

SAUNDER
CHOI

CROWN OF FLAMES

for SSSAAATTTBBB *a cappella*

SAUNDER CHOI *music*



Crown of Flames is a work for 12-part mixed choir a cappella, and sets the text of Brian Sonia-Wallace on the themes of survival, adaptation, and renewal. Pyrophytes (from the Greek pyro = fire + phyte = plant) are plants that resist fire or even require it to propagate. Passive pyrophites have thick bark or insulating tissue, while active pyrophites produce flammable oils to help spread fires and so eliminate competing trees. The most extreme pyrophytes, known as pyrophiles (“flame lovers”), require the extreme heat of fire for their seeds to start growing, breaking soil when all the surrounding vegetation and dead leaves have been burnt and they can access the forest floor’s scarcest resource — sunlight. Unlike forest birds and animals, which can flee fires, pyrophytic plants have adapted not only to withstand them, but to use them to their advantage.

The idea for this piece came about when Salvatore Diana approached me to write a work for The Salvatones' spring concert on the topic of climate change. Both Brian and I live in Southern California, where we are subject to seasonal wildfires that trigger evacuations and cause massive destruction. Climate change creates an arid atmosphere that is warmer, drier, and prone to drought, which causes forest fires to be more active. Looking at the ways that native species have evolved through centuries to withstand fire, we thought this would be a perfect metaphor to deliver the message of resilience, adaptation, and renewal through destruction.

Crown of Flames is commissioned by The Salvatones for their "Many Sounds of Spring" concert.

Pyrophytic

I would run
but I am a forest
so I wait
while the long-tongued flame
licks lost leaves.

I seal seeds in resin
that melts with heat
so after I am a burnt husk
new pines that have lain
dormant for decades
will sprout
through the ashes.

I would run
but I am a planet
so I wait
while ants tunnel & monkeys build rockets
& fall in love
& everything burns
but not everything
is lost.

-Brian Sonia-Wallace

Crown of Flames

for SSSAAATTTBBB a cappella

poetry by Brian Sonia-Wallace
used by permission

Saunder CHOI

Slowly unfolding $\text{♩} = 60$

Soprano 1

Soprano 2 *mp*
I would

Soprano 3

Alto 1 *pp*
*alternate between nəmə... rapidly and freely
n'm'n'm...

Alto 2 *pp*
n'm'n'm...

Alto 3 *pp*
n'm'n'm...

Tenor 1 *pp*
n'm'n'm...
*alternate between nəmə... rapidly and freely

Tenor 2 *pp*
n'm'n'm...

Tenor 3 *pp*
n'm'n'm...

Baritone

Bass 1

Bass 2

6

S1. *pp*
n'm'n'm...

S2.
run but I am a fo - rest_ so I wait;

S3. *pp*
n'm'n'm...

A1. *mm* n'm'n'm...

A2. *mm* n'm'n'm... *mm* n'm'n'm...

A3.

T1.

T2.

T3.

Bar. *pp*
n'm'n'm...

B1.

B2.

A

11

S1.

S2. I wait... So I wait

S3. mm

A1. mm n'n'n'm... no'no'no... *p*

A2. no'no'no... *p*

A3. no'no'no... *p*

T1.

T2. *mp* So I wait

T3. no'no'no... *p*

Bar. no'no'no... *p*

B1. no'no'no... *p*

B2. no'no'no... *p*

15

S1. *p* no'no'no... mm_

S2. 3 while the long - tongued flame_ licks lost leaves._

S3. *p* no'no'no... mm_ no'no'no...

A1.

A2.

A3.

T1. *p* no'no'no...

T2. 3 while the long - tongued flame_ licks lost leaves._

T3.

Bar. 3

B1.

