Roberto Berzero

I painted peace

for
3 parts Children's Choir
(S,Ms,A)
and
Piano

(duration: 3'00")



(Lyrics by)
Tali Sorek

Awarded Work at the 2nd International Choral Composition Competition of Preveza (Greece), 2025

(SCORE)

Text

I had a box of colours
Shining bright and bold.
I had a box of colours,
Some warm, some very cold.
I had no red for the blood of wounds.
I had no black for the orphans' grief.
I had no white for dead faces and hands.
I had no yellow for burning sands.
But I had orange for the joy of life,
And I had green for buds and nests.
I had blue for bright, clear skies.
I had pink for dreams and rest.
I sat down and painted Peace

N.B. *It is possible to request audio with Virtual Choir (full version and/or individual voice parts) at: info@robertoberzero.com*

Author's notes

This composition was created in accordance with the guidelines of the competition for a **"good amateur choir"** (three voices with piano). The text I selected, **"I panted peace"**, imbued with hope and the yearning for universal harmony, inspired me to compose a work that fully reflects these very qualities.
P.S. When referring to pitch, I will use **C3** as the reference for **middle C**.

Intro (Bars 1-5) **Allegretto**

In the opening measure, the *feet roll* draws attention to the protagonists: the children. The dark, resonant sound evokes times of hardship and drama. In contrast, immediately afterward (bars 2-5), the lively piano rhythm highlights hope for a better future and invites the singers to mime the climbing to the attic in search of *a box of colours.*

A (Bars 6-17)

A lively imitative passage highlights the joy of playing with colours. The brightness of some is emphasized by higher notes and energetic rhythms on the words *shining bright and bold* (bars 9-10). Following this, warmer colours are expressed through gentle harmonies *some warm* (bars 14-15), while angular melodies evoke cooler shades *some very cold* (bars 16,17).

B (Bars 18-31)

The absence of certain colours casts a sense of sorrow over the moment when *red* could have represented *the blood of wounds* (bars 18-21) and *black* (bars 22-23), the color of sadness. This unfortunate situation is expressed musically through a slowing of the tempo (bar 21), followed by an agitated stringendo in crescendo on the text depicting the orphans' weeping.

C (Bars 26-31) **Andante calmo**

All of this flows into poignant descending melodies on the words: *"I had no white for dead faces and hands"* (bars 26-31). I also deliberately inserted, as a vocal lament (Ms, A), the exclamation *Oh*, representing a sign of sufferance and compassion (bars 25-26).

D (Bars 32-40) **Primo tempo**

The tempo returns to *Primo tempo*, as if to underline the strength of a reaction — perhaps naïve, yet genuine — that allows one's gaze to move beyond pain and continue to nurture hope for a better future. The energetic ascending melodie of the Soprano to C4 (bar 35, *burning*), articulated through detached notes, evokes the sensation of sudden burning that instinctively makes one pull away from the source of heat. It is the rediscovery of the colour *orange* (bars 36–39) that restores positive thoughts on the words *"for the joy of life"*, musically highlighted and emphasized by imitative repetitions enriched with greater vertical sonorous density.

E (Bars 41-46) **Allegretto**

A bright ascending major sixth (S, bar 41) leads us toward the colour of hope: green. It is the *a cappella* choir, supported by handclaps, that highlights this festive moment (*"I had green for buds and nests"*), helping to strengthen our resilience and keep faith alive as nourishment for a constructive mindset. At the words *"I had blue for bright, clear skies"*, the piano accompaniment returns, supporting the Soprano's melodic climax (F4) on the word *celeste*.

F (Bars. 46-53)

Pink for dreams are the words that lead me, almost naturally, to the reuse of soft seventh chords of various types, creating a new dreamy moment of suspension (Bars 46) and sweetness. Drowsy notes (Ms, A, S, Bars 49-51) on the word *rest* guide us to the brief harmonic-melodic bridge (Bars 51-53), where the piano's high frequencies evoke the delicate sounds of mobile toys hanging over the cribs, in the tender gesture of leading them into a peaceful sleep within an intimate atmosphere.

