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M o t e t

“Adoramus Te”

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

Adapted and Edited with Instructions as to Interpretation
and Method of Study by

Leopold Godowsky

Biographical Sketch, General Information and Glossary by
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Published by the

Art Publication Society

St. Louis

London

Berlin

Vienna

Price 35 Cents

PRINTED IN U. S. A.

No. 530


PROGRESSIVE SERIES COMPOSITIONS

Catalog No. 530

MOTET — "ADORAMUS TE" (“WE ADORE THEE”)

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH—GIOVANNI PIERLUIGI DA PALESTRINA.

*Born at Palestrina, near Rome, about 1526.
Died in Rome, Italy, February 2, 1594.*

 GIOVANNI PIERLUIGI was of humble birth; his ancestors lived obscure lives unfavored by nature in either spiritual or material riches. There in the Campagna (the plain) of Rome, in the little town of Palestrina, Giovanni spent his childhood. It is told that he was discovered as a street urchin singing in the gutters of his native village—that he was taken to Rome and musically educated by some scheming *maestro*, who thought to add the lustre of gold and good reputation to his own possessions, by cleverly training the gifted boy.

Whether or not this particular story is true, it is certain that Palestrina (so called after the place of his birth) appeared in Rome about 1542 as a pupil of the Fleming, Gaudio Mell. After four years with the Flemish music-master he returned to Palestrina to accept the offices and income of a canonry there; he played the organ at all church festivals, he sang at the daily services, besides teaching singing and the theory of music during his leisure hours.

In 1547 he married Lucrezia di Goris. He was already a musician of sufficient talent and ability to attract the attention of the church authorities, and when Rubino retired from the leadership of the Cappella Giulia at the Vatican, Giovanni Pierluigi of Palestrina was chosen for the vacancy. It was then that his career as a composer began; his first volume, containing four masses dedicated to Pope Julius III. was published in 1554. This was in his twenty-eighth year, and for forty years, until his death (in 1594) Palestrina devoted his untiring energies to writing music for the Catholic service. The edition of his complete works in 33 volumes is proof of his tremendous diligence in his art.

Before the time of Palestrina the composers of church music had frequently been lazy artisans of low ideals. To avoid the mental effort of making new melodies for the church service, they used the popular tunes of the streets and cafés, to which they simply added the Latin text with small regard to the fitness of the procedure. It was not an unusual occurrence to hear the solemn words of the Credo or Kyrie sung to the melody of some vulgar ditty of Flanders or Provence; and the singers, except those in the front row of the choir, found amusement in chanting the original words of these songs.

Small wonder that the Council of Trent had almost decided to banish music from the church altogether: it was only natural that this blending of sacred and profane should rouse the ire of the cardinals. Palestrina was called upon to write a mass which should serve as a model of what noble church music should be. This mass was sung in the Sistine Chapel at Rome, on June 19, 1565, and was afterwards mentioned in a papal decree as an example to be followed in future music for the church.

Although never wealthy, Palestrina's life was replete with honors and rewards. He was protected by popes and cardinals; his published works went through numbers of editions; he was acclaimed the greatest composer of his time.

The loss of two sons, his brother and his wife fell upon him heavily, as they all died within the period of a few years, yet his work did not suffer from his sorrow, but seemed rather to rise to even more spiritual heights. Until nine days before his death he continued his labors; he was engaged upon his seventh volume of masses dedicated to Pope Clement VIII, when the figure of death appeared on his threshold. Filippo Neri, his friend and confessor, was with him until the end. Thus died the great Palestrina, as befitted a master who had consecrated his life and genius to the Church. After a period of more than four centuries he still remains one of the supreme masters of music.

Ano. 442-2

HISTORICAL INFORMATION: Palestrina published seven books of motets during his lifetime. Besides the 202 compositions contained in these volumes, he wrote at least a hundred others, which were discovered in manuscript after his death. *Motet* is the name applied to certain pieces of church music of moderate length, the words of which are taken from the Scriptures. The first motets of which there is any record were written about 1290.

METHOD OF STUDY: The editor has so carefully considered the phrasing, fingering, and the dynamic (strength gradation) and agogic (time gradation) indications, that he wishes to impress upon the student the necessity of the most conscientious application to all these phases of artistic interpretation.

