

# BALULALOW

for SATB choir a cappella,  
with soprano and baritone soloists

Some individual singing is required from all singers,  
and all four sections are divisi at various points.

Text in Scots (16th century), from  
"The Gude and Godlie Ballads"  
by J., J. & R. Wedderburn,  
believed to be a translation into Scots  
of Martin Luther's "Von Himmel Hoch"

Electronic PDF edition prepared for:  
CHOIR NAME

© Chris Hutchings 2012  
[www.hutchingsmusic.co.uk](http://www.hutchingsmusic.co.uk)

## Full text

I come from hevin heich to tell  
the best nowells that e'er befell.  
To you thir tythings trew I bring  
and I will of them say and sing:  
This day to you is born ane Child  
of Marie meik and Virgin mild.  
That blissit bairn bening and kind  
sall you rejoyce baith hart and mind.

Lat us rejoyis [now] and be blyth  
and with the Hyrdis go full swyth,  
and see what Godis grace hes done  
throu Christ to bring us to his throne.  
My saull and life, stand up and see  
wha lysis in ane cribbe of tree.  
What Babe is that, sa gude and fair?  
It is Christ, Godis Son and Air.

The silk and sandell thee to eis  
ar hay and sempill sweilling clais  
wharin thou gloris greitest King  
as thou in hev'n war in thy ring.  
And war the warld ten times sa wide  
cled ouer with gold and stanes of pride  
unworthie yit it were to thee  
under they feet ane stule to be.

O my deir hart, yung Jesus sweit,  
prepair thy creddill in my spreit!  
And I sall rock thee in my hart  
and never mair fra thee depart.  
Bot I sall praise thee evermoir  
with sangis sweit unto thy gloir.  
The kneis of my hart sall I bow  
and sing that rycht Balulalow.

## Pronunciation and glossary

"Balulalow" should rhyme with "now" (so that it rhymes with "bow" in the last couplet).

If there is doubt about the pronunciation of a word, it may be pronounced to match the modern English equivalent. This is an approximation of Scots pronunciation (words which are pronounced as they look - e.g. war, wharin, sa - are omitted):

v.1: heich: "hee", then a ch as in loch (high)

Marie: same as English "Mary"

meik: as English "meek"

bening: "ben" then ing as in "ring" (benign)

sall: as if it was the opening syllable of "Sally"

v.2: Lat: as written (let)

rejoyis: as "rejoice", but with the diphthong partly split into two syllables; "rih-jaw-ees".

blyth: as English "blithe"

swyth: rhymes with "blithe" (swift)

throu: same as "through"

gude: same as "good"

Air: same as "heir" (the h is silent)

v.3: eis: ay-ees (ease)

sweilling: swee-ling (swaddling)

clais: clay-ees (clothes)

greitest: gree-test (greatest)

ouer: ah-oor (ow'r, over)

stule: same as "stool"

v.4: sweit: same as "sweet"

spreit: spreet (spirit)

evermoir: same as "evermore"

sangis: "sang-is" (songs)

gloir: rhymes with "more" (glory)

kneis: same as "knees"

rycht: richt (i sound as in lift, ch sound as in loch) (right, appropriate)

# Balulalow

Words: from *The Gude and Godlie Ballatis* (J, J & R Wedderburn),  
16th century

This PDF edition prepared for:  
CHOIR NAME

Chris Hutchings

Please do not use elsewhere without composer's permission:  
copies or PDFs can be ordered at [www.hutchingsmusic.co.uk](http://www.hutchingsmusic.co.uk).

**Calmato**, ♩ = c. 140

The musical score is written for Soprano (Sop.) and Alto (A) voices. It begins with a tempo marking of 'Calmato' and a metronome indication of ♩ = c. 140. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 5/4. The score is divided into systems, with measures 1-2, 3-4, 6-7, 9-10, and 12-13 shown. Dynamics range from *pp* (pianissimo) to *mf* (mezzo-forte). The lyrics are: 'Ba - - - lu - - - la - low, I come from ba - lu - - - la - low, he - vin heich to tell The best no-wells that lu - la - low, ba - lu - - - e'er be - fell; To you thir ty-things trew I la - low, ba - lu - la - low, bring And I will of them say and sing: Ba - lu - - - la - low,'. A watermark 'SAMPLE COPY NOT FOR PERFORMANCE © www.hutchingsmusic.co.uk' is visible across the middle of the page.

