

*Dear Albert A. Stanley  
with cordial greetings from  
Charles S. Skilton*

*Christmas, 1920,*



MUSIC  
TO THE  
LECTRA  
OF  
SOPHOCLES

COMPOSED  
BY

CHARLES SANFORD SKILTON

PRICE \$1.00

THE ARTHUR P. SCHMIDT CO.  
BOSTON  
120 Boylston St.  
NEW YORK  
8 West 40th St.

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To my Sister  
MRS. R. H. CORNISH

MUSIC  
TO THE  
ELECTRA  
OF  
SOPHOCLES

COMPOSED  
FOR  
WOMENS' CHORUS AND ORCHESTRA

BY  
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a. a. Stanley  
gt.

transcribed

March 18

7-18-1

12-31-26 G. H.

## ARGUMENT

King Agamemnon, commander of the Grecian host in the expedition against Troy, on his return to Mycenae was murdered by his unfaithful wife Clytemnestra and her paramour Aegisthus. His infant son Orestes was rescued by his daughter Electra and sent away in the care of a faithful tutor to grow up in a distant land and become his father's avenger. Electra remained at home, continually mourning for her father and denouncing the murderers, who treated her with the utmost contempt and abuse, while favoring her sister Chrysothemis, who had accepted the situation.

The action of the play begins some years later, when Orestes may be expected to return. The scene is in front of the royal palace.

The aged tutor enters with Orestes and his friend Pylades. After he has described the scene they develop a plan of action, agreeing that the tutor shall appear alone as a messenger from a friend with news of the supposed death of Orestes in a chariot race. The voice of Electra is heard lamenting within, and the tutor hurries them both away, as it is not yet time for her to know of their presence. Electra enters and bewails her lot in a monody. She is joined by a chorus of fifteen maidens of Mycenae who praise her fortitude, console her for her misfortunes and prophesy the speedy return of Orestes. Chrysothemis enters and reproves Electra for her folly in open opposition, warning her that she is likely to suffer solitary confinement. She relates a troubled dream of Clytemnestra's, that Agamemnon was alive and had planted his sceptre, which grew to a fruitful bough that overshadowed the land: on account of this dream she is being sent with offerings to her father's tomb, but is persuaded to substitute tokens from Electra and herself.

The first Choral Ode follows, in which the chorus make a favorable interpretation of the dream, concluding with a lament for the woes of the house of Pelops.

G. H.

Clytemnestra enters and defends her conduct against the reproaches of Electra. The aged tutor makes his appearance according to plan and gives a spirited description of the chariot race in which he feigns that Orestes lost his life. He withdraws with the queen and Electra with the chorus mourn the untimely fate of her brother. Chrysothemis returns joyfully, announcing that she has found fresh offerings on her father's tomb, which she believes are a sign of the return of Orestes. She is downcast at the tidings of his supposed death but refuses to accede to Electra's resolution to take vengeance into their own hands.

A. Stanley

In the second Choral Ode the chorus bewail the unfilial conduct of men compared with birds of the air, and praise Electra's constancy.

Orestes and Pylades enter with two attendants bearing an urn, which they say contains the ashes of Orestes. Electra takes the urn and delivers an address of such pathos that Orestes presently reveals himself. The aged tutor interrupts their joyous greetings to urge instant action before Aegisthus returns from the country. They accordingly enter the house leaving the chorus alone while they sing the short third Choral Ode, describing the approaching vengeance of the gods. Electra returns to watch for Aegisthus, and they hear the shrieks of Clytemnestra within, as her execution takes place.

Orestes and Pylades re-enter and meet the approaching Aegisthus, who inquires about the visitors and their news. The veiled body of Clytemnestra is brought forth, which he supposes to be that of Orestes. On discovering his error he is driven within to share her fate and the chorus welcome the return of happier days for the house of Atreus.

### Suggestions for Performance

To perform "Electra" it is necessary to have, in addition to the speaking cast and attendants, a chorus of fifteen singers, one of whom should be able to speak for the chorus in dramatic scenes. While fifteen is the traditional number, the chorus might be reduced to four if necessary. The six funeral dancers are not essential to the performance, but add to the effect.

The accompaniment may be rendered with piano alone, or with the addition of a few orchestral instruments, if the full orchestration is not available.

The translation employed is that of Lewis Campbell, slightly modified in the chorus dialog, except for the choral odes, which have been especially translated by the composer in the original rhythms. If desired the Greek could be used for the entire performance.

The Play should be given without interruption and lasts almost exactly two hours. It requires a minimum of scenery; a central door with shrubbery on each side, two long benches for the chorus, and an altar, being the essential properties.

# Electra

## PRELUDE

CHARLES S. SKILTO

Maestoso ♩ = 68

The musical score is written for piano and celeste. It begins with a tempo marking of 'Maestoso' and a metronome setting of 68. The piano part starts with a forte (f) dynamic, while the celeste part enters with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The score includes several dynamic changes, including piano (p) and mezzo-forte (mf). Performance instructions such as 'without Ped.', 'Ped.', and '\*' are placed below the piano part. A section marked '8va B.' indicates an octave change for the piano part. A stage instruction, 'Enter Priestess with lighted torch with Ped. sempre', is placed below the piano part. The score concludes with the instruction 'She lights the altar flame'.

without Ped. Ped. \* without Ped.

without Ped.

