

JOAN SZYMKO

Be It Therefore Resolved

a setting of a poem by
Kim Stafford

for sssa chorus, optional SSA trio
piano,
violin and cello



Kim Stafford is the founding director of the Northwest Writing Institute at Lewis & Clark College, and author of a dozen books of poetry and prose. He approaches writing as a chance to set down stories we have carried into poems, essays, radio commentaries, blessings, rants, parables, and other forms of "tikkun olam," the healing of the world: "In our time is a great thing not yet done. It is the marriage of Woody Guthrie's gusto and the Internet. It is the composing and wide sharing of generous expression in the voices of many for the needs of all." (KS) - info from www.oregonpoeticvoices.org

Friend: Download This Free Proclamation for Local Use

Whereas the world is a house on fire;
Whereas the nations are filled with shouting;
Whereas hope seems small, sometimes
 a single bird on a wire
 left by migration behind.
Whereas kindness is seldom in the news
 and peace an abstraction
 while war is real;
Whereas my words are all I have;
Whereas my life is short;
Whereas I am afraid;
Whereas I am free—despite all
 fire and anger and fear;
Be it therefore resolved a song shall
 be my calling— a song
 not yet made shall be vocation
 and peaceful words the work
 of my remaining days.

Kim Stafford's poem found its way to my attention by way of a singer who had passed it on to me, knowing that I am always on the lookout for powerful, transformative texts. Stafford had disseminated his poem on the Internet in 2005. The poem's title, "Friend: Download this Free Proclamation for Local Use" immediately piqued my interest. When I first sent the poem to the director of the Congressional Chorus for consideration as the commission text, it was without conscious realization that legislative resolutions are written in the same format as the poem; a crazy coincidence!

I resonate deeply with Stafford's theme of hopelessness met with personal resolve. I am a composer and conductor who has answered a calling to use words and sounds to open hearts while providing a platform for community; a place where the singer can openly express compassion and feel his/her own emotional vulnerability. And so I share a great affinity with the final resolution in Stafford's poetic proclamation.

Often, composers will repeat as well as manipulate words and phrases—using the text as material to construct their own arc of creative expression. However, when reading an official proclamation aloud, one does not repeat text. So, with the exceptions of the opening cries of "fire", and "shouting", this setting is through-composed and free-flowing without repetition within voice parts.

In performing this work, special care should be made in adhering to tempo and articulation markings, as these elements play a particularly expressive role.

- Joan Szymko

Joan Szymko's music is sung by distinguished ensembles across North America and abroad with performances at international festivals, state and regional conferences, and at six consecutive national conferences of the American Choral Directors Association. The ACDA recognized her contribution to the choral arts by awarding Szymko the prestigious Raymond W. Brock Memorial Commission in 2010. For additional information please visit www.joanszymko.com



*Commissioned in 2011 by Bette Mohr & Rosalie Person in honor of the 25th Anniversary
of the founding of the Congressional Chorus, David Simmons, Artistic Director*

Be It Therefore Resolved

SSAA version created for Aurora Chorus

Kim Stafford

Joan Szymko

The musical score consists of six staves. The top two staves are for CHOIR I (Soprano and Alto). The next two staves are for CHOIR II (Soprano and Alto). The bottom two staves are for the Piano and strings (Violin and Cello). The tempo is marked as $=72$ with *with urgency*. The key signature is $\#4$.

CHOIR I: The Soprano (S) and Alto (A) parts are shown. The Soprano part begins with a single note followed by three rests. The Alto part follows with three rests.

CHOIR II: The Soprano (S) and Alto (A) parts are shown. The Soprano part begins with a single note followed by three rests. The Alto part follows with three rests.

Piano: The piano part features a dynamic *f*, followed by *ff* and *mf*. The strings (Violin and Cello) play eighth-note patterns with dynamics *f*, *ff*, and *mf*.