B2. 3

The image shows a page of a musical score for 12 parts, labeled S1 through B2. The score is written in treble and bass clefs. Part S1 is the vocal line with lyrics 'no'no'no...' and a dynamic marking of *p*. Part S2 has lyrics 'while the long - tongued flame_ licks lost leaves._' and a triplet marking. Part S3 has lyrics 'no'no'no...' and 'mm_ no'no'no...' with a dynamic marking of *p* and triplet markings. Parts A1, A2, and A3 are accompaniment parts. Part T1 has lyrics 'no'no'no...' and a dynamic marking of *p*. Part T2 has lyrics 'while the long - tongued flame_ licks lost leaves._' and a triplet marking. Part T3 is an accompaniment part. The 'Bar.' part is a bass line with triplet markings. Parts B1 and B2 are bass accompaniment parts with triplet markings. The page number '15' is at the top left. A large watermark 'PianoScore.com' is visible across the page.

20

S1. n'm'n'm...

S2. lost_ leaves...

S3. n'm'n'm...

A1. n'm'n'm...

A2. n'm'n'm...

A3. n'm'n'm...

T1. n'm'n'm...

T2. lost_ leaves... n'm'n'm... hmm hmm

T3. n'm'n'm...

Bar. n'm'n'm...

B1. n'm'n'm...

B2. n'm'n'm...

pp

pp

pp

pp

Detailed description: This is a musical score for 12 voices, arranged in 12 staves. The staves are labeled S1, S2, S3, A1, A2, A3, T1, T2, T3, Bar, B1, and B2. The music is written in treble clef for the soprano, alto, and tenor parts, and bass clef for the baritone and bass parts. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 4/4. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings like *pp* (pianissimo). The lyrics are: S1: n'm'n'm...; S2: lost_ leaves...; S3: n'm'n'm...; A1: n'm'n'm...; A2: n'm'n'm...; A3: n'm'n'm...; T1: n'm'n'm...; T2: lost_ leaves... n'm'n'm... hmm hmm; T3: n'm'n'm...; Bar: n'm'n'm...; B1: n'm'n'm...; B2: n'm'n'm... The number 20 is written at the top left of the first staff.

25

S1. *p* 3 I would run

S2. *p* I would run

S3. *mp* I would run

A1. *mp* I would

T2. 3 3 3
hmm

Bar. 3

poco rit. . . .

30

S1. *But I wait*

S2. *But I wait*

S3. *But I wait* *I wait*

A1. *I wait* *hmm*

A2. *mp* *But I wait* *hmm*

A3. *hmm* *hmm*

T1. *hmm*

T2. *hmm*

T3.

Bar. *p**vocal fry */ə/*

B1. *p**vocal fry */ə/*

B2. *p**vocal fry */ə/*

36 **B** Poco più mosso ♩ = 72

The musical score is arranged in 12 staves. The vocal parts are S1, S2, S3, A1, A2, A3, T1, T2, and T3. The piano accompaniment consists of a Baritone (Bar.), Bass 1 (B1), and Bass 2 (B2). The score begins with a key signature of one flat and a tempo of 72 beats per minute. The vocal parts have lyrics: S1, S2, S3, A1, and T1 sing "I seal seeds"; T2 and T3 sing "I wait"; and the piano accompaniment has the syllable "/ə/...". Dynamics include *mp*, *pp*, and *p*. There are triplets in the piano accompaniment and some vocal lines.

41

S1.
 — in re - sin. that melts with heat

S2.
 — seal that heat

S3.
 that heat so

A1.
 — in re - sin. that melts with heat

A2.
 — seal that heat

A3.
 that heat so

T1.
 — in re - sin. that melts with heat

T2.
sim. I wait

T3.
sim. I wait

Bar.
poco più /o/...

B1.
poco più /o/...

B2.
poco più /o/...

