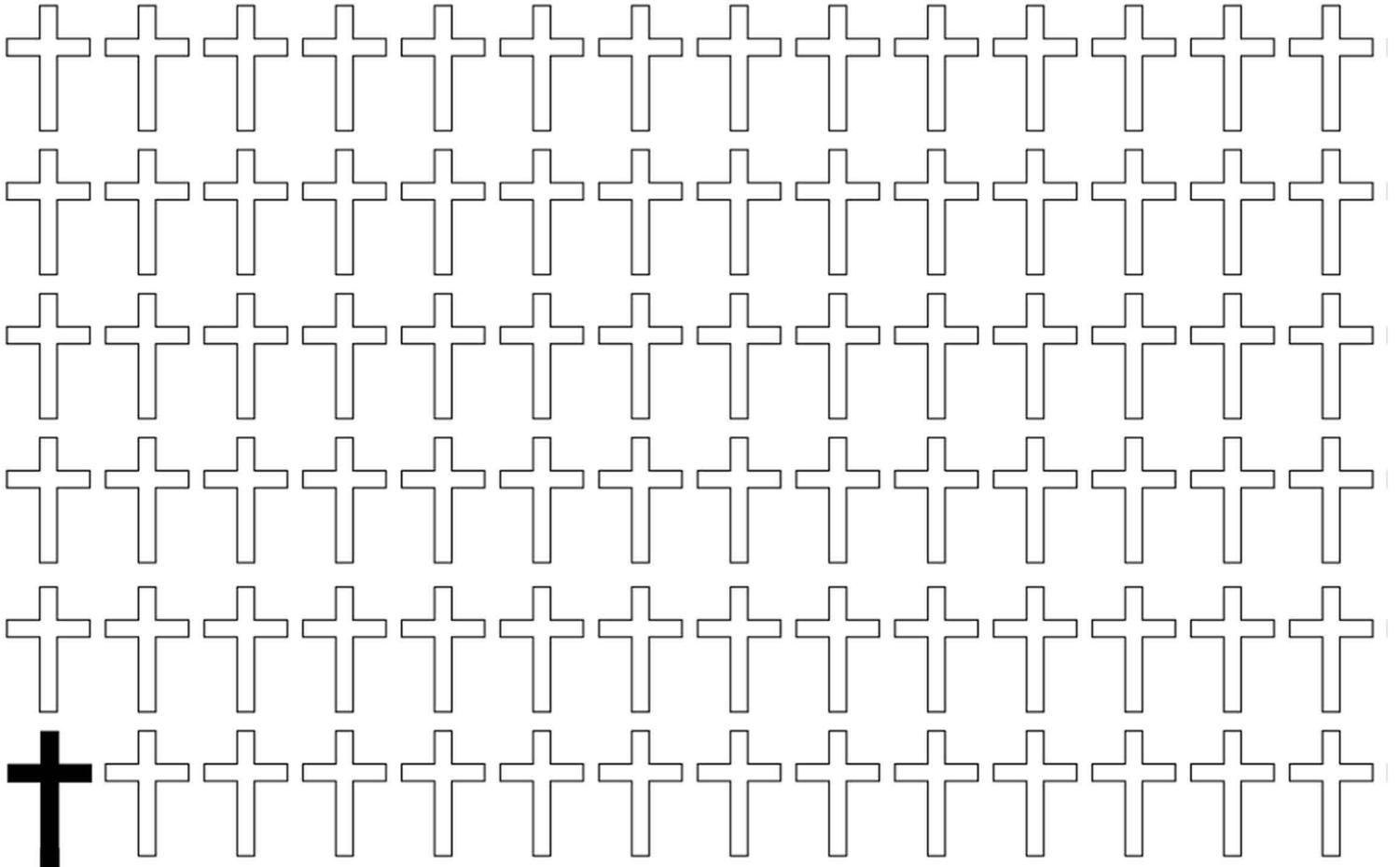




DIS DIE EEN



Uitsending op RSG Goeie Vrydag, 2 April om 14:05



KRUIS VAN LIEFDE

'n Paasatorium gekomponeer deur Franco Prinsloo

25 MAART 2021 | 19:00

MI ATELJEE, SAUK RADIOPARK, AUCKLAND PARK, JOHANNESBURG

Teks deur **Hans du Plessis & Bernard Odendaal** · Uitgevoer deur **VOX CHAMBER CHOIR**
Orrel: **Isabelle van Rensburg** | Marimba & Slagwerk: **Magdalena de Vries** | Buisklokke & Slagwerk: **Wian Joubert**
Keteltromme & Slagwerk: **Deo du Plessis** | Bykomende slagwerk: **Herman Swanepoel** | Trompet: **Richard Kingon**

Moontlik gemaak deur die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, die Afrikaanse Taal- en Kultuurvereniging en die ATKV-Skryfskool van die Noordwes-Universiteit

In samewerking met RSG en die SAUK Musiekbiblioteek



'n Nuwe Afrikaanse Paasoratorium

*Wêreldpremière
deur Vox Chamber Choir*

"*Kruis van liefde*" is 'n splinternuwe Afrikaanse Paasoratorium gekomponeer deur die Suid-Afrikaanse komponis, Franco Prinsloo.

