

PROGRAM NOTE

It was common for composers of the Baroque era such as J.S. Bach to work with their own existing material - - particularly if they felt that they had more to say with it - - and I approached this piece in a similar way, creating a chorale prelude on my own melody. The tune is from my setting of a poem by the Hungarian poet Szilárd Borbély, "If I could..." I composed the tune for the opening section of my 2015 vocal/orchestral work *The Debrecen Passion*, in which I set a number of Borbély's poems. In *Ambrosiana*, it was my goal to take the spirit of the original poem -- understated, fleeting, and enigmatic -- ("If I could tell you/that I hide even from my own heart/everything that can be possibly hidden...") and amplify it into an entire sonic world, complete in itself. With a distinctly vocal quality, the piece treats the original melody in a free, rhapsodic way, drawing upon sonorities in the setting that are rich and luscious (ie. ambrosial) and amplifying them as pianistic colour. Over the course of its six-minute duration, the piece opens up from a more contained and decorous place to a sonic world that is grand, rich and intimate. This work was commissioned by the Sioux City Symphony Orchestra as a competition piece for the finalists to perform in the 2017 Iowa Piano Competition.