

Editor's Note

The Italian Giovanni Battista Pergolesi was one of the most respected and successful composers in the early part of the eighteenth century. Although Giovanni's original family name was Draghi, he was known as Pergolesi because his ancestors had lived in the town of Pergola. He first studied violin and composition before becoming a conductor and esteemed composer. With numerous successes at an early age, he was appointed *vicemaestro* to the royal chapel at the age of twenty-two, offering him a stable existence as a composer to Naples's most important royal families. After dying of tuberculosis, his fame quickly spread with the very large number of productions and printings of his works.

In his brief life of only twenty-six years, Pergolesi completed comic and serious operas and numerous sacred works, including cantatas, masses, oratorios, and psalm settings. He is particularly known today for *La serva padrona*, his most famous comic opera, and *Stabat Mater*, a setting for treble voices and strings and the most frequently printed work in the eighteenth century. However, some of his best music is contained in two serious operas, *L'Olimpiade* and *Salustia*.

Pergolesi devoted much of his early years composing in the most important musical genre of his time, the *opera seria*. Pergolesi's first attempt at writing a serious opera was *Salustia*. It was commissioned by the Teatro San Bartolomeo di Napoli in 1731 and was premiered in 1732. The libretto of *Salustia* originally appeared in *Alessandro Severo*, which was written by Apostle Zeno for Venice in 1716. Later revised as *Salustia*, the words were set by Pergolesi to very expressive music for soloists and a choir.

"Ritorni al nostro cor" appears at the end of the third and final act as a joyous celebration, for *Salustia* is once again reunited with her husband after much adversity and trouble. Originally scored for oboe, trumpet, strings, continuo, and an S.A.T.B. chorus, this arrangement for 3-part mixed voices includes a keyboard reduction of the vocal and instrumental parts as the accompaniment. Transposed down one whole step from the original key, the six measure introduction, tempo and dynamic indications, and optional English words were added by the editor.

The work should be performed energetically with an emphasis given to the first beat of each measure. The singers should carefully inflect the text while emphasizing the naturally energized syllables. Accent marks are indicated over those syllables in the following Italian pronunciation guide.

Italian Pronunciation Guide

Ri-tor-ni_lal no-stro cor la bel-la pa-ce.

ree-tóhr-njahl nów-stroh kawr lah béhl-lah páh-cheh.

E_jin noi del Di-o d'a-mor splen-da la fa-ce.

ayeen nohee dehl deé-aw dah-móhr splén-dah lah fáh-cheh.

Suggestions for pronunciation:

The "r" should be rolled.

The "j" in the transliteration should be pronounced like the "i" in "onion."

When singing the word "bella" [béhl-lah], the double consonants "ll" should be sustained on a pitch while maintaining a legato line. The singer should take time for the singable double consonants from the preceding musical note.

RITORNIAL NOSTRO COR

from *Salustia*

for 3-part mixed voices and piano
with optional PianoTrax CD*

English words by
PATRICK M. LIEBERGEN

Music by
GIOVANNI BATTISTA PERGOLESI (1710-1736)

Edited and Arranged by
PATRICK M. LIEBERGEN

Energetically and rhythmically in one (♩ = 152-160)

PIANO

The piano accompaniment for the first system is written in 3/4 time. The right hand features a series of chords, while the left hand plays a steady eighth-note bass line. The dynamic marking is *f*.

5

PART I

f 7 §

Ri - tor - ni al no - stro
Now peace — re - turns — this

PART II

f

Ri - tor - ni al no - stro
Now peace — re - turns — this

PART III

f

Ri - tor - ni al no - stro
Now peace re - turns this

The second system contains three vocal parts (PART I, PART II, PART III) and the piano accompaniment. Each vocal part begins with a rest for two measures, followed by the lyrics. The piano accompaniment continues with chords and a bass line. A dynamic marking of *f* is present. A box containing the number '7' and a section symbol (§) is placed above the first vocal line. A second section symbol (§) is placed above the piano accompaniment line.

* PianoTrax 1 Accompaniment CD available (31028).

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