

Sungji Hong

Ficus enim non florebit

for SSSA voices unaccompanied



Lorelei
ensemble

Sungji Hong

Ficus enim non florebit

for SSAA voices

2013, ca. 7'

Ficus enim non florebit is a setting of the book of Habakkuk. I chose three verses (Habakkuk 3:17-19) and cast the work in three sections. It explores various vocal tessitura and textures. It is scored for female voices (SSAA) and was composed during the spring of 2013 in Seoul, Korea.

Ficus enim non florebit is written for Lorelei Ensemble.

S. H.

Sungji Hong's *Ficus enim non florebit* sets the final verses of Habakkuk, one of the twelve Minor Prophets. In the opening verses of chapter 1, Habakkuk notably questions the wisdom of God: "Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds" (Habakkuk 1:3a) His doubt is not unfamiliar, burdened with the weight of a fallen world. Hong sets the final verses of the book—a prayer in a time of poverty and conflict (the rise to power of the Babylonians, c.612 BCE). Despite his doubt and the darkness that surrounded his situation, Habakkuk chooses to rejoice.

Hong displays both purity and discord through stark unisons and open sonorities, juxtaposed with thick parallel dissonance. She chooses to set the opening description of poverty and loss with austere and patient homophony. It is not until the speaker rejoices ("Ego autem in Domino...") that the three-part texture thickens to four unsettled voices, sliding in labored parallel augmented triads, tritones and minor seconds. This ironic setting poignantly wrings the earthly nature out of this text.

Beth Willer

Founder and Artistic Director, Lorelei Ensemble

Ficus enim non florebit

Ficus enim non florebit et non erit germen in vineis mentietur opus olivae et arva non adferent cibum abscidetur de ovili pecus et non erit armentum in praesepibus

Ego autem in Domino gaudebo exultabo in Deo lesu meo

Dominus Deus fortitudo mea et ponet pedes meos quasi cervorum et super excelsa mea deducet me victori in psalmis canentem

Habacuc 3:17–19, Biblia Sacra Vulgata (Vulgate)

Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls:

Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments.

Habakkuk 3:17–19, King James Version (KJV)