Balulalow

4

Tutti

*mf*

15

S This day to you is born ane child Of Ma-rie meik and

A — This day to you is born ane child Of Ma-rie

*mp*

18

*piu cresc.*

S Vir - gin mild. That bli - ssit bairn be - ning and

A meik and Vir - gin mild; That bli - ssit bairn be - ning and

*piu cresc.*

21

*f*

S kind, That bli - ssit bairn be - ning and kind

A kind, That bli - ssit bairn be - ning and kind

*f*

24

*mp*

S sall you re-joyce baith hart and mind.

A sall you re-joyce baith hart and mind.

*mp*

27 **Animato, ♩ = c. 180**

*f*

T Let us re - joy - is and be blyth And

B Let us re - joy - is, let us re - joy - is and be blyth \_\_\_\_\_

30

T with the hy - rdis go full swyth \_\_\_\_\_ And see what

B — And with the hyr - dis go full swyth \_\_\_\_\_ To

33

T Go - dis grace hes done Throu Christ to bring us

B see — what Go - dis grace hes done Throu Christ to bring us

*rit.* *f* *mf*

36 **Piu moderato, ♩ = c. 150**

*f* *mf*

A My saull and life, stand up and see

T to his throne. My saull and life, stand up and

B to his throne. My saull and life, — stand up and see

Balulalow

6

39 *mf cresc.*

S What babe is that, sa

A Wha ly - is in ane cribbe of tree; What babe is *mf cresc.*

T see Wha ly - is in ane cribbe of tree; What babe is *mf cresc.*

B Wha ly - is in ane cribbe of tree What babe is that, sa *mf cresc.*

42 *p reverently*

S gude and fair? What babe is that, sa

A that, sa gude and fair? *p reverently* What babe is that, sa

T that, sa gude and fair? *p reverently* What babe is that, sa

B gude and fair? *p reverently* What babe is that, sa

Maestoso, ♩ = c. 120

*mf* warm

45

S  
gude and fair? It is Christ, God - is Son and

A  
gude and fair? It is Christ, God - is Son and

T  
gude and fair? It is Christ, God - is Son and

B  
gude and fair? It is Christ, God - is Son and

Maestoso *mf* warm

SAMPLE COPY  
NOT FOR PERFORMANCE  
© www.hutchingsmusic.co.uk

48

S  
Air. Ba

A  
Air. lu

T  
Air. la

B  
Air. low

Tempo I *f* *pp* sempre

Tempo I *f* *pp* sempre

Tempo I *f* *pp* sempre

Tempo I *f* *pp* sempre

52 Baritone solo *p*

Bar. *p* The silk and

S Ba Ba

A lu

T la

B low

55 *piu cresc.*

Bar. san - dell thee to eis Ar hay — and sem - pill

S Ba - lu - - -

A lu Ba - lu - - -

T la Ba - lu - - -

B low Ba - lu - - -

58 *mp*

Bar. *mp*

swei - ling clais whar - in thou glo - ris grei - test King

S la - low, ba - lu - la - low,

A la - low, ba - lu - la - low,

T la - low, ba - lu - la - low,

B la - low, ba - lu - la - low,

61 *p*

Bar. *p*

As thou in hev'n war in thy ring.