Nuwe, roerende verse uit die pen van bekroonde digters Hans du Plessis en Bernard Odendaal, vertel die verhaal van Jesus se kruisiging. Gehoorlede word op 'n musikale pelgrimstog geneem deur die Vox Chamber Choir aan wie die werk ook opgedra is.

Franco Prinsloo se meesleurende toonsetting maak gebruik van 'n klein ensemble bestaande uit, onder andere, orrel (Isabelle van Rensburg), marimba (Magdalena de Vries), keteltromme en buisklokke (Deo du Plessis) en bykomende slagwerk (Wian Joubert en Herman Swanepoel).

Kom beleef opnuut die Paasverhaal in Afrikaans en wees getuie van die sinergie tussen die digkuns en musiek wat hierdie werk so onvergeetlik maak.

"*Kruis van liefde*" is moontlik gemaak deur die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns en word ook ruim ondersteun deur die ATKV en die ATKV-skryfskool van die Noordwes Universiteit, Potchefstroom Kampus. Ons bedank ook graag ons wynborg, Rietvallei Wynlandgoed, vir hul ruim skenking.

Die debuutvertoning was oorspronklik beplan vir Maart 2020, maar is weens die internasionale COVID-19 pandemie in die wiele gery. Dit is vir Vox Chamber Choir 'n groot voorreg om in samewerking met RSG en die SAUK Musiekbiblioteek hierdie werk uit te kan voer en op te neem vir uitsending.

"*Kruis van liefde*" is a brand new Easter Oratorio in Afrikaans, composed by the South African composer Franco Prinsloo. The story of the crucifixion of Jesus is told using new, moving poetry by esteemed poets Hans du Plessis and Bernard Odendaal. The audience will be taken on a musical pilgrimage by the Vox Chamber Choir, to whom the work has been dedicated.

Franco Prinsloo's composition is a compelling setting of the rich poetry. A small ensemble accompanies the choir. This ensemble consists of, amongst others, organ (Isabelle van Rensburg), marimba (Magdalena de Vries), timpani and percussion (Deo du Plessis) and additional percussion (Wian Joubert and Herman Swanepoel).

Experience the tale of the Passiontide in Afrikaans and bear witness to the synergy between poetry and music that makes this work so unforgettable.

"*Kruis van liefde*" has been made possible by the Suid Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns ("South African Academy for Science and Art") and is also generously supported by the ATKV and the ATKV School of Creative Writing at North-West University, Potchefstroom campus. We would also like to thank our wine sponsor, Rietvallei Wine Estate, for their generous donation.

The debut performance was planned for March 2020, but due to the international COVID-19 pandemic it had to be cancelled. Vox Chamber Choir considers it an immense privilege to be able to perform and record this work for broadcast in collaboration with RSG and the SABC Music Library.

*World premiere
by Vox Chamber Choir*

New Easter Oratorio in Afrikaans

KRUIS VAN LIEFDE

'n Paasatorium vir Koor, Orrel en Slagwerk

Komponis:

*FRANCO PRINSLOO (1987 -)
2019 - 12 Februarie 2020*

Teks geneem uit:

*Kruis van Liefde
deur Hans du Plessis & Bernard
Odendaal*

I. Kom laat ons sing!

Kom laat ons sing, kom laat ons sing
oor die Kruis wat liefde bring!
Kom laat ons die liefde vier,
God het ons Sy Seun gestuur.

Kom laat ons juigend buig
en van Sy tussenkoms getuig.
Kom verheerlik Hom,
Hy het die dood oorkom.

Kom prys Sy Naam:
die Heer het opgestaan!
Kom, kom besing Sy eer,
Hy's deurgaans in beheer!

Kom laat ons Sy liefde vier,
God het ons Sy Seun gestuur.
Kom laat ons sing, kom laat ons sing
oor die Kruis wat Liefde bring!

II. Resitatief: Daarop sê Pilatus

Daarop sê Pilatus aan die leierpriesters
en die skare: *"Ek vind geen skuld in
hierdie mens nie."*

III. Kruisig Hom!

Weg, Pilatus, weg met Hom!
Al verskoon jy hom keer op keer,
eis ons 'n kruis vir grootmeneer!
Weg, Pilatus, weg met Hom!
Laat Barabbas vir ons vry,
sodat die kamma koningjood
die doodstraf kry!
Kruisig Hom!
Kruisig Hom!

IV. Resitatief: Toe lewer Pilatus Hom aan hulle uit

Toe lewer Pilatus hom aan hulle uit om
gekruisig te word. En hulle het Hom
weggelei.

