

The Wings of Our Children
SATB div. a cappella

Timothy C. Takach

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The Wings of Our Children

for SATB div. a cappella choir

Commissioned by Cor Cantiamo, Eric A. Johnson, Founding Artistic Director
with generous support from the DeKalb County Community Foundation and Cy Miller Foundation.



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Text:

We never saw it coming, although I suppose nobody ever does. One day you have wings, and the next you crawl.

There was no way we could have known. We were tried, and we were found guilty. I still have nightmares, some nights, the shouts that followed us for days and nights of nonstop running, running some of us had never done in our lives. The blood that marked our path until it stopped, and the tears that kept on going.

She gave us wings; the mob lined us up, one by one, and took them away again. The wings made no sound as they were piled high in the center of the green-paved square, feathers ruffling in the afternoon breeze.

Nobody goes up into the mountains, so we went up into the mountains. These days, we do a lot of waiting. We wait for our next generation to be born and weaned. For this I believe: the wings of our children will be their own. They will hunt through the skies, play in the clouds, alight on the tops of trees. They will bring us news of the world, delicacies from afar, sights to be tasted and savoured on cold nights.

They will not walk, crawl, or beg.
They will fly.

- Leah Bobet, from the short story Displaced Persons, edited by TCT. Used with permission.

Notes:

I found this text in a collection of short stories. It was only a couple pages long, but the content was strong, and the language clear. Leah Bobet wrote in these compact sentences, and the images were so vivid, I knew immediately I wanted to set it to music, I just didn't know when.

Leah graciously agreed not only to let me use her story but also to make an edit of it for this piece. She has a specific context for this story, and although it's a context that I am in love with, I don't want to tell you what that is. I think the story itself is an allegory for many different things - oppression, genocide, racism and the hope for a community to heal and rise with each new generation.

The music is built on ritual and on storytelling. I picture a group of people who pass on their history through song, one that is thematic and vivid in its sounds. Although the piece moves through many different moods and colors, the ending is hopeful, triumphant - the next generation taking flight.

- Timothy C. Takach, 2017



Reviewed as “gorgeous” (Washington Post) and “stunning” (Lawrence Journal-World), the music of Timothy C. Takach has risen fast in the concert world. Applauded for his melodic lines and rich, intriguing harmonies, Takach has received commissions from various organizations including the the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, St. Olaf Band, Cantus, Pavia Winds, Lorelei Ensemble, VocalEssence, the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, The Rose Ensemble, and numerous high school and university choirs. His compositions have been performed on A Prairie Home Companion, The Boston Pops holiday tour, multiple All-State and festival programs and at venues such as the Library of Congress, Kennedy Center and Royal Opera House Muscat. Takach has received grants from the American Composers Forum, Meet the Composer, Minnesota State Arts Board, Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, and ASCAP.

He is a co-creator of the theatrical production of All is Calm: the Christmas Truce of 1914, by Peter Rothstein. The critically adored show has had over 100 performances since its premiere in 2006. He was also selected for the 2014 Nautilus Music-Theater Composer-Librettist Studio.

Takach studied music composition at St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN, where he graduated with honors. He has frequent work as a composer-in-residence, presenter, clinician and lecturer for conventions, schools and organizations across the country. He is a full-time composer and lives in Minneapolis with his wife and two sons.

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The Wings of Our Children

for SATB div. a cappella choir

Leah Bobet

Timothy C. Takach

$\text{♩} = 100$
a few people

Clapping *mf*

Soprano

Alto

Tenor *mf*
Hum,* hum, hm...

Bass *mf*
Hum,* hum, hm...

4

S

A

T *mf* Mm...
Hum, hum, hm... *mf*

B *mf*
Hum, hum, hm...

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* For "hum," close to "m" on second 8th note. For "hm," close right away.



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S

A *p* *mf* *p* *mf*
We nev-er saw, we nev-er saw... We nev-er saw, we nev-er saw...

T *mf* Mm...
Hum, hum, hm... Hum, hum, hm...

B *mf* *mf*
Hum, hum, hm... Hum, hum, hm...

10

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S *mf*
We nev-er saw it com-ing, —

A *p* *mf*
We nev-er saw, we nev-er saw...

T *mp* Mm... *mf* Mm...
Hum, hum, hm... Hum, hum, hm...

B *mf*
Hum, hum, hm...