CODA (Bars. 54-75) **Andantino**

In the final line of the poem, *I sat down and painted peace*, the decisive turning point unfolds: an act of rebirth, a gesture of reconciliation with life. This moment inspired the creation of a new melodic motif, symbolizing “turning the page,” letting go of pain and anger, and opening oneself to the light of a new beginning.

The adoption of a sparse, almost immobile accompaniment (from Bar 54 to the End), with slightly restrained and peaceful agogics, aims to convey sobriety and depth, reflecting the most intimate and universal meaning embedded in the final words of Talil Sorek’s moving poem.

In this context, I chose to involve the audience, through the rhythmic repetition, spoken or declaimed (*ad libitum*), of the phrase previously sung by the choir (Bars 54–57): *I sat down and painted peace.* The choir then resumes (Bars 62–65), leading towards the concluding bars, where the audience is invited again to participate, responding to the choral passages by repeatedly echoing the word *PEACE*.

Note:
In the final section (Coda), movements of the singers (and subsequently of the audience) may be incorporated to illustrate the meaning of the text, using International Sign Language (ISL), corresponding to the words *painted* and *peace*, with their respective repetitions (*ad libitum*), in addition to the representation of the beating heart (Bar 73).
(See drawings on the Score).



Paint
(right hand)



Peace
(left hand)



Love

SCORE

I painted peace

for
3 parts Children's Choir
(S, Ms, A)
and Piano
(duration: 3'00'') *

Lyrics by:
:Tali Sorek (*1961)

Music by:
Roberto Berzero (*1956)

