

Preface

In response to a growing demand for pieces by women composers, I was invited by Oxford University Press to assemble a collection of outstanding new works from living contributors. This set me on an exciting journey of discovery as I sought out new composers from across the world and had the opportunity to connect with others I've long admired.

Breath of Song brings together ten compelling works from different creators, some of whom are well-known, and others are just beginning to make their mark on the international choral scene. Each piece contributed to shaping this collection and played a part in refining the parameters of the original brief. In *Breath of Song* we have a group of unaccompanied works appropriate for concert performance and at a difficulty level accessible to the majority of choirs. Sacred and secular texts are both represented, and pieces can be programmed individually or together in one thrilling concert. Each work has a unique story to tell and brings something fresh and exciting to the contemporary choral catalogue. From the modal sound coloured by the Hindustani classical tradition in Esmail's 'TāReKiṬa', to the expressive melodic lines seasoned with Scottish snaps in McDowall's 'God be with us', there is something in this eclectic collection for each choir, each concert, and each season.

Thank you to Robyn Elton, Commissioning Editor at Oxford University Press, for her tireless work on this project and for amplifying voices that deserve to be heard. Thank you to Amy Chang and Jane Griffiths for keen eyes and thoughtful editing. Finally, thank you to my fellow composers for sharing your music and for trusting us with your exquisite work.

Sarah Quartel
November 2020

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Wake, Love, Wake!

Rabindranath Tagore
(1861–1941)

JOAN SZYMKO
(b. 1957)

Gently ♩ = 54

mp *p*

SOPRANO
The night is dark, the night is dark and your

ALTO
The night is dark, the night is dark and your

TENOR
The night is dark, the night is dark and your

BASS
The night is dark, the night is dark and your

for rehearsal only

Gently ♩ = 54

mp *p*

4 *mf* *dim.* *rit.* *p*

slum - ber is deep in the hush of my be - ing.

mf *dim.* *p*

slum - ber is deep in the hush of my be - ing.

mf *dim.* *p*

slum - ber is deep in the hush of my be - ing.

mf *dim.* *p*

slum - ber is deep in the hush of my be - ing.

mf *dim.* *rit.* *p*

Duration: 3 mins

My beloved spake

Song of Songs 2: 10–12

BECKY McGLADE
(b. 1974)

Espressivo ♩ = 80
mp

SOPRANO
My be - lov - ed spake, and said un - to me, _____

ALTO
My be - lov - ed spake, and said un - to me, _____

TENOR
My be - lov - ed spake, and said un - to me, _____

BASS
My be - lov - ed spake, and said un - to me, _____

for rehearsal only
Espressivo ♩ = 80
mp

5
my be - lov - ed spake, and said un - to me, _____ Rise_

my be - lov - ed spake, and said un - to me, _____ Rise

my be - lov - ed spake, and said un - to me, _____ Rise_

my be - lov - ed spake, and said un - to me, _____ Rise_

Duration: 3.5 mins

God be with us

Invocation, *Carmina Gadelica*, Vol. 1
Alexander Carmichael
(1832–1912)

CECILIA McDOWALL
(b. 1951)

Sustained ♩ = c. 88

p espress.

SOPRANO

God__ be with us On this Thy day, God__ be

p espress.

ALTO

God__ be with us On__ this Thy day, God be

p espress.

TENOR

God be with us On this Thy day,_____ God be

p espress.

BASS

God_____ be with us On this Thy day,_____ God be

Sustained ♩ = c. 88

p espress.

for rehearsal only

* Sing as Scotch snaps, always clearly accented.

Duration: 2.5 mins

TāReKiṬa (तारेकित)

Words and music by
REENA ESMAIL
(b. 1983)

Joyfully ♩ = 60-76
mp

SOPRANO
Hum* _____ tā nā nā

ALTO
mf
Dhā tā - re - ki - ṭa Dhūm tā - re - ki - ṭa Nōm tā - re - ki - ṭa Ta - ka - dī - mī - ta - ka

TENOR
mp
Hum* _____ tā nā nā

BASS
mp
Hum* _____ tā nā nā

5

Hum _____ tā nā nā

Dhā tā - re - ki - ṭa Dhūm tā - re - ki - ṭa Nōm tā - re - ki - ṭa Ta - ka - dī - mī - ta - ka

Hum _____ tā nā nā

Hum _____ tā nā nā

* close to m immediately

The Arrow and the Song

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
(1807–82)

LAURA HAWLEY
(b. 1982)

Before the notes begin, start with c.15–20 seconds of some voices imitating the sounds of wind, gentle breezes, the subtle whistle of an arrow, and occasional bird calls. Continue the wind and birds (or wind only) until the text begins in b. 13. Choirs should feel free to experiment with placement of singers, textural variety, and character and 'pitch' of the wind and bird sounds according to their own artistic expressive nuance.