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13

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S al-though I suppose no-bod-y ev-er does. *mp* One day you have

A *pp* We nev-er saw...

T Hum, hum, hm... *p* Hum,

B Hum, hum, hm... *p* Hum,

16

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S wings, and the next you crawl. *f* *mf*

A *p* *mf* We nev-er saw, we nev-er saw...

T *f* *mf* next you Hum, hum, hm... *mf*

B *f* *mf* next you Hum, hum, hm... *mf*

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20

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mf We nev-er saw, *p* We nev-er saw, we nev-er saw... *mf*

mf There was no way we could have known.

mp Mm... hum, hm... Hum, hum,

mp Hum, hum, hm... Hum, hum,

23

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mf We were tried, and we were found *mp* We nev-er saw, we nev-er saw... *f*

mf We were tried, and we were found guilt - y. We nev-er saw... *f*

mf We were tried, and we were found guilt y. nev-er saw... *f*

mf hum, guilt - y. Ah... *f*

mf hum, guilt - y. Ah... *f*

26 $\text{♩} = 110$

S Ah... Ah... Ah... Ah...

S *mp* for days and nights and days and nights, *mf* for days and nights and days and nights,

A Ah... Ah... Ah...

A *mp* for days and nights and days and nights, *mf* for days and nights and days and nights,

T

B

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S Ah... Ah... Ah... Ah...

S *f* for days and nights and days and nights, *ff* *p* for days and nights and days and nights,

A *p* Ah... Ah... Ah... Ah...

A *f* for days and nights and days and nights, *ff* *p* for days and nights and days and nights,

T *f* I still have night-mares, some nights,

B *f* I still have night-mares, some nights,

30

S Ah... Ah... Ah... Ah...

S for days and nights and days and nights, for days and nights and days and nights,

A Ah... Ah... Ah... Ah...

A for days and nights and days and nights, for days and nights and days and nights,

T still have night - mares, the shouts that fol-lowed us for days,

B still have night - mares, the shouts that fol-lowed us for days,

32

S Ah... *mf*

S for days and nights and days and nights, and nights of non-stop run-ning, run-ning, *f*

A *f* the shouts that fol-lowed us for days and nights of non-stop run-ning, run - ning,

A Ah... Ah... run-ning,

T the shouts that fol-lowed us for days and nights of non-stop run-ning, run - ning,

B *mp* Ah... *f* and nights of non-stop run-ning, run-ning,

34 *f*

S run-ning some of us had nev - er done in our lives.

S run-ning some of us had nev - er done in our lives.

A run-ning some of us had nev - er done in our lives.

A run-ning some of us had nev - er done

T run-ning some of us had nev - er done for days and nights and days and nights,

B run-ning some of us had nev - er done for days and nights and days and nights,

36 *rit.* *ff* **Strong** = 94

S The blood that marked our path un - til it stopped, the tears — that kept on go - ing, go - ing.

S *ff* The blood that marked our path un - til it stopped, the tears — that kept on go - ing, go - ing.

A *ff* The blood that marked our path un - til it stopped, the tears — that kept on go - ing, go - ing.

T *ff* The blood that marked our path un - til it stopped, the tears — that kept on go - ing, go - ing.

B *ff* The blood that marked our path un - til it stopped, the tears — that kept on go - ing, go - ing.

Alarming $\text{♩} = 110$

39

f strong, bright stagger breathe

S Ah... Ay... a bright [eI] sound, as in "say."

S Ah... 3

A Ah...

T Ah... **f** strong, bright, no vib. Ay... Ay... Ay... a bright [eI] sound, as in "say."

B Ah... **f** voiced fall during beat 3, approx. a 4th down Ay... Ay... Ay... Ay... Ay... a bright [eI] sound, as in "say."

45

f strong, bright stagger breathe

S Ay... Ay... Ay... Ay... Ay... Ay...

S **f** strong, bright stagger breathe Ay... Ay... a bright [eI] sound, as in "say."

A **f** strong, bright stagger breathe Ay... Ay... Ay... Ay... Ay... a bright [eI] sound, as in "say."

A **f** strong, bright stagger breathe Ay... Ay... a bright [eI] sound, as in "say."

T Ay... Ay... Ay... Ay... Ay... Ay...

B Ay... Ay... Ay... Ay... Ay... Ay...

