

Who Were the Shepherds, Mary? / Trad Basque Christmas Carol - arr Berg  
SSA with Kbd & Opt Unpitched Bells

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# Who Were the Shepherds, Mary?

No. 2 from Three Basque Christmas Carols

Traditional Basque Christmas Carol

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Arranged by

**KEN BERG**

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SSA Voices with Keyboard and Optional Unpitched Bells

Ranges:



**CARL FISCHER®**

## Program Notes

The Basque Country is located in the Pyrenees Mountains on the western border between France and Spain. The Basque language is unrelated to any other language family and its origins are unknown. While Basques have been mostly Roman Catholic, there are a significant number of Sephardic Jews as well as Protestants, all of whom are devout and passionate about their faiths. Ignatius Loyola, founder of the “Society of Jesus,” was Basque.

The Basque people have spent centuries warding off invasion from both of their neighboring countries. To that end, they are a fiercely independent people, often reflecting their passion for freedom—and their willingness to fight for it—in their music and art. Basque folk music is profoundly influenced by their use of the tambourine and the *trikitixa* (a form of accordion) as well as the *txistu*, a form of recorder. Hence, Basque folk music is replete with complicated rhythms and strong diatonic melodies.

While their carols and folk songs are certainly beautiful and well crafted, the texts as well as the melodies are often passionate to the point of belligerence. These Basque Christmas carols should be sung with strong feeling and depth of character; an “in-your-face” attitude that demands the listener realize that you really mean what you say!

*Who Were the Shepherds, Mary?* calls for a sense of wonder and awe. Each line should be majestic and full. This carol asks unconventional questions about the events concerning this birth. Again, establish the tempo based on the articulatory capabilities of the singers. The melody is beautiful and lyric, but, as ever, pointless without clear and understandable words.

You may use any unpitched bells at your discretion. Wind Chimes have been used effectively in performances, for instance.

# Who Were the Shepherds, Mary?

for SSA Voices with Keyboard and Optional Unpitched Bells\*

## No. 2 from *Three Basque Christmas Carols*

Traditional Basque Christmas Carol

Arranged by Ken Berg

**Andante grazioso** ♩ = ca. 50 *mf* a haunting lullaby

Soprano 1

Soprano 2

Alto

Unpitched Bells (optional)

Keyboard

*Lo loo lo loo lo loo lo*  
*mf* a haunting lullaby

*Lo loo lo loo lo loo lo*  
*mf* a haunting lullaby

*Loo,*

*mp*

**Andante grazioso** ♩ = ca. 50

*mf*

*loo, lo loo lo loo lo loo lo loo.*

*loo, lo loo lo loo lo loo lo loo.*

*Loo,*

*Loo lo loo.*

*mp*

*mp*

*mf*

\*The part for Optional Unpitched Bells may be found on page 15.

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## Verse 1: Solo

*mp dolce e legato*

8

Who were the shep - herds, Ma - ry, has - ten - ing to a - dore

10

Je - sus, the ten - der ba - by no one had seen be - fore?

12

**Meno mosso**

Yes, they were sim - ple shep - herds, saw Him the first of all;

14

*a tempo*

Rough in a way, but gen - tle, lov ing and pi - ti - ful.

## Verse 2: Unison Choir

*mf poco legato appassionato*

17

Who were the kings, O Ma - ry? Tell us if that be true:

*mf poco legato appassionato*

Who were the kings, O Ma - ry? Tell us if that be true:

*mf poco legato appassionato*

Who were the kings, O Ma - ry? Tell us if that be true:

*mf*

20

Kings on a jour - ney, seek - ing Je - sus they strange - ly knew.

Kings on a jour - ney, seek - ing Je - sus they strange - ly knew.

Kings on a jour - ney, seek - ing Je - sus they strange - ly knew.

22

Kings from a dis - tant coun - try, ea - ger to see the Boy,

Kings from a dis - tant coun - try, ea - ger to see the Boy,

Kings from a dis - tant coun - try, ea - ger to see the Boy, \_\_\_\_\_

The musical score for measures 22-23 features three vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are in treble clef with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The piano accompaniment is in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The lyrics are: "Kings from a dis - tant coun - try, ea - ger to see the Boy," repeated for three voices. The third voice part ends with a long horizontal line, indicating a continuation of the phrase.