8va B. \* Enter Priestess with lighted torch with Ped. sempre

She lights the altar flame

\* This action may be omitted if desired

*p* *p*

*She invokes the gods above*

*She invokes the gods below*

*p dolce*

*Priestess withdraws*

*tenor marc.* *mf agitato*

*appassionato* *poco accel.*

8

*f*  
*cresc. sempre*  
*l.h.* *r.h.* *l.h.*  
*rit.*

*ff* *a tempo*

*Enter TUTOR, ORESTES and PYLADES*

*p* *f marc.* *marc.*

*p* *f marc.* *marc.*  
*r.h.*  
*p* *8va bassa*

**SCENE I**  
**Dialogue**

First system of musical notation, featuring a treble and bass staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The music begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The melody in the treble staff is characterized by chords and moving lines, while the bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment.

*She invokes the gods above*

Second system of musical notation, continuing the piece. The treble staff features a more active melody with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the bass staff continues with a steady accompaniment.

Third system of musical notation. The key signature changes to two flats (Bb, Eb). The music features a mix of chords and moving lines in both staves.

*She invokes the gods below*

Fourth system of musical notation. The key signature remains two flats. The music includes a piano (*p*) dynamic and a *dolce* (sweet) marking. The bass staff has a triplet of eighth notes.

*Priestess withdraws*

Fifth system of musical notation. The key signature remains two flats. The music includes a *tenor marc.* (tenor march) marking and a *mf agitato* (moderato-forte agitated) marking. The bass staff has a triplet of eighth notes.

Sixth system of musical notation. The key signature changes to three flats (Bb, Eb, Ab). The music includes an *appassionato* (passionately) marking. The bass staff has a triplet of eighth notes.

*Forc' ucci.*



8

*f*  
*cresc. sempre*  
*l.h.* *r.h.* *l.h.*  
*rit.*

*ff* *a tempo*

*f*

*f*

Enter TUTOR, ORESTES and PYLADES

*p* *marc.* *f marc.*

*p* *marc.* *f marc.*  
*8va bassa*

SCENE I  
Dialogue

# SCENE II

## \* Monody-Electra

Enter **ELECTRA**  
Andante ♩ = 68

Oh, purest light! And air by earth alone how oft have ye  
Measured and limitable, Heard many a piercing

moan, Many a blow breast, When gloomy night Hath slackened pace  
full on my bleeding and

yielded to the day! And through the Ah! well To my sad pillow  
hours of rest, 'tis known in yon house of

woe, What vigil of scant Whiles all within are sleeping, For my dear father  
joyance keeping, without stint I

\* In this and all similar numbers the music must be carefully subordinated to the voice

groan, Whom not in bloody fray The War-god in the stranger-land

musical notation for the first system, featuring a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a triplet and an *accel.* marking.

Received with hospitable hand, But she that is my mother, and her

musical notation for the second system, featuring a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a triplet and a *marziale* marking with a tempo of 104.

groom, As woodmen fell the oak, Cleft through the

musical notation for the third system, featuring a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a triplet, *accel.*, and *cresc.* markings.

skull with murdering stroke.

musical notation for the fourth system, featuring a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a triplet, *rit.*, and various dynamic markings.

And o'er this gloom save from only me, Goes forth on thee  
No ray of pity,

musical notation for the fifth system, featuring a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a triplet, *p a tempo*, and *tenor marcato* markings.

My father, who didst die A cruel death of piteous agony.



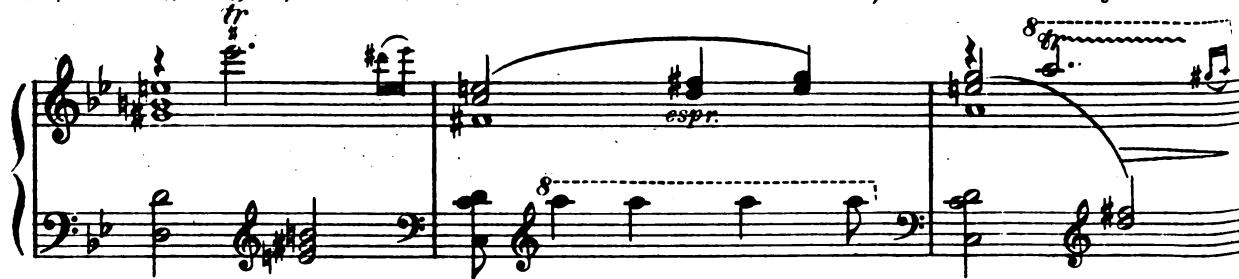
But ne'er will I  
Cease from my crying and sad mourning lay,



While I behold the sky, Glancing with myriad fires, or But, like some brood - bereaved  
this fair day.



nightingale, With far - heard wail, Here at my father's



door my voice shall sound.

O home beneath



the ground! Ha - des un - seen, and dread Persephonè, And darkling Hermes, 11  
and the

Curse revered, And ye, Erinyès, of mortals feared, Daughters of Heaven, that ever  
*Piu mosso*  $\text{♩} = 116$

see Who die unjustly, who are wronged i<sup>n</sup> the bed Of those they wed,

Avenge our father's murder on his foe! Aid us, and send my

brother to my side;

*Moderato e maestoso*

Alone I cannot longer  
bide The

oppressive strain of strength - o'er-mastering woe.