

TTBB

Canzones de Sardinia (Songs of Sardinia)

\$2.50

Christopher Alexander

Canzones de
Sardinia
(Songs of Sardinia)

TTBB, a cappella

cantareworks

THE MUSIC OF CHRISTOPHER ALEXANDER

About the Work

The island of Sardinia is the second-largest in the Mediterranean Sea, incorporating linguistics stemming from both Italian and Spanish roots. Its rich artistic history comes from its inspirational poetry and its unique musical performance creation of *canto a tenore*. *Canto a tenore* (kahn-toh ah teh-noh-reh) is a stylized form of polyphonic quartet singing for secular textual passages (for sacred passages, this style of singing would be known as *canto a cuncordu*) in which the lead singer (*boghe*) performs a passage very freely without meter, being answered with nonsensical syllables by the bass (*bassu*) and baritone (*contra*) sing gutterally to the tune of a perfect fifth and the fourth voice (*mesu boghe*) with a melismatic passage of their own. Mainly an oral tradition, the form has embellished over time with including metrical, syncopated works akin to dances and anthems of a brighter future and improved homeland. This tribute with text selections from famed Sardinian poets Melchiorre Murenu (the “Homer” of Sardinian poetry) and Pompeo Calvia captures the pure essence of the singing style of *canto a tenore* and brings it to your men’s choir to perform and appreciate this distinct style of musical performance around the world.

Poetic translations listed on next page.

About the Composer



Mr. Christopher Alexander is an award-winning composer and arranger from St. Joseph, Missouri. He received his Bachelor of Science in Vocal Music Education degree from Missouri Western State University in 2009. A self-taught pianist, his compositions and arrangements ranging from instrumental works to vocal solo and choral literature. Mr. Alexander has been commissioned numerous times by singing groups and church choirs within the northwest Missouri and northeast Kansas regions. He is also active in musical theatre productions as a music director and pianist. His works have been published with GIA Music Publications, Hal Leonard, and Excelcia Music Publishing.

In 2016, he was awarded the St. Joseph Allied Arts Council Mayor’s Award for Artist of the Year. In 2023, he was inducted into the New Generation Singers Hall of Fame.

Mr. Alexander currently serves as the pianist and primary arranger for The New Generation Singers, a Christian singing youth group based in St. Joseph, Missouri. He is a member of NAfME, ACDA, MCDA, and Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity.

He is available for commissions and conducting events on request.

Text and Translations

I. S'istadu 'e Sardigna (excerpt)

by Melchiorre Murenu (1803-1854)

*Ite resolves, povera Sardigna,
Subr' a tantas disgrazias connotas,
Sos peccados t'han fattu gasi digna
De flagellos, castigos e azzottas.
Motivu, veramente, chi t' insigna
Ca tenes bagas animas devotas;
Serpunt sos azzotas insufribiles
Contr'a beni costantes e movibiles.*

Go, resolve, poor Sardinia,
Under so many known misfortunes,
Your sins have made you worthy
Of scourges, punishments, and blows.
Truly, a reason that teaches you
That you have paid devoted souls;
Bearing the unbearable blows
Against constant and movable goods.

*Si ti miras sos poveros presentes
Non ls osservas samben' in sas laras,
Ca sun bivind' 'e cibos puzzolentes
Cun erbas mesu siccas e amaras,
Bendidas tott' a prezios dolente
Sas tancas chi teniant pius caras,
Como medas famidas e destruttas
In bassu disisperas sinu ruttas.*

If you look, you are poor present
Do not observe them, they are hungry in the fields,
For they are living on foul-smelling food
With half-dry and bitter herbs,
Blessed are all the precious pains
The walls that hold them more dearly,
Like famished and destroyed medals
In low despair they are broken.

II. Tancas serradas a muru

by Melchiorre Murenu (1803-1854)

*Tancas serradas a muru,
Fattas a s'afferra afferra,
Si su chelu fit in terra,
Che l'aian serradu puru.*

Closed gates to the wall,
Made to hold tight,
If the sky falls to the ground,
Let them be closed too.

III. Poeta, tu chi sai

by Pompeo Calvia (1857-1919)

*Poeta, tu chi sai,
Parchi non giri in tondu
Tuttu chista Sardigna,
E in mezu e drentu e fora?
Poeta, la Sardigna
No, no è iscuberta ancora.
Abà iscobbrila tu,
Chista Sardigna amadda,
Terra dimintiggadda.*

Poet, you who are good,
Why don't you go through
All this Sardinia,
Of the interior and the coasts?
Poet, Sardinia
No, it has not yet been discovered.
Now you discover
This beloved Sardinia,
Forgotten land.

CANZONES DE SARDIGNA

(Songs of Sardinia)

TTBB, a cappella

Music by
CHRISTOPHER ALEXANDER

I.

S'istadu 'e Sardinia (*excerpt*)

Poetry by Melchiorre Muneru (1803-1854)

Moderadu no meda (Moderately but not too much), molto rubato

mf Go, resolve, poor Sardinia,

Under so many known misfortunes,

TENOR I



peccante, meno mosso)

2

TENOR II



f BARITONE & BASS



guttural

*Me - ma - mo - a - du - way - ma - mo

3

TENOR I Your sins have made you worthy

Of scourges, punishments, and blows.



4

TENOR II



BARITONE & BASS



5

TENOR I Truly, a reason that teaches you

That you have paid devoted souls,



*These words are nonsensical and have no meaning/translation.

II.

Tancas serradas a muru

Poetry by Melchiorre Muneru (1803-1854)

Balla in manera istrinta (Strict Dance) (♩ = 156)

15

f Sing on 6th repeat only Closed gates to the wall,

Repeat 6 times

Tan - cas a mu - ru, mu - ru,

f Sing on 4th, 5th, and 6th repeats

Tan-cas ser-ra - das, tan-cas ser-ra - das, tan-cas ser-ra - das a mu - ru, mu - ru,

f (BARITONE) Sing on 2nd, 3rd, 5th, and 6th repeats only

Tan-cas ser-ra - das, tan-cas ser-ra - das, tan-cas ser-ra - das a mu - ru, mu - ru,

(BASS) Sing on 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 6th repeats only

19

Tan - cas a mu - ru, mu - ru,

Tan-cas ser-ra - das, tan-cas ser-ra - das, tan-cas ser-ra - das a mu - ru, mu - ru,

Tan-cas ser-ra - das, tan-cas ser-ra - das, tan-cas ser-ra - das a mu - ru, mu - ru,

23

Tan - cas a mu - ru, mu - ru,

Tan-cas ser-ra - das, tan-cas ser-ra - das, tan-cas ser-ra - das a mu - ru, mu - ru,

Tan-cas ser-ra - das, tan-cas ser-ra - das, tan-cas ser-ra - das a mu - ru, mu - ru,

III.

Poeta, tu chi sai

Poetry by Pompeo Calvia (1857-1919)

Cun sa proclamazione (With proclamation), poco rubato

71

mf Poet, you who are good,

, Why don't you go through

Po - e - ta, tu chi sai, Par - chi non gi - ri in

All this Sardinia,

ton - du Tut - ta chi - sta Sar - dig - na,

Of the interior and the coasts?

E in mez - zu e dren - tu e fo - ra?