to Lorelei Ensemble
Ficus enim non florebit

Legato e con espressione ♩=80

Sungji Hong

mp

Soprano
Fi - cus e - nim non

mp

Soprano
Fi - cus e - nim non

mp

Alto
Fi - cus e - nim non

10

S. flo - - - - re - - - - bit

S. flo - - - - re - - - - bit

A. flo - - - - re

17

S. et non e - rit

S. et non e - rit

A. - bit et non e - rit

24

S. ger - men in vi - neis men - ti - e - tur

S. ger - men in vi - neis men - ti - e - tur

A. ger - men in vi - neis men - ti - e - tur

30 *p*

S. o - pus o - li - vae

S. o - pus o - li - vae

A. o - pus o - li - vae

36 *mf*

S. et ar - va non non ad - fe - rent

S. et ar - va non non ad - fe - rent

A. et ar - va non non ad - fe - rent

43 *p* *mf*

S. ci - bum ab - - sci - de - tur

S. ci - bum ab - - - - sci - de - tur

A. ci - bum ab - - - - - sci - de - tur

47 *p*

S. de o - vi - li pe - cus et

S. de o - vi - li pe - cus et

A. de o - vi - li pe - cus et

52

S. *f*
non non non e - - - rit

S. *f*
non non non e - - - rit

A. *f*
non non e - - - rit

59 *dim.*

S. ar - - - - - men - tum

S. *dim.*
ar - - - - - men - tum

A. *dim.*
ar - - - - - men - tum

64 *mp* *pp*

S. in prae - se - pi - bus

S. *mp* *pp*
in prae - se - pi - bus

A. *mp* *pp*
in prae - se - pi - bus

A **Molto legato** ♩.=80

70 *mp dolce*

S. E - go au - tem in Do - mi - no

S. *p dolce*
E - go au - tem in

A. *p dolce*
E - go au - tem in

A. *p dolce*
E - go au - tem in

77

S. — gau - - - de - bo - e - - -

S. Do - mi - no gau - - - de - - - bo -

A. Do - mi - no gau - - - de - - - bo -

A. Do - mi - no gau - - - de - - - bo -

82

S. - - - xul - ta - bo in *cresc.*

S. e - xul - ta - bo in De - o *cresc.*

A. e - xul - ta - bo in De - o *cresc.*

A. e - xul - ta - bo in De - o *cresc.*

87

S. De - o *f* Ie - su

S. *mf* Ie - - - su

A. *mf* Ie - - - su

A. *mf* Ie - - - su

93 *p*

S. me - o

S. me - o Ie - su me - o

A. me - o Ie - su me - o

A. me - o Ie - su me - o

B *Meno mosso* ♩=66

98 *mp*

S. Do - mi - nus De - us for - ti - tu - do me - a

S. Do - mi - nus De - us for - ti - tu - do me - a

A. Do - mi - nus De - us for - ti - tu - do me - a

A. Do - mi - nus De - us for - ti - tu - do me - a

104

S. et po - net pe - des me - os qua

S. et po - net pe - des me - os qua

A. et po - net pe - des me - os qua

A. et po - net pe - des me - os qua

C Molto legato

111

mf

dolce

S. si cer - - - vo - - -

S. si cer - - - vo - - -

A. si cer - - - vo - - -

A. si cer - - - vo - - -

116

f

cresc.

S. - rum et su - per ex - - - cel - sa

S. - rum et su - per ex - - - cel - sa

A. - rum et su - per ex - - - cel - sa

A. - rum et su - per ex - - - cel - sa

122

S. - me - a ex - - - cel - sa

S. me - a ex - - - cel - sa

A. me - a ex - - - cel - sa

A. me - a ex - - - cel - sa

126 *dim.*

S. me - a me - a de - - - - du - cet me de - du - cet

S. me - a me - a de - - - - du - cet me de - du - cet

A. me - a me - a de - - - - du - cet de - du - cet

A. me - a me - a de - - - - du - cet de - du - cet

D Andante tranquillo e tenuto ♩=66

131 *mp* *p*

S. me vic - to - ri in

S. me vic - to - ri in

A. me vic - to - ri in

A. me vic - to - ri in

136 *mp*

S. psal - mis ca - nen - tem.

S. psal - mis ca - nen - tem.

A. psal - mis ca - nen - tem.

A. psal - mis ca - nen - tem.

About the Composer

Sungji Hong's music has been described as "a work of iridescent freshness" (BBC Music Magazine), "the sound is utterly luminous" (*Fanfare Magazine*), "it had fantasy, colour and drive" (Nottingham evening post), "outbursts of rhythmic energy" (*The Irish Times*), and "a virtuoso exploration of the technical and sonorous possibilities" (*Daily Telegraph*).

Her music has been performed in over 41 countries and 156 cities throughout Europe, the United States and Asia. Her music has been widely broadcast in more than 17 countries (37 channels) and has been recorded and released on the Soundbrush, Elektramusic, Atoll, Dutton label and by ECM Records.

Her creative output ranges from works for solo instruments to full orchestra, as well as choral, ballet and electroacoustic music. Her works have been commissioned by the Fromm Music Foundation (Harvard University, USA), the Tongyoung International Music Festival (Korea), the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra (Korea), the Keumho Asiana Cultural Foundation (Korea), the Foundation for Universal Sacred Music (USA), the International Isang Yun Music Society (Germany) and the MATA Festival (USA).

She has won the Franz Josef Reini-Stiftung (1st Prize), the Magistralia (1st Prize), the Seoul Spring Festival Composition Competition (1st Prize), the Jesus Villa-Rojo (1st Prize), the European Competition of the State Conservatory of Thessaloniki (1st Prize), the Temple Music Composition Prize (1st Prize), the Crwth Competition (1st Prize), the international competition for original ballet music at the ISCM World Music Days–Slovenia (1st Prize), the Montserrat International Camera Music Composition Competition (1st Prize), the Theodore Front Prize (IAWM) and the Yoshiro Irino Memorial Prize (ACL).

Sungji Hong studied composition in Seoul before moving to England where she completed her Master in Music at the Royal Academy of Music in London and a PhD in composition with Nicola LeFanu at the University of York in the UK.

About Lorelei Ensemble

Lorelei Ensemble advances the women's vocal ensemble through passionate, engaging artistry and creative collaboration. Committed to a fresh and culturally relevant repertoire, Lorelei reimagines and cultivates bold compositional voices in performances that transform audience perspectives and expectations.

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