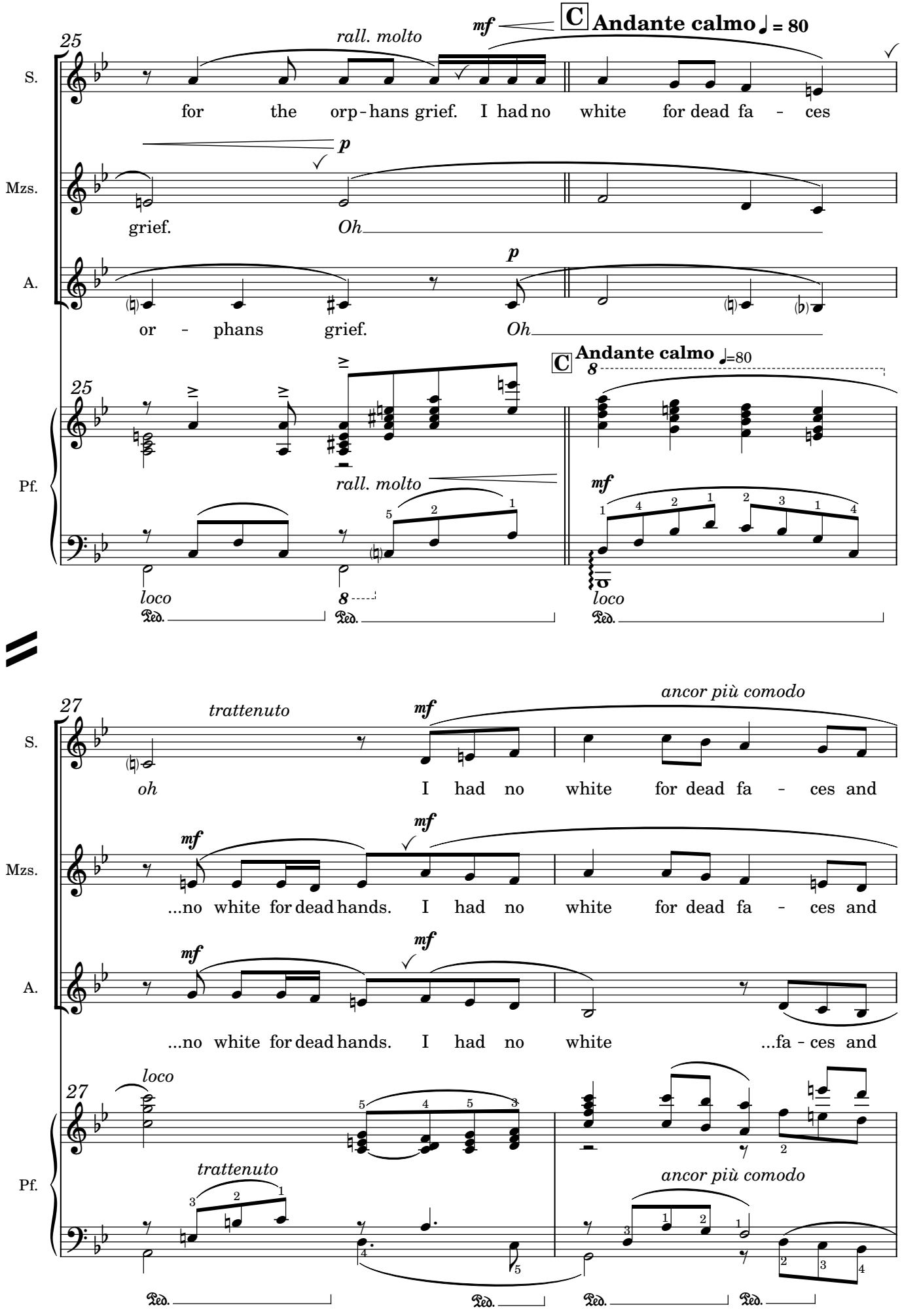


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8
S.
Mzs.
A.
Pf.
f
- ours
Shin - ing bright
and bold, and bold.
espr.
mf
I
11
...the box
box of col - ours,
I had
had the box
mp
Some
Ped.


14
S.
Mzs.
A.
Pf.
mp
mf stringendo
più comodo
some ve - ry, ve - ry cold, cold.
Some warm, some ve - ry, ve - ry cold, cold. I
warm, some warm, some ve - ry, ve - ry cold, cold. I
loco
mf stringendo
più comodo
Ped.
18
B
a tempo (♩=104)
allargando
...for, no red for I had no red for the
had no red for, no red for I had no red for the
p a tempo
allargando


21
pp
ancora allargando
(♩ = 76)
p molto espressivo
S.
blood of wounds. I had no black, I
Mzs.
p
p subito
blood of wounds. I had no black, no black, I
A.
blood of wounds. I had no black, I had no
Pf.
(♩=76)
ancora allargando
p subito
Ped.
23
stringendo e cresc. poco a poco
had no black for the orp - hans grief,
mp
oh for the orp-hans
black, no black for the orp - hans grief, the
stringendo e cresc.poco a poco
8

