

# **Maria durch ein Dornwald ging**

**Dear Mary journeys through the thorn**

**Maria gennem torne går**

**German traditional pilgrim hymn now used for Advent**

**Set 2012 by Klaus Smedegaard Bjerre**

This beautiful hymn turned an advent carol in several countries and languages has been in my ears since I first conducted it with a school choir several decades ago, but I don't remember ever having written it out for parts or the like. I wasn't even really aware whether it had a canonized setting used for most performances.

Searching the web I found several settings still under copyright, but not THE setting to incorporate in my hymn project. So I let my ears do the talking resulting in a sequence of 3 verses. Ironically this isn't a traditional hymn setting either. It may be considered closer to the improvised hymn preludes so many organists provide Sunday after Sunday.

It also has elements of organised chaos, where each parts moves kind of erratically and only the combined whole forms a structure. Hopefully so. This way of writing puts great demands on the players, as the rhythm shall be kept very strictly to display the fluctuation of the vertical chord structures. And the intonation has to be exact also, if the many modulations shall make sense.

The score formats basically are the same as with the other hymns within my project of modular hymn scores. Only the organ score could not be condensed on 2 staves, so here it has 3 staves. The 2' recorder version would be too shrieky, so it has been omitted. The inner parts move in higher ranges than usual for this project.

Despite the implied reservations I very much liked working with this setting and hopefully you will enjoy taking the challenge of playing it.

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