Freely, thoughtfully, as though walking ♩ = 48

unis. mp

SOPRANO
1 & 2

hoo _____ *hoo* _____

mp

ALTO

doon doon doon doon doon doon doon doon doon doon doon doon doon doon*

mp

TENOR

oo—

BASS

Freely, thoughtfully, as though walking ♩ = 48

for rehearsal only †

mp

* straight to the 'n' of 'doon'

† The piano reduction includes the rhythmic accompanying parts throughout; for reason of playability, melodic lines are sometimes omitted.

Also available separately in a version for SSSAAA unaccompanied (ISBN 978–0–19–355088–9).

Duration: 4 mins

The Birds' Lullaby

E. Pauline Johnson
(1861–1913)

SARAH QUARTEL
(b. 1982)

Playful and light, yet tender ♩ = 112 *mp*

SOPRANO

mp

doo doo doo doo_ doo doo doo doo_

ALTO

mp

doo doo doo doo_ doo doo doo doo_ doo doo doo doo_ doo doo doo doo_

TENOR

BASS

5 *mf*

Sing _____ to us, ce - dars; the twi - light is creep - ing,

doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo

doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo

doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo

This piece is also available in a version for SSAA unaccompanied (ISBN 978-0-19-352466-8).

Duration: 3 mins

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Snow is Silent

John Pickles
(b. 1953)

JENNY MAHLER
(b. 1989)

Playful and spirited ♩ = 95

SOPRANO

f Rain is noise. *mf* Fall-ing, *mp* fall-ing, *mf* vio - lent,

ALTO

f Rain is noise. *sub. p* Gen - tle, *mf* vio - lent,

TENOR

f Rain is noise. *sub. p* Gen - tle, *mf* vio - lent,

BASS

f Rain is noise. *mf* Fall-ing, *mp* fall-ing, *mf* vio - lent,

CONGAS II $\frac{4}{4}$

Playful and spirited ♩ = 95

f *mf* *mf*

for rehearsal only

Duration: 2.5 mins

O ye who taste that Love is sweet

Christina Rossetti
(1830–94)

ELEANOR DALEY
(b. 1955)

Dolce ♩ = c.63–66
unis. mp

**SOPRANOS
ALTOS**

O ye who taste that Love is sweet, set way-marks for the_

4 *rit.*

doubt - ful feet that stum - ble on in search of it.

(6) **a tempo**
mp

S.

O ye who taste that Love is sweet, set way-marks for the_ doubt - ful feet that

A.

O ye who taste that Love is sweet, set way-marks for the doubt - ful feet that

T.

O ye who taste that Love is sweet, set way-marks for the doubt - ful feet that

B.

O ye who taste that Love is sweet, set way-marks for the_ doubt - ful feet that

*** Keyboard**

a tempo
mp

* Keyboard reduction for rehearsal only.

Duration: 3 mins

Round me falls the night

William Romanis
(1824–99)

ANNABEL McLAUHLAN ROONEY
(b. 1973)

Lento espressivo ♩ = 54 *mp* *mp*

SOPRANO

Sa - viour, be my light: Through the hours in

ALTO

p Round me falls the night; *mp* Sa - viour, be my light: Through the hours in

TENOR

p Round me falls the night; *mp* Sa - viour, be my light: Through the hours in

BASS

p Round me falls the night; *mp* Sa - viour, be my light: Through the hours in

for rehearsal only

Lento espressivo ♩ = 54 *p* *mp*

Duration: 3 mins

Round me falls the night has been recorded by The Choir of Christ's College, Cambridge, conducted by David Rowland, on the album *As a seed bursts forth* (Regent).