Performance Instructions: CHOIR II to be no more than one quarter of the full ensemble; may be sung as an optional trio positioned in front of CHOIR I. The vocal parts for CHOIR II include lyrics: "Fi - re, _____" and "fi - re, _____". The piano part includes dynamics *f*, *ff*, *mf*, and *ff*. The strings (Violin and Cello) play eighth-note patterns with dynamics *f*, *ff*, and *mf*.

CHOIR I

Soprano (S) and Alto (A) parts are shown. The Alto part begins with a dynamic *f* followed by *ff* on the word "fire". The lyrics "Where-as the world is a house on fi - re;" are written below the notes.

CHOIR II

The Alto part continues with a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The lyrics "fi - re, fi - re," are written below the notes. The dynamic *mf* is indicated above the notes.

FOR PERUSAL ONLY

The Alto part continues with a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The lyrics "Fi - re, fi - re, fi - re, fi - re," are written below the notes. The dynamic *mf* is indicated above the notes.

Ped. (Pedal) part: The bassoon (Bassoon) part consists of sustained notes with grace notes. The dynamic *dim.* is indicated at the beginning, and *mf* is indicated later.

[vn tacit to M16]

7

on fi - re

Where-as the na - tions are shout - ing; are filled with

FOR PERUSAL ONLY

fi - re, fi - re,

fi - re, fi - re, fi - re, fi - re, fi - re, fi - re,

fi - re, fi - re, fi - re, fi - re, fi - re, fi - re,

10

shout - ing shout - ing shout - ing shout - ing shout - ing

shout - ing are filled with shout - ing, shout - ing shout - ing

fi - re, fi - re, shout - ing shout - ing

fi - re, fi - re, fi - re, fi - re,

FOR PERUSAL ONLY

shout - ing

12 rit.

mf

Where - as _____

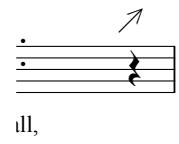
pp A tempo $\text{♩} = 72$ div.

hope seems small,

END DOUBLE CHOIR

shout - ing; Where - as _____ hope seems small,

FOR PERUSAL ONLY



ill,
END
DOUBLE
CHOIR

shout - ing; Where - as _____ hope seems small,

Where - as _____ hope seems small,

rit.

A tempo $\text{♩} = 72$

Ped.

16

p

mp

mp

p hind

S1 some times a sin-gle bird on a wire left by mi - gra-tion be - hind.

p

mp

mp

p

S2 some times a sin-gle bird on a wire left by mi - gra-tion be - hind.

p

mp

mp

p

A1 some times a sin-gle bird on a wire left by mi - gra-tion be - hind.

p

mp

mp

p

A2 some times a sin-gle bird on a wire left by mi - gra-tion be - hind.

p

dolce

vn

FOR PERUSAL ONLY

21 $\text{♩} = 62$ *Meno*
dim.

A1

leggiero $\text{♩} = 62$ *Meno mosso* *poco accel.*

p

mp

Ped. $\wedge \quad \wedge \quad \wedge \quad \wedge \quad \wedge$ *ped. simile*

pizz. *mp*

mf

24

mp

S2

A2

Where - as kind - ness is sel - dom in the

mp

Where - as kind - ness is sel - dom in the

68

S2

A2

mp

S2

A2

mp

FOR PERUSAL ONLY

27

mf

S1

Where - as kind - ness is sel - dom in the news

Tempo primo

S2

news

cresc.

A1

Where - as kind - ness is sel - dom in the news

A2

news

cresc.

Tempo primo less delicate

S2

A2

mf

Bass

arco

30

cresc.

mf and peace an ab - strac - tion
f

mf strac - tion ab - strac - tion

cresc.

mf and peace an ab - strac - tion
f

mf strac - tion ab - strac - tion

f

cresc.

f

8va

FOR PERUSAL ONLY

32

mf

S1 while war is real; *mp* rit. dim.

S2

A1 while war is real; *mf* dim.

