

Where There Is Light In the Soul

Chinese proverb

SATB a cappella



Elizabeth Alexander

Seafarer Press

*Where there is light in the soul there will be beauty in the person.
Where there is beauty in the person there will be harmony in the home.
Where there is harmony in the home there will be honor in the nation.
Where there is honor in the nation there will be peace in the world.*

Chinese proverb

“When I decided to set this Chinese proverb to music, I offered myself a delightful musical challenge. Each of the five central concepts — light, beauty, harmony, honor and peace — is given a distinct character, using rhythm, harmony, melody and articulation. Each time these words make an appearance in the music, no matter how briefly, these musical “signatures” are present, woven into the fabric of the composition.” - E.A.

Elizabeth Alexander spent her childhood in the Carolinas and the Appalachian region of Ohio. She studied composition with Steven Stucky, Jack Gallagher, Karel Husa, and Yehudi Wyner, receiving her bachelors degree from The College of Wooster and her doctoral degree from Cornell University.

Her many commissions include orchestral, chamber and choral works, with her passion for language reflected in her large catalogue of vocal and choral compositions. Orchestral and chamber performers of her works have included Charleston Symphony Orchestra, Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra, Minnesota Philharmonic Orchestra, North/South Consonance, Sounds New, Society for New Music, Women’s Works and The Music Fix. Her music has been performed by hundreds of choirs, including VocalEssence, Gregg Smith Singers, Elmer Iseler Singers, New York Virtuoso Singers, and the entire student body of Waunakee Elementary School.

She has been the recipient of numerous grants, awards and fellowships from such organizations as the Jerome Foundation, New York Council on the Arts, Wisconsin Arts Board, National Orchestral Association, International League of Women Composers, and American Composers Forum, as well as receiving over a dozen national and international awards for individual works.

For more information about Elizabeth Alexander’s music, CDs,
commissions and current projects, visit:

www.elizabethalexander.com

Commissioned for SATB Chorus by
Kantorei, The Singing Boys of Rockford, IL; Joel Ross, Artistic Director

Where There Is Light in the Soul

SATB choir a cappella

Elizabeth Alexander

Chinese Proverb

(♩ = 76-80) with lightness and grace

mp

S
Where there is light in the soul there will be beau - ty in the

mp

A
Where there is light in the soul there will be beau - ty in the

mp

T
Where there is light in the soul there will be beau - ty in the

mp

B
Where there is light in the soul there will be beau - ty in the

for rehearsal only

4

S
per - - son. Where there is

A
per - - son, where there is light in the soul. Where there is

T
per - - son, where there is light in the soul. Where there is

B
per - - son. Where there is

2

6

S
beau - ty in the per - son there will be

A
beau - ty in the per - son there will be

T
beau - ty in the per - - son there will be

B
beau - ty in the per - son there will be

8

S
har - mo - ny, there will be har - mo - ny, there will be

A
har - mo - ny, there will be har - mo - ny, there will be

T
har - mo - ny, there will be har - mo - ny, there will be

B
har - mo - ny, there will be har - mo - ny, there will be

10

S har - mo - ny in the home. Where there is

A har - mo - ny in the home, in the home. Where there is

T har - mo - ny in the home, the home. Where there is

B har - mo - ny in the home, the home. Where there is

13

S har - mo - ny in the home there will be hon - or in the

A har - mo - ny in the home there will be hon - or in the

T har - mo - ny in the home there will be hon - or in the

B har - mo - ny in the home, there will be hon - or in the

4

16 *f* *mp*

S na - tion. Where there is hon - or in the

A na - tion. Where there is hon - or in the

T na - tion. Where there is hon - or in the

B na - tion. Where there is hon - or in the

19 *p*

S na - tion there will be peace,

A na - tion there will be peace,

T na - tion there will be

B na - tion

27

S
A
T
B

peace in the world, there will be peace in the
peace in the world, there will be peace in the
peace in the world, there will be peace in the
peace in the world, there will be peace in the

The musical score for measures 27-30 features four vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are in a soprano clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The piano accompaniment is in a bass clef with the same key signature. The lyrics are: 'peace in the world, there will be peace in the'. The music consists of quarter and eighth notes, with some rests and a fermata over the final note of the phrase.