V. Sal sy graf ooit oop kan gaan?

Sal sy graf ooit oop kan gaan,
en ons uit sonde op laat staan?

Hy was so mensalleen
toe ons Hom vang
en op 'n skedelbeen
aan vernedering hang.
Die teerling het geval,
en ons het self besluit
ons loot Sy lewe uit.

Sal sy graf ooit oop kan gaan,
en ons uit sonde op laat staan?

VI. Resitatief: 'n Groot menigte

'n Groot menigte van die volk het agter
Jesus aan geloop, ook vroue wat oor
Hom getreur en gehuil het.

VII. Vroue van Jerusalem

Vroue van Jerusalem,
moenie oor My treur nie,
huil liewer oor julleself
en oor die wat nog moet kom.

Ek sien al die dae
waarvan julle sal sê:

Salig die wat onvrugbaar is,
vrolik die wat geen kind kan dra,
geseënd is die wat nooit kan baar.

Vroue van Jerusalem,
moenie oor My treur nie,
huil liewer oor julleself
en oor die wat nog moet kom.

Vir die berge sal hul vra:
"Kom, kom val op ons."
As dit so met die groenhout gaan,
hoe sal die ouhout voortbestaan?

VIII. Resitatief: Die Volksleiers het aangehou om smalend te sê

Die volksleiers het aangehou om
smalend te sê: *"Ander het hy gered, laat
hy homself red as hy die Christus van
God is."*

IX. Gee hom suur asyn

Gee hom suur asyn
as hy vra na water of na wyn.

Kom laat ons nadergaan,
kom ons swerm saam,
laat ons die ketter hoon
en hom met suur asyn beloon.

X. Red jousef!

Hy wil in sy valse roem
homself die koning noem.
As hy dan die koning is,
laat hy red wat verlore is.

Red jousef!

XI. Resitatief: Saam met Jesus is ook twee ander misdadigers weggelei

Saam met Jesus is ook twee ander
misdadigers weggelei om gekruisig te
word. Een van die misdadigers wat daar
gehang het, het Hom gelaster deur te
sê: *"Is jy dan nie die Christus nie? Red
jousef en ons ook!"*

XII. Vader, vergewe hulle

Vader, vergewe hulle
want hulle weet nie
wat hulle doen nie.

Vader, vergewe hulle
wat tussen krip en Kruis
U heilige koms verguis.

Vader, vergewe hulle
want hulle weet nie
wat hulle doen nie.

Vader, vergewe hulle
wat die Kruis van asem
met doodse nood verwar.

Vader, vergewe hulle
want hulle weet nie
wat hulle doen nie.

Vader, vergewe hulle,

dis die sonde wat spykers
deur my sagte hande slaan.

Vader, vergewe hulle
want hulle weet nie
wat hulle doen nie.

XIII. Resitatief: Een van die misdadigers wat daar gehang het

Een van die misdadigers wat daar gehang het, het Hom gelaster deur te sê: "*Red Jousef!*" Maar die ander misdadiger wat daar gehang het, het hom bestraf en vir Jesus gesê:

XIV. Dink aan my

Dink aan my, Here, wanneer U in U koningryk kom.

En Jesus antwoord hom:
"*Voorwaar Ek sê vir jou,
vandag sal jy saam met My
in die paradys wees.*"

XV. Resitatief: By die Kruis van Jesus

By die Kruis van Jesus het Sy moeder en Sy moeder se suster, Maria, vrou van Klopas, en ook Maria Magdalena gestaan.

XVI. Vrou, kyk, daar is u seun

Vrou, kyk, daar is u seun ...

Ag, kind wat ek nie mag verpleeg of troos nie,
jy dink aan my in die, jou
Godverlatenheid.

Jou Kruis wat bloedig in die donker flonker,
'n doodmaakding waaruit daar, vreemd,
tog lewe spruit.

Kyk, daar is jou moeder ...

O, vriend wat ek nie kan bevry of troos nie,
jy dink aan my in die, jou
Godverlatenheid.

Jou Kruis wat bloedig in die donker flonker,
'n stommaakding wat nogtans van die liefde spreek.

XVII. Resitatief: Op die Negende Uur

Op die negende uur het Jesus in 'n harde stem uitgeroep:
"*Elo-i, Elo-i, lama sabagtani?*"

XVIII. My God, my God, waarom het U my gelos

My God, my God,
U het My alleen gelos!

My God, my God,
Ek smee U dag en nag.

My God, my God,
U hoor My nie.

My God, my God,
Ek soek na U.

My God, my God,
bly hier by My!

My God, my God,
die dood lê op loer.

My God, my God,
die hel omsingel My.

My God, my God,
die wolwe blaf!

My God, my God,
waarom het U My gelos?

