - - - - i - zon - tes,

S 2 *mf* *f* *ff*
I - - - - - kon - - - - i - zon - tes,

A 1 *mf* *f* *ff*
I - - - - - kon - - - - i - zon - tes,

A 2 *mf* *f* *ff*
I - - - - - kon - - - - i - zon - tes,

T *f* *mf* *f* *ff*
I - - - - - kon - - - - i - zon - tes,

B 1 *f* *mf* *f* *ff*
I - - - - - kon - - - - i - zon - tes,

B 2 *f* *mf* *f* *ff*
I - - - - - kon - - - - i - zon - tes,

Faster (MM = 72)

29 *f* ke ti zo - - - - -

f ke ti zo - - - - -

mf ke ti zo - - - - -

mf ke ti zo - - - - -

f ke ti zo - - - - -

mf ke ti zo - - - - -

mf ke ti zo - - - - -

35 *mf* o - - - - - pi o - pi - o -

mf o - - - - - pi o - pi - o -

mf o - - - - - pi o - pi - o -

mf o - - - - - pi o - pi - o -

mf o - - - - - pi o - pi - o -

mf o - - - - - pi o - pi - o -

mf o - - - - - pi o - pi - o -

41

f *f*

S1 Tri - a - da Tri i Tri - a - da a

f *mf*

S2 Tri - a - da Tri

f *mf*

A1 Tri - a - da Tri

f *mf*

A2 Tri - a - da Tri

f *mf*

T Tri - a - da Tri

f *mf*

B1 Tri - a - da Tri

f *mf*

B2 Tri - a - da Tri

48

mf accel. *f* *ff*

S1 tri - sa - ji-on ton tri - sa - ji-on ton tri - sa - ji-on im - non

mf accel. *f* *ff*

S2 ton tri - sa - ji-on ton tri - sa - ji-on ton tri - sa - ji-on im - non

mf accel. *f* *ff*

A1 ton tri - sa - ji-on ton tri - sa - ji-on tri - sa - ji-on im - non

mf accel. *f* *ff*

A2 ton - tri - sa - ji-on ton tri - sa - ji-on tri - sa - ji-on im - non

mf accel. *f* *ff*

T ton tri - sa - ji-on ton tri - sa - ji-on on im - non

mf accel. *f* *ff*

B1 ton tri - sa - ji-on ton tri - sa - ji-on im - non

mf accel. *f* *ff*

B2 ton tri - sa - ji-on ton tri - sa - ji-on im - non

a Tempo (MM = 72)

57

S 1 *f* pro - - - sa-don - tes,

S 2 *f* pro - - - sa-don - tes,

A 1 *f* pro - - - sa-don - tes,

A 2 *f* pro - - - sa-don - tes,

T *f* pro - - - sa-don - tes, *mf* pa - - -

B 1 *f* pro - - - sa-don - tes, *mf* pa - - -

B 2 *f* pro - - - sa-don - tes, *mf* pa - - -

63

S 1 *f* pa - san - - - pa - san - tin - bi - - - o - - - ti - kin -

S 2 *f* pa - san - - - pa - san - tin - bi - - - o - - - ti - kin -

A 1 *f* pa - san - - - pa - san - tin - bi - - - o - - - ti - kin -

A 2 *f* pa - san - - - pa - san - tin - bi - - - o - - - ti - kin -

T *f* - - - - - san tin bi - - - o - - - ti - kin

B 1 *f* - - - - - san tin bi - - - o - - - ti - kin

B 2 *f* - - - - - san tin bi - - - o - - - ti - kin

69

S 1 *mf*
 bi - o - - - - ti - - - kin bi - o - ti - kin a

S 2 *mf*
 bi - o - - - - ti - - - kin bi - o - ti - kin a

A 1 *mf*
 bi - o - - - - ti - - - kin bi - o - ti - kin a

A 2 *mf*
 bi - o - - - - ti - - - kin bi - o - ti - kin a

T *f*
 a - po - tho -

B 1 a

B 2 a

76

S 1 a

S 2 a

A 1 a

A 2 a

T
 - me - tha a - po - tho - me - tha mer - - - -

B 1 *f*
 mer - - - -

B 2 *f*
 mer - - - -

83

S 1 *f* Os — Os — ton Ba - si - le - a

S 2 *mf* O

A 1 *mf* O

A 2 *mf* O

T *mf* im - nan mer - - - im - nan.