30

S
A
T
B

mf
world, where there is light in the soul
mf
world, where there is light in the soul
mf
world, where there is light in the soul
mf
world, where there is light in the soul

The musical score for measures 30-33 continues the vocal and piano parts. The vocal parts are in a soprano clef with a key signature of two flats. The piano accompaniment is in a bass clef with the same key signature. The lyrics are: 'world, where there is light in the soul'. The dynamic marking *mf* (mezzo-forte) is indicated above the vocal lines. The music features a melodic line for the voices and a harmonic accompaniment for the piano, with some sustained notes and a fermata over the final note of the phrase.

34 *p*

S there will be peace, there will be

A *p*
there will be peace, will be peace, will be

T *p*
there will be peace, will be peace, will be

B *p*
there will be peace, will be peace, will be

37

S peace, will be peace,

A peace, will be peace, will be peace, where there is

T *mp* *p*
peace, where there is light in the soul there will be peace, where there is

B peace, will be peace, will be peace, where there is

40 *mp* *p*

S — there will be peace, — there will be peace,

A light, there will be peace, — there will be peace, —

T light, there will be peace, there will be peace, —

B light, there will be peace, —

44 *pp* *poco rit.*

S there will be peace, — there will be peace.

A there will be peace in the world, — there will be peace.

T there will be peace in the world, — there will be peace.

B there will be peace, — there will be peace.

there will be peace.

Selected Choral Pieces by Elizabeth Alexander

Faith Is the Bird That Feels the Light (Rabindranath Tagore) SSA **SEA-068-00 - \$1.75**
A soulful rendering of Rabindranath Tagore's poetic aphorism, "Faith is the bird that feels the light, and sings when the dawn is still dark," featuring a rich alto solo, jazz and blues inflections, and a dazzling final chord.

Finally On My Way To Yes (Pesha Gertler) SSATB, piano **SEA-019-00 - \$3.00**
Winner of Ithaca College Choral Composition Contest
This warm combination of modal, tonal, classical, close-harmony and gospel is a joyful celebration of life's rough lessons, setting Pesha Gertler's tough and compassionate poem, "The Healing Time."

Praise Wet Snow Falling Early (Denise Levertov) SATB, piano **SEA-015-00 - \$2.00**
Recipient of Highest Honors in the International Waging Peace for Singing Project
Commissioned by Dryden Community Choir, Rachel Dickinson music director
A tender setting of Denise Levertov's meditation on darkness, transcendence and hope, with the understated sensibility of art song.

Tomorrow, God Willing (Garrison Keillor) TTBB **SEA-077-00 - \$3.00**
Commissioned by Perfect Harmony Mens Chorus
A sweet and funny and prayerful setting of the concluding words of one of Garrison Keillor's classic monologues. Luscious harmonies and a feast of choral textures, with a side dish of humanity and hope.

When the Song of the Angels Is Stilled (Howard Thurman) SATB (also TTBB) . . . **SEA-062-00 - \$2.00**
Creator Magazine's "Honored 10" List
A rhythmically vital piece about the true "work of Christmas." Informed by the rhythm and part-writing of South African music and African-American spirituals, this piece lends a powerful relevance to Christmas which extends far beyond Epiphany.

Where There Is Light In the Soul (Chinese proverb) SATB (also SAB, SSA, TBB) **SEA-070-01 - \$2.00**
This setting of a Chinese proverb weaves the five interdependent ideals of light, beauty, harmony, honor and peace into a rich, a cappella affirmation.

Why I Pity the Woman Who Never Spills (Joan Wolf Prefontaine) SSAA **SEA-058-00 - \$3.00**
Commissioned by Cornell University Chorus
A gutsy and sensual blues setting of Joan Wolf Prefontaine's poem in praise of messy women, to be sung with nuance, abandon, and *joie de vivre*.