XIX. Resitatief: Ek is dors

Hierna het Jesus, omdat Hy geweet het,
alles is volbring, sodat die Skrif vervul
kon word, gesê: *“Ek is dors.”*

XX. Dit is volbring

Skrifvervulling hierdie dors.
Boetedoen, voldoeningsuur.
Die soldate, bang en nors,
hoor my hyg: *“Ek is dors.”*

Pynverligting uit die suur.
Skrifvervulling uit die dors.

Dit is volbring!

XXI. Kom laat ons sing: Hy het die sonde oorwin

Kom laat ons sing,
kom laat ons sing:
Hy het die sonde oorwin.

Kom laat ons sing,
kom laat ons sing:
Dit is volbring!
Hy het die dood oorwin.

Kom laat ons sing:
Dit is volbring!
Kom verheerlik Hom.
Hy het die dood oorkom.

Kom prys Sy naam,
die Heer het opgestaan.

Kom, kom besing Sy eer,
Hy's deurgaans in beheer.
Kom laat ons sing,
kom laat ons sing:
Dit is volbring!

Kom laat ons sing
oor die kruis wat liefde bring.

XXII: Resitatief: Twaalfuur

Dit was al omtrent twaalfuur, toe kom
daar duisternis oor die hele land. Die
voorhangsel van die tempel het
middeldeer geskeur.

XXIII. Hy hang voor my

“Hierdie man was werklik onskuldig.”

Hy hang voor my
Het net gevra: vergeef hul, God
toe ek hom vas laat kap, laat spot

Hy hang voor my
met “Koning van die Jode”-klag
gedoringkroon; die lam geslag

Hy hang voor my
roep God se naam
en donker wolke pak nou saam
'n duisternis pak dikker aan

Hy hang voor my
hy's van God verlaat
(net ek is hier om mee te praat)

Hy hang voor my
verpletter, arms oopgevlak
'n blote karkas – rou soldatewerk

Hy hang voor my
kyk my aan deur bloed
die dank spring op in my gemoed

Ek staan voor Hóm,
Die Seun van God!

Vader, in U hande gee Ek my gees oor.

XXIV. Vader, my gees gee Ek in U hande oor

Vader, my gees gee Ek in U hande oor!

Vader, die dood het sy angel verloor!
U het dag en nag omgekeer,
klippe middel deur geskeur,
en deur 'n flentergordyn,
het die skyn verdwyn.

Vader, my gees gee Ek in U hande oor!

Die mens het Liefde gevind
in vlees en bloed van U Kind
om vlerke van die kruis
wapper 'n witter duif.

Vader, my gees gee Ek in U hande oor!

XXV. Paasbelydenis – Finale

U het die sonde vervreem,
U het ons skuld weggeneem
U het uit die graf
die dood bestraf.

Laat ons U lof besing
U het redding gebring.
Ons juig oor U majesteit!
Ons wil U prys in ewigheid!

U het weer opgestaan
Ons vooruit gegaan

Juig oor U majesteit!
Ons wil U prys in ewigheid, O God,
Jubel tot U eer.

U dood aan die kruis
gee ons lewe in U vaderhuis.

Amen.



Kruis van Liefde - an analysis

By Christopher Vale

These notes and insights are taken from a discussion with composer Franco Prinsloo.

Kruis van Liefde is a large work for choir, organ, and percussion by Franco Prinsloo. Based on texts by Hans du Plessis and Bernard Odendaal, this oratorio tells the story of the Passion of Jesus Christ through inspired new Afrikaans verse. Other adaptations of this text include a Passion play, but Prinsloo's work uses the text as originally conceived by Du Plessis and Odendaal, with minor concessions to musical interpretation.

Historically, an oratorio is a large work for orchestra, choir, and soloists. In this case, Prinsloo dispenses with the orchestra and soloists, making this work a very economically viable enterprise. The organ fulfils the function of the string, woodwind, and brass sections, while the percussion section is given an extensive showcase for its often-underutilised range. The choir fulfils its usual function, which is to provide commentary on the story as traditionally told by soloists, but in Prinsloo's reimagining of this traditional form, single choral voice parts fill in the solo parts to transform the choir into a more dimensional storytelling device. Recitatives, which are usually performed by solo voices, are given to different unison sections of the choir to magnify the nuances of the language, occasionally using harmony to better illustrate the story.

In terms of style, Prinsloo's point of departure is Medieval chant. Cantus firmus and pedal point are utilised extensively, as well as many instances of open fifth harmonies and parallel fifths. The melodies are constructed from modal scales and this was done specifically to evoke a sense of timeless universality, and to avoid the conventional chorale harmonies used in traditional church music.

The piece largely utilises modal systems which bear resemblances to mirror tonalities to build to several climactic, dissonant chords. This is to underline the brutal aspects of the story, starkly contrasting with the redemptive aspects of the story depicted in the more major tonalities used later in the work. The work begins in the key of D minor, which traditionally symbolises death and destruction, and ends in the key of D major, which is conversely the key of triumph and resurrection.