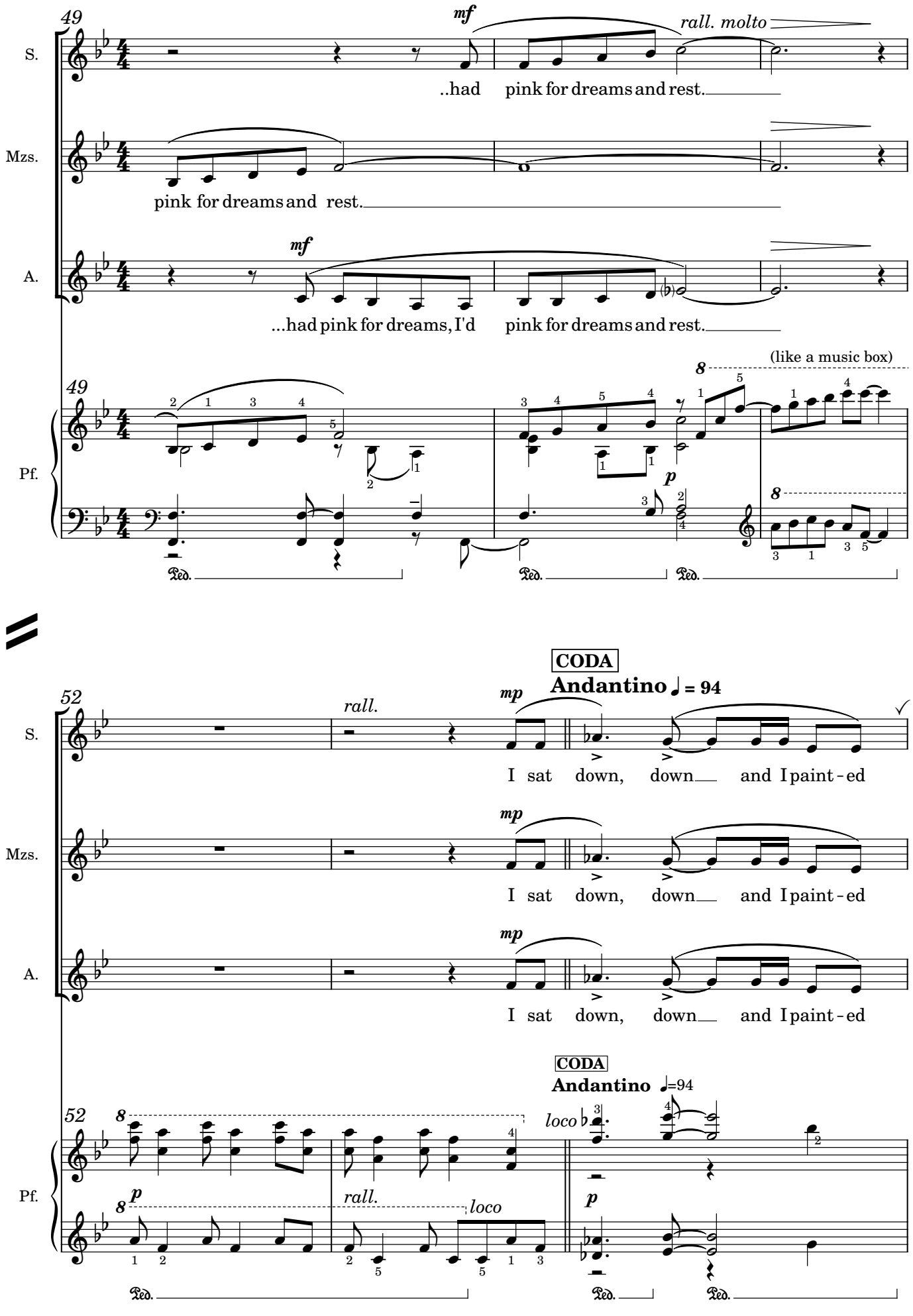

25
rall. molto
mf
C Andante calmo ♩ = 80
S.
for the orp - hans grief. I had no white for dead fa - ces
p
Mzs.
grief. Oh
p
A.
or - phans grief. Oh
C Andante calmo ♩=80
25
Pf.
rall. molto
mf
loco
loco
Ped.
27
trattenuto
mf
ancor più comodo
S.
oh I had no white for dead fa - ces and
mf
mf
Mzs.
...no white for dead hands. I had no white for dead fa - ces and
mf
mf
A.
...no white for dead hands. I had no white ...fa - ces and
27
loco
Pf.
trattenuto
ancor più comodo
Ped.