24

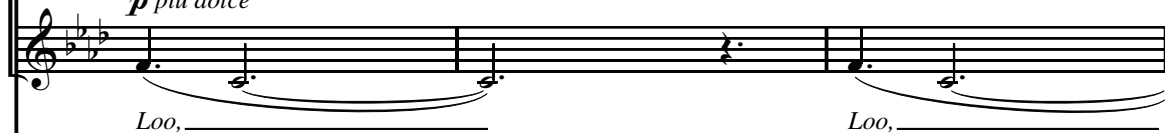
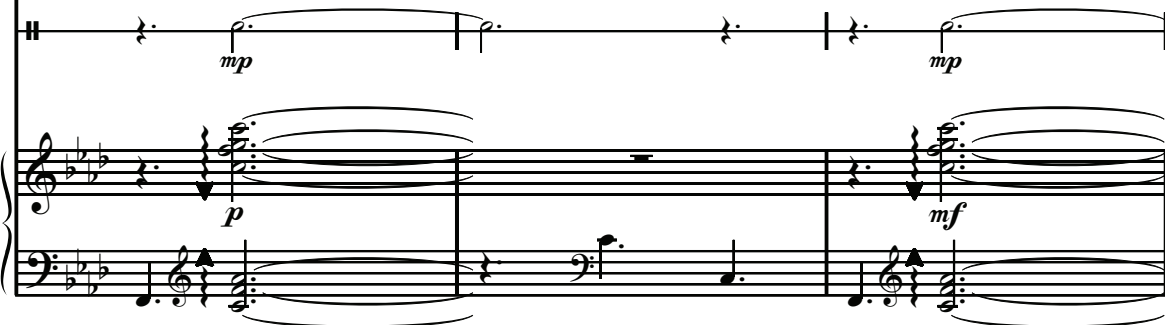
gifts of de - vo - tion brought Him fill - ing His heart with joy.

gifts of de - vo - tion brought Him fill - ing His heart with joy.

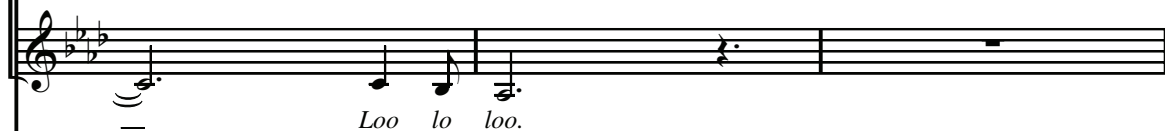
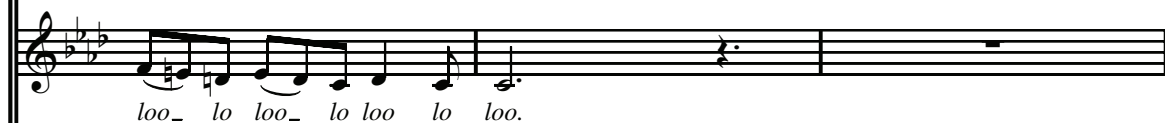
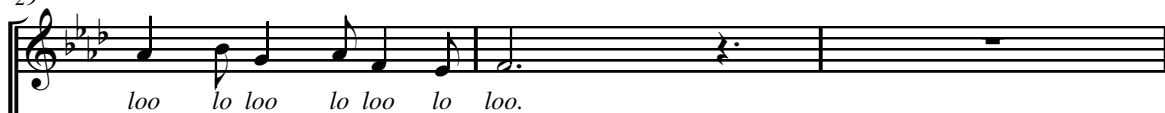
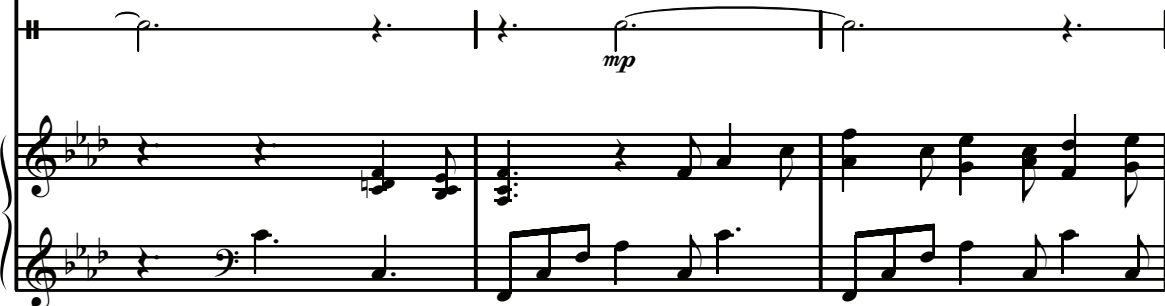
gifts of de - vo - tion brought Him fill - ing His heart\_ with joy.

The musical score for measures 24-25 continues with the same three vocal staves and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "gifts of de - vo - tion brought Him fill - ing His heart with joy." repeated for three voices. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support for the vocal lines. The third voice part has a small horizontal line under "heart" before the final "with joy."