The pedaling has not been marked in the editing of this Motet, as the proper use of the sustaining pedal would be too complicated for the student at this period of his development. On this account greatest care must be taken that all notes are held their full time value by the fingers. As the tone of the pianoforte gradually diminishes from the moment of its production, the length of the note must determine the proportionate intensity of the accent required. The upper voice must be marked throughout the composition, though the inner voices should remain expressive, while suspensions should be played with more tone than their resolutions; thus D in the right hand of m. 11 should be played with more tone than the C in the same voice.

Note the accents in the right hand of measures 7, 17, 18, 20, 22, 24, etc., and in the left hand of measures 19, 21 and 40. Notwithstanding the predominance of the upper part of the right hand and the melodic outline of the middle voices, the lower part of the left hand must always be played with sonority and solemnity.

NOTE TO THE TEACHER.—The aim of the editors is to have every department of their work as perfect and complete as possible, and they have been governed by this principle in making the annotations to the Educational Adaptations. Although nothing superfluous has been included, the teacher must use discretion as to the amount of text material that the student is capable of assimilating at the time.

GLOSSARY

NAMES

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|--|
| Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, | pronounced, | Jē-ō-vān-nī Pyēr-loo-ē-jē dāh Pā-lēs-trē-nā. |
| Rubino, | " | Roo-bē-nō. |
| Filippo Neri, | " | Fē-lēp-pō Nā-rē. |

TERMS

| | | |
|----------------------|-------------|---|
| larghetto, | pronounced, | lār-gēt-tō, - not quite so slow as <i>largo</i> . |
| dim. (diminuendo), | " | dē-mē-noo-ēn-do, - diminishing in tone. |
| rall. (rallentando), | " | rāl-lēn-tān-dō, - slackening the time. |
| cresc. (crescendo), | " | crē-shēn-dō, - increasing the tone. |
| maestro, | " | mā-ēs-trō, - master. |

Without octaves and without pedal.

EDUCATIONAL ADAPTATIONS

Sacred Music Series

Motet - "Adoramus Te"

Adapted and edited by Leopold Godowsky.

Giovanni Pierluigi Palestrina.

Larghetto. ♩ = 120 - 138.

Musical notation for measures 1-4. The score is in G major and 4/4 time. Measure 1 starts with a piano (p) dynamic. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5. A dotted line connects the first finger in measure 1 to the first finger in measure 2.

Musical notation for measures 5-8. The notation continues with various fingerings and articulations. Measure 5 begins with a fingered eighth note in the bass clef.

Musical notation for measures 9-12. Measures 9 and 10 feature a sequence of eighth notes in the bass clef. Measure 11 has a dotted line connecting the first finger in the treble clef to the first finger in the bass clef.

Musical notation for measures 13-16. Measure 13 starts with a fingered eighth note in the bass clef. Measure 14 has a dotted line connecting the first finger in the treble clef to the first finger in the bass clef. Measure 15 has a dotted line connecting the first finger in the treble clef to the first finger in the bass clef.

17 *f* 18 19 20 21

Handwritten musical score system 1, measures 17-21. Treble clef, 4/4 time. Includes fingerings (1-5) and dynamics (*f*).

22 *dim. e rall.* 23 24 25 *a tempo.* 26 *pp*

Handwritten musical score system 2, measures 22-26. Treble clef, 4/4 time. Includes fingerings, dynamics (*dim. e rall.*, *pp*), and tempo marking (*a tempo.*).

27 28 29 30 31

Handwritten musical score system 3, measures 27-31. Treble clef, 4/4 time. Includes fingerings and dynamics.

32 *cresc.* 33 34 35 *mf* 36

Handwritten musical score system 4, measures 32-36. Treble clef, 4/4 time. Includes fingerings, dynamics (*cresc.*, *mf*), and phrasing slurs.

37 38 39 40 *dim. e rall.* 41 42 *pp*

Handwritten musical score system 5, measures 37-42. Treble clef, 4/4 time. Includes fingerings, dynamics (*dim. e rall.*, *pp*), and phrasing slurs.