46

S1. so af - ter I am a burnt husk new

S2. so burnt pines

S3. burnt pines lain

A1. so af - ter I am a burnt husk new

A2. so burnt pines

A3. burnt pines lain

T1. so af - ter I am a burnt husk new

T2. *sim.* I wait new

T3. *sim.* I wait new

Bar. /u/

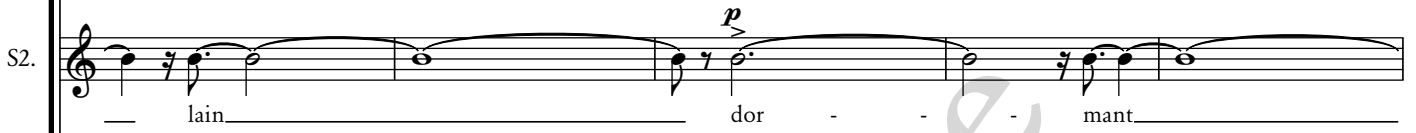
B1. /u/

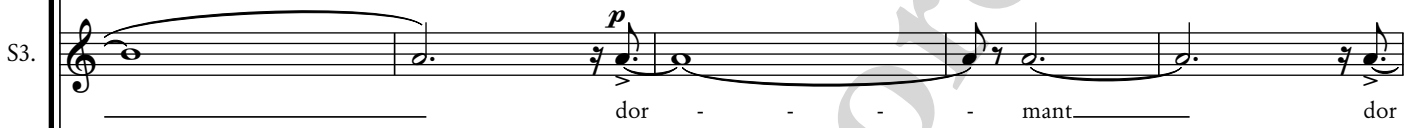
B2. /u/

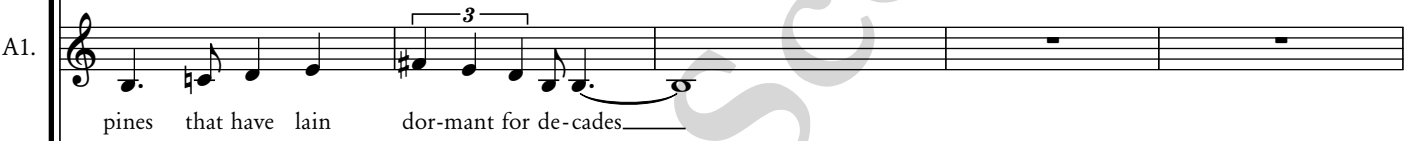
C

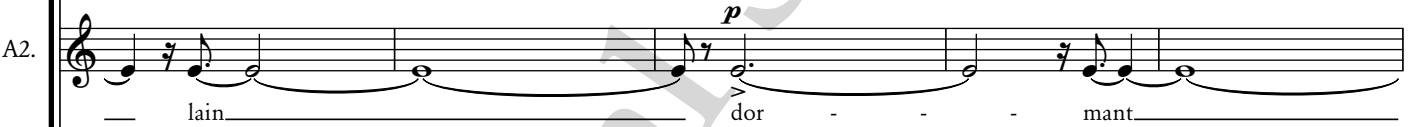
51

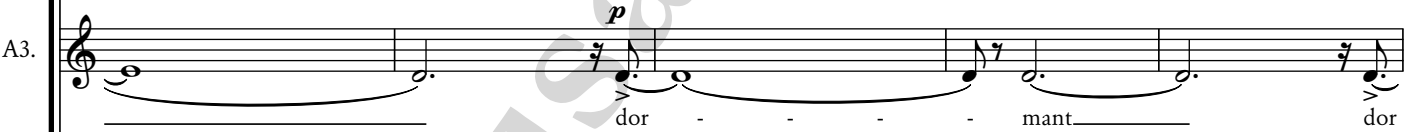
S1.  pines that have lain dor-mant for de-cades