There is also extensive use of symbolic numbers, which can be seen in the number of bars per movement, the number of voices in a chord, or the number of notes in specific melismatic themes. One of the most important themes used in the work is a seven-note melismatic theme on the word "God", the number seven being strongly associated with God. This theme is later used when the word "Hom" (Him) is sung, in reference to Jesus, and later still, the melisma in octaves is used to

accompany Jesus's cry to God, as He cries "Elo-i, Elo-i, lama sabagtani?" (My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?).

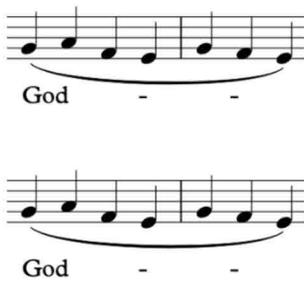


Fig. 1 - Melisma on the word "God"

These themes and motives are used continuously throughout the work in several dynamic ways. These applications can be: to establish a theme connected to a specific idea, person, or event; to refer to a past event or foreshadow a future event; to convey irony by juxtaposing opposing themes.

Additionally, several well-known musical signifiers are used to give a sense of place and intent, for example, a snare drum is used to evoke military presence. Specifically, the use of hard mallets on the marimba is used to evoke the macabre, similarly accomplished with a xylophone in works like Saint-Saens's *Danse Macabre*, evoking the rattling of bones, hell, death, and more specifically, Golgotha, the place of the skull.

I. Kom laat ons sing

The first movement establishes the use of the upward 5th interval and chant with the text "Kom laat ons sing" (come, let us sing). It invites the audience into the realm of the work. One of the most important themes used in the work is a seven-note melismatic theme on the word "God", the number seven being strongly associated with God.



Fig. 2 - Opening chant theme

II. Resitatief: Daarop sê Pilatus

Recitative, which is the singing of a prose-based text over several chord progressions to further a story, is used in this movement. The basses and tenors sing the narrator's part in unison, but as soon as Pilate speaks, they split into two-part harmony. This style of recitative is still used in some church settings to this day.

III. Kruisig Hom!

“Kruisig Hom!” (crucify Him) is the first time the crowd is voiced. Here the instrumentation becomes very aggressive, and we hear the first example of the marimba depicting the approach of death. The snare drum indicates the military presence. An alternating time signature of 4/4, 6/8, and 3/4 suggests a danse macabre. The choir alternates between A minor and A flat major chords alternately, but when the crowd unites in choosing Barabbas, this is in unison. What follows is an organ passage over which the choir ad. lib. yells “kruisig Hom!” This builds up to a tremendous dissonance, ending on an extended eight-part chord, again on the words “kruisig Hom!” After this climax, there is a calm segue into the next recitative.



Fig. 3 - Dissonant eight-part chord on the word “kruisig”

IV. Resitatief: Toe lewer Pilatus Hom aan hulle uit

The organ introduces this recitative with a descending bass line, as in the passacaglia, which is characterised by a descending five-note bass line. The opening chant theme is then repeated in the organ accompaniment. The female voices join the male voices in recitativo for the first time, echoing the musical material in canon. Specific musical emphasis is placed on the word “hulle”, echoing throughout the work.

V. Sal Sy graf ooit oop kan gaan?

Once again, the organ leads us into this movement, suspending the major third of the previous movement, directly modulating into C major. The choir enters one voice part at a time, as in a canon, or fugue-like manner. Typographically, this creates the visual of the grave opening. Each voice part enters in a quiet, prayer-like manner, building to a large climax. Hard mallets are used in the marimba to signify Golgotha, the themes of which are presented in a tremolo figure, evoking the signifiers of hell and death, which echo the melodies in the choir. Tubular bell tolls indicate the fate that awaits Jesus.

The image shows a musical score for the opening of the grave. It includes vocal parts for Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B), along with piano accompaniment for Organ and Pedal. The lyrics are in Afrikaans: "Sal sy graf ooit oop kan gaan?" and "en ons... uit son - de op laet staan". The score is written in a key signature of one flat and a common time signature.

Fig. 4 - The typographic setting depicting the opening of the grave

VI. Resitatief: 'n Groot Menigte

A new melodic theme is introduced in the organ, echoing the already prevalent upward fifth interval that characterises the work as whole. The female voices enter, stating the new theme once again, beginning with the altos, followed by the sopranos in canon. They echo one another as in a processional, symbolising the people that followed Jesus's progress to Golgotha. The women who mourned him are portrayed using a sigh motif on the word "huil" (crying), depicting their sobs.

The image shows a musical score snippet for the word "huil". It features two vocal parts: Soprano (S) and Alto (A). The lyrics are "treur en ge - huil... het" for the Soprano and "huil... het" for the Alto. The music is written in a key signature of one flat and a common time signature.