51

S Ay... — She gave us wings, she gave us wings; —

S Ay... — She gave us wings, she gave us wings;

A *mf* Ay... — Ah... — Ah... — Ah... — Ah... —

A *mf* Ay... — Ah... — Ah... — Ah... — Ah... —

T — She gave us wings, she gave us wings; —

B Ay... — Ah... — Ah... — Ah... — Ah... — Ah... —

56 *f* Timothy C Takach.com *mp*

S the mob lined us up, the mob, the mob lined us up, lined us up, one by

S *mp* Ah... — Ah... — Ah... — Ah... — Ah... —

A *f* the mob lined us up, the mob, the mob lined us up, lined us up, one by *mp*

A *mp* Ah... — Ah... — Ah... — Ah... — Ah... —

T *f* the mob lined us up, the mob, the mob lined us up, lined us up, one by *mp*

B Ah... — Ah... — Ah... — Ah... — Ah... —

61 *f* lyrical

S one, and took them a - way a - gain. The

S Ah... and took them a - way a - gain. The

A *f* lyrical one, and took them a - way a - gain. The

A Ah... and took them a - way a - gain. The

T *f* *mf* *mp* one, Ah... Ah...

B Ah... Ah... Ah...

64 *rit.* *mf* $\text{♩} = 76$

S wings made no sound as they were piled high in the cen - ter of the green-paved

S *mf* wings made no sound as they were piled high in the cen - ter of the green-paved

A *mf* wings made no sound as they were piled high in the cen - ter of the green-paved

A *mf* wings made no sound as they were piled high in the cen - ter of the green-paved

T as they were piled high in the cen - ter of the green-paved

B they were piled high in the cen - ter of the green-paved

$\text{♩} = 72$

67 *mf* *rit.* *p*

S square, feath - ers ruf - fling in the af - ter - noon breeze.

A square, feath - ers ruf - fling in the af - ter - noon breeze.

T square, feath - ers ruf - fling ruf - fling in the af - ter - noon breeze.

B square, feath - ers ruf - fling ruf - fling in the af - ter - noon breeze.

70 *p* simply *p* simply *p* simply

S No - bod - y goes up in - to the moun - tains, up in - to the moun - tains, up,

A No - bod - y goes up in - to the moun - tains, up in - to the

T No - bod - y goes up in - to the moun -

B

75 *rit.* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

S up, up, up, so we went, we went up

A moun - tains, up, up, so we went up, we went up, we went up

T tains, up, up, so we went, up in - to the moun - tains. we went up

B

81 *pp* *mp* *mf* *mp*

S so we went, we went up in - to the moun - tains. These days,

A so we went, we went up in - to the moun - tains. These days,

T so we went, we went up in - to the moun - tains. These days,

B *p* *mp* *mf* *mp*
we went up, we went up in - to the moun - tains. These days,

88 *mf* *mp* *p* *p*

S Sop. 1
we do a lot of wait-ing. wait-ing.

A *mf* *mp* *p*
we do a lot of wait-ing. wait-ing.

T *p* *p*
we do wait-ing. We

B

96 ♩ = 72 *mp* *f* *mp* *f*

S to be born and weaned.

A *mp* *f*
We wait for our next gen-er - a - tion to be born and weaned.

T *mp* *mf*
wait... to be born,

B *mp* *mf*
We wait for our next gen-er - a - tion to be born,

101

accel. ♩ = 80

For ___ this I be - lieve: the wings of our chil - dren ___ will be their

For ___ this I be - lieve: the wings of our chil - dren ___ will be their

For this I be - lieve: the wings of our chil - dren ___ will be their

For ___ this I be - lieve: the wings of our chil - dren ___ will be their

For ___ this I be - lieve: the wings of our chil - dren ___ will be their

106

♩ = 110

own. Ah...

own. They will hunt through the skies. They will play in the

own. They will hunt through the skies. They will play in the

own. will be their own. will hunt through the skies. They will play in the

own. will be their own. Ah... Ah...

110

rit.

f

S Ah... a - light on the tops of trees.

S clouds, a - light on the tops of Ah...

A clouds, a - light on the tops of trees. Ah...

T clouds, Ah...

B Ah... Oh... *mf*

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113

$\text{♩} = 96$

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mp but intense, excited

S They will bring us news of the world, del - i - ca - cies from a - far,

mp but intense, excited

A They will bring us news of the world, del - i - ca - cies from a - far,

T

B

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114

rit.