A2

mf dim.

mp rit.

(8) 1

35

S1 *p*

S2 —

A1 *p*

A2 —

Where - as my words are all I have; Where - as my life is

poco rit.

A1 *p*

A2 —

Where - as my words are all I have; Where - as my life is

poco rit.

pizz.

f

mp *mf* *mp*

FOR PERUSAL ONLY

39 *p*

S1 short;

S2 short; Where-as I am a - fraid; Where - as I am free— des - pite all

A1 short; Where-as I am a - fraid; Where - as I am free— des - pite all

poco accel. *rit.*

mf *f* *mf* *f*

arco *pizz.* *arco* *mf* *arco* *dim.*

dim.

43 A tempo $\text{♩} = 60$

S1 fi - re__ and an - ger__ and fear; Be it
 S2 fi - re__ and an - ger__ and fear; Be it
 A1 fi - re__ and an - ger__ and fear; Be it
 A2 fi - re__ and an - ger__ and fear; Be it

mf *f* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*

Maestoso

A tempo $\text{♩} = 60$

mf *f* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*

Maestoso

arco

FOR PERUSAL ONLY

con moto $\text{♩} = 78$

S1 there - fore re - solved a song shall be my call - ing a
 S2 there - fore re - solved a song shall be my call - ling a

A1 there - fore re - solved a song shall be my call - ling a
 A2 there - fore re - solved a song shall be my call - ling a

Maestoso con moto

$\text{♩} = 78$

f

vc

51

S1 song not yet made shall be my vo - ca - tion and N.B.

S2 song not yet made shall be my vo - ca - tion and N.B.

A1 song not yet made shall be my vo - ca - tion and N.B.

A2 song not yet made shall be my vo - ca - tion and N.B.

FOR PERUSAL ONLY

55

peace - ful words, peace - ful words and peace - ful words the N.B.

peace - ful words, peace - ful words and peace - ful words the p N.B.

61

work of my re - main - ing days.

work of

FOR PERUSAL ONLY

p

pp

mf

mf

66

S1 a song, *cresc.* a song, *and*

S2 a song, *mp* a song, *f*

A1 a song, *mf* a song *f*

A2 a song, *mp* a song *f* and

a song, *cresc.* *f*

(8)

f

71

15

peace - ful words, *mf* peace - ful words *dim.* and *mp*
 peace - ful words, *mf* peace - ful words *dim.* and *mp*
 peace - ful words, *mf* peace - ful words *dim.* and *mp*
 peace - ful words, *mf* peace - ful words *dim.* and *mp*
 peace - ful words, *mf* peace - ful words *dim.* and *mp*

tacit to M81

vln
vc

FOR PERUSAL ONLY

mf *p*

76

rall.

S1 up.div.

peace - ful words the work *mf* of my re - main - ing

S1 low div.

poco a poco cresc.

of my re - main - ing

peace - ful words the work *mf*

poco a poco cresc.

peace - ful words the work *mf*

poco a poco cresc.

peace - ful words the work of my re - main

rall.

vln
vc

81 A tempo molto accel. - - - - - molto rall.

S1 u.d. ff

S1 l.d. ff days.

S2 ff days.

A1 ff days.

A2 ff days.

A tempo molto accel. 3 8va - - - - - molto rall.

ff 3 3 8va - - - - - 8vb - - - - -

ff 3 3 8va - - - - - 8vb - - - - -

ff 3 3 8va - - - - - 8vb - - - - -

ff 3 3 8va - - - - - 8vb - - - - -

ff 3 3 8va - - - - - 8vb - - - - -

ff 3 3 8va - - - - - 8vb - - - - -

ff 3 3 8va - - - - - 8vb - - - - -

ff 3 3 8va - - - - - 8vb - - - - -

ff 3 3 8va - - - - - 8vb - - - - -

f 3 3 8va - - - - - 8vb - - - - -

f 3 3 8va - - - - - 8vb - - - - -