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Commissioned by Geneva Stegner Eschweiler,
in celebration of the Fortieth Anniversary of Fergus Falls Community College, Fergus Falls, MN.
Dedicated to all singers who performed under her direction during thirty-one years as music instructor, 1962–1993.
Premiere: A Center for the Arts, Fergus Falls, Minnesota, September 30, 2000
by The Fergus Falls Community College Choir and the Fergus Falls Area Chorale, Teresa Ashworth, Director.

Duration: 13'00"

Program Note

Singers to Come brings together four poets—a Romantic, a Victorian, and two contemporary Americans—whose subject is passionate singing. The familiar origins of song in the sights and sounds of nature is painted in moonlight to guitar accompaniment by Shelley. Galway Kinnell's earnest treble choir reminds us—to a hint of "A Balm in Gilead"—that "everyone who truly sings is beautiful." Minnesota-born Richard Eberhart's driving, concise lines focus our awareness: "Be tree and bird." Alice Meynell looks to the future and exhorts us to pass it on. As an avid choral singer myself, I can only add: "Alleluia, Amen."

—David Evan Thomas

Texts

Prelude

Singers to come, what thoughts will start
To song? What words of yours be sent
Through man's soul, and with earth be blent?
These words of nature and the heart
Await you like an instrument.

—Alice Meynell (1847–1922)

The keen stars were twinkling

The keen stars were twink'ling,
And the fair moon was rising among them,
Dear Jane!
The guitar was tinkling,
but the notes were not sweet till you sung them
Again.

As the moon's soft splendour
O'er the faint cold starlight of Heaven
Is Thrown,
So your voice most tender
To the strings without soul had then given
Its own.

The stars will awaken,
Though the moon sleep a full hour later,
To-night;
No leaf will be shaken
Whilst the dews of your melody scatter
Delight.

Though the sound overpowers,
Sing again, with your dear voice revealing
A tone
Of some world far from ours,
Where music and moonlight and feeling
Are one.

—Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822)

The Choir

Little beings with their hair blooming
so differently on skulls of odd sizes
and their eyes serious and their jaws
very firm from singing in Gilead, and with
their mouths gaping, saying
"Ah!" for God,
"O!" for an alphabet of O's,
they stand in rows, each suspended
from a fishing line
hooked at the breastbone, being hauled up
toward the heavenly gases.

Everyone who truly sings is beautiful.
Even sad music
requires an absolute happiness:
eyes, nostrils, mouth strain together in quintal harmony
to sing Joy and Death well.

—Galway Kinnell (1927–2014)
from *Mortal Acts, Mortal Words*.

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Go to the shine that's on a tree

Go to the shine that's on a tree
Go to the shine that's on a tree
When dawn has laved with liquid light
With luminous light the nighted tree
And take that glory without fright.

Go to the song that's in a bird
When he has seen the glistening tree,
That glorious tree the bird has heard
Give praise for its felicity.

Then go to the earth and touch it keen,
Be tree and bird, be wide aware
Be wild aware of light unseen,
and unheard song along the air.

—Richard Eberhart (1904-2005)
from *Collected Poems*.

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the Richard Eberhart Estate.

Singers to Come

No new delights to our desire
The singers of the past can yield.
I lift mine eyes to hill and field,
And see in them your yet dumb lyre,
Poets unborn and unrevealed.

Singers to come, what thoughts will start
To song? What words of yours be sent
Through man's soul, and with earth be blent?
These worlds of nature and the heart
Await you like an instrument.

Who knows what musical flocks of words
Upon these pine-tree tops will light,
And crown these towers in circling flight,
And cross these seas like summer birds,
And give a voice to the day and night?

Something of you already is ours;
Some mystic part of you belongs
To us whose dreams your future throngs,
Who look on hills, and trees, and flowers,
Which will mean so much in your songs.

—Alice Meynell (1847-1922)
from *Singers to Come*

Editor's Note

The poems printed on page 2-3 differ slightly from what the composer set in the music (artistic license).

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Singers to Come

1. Prelude

for SATB Chorus and Piano

Alice Meynell (1847–1922)

David Evan Thomas

Very slowly ♩ = 46–48

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Piano

Very slowly ♩ = 46–48

pp

rich

p

mf

r.h.

Ped.