Broadly ♩ = 80

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S *mf* sights — to be tast - ed and sa - voured on cold nights. *ff* The wings of our

A *mf* sights — to be tast - ed and sa - voured on cold nights. *ff* The wings of our

T *mp* Ah... *ff* The wings of our

B *mp* Ah... *ff* The wings of our

117

♩ = 110

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S *mf* chil - dren will be their own. *f* They will not walk, *ff* They will not walk,

A *f* chil - dren will be their own. *ff* They will not walk, *ff* They will not walk,

T *f* chil - dren will be their own. *mf* Ah... They will not

B *mf* chil - dren will be their own. *mf* Ah... They will not

120

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S
crawl, or beg. They will fly.

A
crawl, or beg. They will fly.

T
ff
crawl, or beg. They will fly.

B
ff
crawl, or beg. They will Ah...

123

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S
fff
Fly! Fly!

A
fff
Fly! Fly!

T
fff
Fly! Fly!

B
fff
Ah... Fly!

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Selected vocal works by Timothy C. Takach:

Mixed Voices

A Depth We Cannot Sound		SATB, vibraphone, marimba, large tom
A Worshipper and a Man		SATB a cappella
All the Beautiful Names		SATB a cappella
All Sisters and Brothers		SATB, 2 trumpets, organ
And I Saw		SATB div. a cappella
As the Sunflower Turns on Her God		SSAATBB div, Sop. solo, SSATB soli, a cappella
The Darkling Thrush	(earthsongs)	SATB, SAT soli, a cappella
Epitaph		SATB, viola
Listen to the Apples		SATB div. a cappella
Neither Angels, Nor Demons, Nor Powers	(Graphite Publishing)	SSATBB a cappella
Nubes Oriebatur: the eruption of Vesuvius		SSATBB a cappella
One Boy Told Me		SATB, piano
Something There is Immortal		SSATBB a cappella
Su Rahva Koda (The House of Your Kindred)		SSAATTBB a cappella
This Alien Landscape		SATB, crotales, suspended cymbal, bass drum
This Amazing Life		SA(T)B, piano
'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime (arr. Huron Carol)	(Graphite Publishing)	SATB a cappella
We Are Lost, We Are Lucky		SATB, piano

Treble Voices

And I Saw		SSAA div. a cappella
Cassiopeia		SSA a cappella
Goodbye, Then		SSA choir, Bb clarinet, piano
Home on the Range (arr. American Folk Song)	(Graphite Publishing)	2-part treble, piano
Queen of the Range	(Graphite Publishing)	SA choir, piano
Serenade	(Graphite Publishing)	SSAA a cappella
There is No Rose	(Lorelei Ensemble)	SSAA, SS soli, a cappella
The Streets of Laredo (arr. American Folk Song)	(Graphite Publishing)	Unison, TTB, piano
Torn Map	(Graphite Publishing)	2-part treble, piano

Men's Voices

All Natures, Even Mine		TTTBB a cappella
Empty		TB (opt. div), piano, opt. djembe
Go		TB, hand drum, wood block or clapping
Goodbye, Then		TBB choir, Bb clarinet, piano
I Will Howl		TBB choir, piano or cello
It Is Not the Fact That I Will Die That I Mind		TB, piano
Luceat Eis		TTTBB a cappella
Mad		TBB, piano
Rough Beast		TTBB, percussion
Salve Regina	(Graphite Publishing)	TBB semi-chorus, TTBB a cappella
She Moved Through the Fair (arr. Irish Ballad)	(Neil A. Kjos Music Co.)	TBB a cappella
Things I Didn't Know I Loved	(Graphite Publishing)	TTBB a cappella
'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime (arr. Huron Carol)	(Graphite Publishing)	TTBB a cappella
Veni Creator Spiritus	(Graphite Publishing)	TTBB a cappella
What I Have Done (arr. Amazing Grace/House of the Rising Sun)		TTTBBB a cappella

Large Works

True North (18')		SATB, chamber orchestra
The Longest Nights (ca. 21')		SATB, piano or string quartet
This is How You Love (35') co-composed with Jocelyn Hagen		SATB a cappella
We Made a Grave For Him, And Her Smoke Rose Up Forever (ca. 10')		TTBB a cappella
We, the Unknown (38')		TTBB, STTB soli, chamber orchestra
Where Beauty Comes From (ca. 16')		TBB, 2-part, SSAA, SATB; piano