

The Maple Key

SSA with piano

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LAH PUBLICATIONS

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Original text:

I am a helicopter child
Whirling, swirling, sailing
Into the wide unknown
Dancing, arcing
Into the future.

Wind carry me upward
Wind blow me onward
Wind sail me outward.

O The great tree my mother
The green tree my father:
Send me into the world
To plant new hope
To grow new dreams.

Wind carry me upward
Wind blow me onward
Wind sail me outward.

I was born in high branches
Swaying, singing, growing
Now I seek a new home
Earth to welcome me
Soil to feed me
I am tomorrow.

Wind carry me upward
Wind blow me onward
Wind sail me outward.

I am tomorrow.

~Marion Saunderson

Commissioned by Burnaby Youth Choir, Teresa Jukich-Fierro, director, and Coastal Sound Children's Choir, Diana Clark, director

Duration: 4:45

Poet's notes

In writing text for this commissioned song, I started from a different place than my regular approach to creating a poem. I focused my initial thoughts on several principles: the piece would be for a children's choir and the imagery should reflect the maple key, the seed pod of maple trees. In addition, I considered the difference between poetry and the lyrics of a song: the aural clarity of the text so that the listener is able to understand the song's wording on first hearing versus the opportunity which a reader has to study a poem at leisure for understanding.

As is usual for me, my inspiration is emotion and the visual. In my mind's eye, I saw the sailing maple keys and felt the joy that their movement always arouses in me. I felt the wonder of the green world alive and growing around us, that we are a part of, that we connect to on many levels. Finally the rhythms of the words echoed Irish folk songs and the music of our Indigenous communities.

With all these things in mind, I still found the words flowed quickly onto paper.

~Marion Saunderson

Composer's notes

I'm grateful to poet Marion Saunderson for creating this beautiful text for this project. The inspiration behind her poem and the emotional ideas she had in the different sections spoke to me very clearly. I finished composing the work before asking her to share some notes for the performers, and discovered that her description of the text's emotional landscape aligned perfectly with my experience of her poem and, therefore, the various things that happen musically throughout my setting. The sense of "whirling, twirling" freedom was very clear to me, and caught my imagination with a sense of the unknown – of the adventure and optimism of the maple key swirling along to its destination. I also felt the sense of wonder at the green world Marion refers to above, and this section in the music ("O great tree my mother, O green tree my father") changes to express a sense of reverent respect and awe. Here it is almost prayerful – not in a distant way that separates the maple key from the great green trees, but respectfully honouring the connection between the maple key and the trees.

The quick "ah" sections that return throughout reflect a brimming over of joy and freedom, and I imagine a brightly placed "ah" vowel here that is legato but agile and free.

~laura hawley

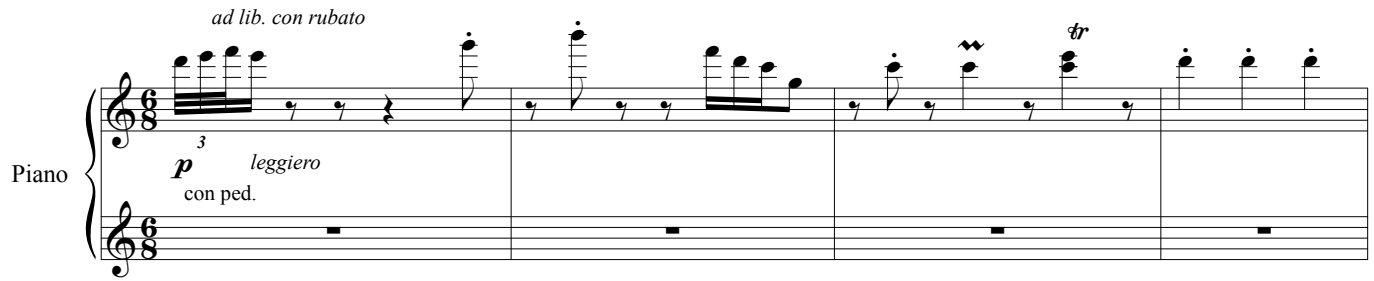
Commissioned by Burnaby Youth Choir, Teresa Jukich-Fierro, director,
and Coastal Sound Children's Choir, Diana Clark, director