S ba - lu - la - low,

A ba - lu - la - low,

T ba - lu - la - low,

B ba - lu - la - low,

64 *p cresc. poco a poco*

S And war the world ten times sa wide, Cled ouer with gold and

*p cresc. poco a poco*

A — And war the world ten times sa wide, cled ouer with

*p cresc. poco a poco*

T — And war the world ten times sa wide, cled ouer with

*mp cresc. poco a poco*

B And war the world ten times sa wide Cled ouer with gold and

67

S stanes of pride, Cled ouer with gold and stanes of

*rit.*

A gold and stanes of pride, Cled ouer with gold and

*rit.*

T gold and stanes of pride, Cled ouer with gold and

*rit.*

B stanes of pride, cled ouer with gold and stanes of

SAMPLE COPY  
 NOT FOR PERFORMANCE  
 © www.hutchingsmusic.co.uk

Balulalow

70 *a tempo p*

Sop. Un - wor - thie yit it were to thee

Bar. Un - wor - thie yit it were to thee

*f* *a tempo pp*

S pride, ba - lu - - - la - low,

*f* *a tempo pp*

A stanes of pride, ba - lu - - - la - low,

*f* *a tempo pp*

T stanes of pride, ba - lu - - - la - low,

*ff* *a tempo pp*

B pride, ba - lu - - - la - low,

73

Sop. Un der thy feet ane stule to be.

Bar. Un der thy feet ane stule to be.

S ba - lu - - - la - low.

A ba - lu - - - la - low.

T ba - lu - - - la - low.

B ba - lu - - - la - low.

(Baritone in octave  
unison with soprano)

76

Sop. *p* (start about 5" after B) O my deir hart, yung Je sus

S *pp*  
Ba lu la low

A *pp*  
Ba - lu la low

T *pp*  
(start about 5" after S&A)  
Ba lu la low

B *pp*  
(start about 5" after T)  
Ba lu la low

The notes in boxes are to be sung in any order, freely, being repeated as required, by each member of the section, ad lib. Bring in each note pp, with a swell in the middle (volume should never be more than mp, usually p), and fade it off with a diminuendo; leave a slight rest before the next note. The speed should be similar to the soloists'. Any rests are entirely ad lib.

80

Sop. *c. 3"* *sim.*  
sweet, pre-pair thy cred-dill in my spreit, And I sall rock thee in my

S  
Ba lu la low Ba lu la low

A  
Ba lu la low Ba lu la low

T  
Ba lu la low Ba lu la low

B  
Ba lu la low Ba lu la low

86

Sop. hart and ne ver mair frae thee de part;

S Ba lu la low (niente)

A Ba lu la low (niente)

T Ba lu la low (niente)

B Ba lu la low (niente)

Begin to fade out (over about 5 seconds) when "depart" is sung: all singers should sing "low" as their last syllable before fading out.

89 Tutti *mp*

S Bot I sall praise thee e - ver - moir with sang-is sweet un - to thy gloir,

A Bot I sall praise thee e ver moire with sang-is sweet un - to thy gloir,

T *pp* ba - lu - la - low, ba - lu - la - low,

B *pp* ba - lu - la - low, ba - lu - la - low,

93 *mp* *rit.* **Maestoso** *f ma dolce*

S with sang-is sweet un - to thy gloir; **Maestoso** The kneis of my hart sall

A with sang-is sweet un - to thy gloir; **Maestoso** The kneis of my hart sall

T with sang-is sweet un - to thy gloir; **Maestoso** The kneis of my hart sall

B with sang-is sweet un to thy gloir; **Maestoso** The kneis of my hart sall

SAMPLE COPY  
 NOT FOR PERFORMANCE  
 © www.hutchingsmusic.co.uk

97 *poco* *mp* *rall. al fine* *p*

S — I bow, And sing that rycht Ba - lu - la - low.

A — I bow, And sing that rycht Ba - lu - la - low.

T — I bow, And sing that rycht Ba - lu - la - low.

B — I bow, And sing that rycht Ba - lu - la - low.

101

S  
ba lu la low (niente)

A  
ba lu la low (niente)

T  
ba lu la low (niente)

B  
ba lu la low (niente)

The conductor should give a signal about 10" before he/she wishes the piece to end; at this point, everyone should make their next syllable "low" (on the notes of a D major chord, entering individually within 1-3 seconds of the conductor's signal), and fade off gradually on that syllable.