

Selig alle, die im Herrn entschliefen

K 230 Canon for two voices by W. A. Mozart (1756 – 1791)

Text – adapted from Ludwig Christoph Heinrich Hölty (1748-1776) – “Elegie beim Grabe meines Vaters”

Text and Translation

[ze:lɪç ze:lɪç al:lə al:lə ze:lɪç ze:lɪç zi:]
Selig, selig alle, alle, selig, selig sie,
blessed, blessed all all blessed blessed are

[di: ɪm hɛrrn ɛnt-ʃli:fən]
die im Herrn entschliefen!
in the Lord rest

[aux ze:lɪç ze:lɪç frɔ̃ʏnt bɪst du:]
Auch selig, selig, Freund, bist du.
Ah, blessed, blessed friend, are you.

[ɛŋ-əl brax-tən di:r de:n krants]
Engel brachten dir den Kranz,
Angels bring to you the wreath

[ʊnt di: ɛŋ-əl ri:fən]
Und di Engel riefen,
And the angels called,

[ʊnt du: ɡɪŋst ɪn ɡɔt:təs ru:]
und du gingst in Gottes Ruh,
and you went into God's rest,

[ʊnt du: ɡɪŋst tsu:r ru:]
Und du gingst zur Ruh.
And you went into rest.

[ja ze:lɪç al:lə al:lə]
Ja, selig alle, alle...
Yes, blessed, all, all...

Selig alle, selig sie, die im Herrn entschliefen! Auch selig, Freund, bist du. Engel brachten dir den Kranz, Und di Engel riefen, und du gingst in Gottes Ruh, Und du gingst zur Ruh. Ja, selig alle, alle...	Blessed all, blessed are they who rest in the Lord Blessed, friend, are you. Angels brought you the wreath, And the angels called, and you went into God's rest, And you went to rest. Yes, blessed all, all ... ¹
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¹ Translation and IPA transcription by Elizabeth Pauly.

Background

The text is adapted from the first stanza of Ludwig Christoph Heinrich Hölty's "Elegie beim Grabe meines Vaters". The original text:

Selig alle, die im Herrn entschliefen!
Selig, Vater, selig bist auch du!
Engel brachten dir den Kranz, und riefen;
Und du gingst in Gottes Ruh;

K. 230 is one of several canons that are known primarily in editions published after Mozart's death. Other canons include K. 229, 231, 233, 234, 347 and 348. No autograph score has been found for this particular canon. Unlike most of the other canons in this list, K. 230 is a fairly complex canon and, "notable...for the unusual entry of the answer on an offbeat."²

Recordings

Győr Girl's Choir, Miklós Szabó, conductor: [Selig Selig Alle Alle](#)

Chamber Choir of Europe: [Selig Selig Alle Alle](#)

² Zaslaw, Neal with William Cowdery. *The Complete Mozart: a Guide to the Musical Works of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*, W.W. Norton, 1990, p. 101.

Analysis

Key: C harmonic minor (although the score we have has no key signature and uses only accidentals)

Meter: 4/4

This is a fairly complex 2-voiced canon at the unison. The second entrance comes in three beats after the first, which causes the second voice to enter on the pick-up to the next measure (as the first voice enters on the downbeat). This may feel challenging at first, as for the most part, both voices are singing with the same text underlay, so text stresses will be different for the two voices.

The phrase structure could be analyzed a number of ways. I am using the rests that Mozart has provided as the general guide for feeling phrases. This leads to a pattern of 3 + 4 + 4.