S2.  lain dor - - - mant

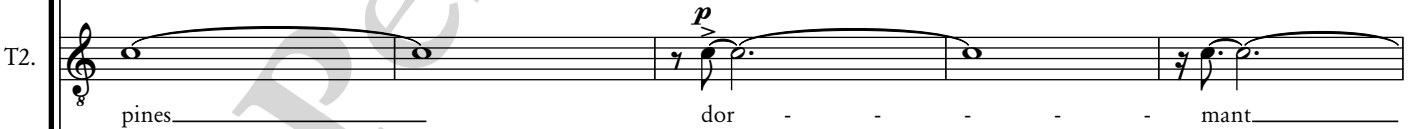
S3.  dor - - - mant dor

A1.  pines that have lain dor-mant for de-cades

A2.  lain dor - - - mant

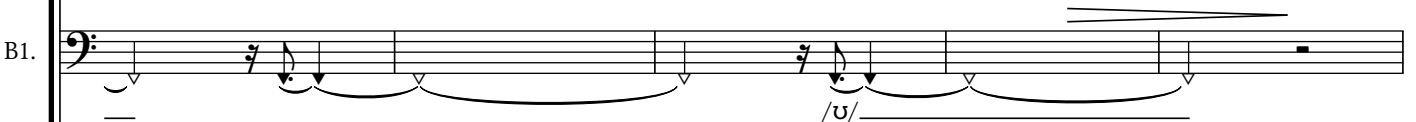
A3.  dor - - - mant dor


T1.  pines that have lain dor-mant for de-cades

T2.  pines dor - - - mant

T3.  pines dor - - - mant

Bar.  -

B1.  - /u/

B2.  - /u/

56

S1. *mf*
will

S2.
dor - - - mant dor - - - mant

S3.
mant dor - - - mant

A1. *mf*
will

A2.
dor - - - mant dor - - - mant

A3.
mant dor - - - mant

T1. *mf*
will

T2.
dor - - - mant

T3.
dor - - - mant

Bar.

B1.

B2.

61

S1. sprout _____ will _____ sprout _____

S2. _____ dor - - - mant _____ dor -

S3. _____ dor - - - mant _____ dor - - -

A1. sprout _____ will _____ sprout _____

A2. _____ dor - - - mant _____ dor -

A3. _____ dor - - - mant _____ dor - - -

T1. sprout _____ will _____ sprout _____

T2. dor - - - mant _____ dor -

T3. _____ dor - - - mant _____ dor -

Bar. _____ will _____ sprout _____

B1. _____ will _____ sprout _____

B2. _____ will _____ sprout _____

mf

mf

mf

66

S1. — will sprout

S2. - mant will sprout sprout through the ash-es

S3. - mant will sprout sprout through the ash - es

A1. — will sprout

A2. - mant will sprout sprout through the

A3. - mant dor - - - mant

T1. — will sprout

T2. - - mant will sprout

T3. - - mant will sprout

Bar. — will sprout

B1. — will sprout

B2. — will sprout

70

S1. will

S2. sprout through the ash - es

S3. sprout through the ash - es

A1. will sprout will

A2. ash - es sprout through the

A3. will

T1. will

T2. sprout through the ash - es

T3. sprout through the ash - es

Bar. will

B1. will

B2. will

rall.

72

The musical score consists of 12 staves, each representing a different voice part. The lyrics are: "sprout", "will sprout", and "I would". The score includes performance markings such as *poco f* and *rall.*. The music is written in treble and bass clefs with various time signatures (3/2, 4/4, 3/4). There are also some triplets and slurs in the lower parts.

S1. sprout I would *poco f*

S2. will sprout I would *poco f*

S3. will sprout

A1. sprout will sprout

A2. ash - es will sprout I would *poco f*

A3. sprout will sprout I would *poco f*

T1. sprout will sprout I would *poco f*

T2. sprout through the ash - es will sprout

T3. sprout through the ash - es will sprout

Bar. sprout will sprout

B1. sprout will sprout

B2. sprout will sprout

D Tempo I ♩ = 60

75

mf *poco f* *mf* *poco f*

S1. run (nn) but I am a pla - net so I

S2. run (nn) but I am a pla - net so I

S3. *poco f* *mf* *poco f* run (nn) but I am a pla - net so I

A1. *poco f* *mf* *poco f* run (nn) but I am a pla - net so I

A2. *poco f* *mf* *poco f* run run (nn) but I am a pla - net so I

A3. *poco f* *mf* *poco f* run run (nn) but I am a pla - net so I

T1. run (nn)

T2. *poco f* *poco f* *mf* run (nn)

T3. *poco f* *poco f* *mf* run (nn)

Bar. *poco f* *poco f* *mf* run (nn)

B1. *poco f* *poco f* *mf* run (nn)

B2. *poco f* *poco f* *mf* run (nn)