CD: Finally On My Way To Yes: Choral Music of Elizabeth Alexander **SEA-CD-001 - \$15.00**
This CD includes performances by 10 diverse choirs, with settings of such poets as Denise Levertov, Pesha Gertler, Yehuda Amichai, e. e. cummings, Carl Sandburg, Langston Hughes, and Joan Wolf Prefontaine. This varied collection reflects the composer's passion for both classical and vernacular language, as well as the beauty and messiness of life.

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Photo by Ann Marsden

Choral Music by Elizabeth Alexander

| | | |
|--|-------------------------|------------|
| April Rain Song (Langston Hughes) | SATB | SEA-006-01 |
| Before the Bread (English folk prayer) | SSSS | SEA-023-00 |
| Blessed Be the Flower That Triumphs (Boblett) | SATB | SEA-078-00 |
| Cherish Your Doubt (Alexander) | SSAA, pno | SEA-063-02 |
| Climb (Edna St. Vincent Millay) | SATB, pno | SEA-059-00 |
| Dragon Dance (Elizabeth Alexander) | S, pno | SEA-001-00 |
| The Earth Called To My Friend (Nancy Wood) | SSA, pno | SEA-057-00 |
| Even a Fist Was Once an Open Palm (Amichai) | SATB | SEA-026-01 |
| Faith Is the Bird That Feels the Light (Tagore) | SSA | SEA-068-00 |
| Fighting Over What We Believe (Alexander) | SAB youth choir, SATB | SEA-099-00 |
| Finally On My Way To Yes (Pesha Gertler) | SSATB, pno | SEA-019-00 |
| Folks, I'm Telling You (Langston Hughes) | SSATB, pno | SEA-027-00 |
| For So the Children Come (Sophia Fahs) | SATB, pno | SEA-010-00 |
| Glen Song (Scott Bates) | SSATB, pno | SEA-025-00 |
| I Write This Poem Out of Darkness (George Ella Lyon) | SSA, fl, vln, pno | SEA-024-00 |
| If You Can Walk You Can Dance (Zimbabwean Proverb) | SAB, pno | SEA-022-03 |
| Immortal Love (John Greenleaf Whittier) | SATB | SEA-017-00 |
| Infant Holy, Infant Lowly (arr. Polish carol) | SSA | SEA-020-00 |
| The Journey (Evelyn Dudley) | TTBB | SEA-075-00 |
| Jump! (Ray Bradbury) | SSA | SEA-090-00 |
| Life is not a Garden (Alexander) | SATB, pno | SEA-064-00 |
| May This Be a Working Alleluia (Alexander) | Children's choir & SATB | SEA-098-00 |
| Morning Bread (Amy Lowell) | SATB | SEA-060-00 |
| ...or a musician (Philip Dacey) | SATB, orchestra | SEA-007-00 |
| A Palette To Paint Us As We Are (Gerald Rich) | SA, pno | SEA-014-00 |
| Praise Wet Snow Falling Early (Denise Levertov) | SATB, pno | SEA-015-00 |
| Reasons for the Perpetuation of Slavery (Alexander) | SSAA | SEA-091-00 |
| Spring Grass (Carl Sandburg) | SATB | SEA-006-03 |
| They Have Freckles Everywhere | SSAA | SEA-076-00 |
| Those Who Wish To Sing Always Find a Song | SSS, pno, oboe | SEA-022-01 |
| To Make a Prairie (Emily Dickinson) | SSA, pno | SEA-016-00 |
| Tomorrow, God Willing (Garrison Keillor) | TTBB | SEA-077-00 |
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| We Lift Up Our Hearts (Richard Fewkes) | Children's choir & SATB | SEA-021-00 |
| We Remember Them (Sylvan Kamens & Jack Riemer) | SATB | SEA-083-01 |
| Where There Is Light in the Soul (Chinese proverb) | SAB | SEA-070-00 |
| When the Song of the Angels Is Stilled (Thurman) | SSAA | SEA-062-04 |
| Why I Pity the Woman Who Never Spills (Prefontaine) | SSAA | SEA-058-00 |
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