Fig. 5 - Sigh motif on the word "huil"

VII. Vroue van Jerusalem

Jesus, voiced by the male choir, addresses the women, telling them not to weep for him. The female voices reply with the same sigh motif used in the previous recitative, building to a great climax in chorale form, in which the words of Jesus are sung by the entire choir to confirm His message to the weeping women. The transition out of this piece is played by the marimba, which plays a repeated note in a metronomic fashion, indicating the urgency of the moment. The section ends with typical modal chant in the male voices, whereafter the organ closes this section with the same melodic theme present at the opening of the movement.

VIII. Resitatief: Die Volksleiers het aangehou om smalend te sê

Short, sharp cell motifs in the organ's upper register indicate time urgency, underscored by long pedal points and suspensions. The male voices depict the Jewish elders that mock him derisively for claiming to be the king of the Jews. The pedal point in the organ builds along with marimba's increasingly insistent stabs. The left hand of the organ drives the momentum of the section in a repeated sextuplet pattern, echoed in the timpani, increasing the drama. The female voices join in three-part harmony to echo the male voices.

The musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is for the Marimba (Mar.), showing a repeated sextuplet pattern of eighth notes. The middle staff is for the Soprano (S.), and the bottom staff is for the Alto (A.). Both vocal staves are in mensural notation and include the lyrics "An - der het hy ge - red". Above the vocal staves, the tempo marking "mesa di voce" is indicated.

Fig. 6 - Insistent sextuplet "stabs" on marimba

IX. Gee Hom suur asyn

This movement causes an abrupt shift in tempo and mood. A pedal point in held open fifths sustains the tension. The upward moving perfect fifth motif in the theme reinforces the thematic material with the words "Gee Hom suur asyn", followed by a distinctly Phrygian descending melody. A snare drum roll helps to build tension as the movement builds to a climatic 6/8 section which predicts the spear stabbing into Jesus's side. The sudden rhythmic changes and time signature changes evoke a danse macabre, directly leading into the next movement.

X. Red jousef!

The dynamic, rhythmical, and fiery character of the third movement is revisited. The choir, depicting the crowd, relentlessly mocks Jesus. As before, the organ interlude is punctuated by ad libitum laughter and exhortations by the crowd for Jesus to save Himself if He is truly the King of the Jews. This is brought to a climax by the choir singing a dissonant chord in eight-part harmony on the words "red jousef".

XI. Resistatief: Saam met Jesus is ook twee ander misdadigers weggelei

The tension of the previous movement is resolved in the organ by reinstating the passacaglia-like descending bass line as stated in the fourth movement. The tenors enter in a very high tessitura, describing one of the criminals being crucified alongside Jesus. A high vocal line depicts the painful circumstances of the characters. The criminal, speaking in the bass voices, ridicules Jesus: "Is jy dan nie die Christus nie?" (Are you not the Christ?) The original chant theme recurs in the organ.

XII. Vader vergewe hulle

This movement begins very meditatively with a slow four-note chord progression in the left hand and pedals of the organ, with soft, staccato repeated notes in the right hand. This expresses the trembling, stammering speech of Jesus. Jesus speaks through the male voices in a soft, legato, unison, contrasting directly with the organ accompaniment. The female voices enter by echoing the words of Jesus. Each additional voice adds a new texture, starting with the baritones and staggering each new line of text, drawing attention to each voice part in turn. This meditative prayer invokes wave after wave of textual layering. The whole choir ends in unison, affirming the text “Vader vergewe hulle, want hulle weet nie wat hulle doen nie” (Father forgive them, for they know not what they do).



The musical score for the organ accompaniment in movement XII is presented in three systems. The first system features a treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a common time signature. It begins with a box containing the letter 'Q'. The right hand plays a series of staccato chords, while the left hand plays a slow, four-note chord progression. The dynamic marking is *p* and the tempo is *meditative*. The second system continues the left hand's chord progression. The third system shows the pedals playing a simple, slow-moving line of notes, also marked *p*.

Fig. 7 - Organ accompaniment expressing the trembling, stammering speech of Jesus

XIII. Resitatief: Een van die misdadigers wat daar gehang het

This movement contrasts with previous movements though anxious motivic movement, with a large focus on the organ as a solo instrument. A toccata-like accompaniment propels the dramatic movement of the story forward. The choir enters in unison, and the same seven-note melismatic phrase used for the word “God” in a previous movement is used on the word “Hom”, referring to Jesus. An abrupt interruption occurs when the criminal derides Jesus with the words “red jouself” in a forceful eight-part chord, with a dissonance on “-self”.



The musical score for the organ accompaniment in movement XIII is shown in two systems. The first system features a treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a common time signature. The right hand plays a complex, toccata-like texture with rapid sixteenth-note passages and chords. The left hand plays a simple, slow-moving line of notes. The second system continues the right hand's complex texture, while the left hand plays a simple, slow-moving line of notes.