8va

6 *moving ahead* $\text{♩} = 66$ *f* *meno f*

S Sing-ers to come, what thoughts will start To song? What

A Sing-ers to come, what thoughts will start To song? What

T Sing-ers to come, what thoughts will start To song? What

B Sing-ers to come, what thoughts will start To song? What

moving ahead $\text{♩} = 66$

sfz *rit.* *viv.*

Ped. *3* *3* *3* ***

11 *espress.* *3*

words of yours be sent Through man's soul, and with earth be blent?

words of yours be sent, sent through man's soul and blent? _

words of yours be sent, and with earth be blent? What

words of yours be sent through man's soul

3

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Singers to Come

2. The keen stars were twinkling for SATB Chorus and Piano

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822)

David Evan Thomas

Andante tranquillo ♩ = 56

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Piano

Andante tranquillo ♩ = 56

pp

sfz

ped.

p

sim.

cresc.

4 *mp dolce*

S The keen stars were twink-ling, And the

T Ah, *pp*

B Ah, *pp*

8va

Ped.

6 *ritenuto* *a tempo*

S fair moon was ris-ing a-mong them, Dear Jane! Dear Jane! Dear

A Ah, *cresc.*

T ah, *cresc.*

B *ritenuto* *a tempo*

9

Jane!

pp
mm,

pp
mm,

p dolce

The gui-tar was tink - ling, but the notes were not sweet till you sung them A -

11

mp legatissimo

As the moon's soft splen-dour O'er the faint cold star-light of Heav-en Is

mp legatissimo

As the moon's soft splen-dour O'er the faint star - light of Heav-en Is

mp legatissimo

As the moon's soft splen-dour O'er the cold star - light

mp legatissimo

- gain, a-gain. As the moon's soft splen-dour O'er the cold star - light

mf

14 *p* < *dim.*

Thrown, is thrown,

p < *dim.*

Thrown, is thrown,

più f

So your voice most ten - der — To the strings with-out soul had then giv-en Its own, its

più f

So your voice most ten - der — To the strings with-out soul had then giv-en Its own, its

mp *dim.*

17 *pp* (*a tempo*) *pp*

ah,

pp *pp*

ah,

pp *p dolce*

own. The stars will a - wak - en, Though the moon sleep a full hour la - ter, To-

pp

own.

(*a tempo*) *sim.*

pp *sim.*

mp *Ped.*

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Singers to Come

3. The Choir

for SATB Chorus (divisi) unaccompanied

Galway Kinnell (1927–2014)

David Evan Thomas

Gently $\text{♩} = 48$
p in the background

Soprano

mm, _____ mm, _____

Tenor

mp

Bass

mp

div. a3 { Lit - tle be - ings with

8 *cresc.* *dim.*

their hair bloom - ing so diff'r - ent - ly on skulls of odd siz - es, _____

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15

ah,

mf

and their eyes ser - i - ous and their jaws ve - ry firm,

mf

22

ah,

mf *dolce f*

from sing - - - ing in Gil - e - ad, sing sing - -

from sing - - - ing in Gil - e - ad, sing

cresc.

29

f

dim. poco a poco

- - - ing, sing - - - ing, sing - -

- - - ing, sing - - - ing,

35 *poco rall.* *a tempo* *pp* $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

T
- ing, Lit - tle be - ings with their mouths gap - ing,

B
sing - ing, Lit - tle be - ings with their mouths gap - ing,

41 **Brightly** *mf* *fp* *fp*

S
"Ah!" for God, "O!" "O!"

A
"Ah!" for God, "O!" "O!"

T
p (head tone)

B
mf *fp* *fp*
"Ah!" for God, "O!" "O!"

Pno. **Brightly**
(for rehearsal only)

45 *poco a poco stringendo*

mp they stand in rows, from a fish - ing line hooked hauled

mp they stand in rows, from a fish - ing line hooked hauled

mp — they stand in rows, from a fish - ing line hooked hauled

mp marc. they stand sus - pend - ed hooked at the breast - bone,

poco a poco stringendo

48 *allarg.* *ff* up to-ward the heav - en - ly gas - es. **Semplice** ♩ = 54

ff up to-ward the heav - en - ly gas - es. *tenderly p* Ev-'ry - one who tru - ly sings is

ff up to-ward the heav - en - ly gas - es.

ff hauled up to-ward the gas - es. *tenderly p* Ev-'ry - one who

allarg. **Semplice** ♩ = 54

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Singers to Come

4. Go to the shine that's on a tree

for Soprano Solo, SATB Chorus (divisi) and Piano

Richard Eberhart (1904–2005)

David Evan Thomas

Swinging $\text{♩} = 66$

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

(tutti)
mp leggiero

Swinging $\text{♩} = 66$

Go to the shine that's on a tree — When dawn has

Piano

f

p

Ped.