(♩ = 66)
rall. ancora
mp
p
Primo tempo
D
(♩ = 104)
mp
29
S.
hands, dead fa - ces and hands, I had no
Mzs.
hands, dead fa - ces and hands. I had I had no
A.
hands, dead fa - ces and hands. I had, I had no
Pf.
(♩=66)
rall. ancora
Primo tempo
D
(♩=104)
accel. poco a poco
Ped.
33
mf
più comodo (♩ = 100)
allargando molto
yel - low for bur-ning, bur - ning, for bur-ning sands.
yel - low for bur-ning, bur - ning, for bur-ning sands.
yel - low for bur-ning, bur - ning, for bur-ning sands. But I had
(♩=100)
più comodo
allargando molto


(♩ = 80)
accel. poco a poco e cresc.
36
(alla croma)
(alla sem.)
S.
Mzs.
A.
Pf.
...joy of life, the
...joy of li - fe, joy of life, the
or - ange for the joy of li - fe, joy of life, the
(alla croma)
(alla sem. ♩=80)
mp accel. poco a poco e cresc.
Ped.
E Allegretto ♩ = 100
39
(♩ = 100)
(Clap hands)
joy of life. And I had green, had green for buds and nests. I had
(♩=100)
(ad libitum up to middle bar 41)
loco


43
S.
Mzs.
A.
Pf.
mp
blue for bright, cle - ar bright, cle-ar skies. I had
blue for bright, cle - ar bright. cle-ar skies. I had
blue for bright, cle - ar bright, cle-ar skies. I had
8
loco
un poco rall.
p
Ped.


F
senza affrettare
46
S.
Mzs.
A.
Pf.
pink for dreams, for dreams and rest, and rest
mf
...had
senza affrettare
loco
8
Ped.


49
S.
Mzs.
A.
Pf.
mf
rall. molto
..had pink for dreams and rest.
pink for dreams and rest.
...had pink for dreams, I'd pink for dreams and rest.
(like a music box)
p
52
rall.
mp
CODA
Andantino ♩ = 94
I sat down, down and I paint - ed
loco
Andantino ♩=94

- I painted peace-

ISL: International Sign Language

right hand left hand

(right hand) (left hand)

55

S. I paint-ed Peace. I sat down, down and I paint-ed Peace. I sat

Mzs. I paint-ed Peace. I sat down, down and I paint-ed Peace. I sat

A. I paint-ed Peace. I sat down, down and I paint-ed Peace. I sat

Pf.

Acted (ad libitum) by the **Audience**
+ possible pedal note by the choir with F3

Add **ISL** movements
(right hand) (left hand)

58

crescendo

S. down, down and I paint-ed Peace. I sat down, down and I

Mzs. down, down and I paint-ed Peace. I sat down, down and I

A. down, down and I paint-ed - Peace. I sat down, down and I

Pf. *p crescendo*



61

Choir

S. paint - ed Peace. I sat down and I paint - ed,

Mzs. paint - ed Peace. ...and I paint - ed,

A. paint - ed Peace. I sat down down and I paint - ed,

Pf.

Add **ISL** movements

63

S. I paint-ed Peace. I sat down, down and I paint-ed Peace.

(braccio.dx)

Mzs. I paint-ed Peace. I sat down, down and I paint-ed Peace.

A. I paint-ed Peace. I sat down, down and I paint-ed Peace.

Pf.

- I painted peace-

cresc. poco a poco

Choir **Audience**



Continues with alternating **Choir/Audience** + **ISL** movements up the END

66

S. Mzs. A.

p *mp* *mf* *f* *f*

Peace Peace Peace Peace Peace Peace Peace Peace Peace Peace

cresc. poco a poco

67

Pf.

cresc. poco a poco *mp* *mf* *loco* *f* *loco*

8

Ped.

Choir:
At bar 73 everyone mimes a heart with their fingers



71

dim. poco a poco *mp* *p* *rall. up to the END*

Peace Peace Peace Peace

72

dim. poco a poco *mf* *mp* *rall. fino up to the END* *p*


On the GRANDE PAUSE,
everyone remains still in meditation
74
END
S.
pp
Peace
Mzs.
pp
Peace
A.
pp
Peace
74
END
Pf.
(Ped.)