The Maple Key

Marianne Saunderson

laura hawley

ad lib. con rubato



Piano

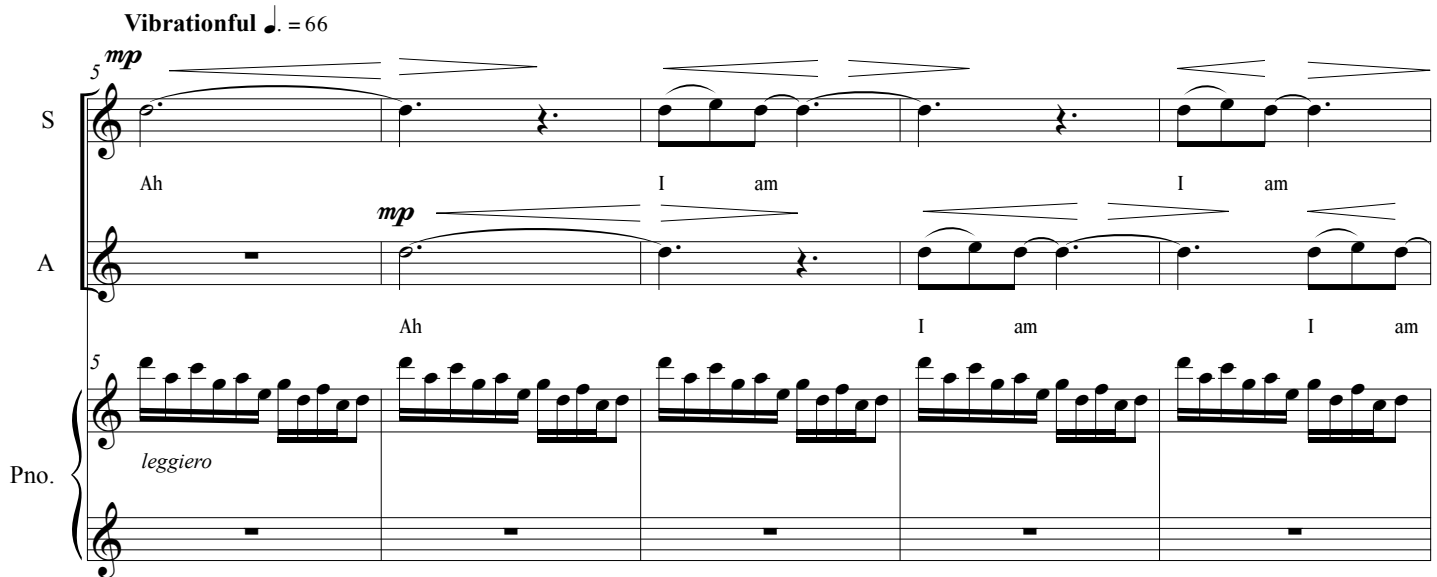
p *leggiere*
con ped.

3

tr

Detailed description: This block contains the piano introduction. It features a treble clef with a 6/8 time signature. The music begins with a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a series of chords and single notes. A trill is marked above a chord in the fourth measure. The dynamics are marked *p* and *leggiere*, with a 'con ped.' instruction. The piece concludes with a fermata over a final chord.

Vibrantful ♩ = 66



S

Ah I am I am

A

Ah I am I am

Pno.