8

laved with liq-uid light With lu-mi-nous light the night-ed tree And take that glo - ry with-out

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15 *mp* *leggiero*

A
Go to the shine that's on a tree _____ When dawn has laved with liq-uid light With lu-mi-nous

B
f fright. *p* (*legg.*) Go to the shine, _____ go to the

Pno.
f *p*

20

light the night-ed tree And take that glo - - - - ry with-out

shine that's on a tree. _____ Go to the light, lu-mi-nous light.

(8va)

25 *f* *p* *port.*

A fright. Go to the shine, go to the

T *mp* *leggiero*
Go to the shine that's on a tree When dawn has laved with liq-uid light With lu-mi-nous

B Go,

Pno. *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*
Ped. Ped. Ped. *sim.*

30 *mp* *p* *f* *f* *p* *mp*

S Go to the shine that's

A lu - mi - nous light. Go,

T light the night-ed tree And take that glo - - ry with-out fright.

B go to the tree, the night - ed tree.

Pno. *p* *f* *p* *p*
mp

36 *cresc.*

on a tree _____ When dawn has laved with liq - uid light With lu - min - ous light the night - ed

_____ go to the shine, _____ go to the

p Go, _____ go to the shine, _____ *mp*

Go to the shine,

sim. *cresc.*

41 *f* *ff*

tree And take that glo - ry with - out fright. Go to the shine that's on a

cresc. shine, _____ and take that glo - ry with - out fright. Go to the shine that's on a

mp cresc. Go to the shine, take that glo - ry with - out fright. Go to the shine that's on a

cresc. And take that glo - ry with - out fright. Go to the shine that's on a

8va *f* *ff*

sfz

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Singers to Come

5. Singers to Come

for Soprano Solo, SATB Semi-Chorus, SATB Chorus and Piano

Alice Meynell (1847–1922)

David Evan Thomas

Very freely *f quasi recit.*

Soprano Solo

No new de-lights to our de-sire The sing-ers of the past can yield. — I lift mine

Full Chorus
Very freely
ppp colla voce - gradually close to "m"

Soprano
 air. Mm.

Alto
 air. Mm.

Tenor
 air. Mm.

Bass
 air. Mm.

Choral Reduction

Very freely
15^{ma}

Piano
ppp
8^{va}

5

Sop. Solo

eyes to hill and field, And see in them, your yet dumb lyre, Po-ets un-born, po-ets un-

più f

meno f

Full Chorus

S

A

T

B

Red.

The image shows a musical score for a vocal solo and a full chorus. The Soprano Solo part is on a single staff with lyrics: "eyes to hill and field, And see in them, your yet dumb lyre, Po-ets un-born, po-ets un-". The lyrics are underlined. The music features a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. There are dynamic markings: *più f* (crescendo) and *meno f* (decrescendo). There are also triplet markings over the notes "un-born" and "po-ets un-". The Full Chorus part consists of five staves: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B), and Red. The Soprano part has a long note with a slur. The Alto and Tenor parts have a *p* (piano) dynamic marking. The Bass part has a long note with a slur. The Red part is a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. A large watermark "Copying is illegal Review Copy only" is overlaid on the page.

9

Expectantly ♩ = 66

Sop. Solo
- born _____ and un - re -

S **Semi-Chorus** *pp hushed*
Sing-ers to come, what thoughts will start To song? What

A *pp hushed*
Sing-ers to come, what thoughts will start To song? What

T *pp hushed*
Sing-ers to come, what thoughts will start To song? What

B *pp hushed*
Sing-ers to come, what thoughts will start To song? What

Full Chorus

Expectantly ♩ = 66

S *n.*

A *n.*

T *n.*

B *n.*

Red. *3*

13 *movendo* *allarg.* **Broad**

Sop. Solo
vealed.
Semi-Chorus

S
words of yours be sent Through man's soul, and with earth be blent? *f*

A
words of yours be sent Through man's soul, and with earth be blent? *f*

T
words of yours be sent Through man's soul, and with earth be blent? *f div.*

B
words of yours be sent Through man's soul, and with earth be blent? *f*

movendo *allarg.* **Broad**

Full Chorus *mf more expansive*

S
Sing-ers to come, what

A
mf more expansive Sing-ers to come, what

T
mf more expansive Sing-ers to come, what

B
mf more expansive Sing-ers to come, what

Red.
movendo *allarg.* **Broad**

Pno.
p *mf*