

Leanna Kirchoff  
**corro a Dio**

for  
soprano  
piano

#22 from Vittoria Colonna's  
*Sonnets for Michelangelo*

*corro a Dio*, “running to God,” is a setting of Vittoria Colonna’s sonnet #22 from her *Sonnets for Michelangelo*. Written in approximately 1538, Colonna was praised for her mastery of the Petrarchan sonnet. What interests me more about sonnet #22 is the reformational spirituality in Colonna’s sentiments about intimacy with God and divine grace. The poetic imagery of the piece moves from passionate running toward God through cold and mist, toward abandonment into the great ocean of divine grace. The musical setting portrays this pursuit by setting the soprano and piano in different tempi that gradually work their way to a single tempo in the final section. In the opening, the piano’s expansive rolled chords feature all twelve pitches, yet gradually lose pitches throughout the course of the piece until the voice and piano center around a D-Eb-E trio. Throughout the poem, Colonna’s thoughts turn ever deeper within, and the music reflects this same turning inward, as the upward sweeping melodies of the beginning inflect downward as the piece draws to a close.

Vittoria Colonna *Sonnets for Michelangelo*  
Sonnet #22

Tra gelo e nebbia corro a Dio sovente  
Per foco e lume, ond’i ghiacci diciolti  
Siano e gli ombrosi veli aperti e tolti  
Con la divina luce e fiamma ardente;  
E se fredda ed oscura è ancor la mente,  
Pur son tutti i pensieri al ciel rivolti,  
E par che dentro in gran silenzio ascolti  
Un suon che sol ne l’anima si sente,  
E dice, “Non temer, che venne al mondo  
Giesù d’eterno ben largo ampio mare  
Per far leggiero ogni gravoso pondo;  
Sempre son l’onde sue più dolci e chiare  
A chi con umil barca in quel gran fondo,  
De l’alta sua bontà si lascia andare.”

I often run through cold and mist toward God’s  
heat and light, which melt away the ice  
and tear apart and banish the shadowy veils  
through the power of holy light and ardent flames;  
and if my mind remains chilly and dark,  
yet all my thoughts are turned to heaven,  
and deep within myself in a profound silence I seem to hear  
a sound that can only be heard within my soul,  
and it tells me, “Do not be afraid, for Jesus came  
into the world, wide and ample sea of eternal good,  
to relieve us of our heavy burdens;  
his waves are always smaller and more gentle  
for those who, in a bark of humility upon the great ocean  
of his divine grace, freely abandon themselves.”

# corro a Dio

Vittoria Colonna

for Emily Sinclair

Leanna Kirchoff

♩ = 76 - 84 Excitedly, "as if running"

*ff* intensely, rushed feeling

Soprano

cor - ro a Di - o, cor - ro a

*ff* quick rolls, like flashes of light

Piano

Di - o, cor - ro a Di - o so -

(8va applies to top line only)

LH

RH

LH

(continue to hold damper pedal)

ven - te, tra ge - lo e neb - bia cor - ro a

(8va)

LH

RH

LH

RH

Di - o, a Di - o, per fo - co e

(8<sup>va</sup>)

This system contains the first two measures of the piece. The vocal line is in a soprano register, with lyrics "Di - o, a Di - o, per fo - co e". The piano accompaniment consists of four staves (treble and bass clefs for both hands), featuring a complex texture with many sustained notes and some melodic movement in the right hand.

lu - me, ond' i ghia - cci dis - ciol - te

*f*

*mf*

*mf*

(8<sup>va</sup>)

This system contains the next two measures. The vocal line continues with lyrics "lu - me, ond' i ghia - cci dis - ciol - te". The piano accompaniment continues with similar textures. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is placed above the vocal line in the second measure. In the piano part, *mf* (mezzo-forte) markings are present in the lower staves of the second measure.

First system of the musical score. The vocal line (top staff) features a melodic phrase with lyrics: "sian - o e gli om - bro - si ve - li a - per - ti e". The piano accompaniment (bottom staves) consists of dense chordal textures. A second ending bracket is present at the end of the system, marked with a '2' and a '2' below it. A dynamic marking of *f* is visible at the end of the system.