B 1 *mf* im - nan mer - - - im - nan.

B 2 *mf* im - nan mer - - - im - nan.

90

S 1 *ff* Ba Ba - si - le - a

S 2 *ff*

A 1 *ff* Ba - si -

A 2 *ff* Ba - si -

T *ff* Ba - - - si - le - a Ba - si - - -

B 1 *ff* Ba - - - si - le - a Ba - si - - -

B 2 *ff* Ba - - - si - le - a Ba - si - - -

95

ff *mf*

S 1 a Ba - si - le - a ton

S 2 a Ba - si - le - a ton

A 1 - le - a Ba - si - le - a ton

A 2 - le - a Ba - si - le - a ton

T - le - a Ba - si - le - a ton o - lon

B 1 - le - a ton o - lon

B 2 - le - a ton o - lon

f

Slower (MM = 68)

100

ff *f*

S 1 o - lon i - po - dex - o - men - i Tes

S 2 o - lon i - po - dex - o - men - i Tes

A 1 o - lon i - po - dex - o - men - i Tes

A 2 o - lon i - po - dex - o - men - i Tes

T ton o - lon i - po - dex - o - men - i Tes

B 1 i - po - dex - o - men - i Tes

B 2 i - po - dex - o - men - i Tes

f

106

S 1 *ff* *mp* *accel. e cresc. poco a poco*
 tes — an - gel - i - kes an - gel - i - kes a - o - ra - tos a - o - ra - tos do - - - ri - - -

S 2 *ff* *mp* *accel. e cresc. poco a poco*
 tes — an - gel - i - kes an - gel - i - kes a - o - ra - tos a - o - ra - tos do - - - ri - - -

A 1 *ff* *mp* *accel. e cresc. poco a poco*
 tes — an - gel - i - kes an - gel - i - kes a - o - ra - tos a - o - ra - tos do - - - ri - - -

A 2 *ff* *mp* *accel. e cresc. poco a poco*
 tes — an - gel - i - kes an - gel - i - kes a - o - ra - tos a - o - ra - tos do - - - ri - - -

T *ff* *p* *accel. e cresc. poco a poco*
 a a do - -

B 1 *ff* *p* *accel. e cresc. poco a poco*
 a a do - -

B 2 *ff* *p* *accel. e cresc. poco a poco*
 a a do - -

113

S 1 *ff*
 fo - - - ru - - - me - - - non tax - - - e - sin.

S 2 *ff*
 - fo - - - ru - - - me - - - non tax - - - e - sin.

A 1 *ff*
 fo - - - ru - - - me - - - non tax - - - e - sin.

A 2 *ff*
 fo - - - ru - - - me - - - non tax - - - e - sin.

T *ff*
 ri - - - fo - - - ru - - - me - - - non tax - - - e - sin.

B 1 *ff*
 - ri - - - fo - - - ru - - - me - - - non tax - - - e - sin.

B 2 *ff*
 - ri - - - fo - - - ru - - - me - - - non tax - - - e - sin.

121 Allegro (MM = 120)

S 1

S 2

A 1 *f* Al - li -

A 2 *f* Al - li -

T *f* Al - li - lu - - - i - a Al - li - lu - - - i - a

B 1 *f* Al - li - lu - - - i - a Al - li - lu - - - i - a Al - li -

B 2 *f* Al - li - lu - - - i - a Al - li - lu - - - i - a Al - li -

128 *f* *ff*

S 1 Al - li - lu - - - i - a Al - li - lu - i - a Al - li - lu - ia *ff*

S 2 *f* Al - li - lu - - - i - a Al - li - lu - i - a Al - li - lu - ia *ff*

A 1 lu - - - i - a Al - li - lu - i - a Al - li - lu - ia *ff*

A 2 lu - - - i - a Al - li - lu - i - a Al - li - lu - ia *ff*

T *f* Al - li - lu - ia *ff*

B 1 lu - ia *ff*

B 2 lu - ia *ff*