

JUDITH SHATIN

unter soreles vigele

Mezzo-Soprano & Piano



Program Note

My setting of *Unter soreles vigele* (*Under Sarah's Cradle*) was commissioned by The YIVO Institute for Jewish Research as part of their Continuing Evolution program, combining Yiddish songs from the past with contemporary music that reimagines or creates instrumental responses to traditional folksongs. Of the four offered as springboards, I chose *unter soreles Vigele*. Not only was I drawn to the beautiful earlier settings, especially those by Lazare Saminsky and Stefan Wolpe, but to the dreamlike, elliptical images and mysterious, unresolved melodic motif at its core. The images center on the little white goat who stands under the cradle before going off to the market to sell raisins and almonds. Meanwhile, the narrator imagines the future groom studying Torah!

I was inspired to build on the unresolved, dreamy aspect of the melody with a floating whole-tone scale that lands on triadic harmonies only at key points. The music for the goat is lighthearted and grounded, while that for the groom reaches the melodic high point. The piano uses plucked and muted strings, creating a special sonic character for the original, unresolved motive. I also added a vocalise, suggesting a mother singing wordlessly to her baby. My setting, for mezzo or soprano and piano, is one of chiaroscuro. It reflects the domestic, yet mysterious elements of the poem, as well as the trauma of history through which it has reached us. —JS

Performance Notes

1. The tempo marking is approximate. The music should flow, without being rushed.
2. Accidentals apply to the note in register throughout the measure.
3. Piano markings

There is time to identify the plucked and muted notes by first lightly pressing the key without sound to show which strings are affected. Or, they can be marked ahead of time.



Pluck the string with the right-hand index fingernail



Mute the indicated string with the fingerpad of your right-hand index finger, while playing the indicated note with the left. Experiment with the distance up from the tuning pin where you obtain the clearest pitch. This is usually about 1", but depends on the register. For very low notes, it may be much less, even right next to the agraffe.

Under Little Sarah's Cradle
Translation & Text
Provided by YIVO

Under little Sarah's cradle
Sits a little white goat,
The little goat has gone off to sell
Raisins and almonds.

What's the best merchandise,
The groom will study Torah.

Under the child's cradle
Sits a little white goat
The little goat will go off to sell
Raisins and almonds.

אונטער שרה'לעס וויגעלע
שטייט אַ ווייסע ציגעלע,
די ציגעלע איז געפֿאָרן האַנדלען
ראַזשינקעס מיט מאַנדלען.
וואָס איז די בעסטע סחורה,
דער חתן וועט לערנען תורה.
אונטער דעם קינדס וויגעלע
שטייט אַ ווייסע ציגעלע
די ציגעלע וועט פֿאָרן האַנדלען
ראַזשינקעס מיט מאַנדלען

World Premiere
Mezzo Annie Rosen & Pianist Daniel Schlosberg
Cantata Profana
Presented by YIVO Institute for Jewish Research
Virtual Premiere
6/30/2020

Concert Premiere
Soprano Lucy Fitz Gibbon &
Pianist Ryan McCullough
Smithsonian Folklife Festival
Presented by YIVO Institute for Jewish Research
Rinzler Stage, National Mall
Washington, DC
7/02/2023

unter soreles vigele

Traditional

Judith Shatin

Mysterious
Freely ♩ = 46

Mezzo

Piano

f *mp*

9

14 *mf*

Ah Ah Ah

mf

18

Ah Ah



21

mf 2

un - ter so - re - les vi - ge - le,



25

un - ter so - re - les vi - ge - le,



29

Ah Ah



32

Ah Ah

36 **Piu Mosso**

un - ter so - re - les vi - ge - le shteyt a vay - se tsi - ge - le, di

40

tsi - ge - le iz ge - for - n hand - len

43

rozh - in - kes mit man - dlen, rozh - in - kes mit man dlen.

47

voz iz di bes - te skhoy - re

52

der khos - n vet ler - nen — toy - - - re.

56

A Tempo

poco rit

un - ter dem kinds vi - ge - le

61

un - ter dem kinds vi - ge - le

65

Ah Ah Ah Ah

69 *Lively* *mf*

shteyt a vay - se tsi - ge - le di tsi - ge - le vet

72

for - n hand - len rozh - in - kes mit man - dlen,

76

rozh - in - kes mit man - dlen.

80 *Dreaming*

Musical score for measures 80-85. The score is in 4/4 time. The vocal line (treble clef) is mostly rests, with a triplet of eighth notes in measure 84. The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a forte (*f*) dynamic in measure 80, followed by a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic in measure 84. The piano part includes a triplet of eighth notes in measure 84 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 85. The piano part also includes a triplet of eighth notes in measure 84 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 85.

Musical score for measures 86-88. The vocal line (treble clef) has lyrics: "un - ter so - re - les vi - ge - le un - - - ter". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic in measure 86. The piano part includes a triplet of eighth notes in measure 86 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 87.

Musical score for measures 89-92. The vocal line (treble clef) has lyrics: "so - re - les vi - ge - - - le." The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic in measure 89. The piano part includes a triplet of eighth notes in measure 89 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 90.

Musical score for measures 93-95. The vocal line (treble clef) has lyrics: "Ah, Ah, Ah". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic in measure 93. The piano part includes a triplet of eighth notes in measure 93 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 94. The piano part also includes a triplet of eighth notes in measure 93 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 94.