(continue to hold damper pedal)

Second system of the musical score. The vocal line (top staff) continues with lyrics: "tol - ti con la di -". The piano accompaniment (bottom staves) features a crescendo leading to a fortissimo (*ff*) section. A dynamic marking of *f* is present at the end of the system. A second ending bracket is also present at the end of the system, marked with a '2' and a '2' below it.

vi - na lu - ce e fiam - ma ar dent - te

*mf*

*f*

8<sup>va</sup>

Detailed description: This system contains the first two staves of a musical score. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef, 12/8 time, with lyrics 'vi - na lu - ce e fiam - ma ar dent - te'. It features eighth notes with slurs and accents, and some notes are marked with a '2' indicating a second ending. The bottom two staves are a piano accompaniment in treble and bass clefs, 12/8 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The piano part includes chords and arpeggiated figures. Dynamics include *mf* and *f*. An 8<sup>va</sup> (octave) marking is present in the upper right of the piano part.

la di - vi - na, la di - vi - na lu - ce

*ff*

8<sup>va</sup>

Detailed description: This system contains the second two staves of the musical score. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef, 12/8 time, with lyrics 'la di - vi - na, la di - vi - na lu - ce'. It features eighth notes with slurs and accents. The bottom two staves are a piano accompaniment in treble and bass clefs, 12/8 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The piano part includes chords and arpeggiated figures. Dynamics include *ff*. An 8<sup>va</sup> (octave) marking is present in the upper left of the piano part.

The first system of the musical score consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is written in a single staff with a treble clef and a 3/4 time signature. It contains the lyrics "e fiam - ma ar" with a fermata over the word "fiam". The piano accompaniment is written in four staves (treble and bass clefs) and features a complex texture with many overlapping notes and chords. A dynamic marking of *8<sup>va</sup>* is placed above the first staff of the piano part. A large, semi-transparent watermark "MusicalScore" is overlaid diagonally across the page.

The second system of the musical score continues the vocal and piano parts. The vocal line is in a single staff with a treble clef and a 3/4 time signature, with the lyrics "den - te;" and a fermata over the word "den". The piano accompaniment continues in four staves, maintaining the complex texture from the first system. A dynamic marking of *f* is placed above the piano part. A large, semi-transparent watermark "MusicalScore" is overlaid diagonally across the page.

$\text{♩} = 60 - 69$  Slower than the beginning, turning inward

*mf* pleadingly

E se fred - daed os - cu - ra è an - cor la

(piano should feel in different tempo than the voice)

*p* legato and sustained

LH

men - te, pur son tut - ti ipen - sie - ri al ciel ri -

entering inconspicuously, out of time with the lower part

RH

*ppp* legato and sustained

LH

*p*

volt - in gran sil - en - zio as -



colt - i,

*pp*

e se fred - daed os - cur - a è an - cor la

(pn. accompaniment becoming more prominent)

*mp*

ment e e par che dent - ro in gran sil - en - zio un

(the two piano lines gradually come into the same temporal dimension, which is shown in the even 8th notes)

*rit.* (gradually slowing into the next section)

suon \_\_\_\_\_ che sol ne l'an - i - ma si sen - te,

*mf*

$\text{♩} = 54$  As if in a place of timelessness and serenity

barely audible, legato but expressionless

*ppp*

*ppp* dolce and breathy, like a "still small voice"

E di - ce, \_\_\_\_\_ e di - ce \_\_\_\_\_ "Non te - mer, \_\_\_\_\_ che

(let sound fade naturally)

(continue to hold damper pedal)

ven - neal mon - do Gie - sù \_\_\_\_\_ d'e - ter -

(continue to hold damper pedal)

- no \_\_\_\_\_ ben \_\_\_\_\_ lar - go am - pio \_\_\_\_\_ ma - re \_\_\_\_\_ per far leg -

gier - o \_\_\_\_\_ og - ni grav - o - so \_\_\_\_\_ pon - do, \_\_\_\_\_

*f* *p*

*mf*

rit. ----- a tempo

*pp* as if reciting a familiar prayer

sem - pre son l'on - de sue più dol - ci \_\_\_\_\_ e chia -

*pp* drone-like, unpunctuated

re a chi con um-il bar-ca in quel gran fon-do

(continue to hold damper pedal)

de l'al-ta sua bon-tà

(continue to hold damper pedal)

unrushed, take your time

si las-cia an-da-re, si las-cia an-da-re,

slowly and unmeasured

like slowly unfolding a "carpet" of sound

*pp*

*pp*

si las-cia an-da-re.

*molto rit.*

(take plenty of time before final arpeggio)

*ppp*