

JUDITH SHATIN

unter soreles vigele

Mezzo or Soprano & Piano



Program Notes

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

There is time to identify the plucked and muted notes by first lightly pressing the key without sound to show which strings are affected.

-  Pluck the string with the right-hand index fingernail
- + Mute the indicated string with the fingerpad of your right-hand index finger, while playing 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 and 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 שרהלאָס וויגעלע
שטייט אַ וויטסע ציגעלע
די ציגעלע איי געפֿאָרָן האנדלען
ראָזשינקעס מיט מאָנדלען.
וּאָס אִיז די בעסטע סחרורה,
דעָר חתָן וועט לערנען תורה.
אונטער דעם קינדס וויגעלע
שטייט אַ וויטסע ציגעלע
די ציגעלע וועט פֿאָרָן האנדלען
ראָזשינקעס מיט מאָנדלען

Unter Soreles Vigele

Judith Shatin

Mysterious
Freely

Mezzo-Soprano

Piano

$\text{♩} = 46$

9

14

mf

Ah _____ Ah _____ Ah _____

mf

18

Ah Ah

21 *mf* 2

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

2

25

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

2

29 Ah Ah

The musical score consists of four systems of music. The top system (measures 18-19) shows a vocal line with two 'Ah' vocalizations and a piano accompaniment. The second system (measures 21-22) begins with a piano dynamic *mf*, followed by a vocal line with lyrics 'un - ter so - re - les vi - ge-le,' and a piano accompaniment. Measure 22 includes a rehearsal mark '2'. The third system (measures 25-26) continues the vocal line with the same lyrics and piano accompaniment, also featuring a rehearsal mark '2'. The bottom system (measures 28-29) shows a vocal line with two 'Ah' vocalizations and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are written in treble clef, and the piano parts are in bass clef. The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines and contains various musical markings such as dynamics, accidentals, and performance instructions like 'PERUSAN SCORE NOT FOR PERFORMANCE'.

32

Ah Ah

Piu Mosso

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

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

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

47

voz iz di bes - te skhoy - re

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

poco rit A Tempo

un - ter dem kinds vi - ge - le

cresc.

mf

un - ter dem kinds vi - ge - le

mp

65

Ah Ah Ah Ah

Lively mf

69

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

mf

72

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

76

rozh - in - kes mit man - dlen.

3

Detailed description: This musical score page contains four systems of music. The first system (measures 65-68) shows a vocal line with sustained notes and piano accompaniment. The vocal line consists of the word 'Ah' repeated four times. The piano part includes a bass line and chords. The second system (measures 69-72) starts with a vocal line 'shteyt a vay - se tsi - ge - le' followed by piano chords. The third system (measures 72-75) features a vocal line 'for - n hand - len' and piano chords. The fourth system (measures 76-79) continues with a vocal line 'rozh - in - kes mit man - dlen.' and piano chords. The score uses a treble clef for the vocal part and a bass clef for the piano part. Measure numbers 65, 69, 72, and 76 are present above the staves. Dynamic markings 'Lively mf' and 'mf' are included. Measure 69 includes lyrics with hyphens. Measure 72 includes a tempo change to 3/4 time. Measure 76 includes a tempo change to 3/4 time. Measure 79 includes a tempo change back to 4/4 time. Measure 76 also includes a '3' above the vocal line, likely indicating a triplet. Measure 79 includes a circled '3' above the vocal line, likely indicating a triplet. Measure 79 also includes a fermata over the vocal note.

80 *Dreaming*

80

Dreaming

f

mf

86

mf

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

89

so - re - les vi - ge - - - le.

93 rit. a piacere *mp*

Ah, Ah, Ah