

Georg Schumann (1866-1952) was a prolific composer of music for chorus, orchestra, piano, organ, chamber ensembles and solo voice with piano. In addition, his tenure as conductor of the famous Berlin *Sing-Akademie* from 1900 to 1950 would by itself have established him as one of the most significant figures in the choral life of twentieth-century Germany. Although Schumann's music was much better known in his own day, interest in his choral works has enjoyed a revival in recent years through new research, republications and new recordings.

Drei geistliche Gesänge, Op. 31 (1902) are Georg Schumann's first a cappella motets, falling midway between his two early successful efforts for chorus and orchestra, *Amor und Psyche* (1888) and *Ruth* (1908). He was later to publish several other collections of motets, with Ops. 51, 52, 60, 71 and 75. The music of all the motets is in a lyrical, late Romantic style, with frequent modulations, expressive chromaticism, and subtle text painting. At the same time, Schumann, like Brahms, frequently draws on polyphonic techniques from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This edition was prepared from original 1902 partbooks in the choral library at the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music.

The three Op. 31 motets are all based on Psalm texts. This second movement, *Siehe, wie fein und lieblich ist es* (Psalm 133: 1 and 3) begins with a brief passage of imitative counterpoint, similar to movement 1. A chromatic soprano melody dominates the texture in measures 7-15, depicting the dew falling on Mt. Hermon, as the lower voices answer with an equally chromatic accompaniment. The tenors launch the second portion of the work, which prepares the eventual return to A major by way of C major and F major. The tonic returns in the men's chorus in measure 26, quickly echoed by the women before the calm of the closing measures.

All three movements of Op. 31 are published under separate cover by Roger Dean Publishing Company:

- No. 1 *Und ob ich schon wanderte im finstren Tal* (Psalm 23:4) catalogue number 15/1816R
- No. 2 *Siehe, wie fein und lieblich ist es* (Psalm 133:1 and 3) catalogue number 15/1817R
- No. 3 *Herr, wie lang* (Psalm 13:1-3) catalogue number 15/1858R

These motets are suitable for church use, although they were more likely intended for concert performance. They are effective either as a set or when performed individually. Their lyrical melodies and rich harmonic palette have made them particularly attractive to many high school, collegiate, and community choruses.

William Weinert
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The following translations are based on the King James Version, modified to provide a more direct translation of the German. Schumann occasionally repeats and re-orders phrases of text in his musical settings.

Siehe, wie fein und lieblich ist's (Psalm 133:1 and 3)

(Verse 1) Siehe, wie fein und lieblich ist's, dass Brüder einträchtig bei einander wohnen!
Behold, how good and pleasant it is, for brothers to dwell together in unity!

(Verse 3) wie der Tau, der von Hermon herabfällt auf die Berge Zions!
as the dew which descends from Hermon upon the mountains of Zion!

denn daselbst verheißt der Herr Segen und Leben immerdar und ewiglich.
for in that very place the Lord promised blessing and life for evermore.

Siehe, wie fein und lieblich ist es

Psalm 133

SATB divisi, a cappella

Georg Schumann (1866-1952)

Op. 31, No. 2

Edited by William Weinert

Langsam und ruhig (Slowly and peacefully)*pp dolce*

Sie - he, wie fein und lieblich ist's, dass

Sie - he, wie lieblich und

Sie - he, wie

Sie - he,

Langsam und ruhig*pp dolce*
(for rehearsal only)

Brü - der ein - träch - tig bei ein - an - der

fein ist's, dass Brü - der bei ein - an - der

lieblich dass Brü - der bei ein - an - der

wie fein dass Brü - der bei ein - an - der

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7 *p* *mf* *espress.*

woh - nen! wie der Tau, wie der Tau, der von

p *mf* *espress.*

woh - nen! wie der Tau, wie der Tau, der

p *mf* *espress.*

woh - nen! wie der Tau, wie der Tau, der

p *mf* *espress.*

woh - nen! wie der Tau, wie der Tau, der

p *mf* *f*

10 *f* *p*

Her - mon her - ab - fällt, wie der Tau, der her -

p

von Her - mon her - ab - fällt, der her -

p

von Her - mon her - ab - fällt, der her -

p

von Her - mon her - ab - fällt, der her -

p

13

ab - fällt auf die Ber - ge Zi - ons!

ab - fällt auf — die Ber - ge Zi - ons!

ab - fällt auf — die Ber - ge Zi - ons! denn da -

ab - fällt auf Zi - on!

p [dim.] *pp*

p *dim.* *pp*

p [dim.] *pp* *mf*

pp

pp *mf*

16

denn da - selbst, denn da -

denn da - selbst, denn da -

selbst — ver - heißt der Herr —

denn da - selbst, denn da -

mf *f*

mf *f*

cresc. *f*

mf *f*

f

19

selbst ver-heißt der Herr. Se - gen und

selbst ver-heißt der Herr. Se - gen und

- ver-heißt der Herr. Se - gen und

selbst ver-heißt der Herr. Se - gen und

23

Le - ben, Se - gen und Le - ben. Sie -

Le - ben, Se - gen und Le - ben. Sie -

Le - ben, Se - gen und Le - ben. Sie - he, der

Le - ben, Se - gen und Le - ben. Sie - he, der