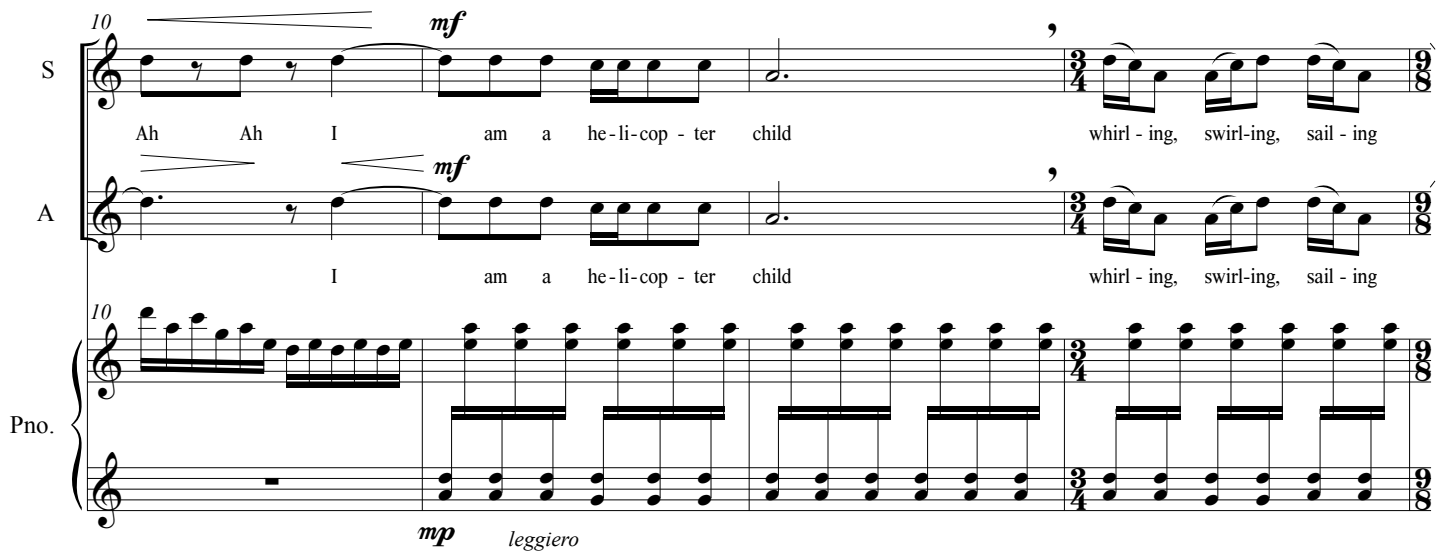
mp

mp

leggiere

5

Detailed description: This block contains the first system of the vocal and piano accompaniment. It includes staves for Soprano (S), Alto (A), and Piano (Pno.). The vocal parts have lyrics: 'Ah I am I am'. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. Dynamics include *mp* and *leggiere*. A tempo marking 'Vibrantful ♩ = 66' is present. A fermata is placed over the final notes of the vocal lines.



S

Ah Ah I am a he-li-cop-ter child whirl-ing, swirl-ing, sail-ing

A

I am a he-li-cop-ter child whirl-ing, swirl-ing, sail-ing

Pno.

mf

mf

mp *leggiere*

10

Detailed description: This block contains the second system of the vocal and piano accompaniment. It includes staves for Soprano (S), Alto (A), and Piano (Pno.). The vocal parts have lyrics: 'Ah Ah I am a he-li-cop-ter child whirl-ing, swirl-ing, sail-ing'. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. Dynamics include *mf* and *mp*. A time signature change to 3/4 is indicated. A fermata is placed over the final notes of the vocal lines.

14

All

in - to the wide un - known danc - ing arc - ing in - to the fu - ture

Pno.

17 *mp*

All

wind car - ry me up - ward, wind blow me on - ward,

Pno.

21

All

wind sail me out - ward Ah

Pno.

cresc. *mf* *f*

25

All

Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah

Pno.

29 *mp* *mp* *p*

S O great tree my mo - ther mm

A O great tree mm

Pno. *dim.* *p* *mp*

35 *mp* *p* *mp* *p*

S O green tree my fa - ther, mm

A O green tree, mm

Pno. *p* *mp*

This space is left blank intentionally.

45

S
world, send me in - to the world

A
world, send me in - to the world

Pno.

8^{va}
loco

accel. toward final piano triplet of m. 51 = ♩. of 52

49

S
send me send me

A
send me send me

Pno.

mf

♩. = 66 (Tempo I)

53

S
Ah send me I am

A
Ah send me I am

Pno.

p *leggiero*

58 *mf*

S Ah Ah I was born in high bran - ches sway - ing, sing - ing, grow - ing

A I was born in high bran - ches sway - ing, sing - ing, grow - ing

Pno. *mp* *leggiero*

62

All seek - ing a new home Earth to wel - come me, soil to feed me

Pno.

