Poem by Faustas Kirsa

The Wooden Christ
for Baritone and Woodwind Quintet

PASSION WITH TROPES, No. 44

Don Freund

(1983)

Lyrics: In his fa-ther's home, a farm-er who's a hun-dred Carves a wood-en mod-el Lord that works some won-ders.

On the face of Je - sus he in-scribes his mis - e - ry

When they sent his son to pris - on in Si - ber - i - a.

He cuts deep,

the wood dust drops, the god doll

ga - zes - An-guished god, cre - a - ted by its ma - ker.

He, to cru - ci - fy him - self his

heart and tor-ments, Spears the side of God

and spikes the palms and in - steps. Then he

twists a crown of thorns to grave the fore-head;

White the wood the old man

gou-ges, goads and tor-tures.

With the hands at rest up-on the knob-by knee-caps,

Wood-en Christ him-self is

born, a-live, and pain - wracked.

cresc.

Chips pile up to ease the

heart, for Christ is ris - en,

Christ him-self is ris - en from the old man's chis - el.

Now the god - wright glows,

now he sees the mi - ra - cle:

Round the head of   Christ are   light-rays in a   cir-cle.

When   he stripped the fi-nal   splin-ter from   the i-con,

You could hear the   lips of its cre-a-tor speak - ing:

Lyrics:
"God, I don't be-lieve this piece of wood requires La-bor out of me to bring a-bout a mi-ra-cle.

"God, you wipe my tears dry, turn my pain to sweet-ness

Through your ag - o - ny with both your tem - ples bleed - ing.

"If you do per - form them mi - ra - cles,

I beg you: Save the in - no - cent, but pun - ish

per - se - cu - tors!"

(at least 5")

91

95

97

100

p, subdued   *freely*

And,   his   lips a - gainst the wound of   Je - sus' pas - sion,

He him-self begged mer - cy for his youth's trans - gres - sions.

Slower (♩ = *ca.* 60)