Fig. 8 - Toccata-like accompaniment in the organ

XIV. Dink aan my

For the first time in this work, the choir features a capella, weaving the words into a soft pleading prayer. The momentum changes when Jesus answers, with a modulation into an established major tonality, and when the criminal speaks with a solemn, soft pleading, the tonality reverts to minor. Long, sustained notes in the soprano, sigh motives in the choir, and a resolution to a major key, all underline the fact that the criminal has been forgiven.



Fig. 9 - Choir in a capella

XV. Resitatief: By die Kruis van Jesus

The organ re-enters with a long pedal point. The male voices chant in unison, introducing three characters: Mary, mother of Jesus; Mary, wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene transforming into the major.

XVI. Vrou, kyk, daar is u seun

This movement is a dialogue between the three Marys portrayed by the female voice parts. The organ accompaniment is reminiscent of that in XII. Vader vergewe hulle. Mary, wife of Clopas says, "vrou, kyk, daar is u seun", to which Mary mother of Jesus responds by expressing her distress at not being able to help her child. Mary Magdalene, in turn, expresses her anguish at not being able to help her friend. The dialogue is interwoven and repeated, creating a meditative prayer as in movement XII. A snare drum illustrates the looming military presence.

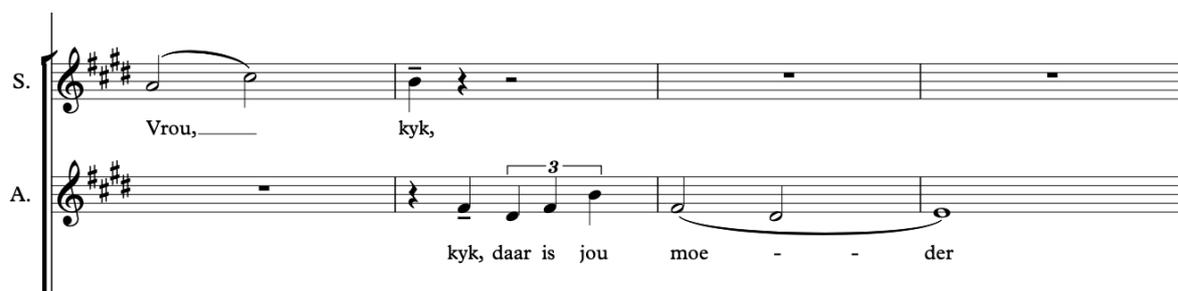


Fig. 10 - Dialogue between the Marys

XVII. Resitatief: Op die negende uur

Here, as sudden, dramatic shift occurs. It is the ninth hour. The male voices enter forte, depicting Jesus crying out to God in a loud voice. Bass drum and gong crashes punctuate this narrative, conveying the urgency of the moment. The male voices, in a very high tessitura, loudly sing the words "Elo-i, Elo-i, lama sabagtani?" (My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?). This is expressed in an ascending triad, as if trying to reach God. The female voices, in octaves, repeat the seven-note "God" melisma in a repeated vocalisation over this section. As soon as this is

complete, the organ echoes the triad motif softly, as though the words have echoed into eternity. The female voices re-enter with a section of the original chant theme, underlining the pain and anguish of the moment, while the timpani play an urgent rhythmic pattern to underline the drama.



Fig. 11 – Male voices calling to God

XVIII. My God, my God, waarom het U my gelos

The marimba reintroduces the musical landscape of movement VIII with a repeated note, symbolising time's relentless pace. Jesus, in the male voice parts, calls out to God once again, echoing material from movement VIII. The male voices enter on the words "U hoor My, Ek soek na U", octaves apart, with an upward moving vocal line, as if calling out to God. The next section is heralded by an abrupt interruption in momentum and movement. A pedal point in the organ and a long, held snare roll build the tension, with the male voices singing the same theme as in the movement IX. Gee hom suur asyn, echoing the mockery of the crowd. Suddenly, a rhythmic 6/8 dance, like in movements IV and X, signifies the encroaching presence of hell and death with the marimba's tremolo, emphasizing the words "die hel omsingel my" (hell encircles me). This dance builds as the organ and timpani echo one another in a dance, the macabre theme building continuously, before it suddenly disappears, leaving only a pedal point in the organ. The male voices sing the last phrases in chant to indicate that Jesus is too tired to continue much longer.

XIX. Resitatief: Ek is dors

Beginning softly, but tensely, the organ plays a five-note cluster in the high register, representing life being drawn out of Jesus. Below this, the original chant of "Kom laat on sing" can be heard in the organ accompaniment. A soft timpani roll keeps the tension as the female voices enter with an evolved version of the original chant theme. On the words "Ek is dors" (I am thirsty), the female voices begin in unison on the word "Ek" (signifying Jesus's divinity with a single note), split into a two-note cluster on "is", and further split into a three-note cluster on the word "dors". The intensity of dissonance in these notes signifies the extent of Jesus's thirst. To convey the irony of His thirst without hope of relief, the theme from movement IX. Gee hom suur asyn, is played in the left hand of the organ.