65 *mp*

All wind car - ry me up - ward, wind blow me on - ward,

Pno.

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82 *mp* *p* 7

S
O green tree my fa - ther,

A
O green tree, mm

Pno. *p* *mp*

This space is left blank intentionally.

95 *f* *mf* *rit.* *mp*

S 1
plant new hope, to grow new dreams to plant, to grow, to

S 2
f *mf* *mp*
plant me in - to the world, to plant, to grow me in - to the world to grow, to plant, to grow, to

A
f *mf* *mp*
plant me in - to the world, to plant, to grow me in - to the world to grow, to plant, to grow, to

Pno.
95 *f* *mf* *mp*

101 *p* *a tempo* *mp* *mf*

S 1
hope, to dream. to grow, to dream,

S 2
p *mp*
hope, to dream. to grow, to grow, dream,

A
p *mp* *mf*
hope, to dream. to grow, to grow, to dream, to

Pno.
101 *p* *poco a poco cresc.*

accel. toward final triplet at end of m. 109 = ♩ of m. 110

107 *mf* *f*

S 1 to grow, grow, dream, dream, dream, dream.

S 2 to grow, grow, dream, dream, dream, dream.

A dream grow, grow, dream, dream, dream, dream.

Pno.

112 *f*

S 1 I am to - mor - row, I am to - mor - row

S 2 I am to - mor - row, I am to - mor - row

A I am to - mor - row, I am to - mor - row

Pno. *f*

116

S 1

S 2

A

Pno.

Ah Ah

I am to - mo... Ah Ah

I am to - mor - row

119

S 1

S 2

A

Pno.

Ah Ah Ah

Ah Ah Ah

I am to - mor - row

122

S 1

Ah Ah Ah

S 2

Ah Ah Ah

A

Altos divide between S1 and S2 parts at m. 125

Pno.

125

S 1

Ah Ah

S 2

Ah Ah

Pno.

128

S 1

S 2

Pno.

Select choral works by **laura hawley**:

A house of prayer
SATB with piano or string
quartet

Absence
SSAATTBB + alto solo a
cappella

And we kissed
SSAA a cappella

Angels in the Snow
SSA with piano

Au champ d'honneur
Unison/2-part with piano

Be music, night
SSAATBB a cappella

Call yourself beautiful
SSA or SATB with piano

Carol Trilogy
SSAA divisi with piano

Chelsea Morning
SSSAAA a cappella

Christmas Snowflakes
SSAA a cappella

Earth's secret soul
SATB a cappella

Earth Voices
Unison/2-part/SSA or SAB with
piano

Gohyangui bon
2-part/SSA with piano

In Flanders Fields
SSAA a cappella

In Song
SSATBB with piano or with
bassoon, piano, vibraphone,
and viola

Loon, Crane, Land
SATB with piano, oboe,
vibraphone and marimba

Maid on the Shore
SSAA a cappella

Meadowlarks
SSATB with piano

Möcht nones bitzeli läbe
SATB with piano

Music Makers
2-part with piano

O come, let us sing
2-part with piano

Pentecost
SSATTBB a cappella

Qaujimavunga
Kinaummangaarma I know
who I am
SSA with piano, violin, cello

Remember, woman
SSAA a cappella with drum

Rise up, my love
SSAATBB a cappella

Salutation to the dawn
SSSAA with piano

Sonnet 43
SSATBB a cappella

Sonnet n3
SSATBB a cappella

Stone and sand
SSSAAA a cappella

Strong Women's Song
SSAA a cappella

The Arrow and the Song
SSSAA a cappella

The commendation
SATB + mezzo solo with piano
or organ

The Christ-Child
SSA with organ

The Maple Key
SSA with piano

The people you love
SSATB a cappella

The sun is mine
Unison/2-part/SSA or SAB with
piano

Versicles and Responses
SSAA a cappella

Vivre, Aimer, Partager Live,
Love, Share (formerly titled
"Alhamdoulillah")
2-part with piano and dumbek