26

*p più dolce**p più dolce**p più dolce**mp**mp*

29

*mp*

**Poco rubato** ♩ = 46

**Verse 3: Tutti**

32

Who are the folk that beg thee, crowd-ing a - round thy feet:

Who are the folk that beg thee, crowd-ing a - round thy feet:

Who are the folk that beg thee, crowd-ing a - round thy feet:

34

Af - ter our ex - ile show us Je - sus the Babe most sweet?

Af - ter our ex - ile show\_ us Je - sus the Babe most sweet?

Af - ter our ex - ile show\_ us Je - sus the Babe\_ most sweet?

36

Those are the mil - lions He ran - soms, born of a vir - gin's womb,

Those are the mil - lions He ran - soms, born of a vir - gin's womb,

Those are the mil - lions He ran - soms, born of a vir - gin's womb,



38

ly - ing a - live in a man - ger, Dead and di - vine in a tomb.\_\_\_\_\_

ly - ing a - live in a man - ger, Dead and di - vine in a tomb.\_\_\_\_\_

ly - ing a - live in a man - ger, Dead and di - vine in a tomb.\_\_\_\_\_

The musical score for measures 38-43 features three vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are in a soprano, alto, and tenor/bass range, all in a key with three flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor). The piano accompaniment consists of a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The lyrics are: "ly - ing a - live in a man - ger, Dead and di - vine in a tomb." The music is in a 4/4 time signature.

40

—

—

—

*mp* *mp*

*dolce espress.*

*ff*

The musical score for measures 40-45 continues with the same three vocal staves and piano accompaniment. Measures 40-42 show the vocal parts with rests, indicated by a horizontal line. Measures 43-45 show the vocal parts with notes. The piano accompaniment features a grand staff. The lyrics are: "—". The music is in a 4/4 time signature.

## Verse 4: Tutti

*f legato*

43

Who are the tribes and na - tions

Who are the tribes and na - tions

Who are the tribes and na - tions

*f legato*

45

clad in their robes and crown'd, Strik - ing their harps and sing - ing

clad in their robes and crown'd, Strik - ing their harps and sing - ing

clad in their robes and crown'd, Strik - ing their harps and sing - ing

47 *ff molto dolce e appassionato*

hymns of so sweet a sound? Those are the hosts un - num - ber'd

*ff molto dolce e appassionato*

hymns of so sweet a sound? Those are the hosts un - num - ber'd

*ff molto dolce e appassionato*

hymns of so sweet a sound? Those are the hosts un - num - ber'd

*ff*

49 **Meno mosso** **Tempo I**

pro-strate be - fore the throne, prais - ing to end - less a - ges

pro-strate be - fore the throne, — prais - ing to end - less a - ges

pro-strate be - fore the throne, — prais - ing to a - ges

*più ff*

51

Him who is Lord a - lone!\_\_\_\_\_

Him who is Lord a - lone!\_\_\_\_\_

Him who is Lord\_ a - lone!\_\_\_\_\_

*mp*

*più ff molto espress.*

53

Prais-ing to end - less a-

O\_\_\_\_\_

Prais-ing to end - less,

*mp*

55

- ges \_\_\_\_\_ Him who is Lord a-

prais-ing to end - less a - ges Him who is Lord a-

prais-ing to end - less a - ges Him who is Lord. \_\_\_\_\_

*mp*

57 *mp*

- lone! Lo loo lo loo lo loo lo loo, lo loo lo

- lone! Lo loo lo loo lo loo lo loo, lo loo lo

Loo, \_\_\_\_\_ Loo, \_\_\_\_\_

*mp*

*pp*

60

*pp a la niente*

loo lo loo lo loo, \_\_\_\_\_ lo loo. \_\_\_\_\_

*pp a la niente*

loo\_ lo loo\_ lo loo, \_\_\_\_\_ lo loo. \_\_\_\_\_

*pp a la niente*

— Loo, \_\_\_\_\_ lo \_\_\_\_\_ loo. \_\_\_\_\_

*mp*

*pp a la niente*

63

*mp*

for Rae, because he asked!

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*Arranged by Ken Berg*

Andante grazioso ♩. = ca. 50

The musical score for Unpitched Bells is written in 9/8 time. It consists of seven staves of music, each representing a line of the instrument. The notation includes various rests, notes, and dynamic markings. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked 'Andante grazioso' with a quarter note equal to approximately 50 beats per minute. The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 6, 18, 32, 44, 56, and 61 indicated at the start of their respective staves. The music features a variety of note values, including quarter notes, half notes, and full notes, as well as rests. Dynamic markings such as 'mp' (mezzo-piano) are used throughout. The score concludes with a double bar line at the end of the seventh staff.

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