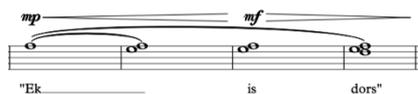


Fig. 12 - Female voices signify the extent of Jesus's thirst

XX. Dit is volbring

Starting on a long D minor pedal point, the organ reintroduces the theme from movement VII. Vroue van Jerusalem, illustrating that Jesus's last words convey the same pathos as those he used to comfort the women of Jerusalem. The sopranos enter in a high tessitura, as if from the heavens, symbolising the fulfilment of God's scriptural word. They chant in unison, splitting into a two-note cluster on the word "dors" each time it occurs. The alto, tenor, and bass parts enter, propelling the events forward. In the organ, the ascending triad as heard on "Elo-i, Elo-i" from movement XVII is echoed. A high descant soprano enters as the choir sings the words "Dit is volbring", starting pianissimo and building up via crescendo to a climactic ten-part harmonic chord.

XXI. Kom laat ons sing: Hy het die sonde oorwin

This movement opens with a single tubular bell toll, together with a high open fifth drone in the organ, symbolising the moment of fulfilment. The choir enters with the same chant as the first movement, with the words changed. Musical material from the opening is re-stated to emphasise the consummation of scripture. The melisma previously used on the word "God" is now used on the words "Dit is volbring".

XXII. Resitatief: Twaalfuur

The number twelve is used extensively in this movement. The movement consists of twelve bars, twelve tolls are played on the tubular bells, the choir's climactic moment ending on a twelve-part harmonic cluster chord. As the cluster chord is sung, the opening theme is re-stated in the organ part. Ending the movement, the sopranos ascend to a two-note harmony on the word "skeur" to signify the curtain ripping in two.



Fig. 13 - Sopranos two-note harmony signifying the curtain ripping in two

XXIII. Hy hang voor my

Here the time signature changes to 3/4 with a sigh motif in the bass line. One of the soldiers realises that Jesus was truly innocent, voiced by the tenors. In contrast to the sigh motif in the bass line, the tenors sing a sustained, elongated passage. The sopranos and altos enter with the same material as the tenors, creating a canon, the choir becoming the repentant soldier. The snare drum's presence throughout the movement shows the irony of the soldier's change of heart. The focus of the narrative shifts through the various voice parts, while the organ restates the thematic material from movement XII. Vader vergewe hulle, indicating that the soldier will be forgiven. A descant soprano line with the ascending triad as heard on "Elo-i, Elo-i" from movement XVII, is heard here. The baritones and altos reintroduce the motif from movement XII, which is developed at a much slower tempo with the words "Vader, in U hande gee ek my gees oor" (Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit). The sopranos and tenors echo one another in two parts, emphasizing the aforementioned phrase, bringing greater significance to the release of Jesus's soul, ending in unison on the words "gee ek my gees oor". A pedal point in the organ leads to the next movement.

XXIV. Vader, my gees gee Ek in U hande oor

The pedal point from the end of the previous movement continues. The sopranos and altos begin with a chant reminiscent of those used in the recitatives, but eventually split into a D major harmony. The organ echoes the recitative of Mary, wife of Clopas in movement XV, structurally binding together these two sections of major tonality, and thematically linking the love and comfort of Jesus's friends and family with the love and comfort of God through death. The basses and baritones sing a pedal point in open fifths, while the tenors softly sing a D major pentatonic scale ad libitum. This creates an aleatoric soundscape of meditative tone clusters, illustrating the movement of the soul from this world to the next. The organ subtly plays a small musical cell from movement XIV. Dink aan my, linking redemption for humanity with Jesus's sacrifice.

XXV. Paasbelydenis

The sopranos and tenors enter with the melody from XIV. Dink aan my, on the words "U het die sonde vervreem". The organ enters with the same accompanimental figure as in XII. Vader, vergewe hulle, but this time in a major key. This builds to a large climax as the tenors and basses join, evolving into a triumphant song of praise. A trumpet enters at the moment of triumph, emphasised by the triumphant key of D major. Musical material from movement VII. Vroue van Jerusalem, previously on the words "moenie oor My treur nie", is now transformed from mourning into praise. The sopranos and altos enter, joining the celebration, and building to a jubilant G major chord on the word "eer" (honour).

After a long moment of silent tention, to contrast this, the choir softly re-enters on the a capella phrase “U dood aan die kruis gee ons lewe” (Your death on the cross gives us life). This soft prayer brings the entire work to a close with an immensely intimate a capella “amen”, using the same musical materials as in movement XIV. Dink aan my (Think of me). This phrase underlines how this story has remained in our collective memory, and will continue to do so.

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Magdalena de Vries

Keteltromme en slagwerk | Timpani and percussion
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