

L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato

Pastoral ode after poems by John Milton (1608-1674), rearranged by Charles Jennens (1700-1773)

PART THE FIRST

L'Allegro

Accompagnato

Hence, loathèd Melancholy,
Of Cerberus, and blackest midnight born
In Stygian Cave forlorn
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and
sights unholy
Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding Darkness spreads her
jealous wings
And the night-Raven sings;
There under Ebon shades, and
low-brow'd rocks,
As ragged as thy Locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert, ever dwell.

Il Penseroso

Accompagnato

Hence, vain deluding Joys,
Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the Sun Beams,
Or likest hov'ring dreams
The fickle Pensioners of Morpheus' train.

L'Allegro

Air

Come, thou Goddess fair and free,
In heav'n yclept Euphrosyne;
And by men heart-easing Mirth,
Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,
With two sister-Graces more,
To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore.

Il Penseroso

Air

Come rather, Goddess, sage and holy;
Hail, divinest Melancholy,
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight;
Thee bright-hair'd Vesta long of yore,
To solitary Saturn bore.

L'Allegro

Air

Haste thee nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful Jollity,
Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods, and becks, and wreathèd smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport, that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter, holding both his sides.

Chorus

Haste thee nymph, and bring with thee
Jest, and youthful Jollity;
Sport, that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter, holding both his sides.

L'Allegro

Air

Come, and trip it as you go,
On the light fantastic toe.

Chorus

Come, and trip it as you go,
On the light fantastic toe.

Il Penseroso

Accompagnato

Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast and demure;
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestic train.

Arioso

Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait;
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes.

Accompagnato

There held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad leaden downward cast
Thou fix them on the earth as fast.

Arioso

And join with thee calm Peace and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring
Round about Jove's altar sing.

Chorus

Join with thee calm Peace and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet.

L'Allegro

Recitative

Hence, loathèd Melancholy,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell
But hast thee, Mirth, and bring with thee
The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty.
And if I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew.

Air

Mirth, admit me of thy crew
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unprovèd pleasures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And singing startle the dull night;
Then to come in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good morrow.
Mirth, admit me of thy crew.

Il Penseroso

Accompagnato

First, and chief, on golden wing,
The cherub Contemplation bring;
And the mute Silence hist along,
'Less Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest, saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night.

Air

Sweet bird, that shun'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee, chantress, oft the woods among,
I woo to hear thy evensong.
Or, missing thee, I walk unseen,
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wand'ring moon
Riding near her highest noon.
Sweet bird...

L'Allegro

Recitative

If I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew!

Air

Mirth, admit me of thy crew!
To listen how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumb'ring morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill.

Il Penseroso

Air

Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
Hear the far-off Curfew sound,
Over some wide-water'd shore,
Swinging slow, with sullen roar;
Of, if the air will not permit,
Some still removèd place will fit,
Where the glowing embers, through the room,
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom.

Air

Far from all resort of Mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bellman's drowsy charm,
To bless the doors from nightly harm.

L'Allegro

Recitative

If I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew!

Air

Let me wander, not unseen
By the hedgerow elms, on hillocks green:
There the ploughman, near at hand,
Whistles over the furrow'd land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.

Il Moderato

Air

Each action will derive new grace
From order, measure, time and place;

Till Life the goodly structure rise
In due proportion to the skies.

L'Allegro

Accompagnato

Mountains, on whose barren breast
The lab'ring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide
Tow'rs and battlements it sees,
Bosm'd high in tufted trees.

Air

Or let the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebeck sound
To many a youth, and many a maid,
Dancing in the checquer'd shade.

Chorus

And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holyday,
Till the livelong daylight fail,
Thus past the day, to bed they creep,
By whisp'ring winds soon lull'd asleep.

PART THE SECOND

Il Penseroso

Accompagnato

Hence, vain deluding Joys,
The brood of Folly without Father bred!
How little you bested,
Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys!
Oh! Let my lamp, at midnight hour,
Be seen in some high lonely tow'r,
Where I may oft out-watch the Bear
With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato to unfold
What worlds, or what vast regions hold
Th'immortal mind that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook.

Air

Sometimes let gorgeous Tragedy
In sceptred pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine;
Or what, though rare, of later age
Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.

Recitative

Thus, Night oft sees me in thy pale career,
Till unwelcome Morn appear.

L'Allegro

Solo

Populous cities please me then,
And the busy hum of men.

Chorus

Populous cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men.
Where throngs of knights and barons Bold,
In weeds of peace high triumphs hold;
With stores of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit, or arms, while both contend
To win her grace, whom all commend.
Populous cities...

Air

There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask, and antique pageantry;
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.

Il Penseroso

Accompagnato

Me, when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me goddess bring
To archèd walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown that Sylvan loves;
There, in close covert, by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look.

Air

Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honey'd thigh,
Which at her flow'ry work doth sing,

And the waters murmuring,
With such consorts as they keep
Entice the dewy-feather'd sleep;
And let some strange mysterious dream
Wave at his wings in airy stream
Of lively portraiture display'd,
Softly on my eyelids laid.
Then as I wake, sweet music breathe,
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some spirit to mortals good,
Or th'unseen genius of the wood.

L'Allegro

Air

I'll to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learned sock be on;
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.

Air

And ever against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs;
Sooth me with immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce

In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linkèd sweetness long drawn out;
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony.

II Moderato

Duet

As steals the morn upon the night,
And melts the shades away:
So truth does Fancy's charm dissolve,
And rising reason puts to flight
The fumes that did the mind involve,
Restoring intellectual day.

II Penseroso

Recitative

But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloisters' pale,
And love the high embowed roof,
With antique pillars' massy proof,
And story'd windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light.

Chorus

There let the pealing organ blow
To the full voic'd choir below,
In service high and anthem clear!
And let their sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all Heav'n before mine eyes!

Air

May at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown, and mossy cell
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of ev'ry star that Heav'n doth shew,
And ev'ry herb that sips the dew;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.

Solo

These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

Chorus

These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And we with thee will choose to live.

L'Allegro

Air

Orpheus' self may heave his head,
From golden slumbers on a bed
Of heap'd Elysian flow'rs, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
His half-regain'd Eurydice.

Air

These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

Chorus

These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee we mean to live.