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for 12 voices, labeled S1 through B2. The score is in G major and 4/4 time, with a tempo of 60 beats per minute. It begins at measure 75. The vocal parts are arranged in three groups: Soprano (S1-S3), Alto (A1-A3), and Tenor (T1-T3). There are also parts for Baritone (Bar.), Bass 1 (B1), and Bass 2 (B2). The lyrics are: 'run (nn) but I am a pla - net so I'. The score includes various dynamic markings: *mf* (mezzo-forte), *poco f* (poco forte), and *f* (forte). There are also accents and slurs. The Soprano and Alto parts have triplets in the second half of the phrase. The Tenor parts have a long note with a slur and an accent. The Bass parts have a long note with a slur and an accent. The Baritone part has a long note with a slur and an accent. The score is written in a standard musical notation with a large watermark 'PERFORMING ARTS' overlaid diagonally.

80 *fp* *fp cresc.* *ff*

S1. wait I wait and fall in love,

fp *cresc. fp cresc.* *ff*

S2. wait I wait and fall in love,

fp *fp cresc.* *ff*

S3. wait I wait and fall in love,

fp *fp cresc.* *ff*

A1. wait I wait and fall in love,

fp *fp cresc.* *ff*

A2. wait I wait and fall in love,

fp *fp cresc.* *ff*

A3. wait I wait and fall in love,

T1. *f* while ants tun-nel and mon-keys build rock-ets and fall in love, *ff*

T2. *f* while ants tun-nel and mon-keys build rock-ets and fall in love, *ff*

T3. *f* while ants tun-nel and mon-keys build rock-ets and fall in love, *ff*

Bar. *f* while ants tun-nel and mon-keys build rock-ets and fall in love, *ff*

B1. *f* while ants tun-nel and mon-keys build rock-ets and fall in love, *ff*

B2. *f* while ants tun-nel and mon-keys build rock-ets and fall in love, *ff*

84 *molto rall.*

love, love, love

love, love

love, love

love, love, fall in love

love, love, fall in love

love, love

love, love, in love.

love, love, in love.

love, love, in love.

love, love, in love.

love, love, in love.

love, love, in love.

88 **E** Dirge-like $\text{♩} = 56$

S1. *p* trio burn n'n'n'... burn

S2. *p* burn n'n'n'... burn

S3. *mp* trio and ev-ry-thing burns and ev-ry-thing burns

A1. *mp* trio and ev-ry-thing burns and ev-ry-thing burns

A2. *p* and burn n'n'n'... burn

A3. *p* and burn n'n'n'...

T1. *mp* trio and ev-ry-thing burns

T2. *mp* trio and ev-ry-thing burns

T3. _____

Bar. _____

B1. _____

B2. _____

92

S1. n'n'n'... burn n'n'n'... burn n'n'n'...

S2. n'n'n'... burn n'n'n'... burn n'n'n'...

S3. burn

A1. burn n'n'n'...

A2. n'n'n'... burn n'n'n'... burn n'n'n'...

A3. burn n'n'n'... burn n'n'n'... burn

T1. but

T2. but

T3. burn but

Bar. burn but

B1. burn but

B2. burn but

p *mf*

97

S1. burn n'n'n'... n'n'n'... *pp*

S2. burn n'n'n'... n'n'n'... *pp*

S3. n'n'n'... burn n'n'n'... n'n'n'... *pp*

A1. burn n'n'n'... burn n'n'n'... n'n'n'... *pp*

A2. burn n'n'n'... n'n'n'... *pp*

A3. n'n'n'... burn n'n'n'... n'n'n'... *pp*

T1. not ev-'ry-thing.. is... lost.

T2. not ev-'ry-thing.. is... lost.

T3. not ev-'ry-thing.. is... lost.

Bar. not ev-'ry-thing.. is... lost.

B1. not ev-'ry-thing.. is... lost.

B2. not ev-'ry-thing.. is... lost.

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for 12 voices, numbered 97. The staves are labeled S1, S2, S3, A1, A2, A3, T1, T2, T3, Bar., B1, and B2. The top six staves (S1-A3) are in treble clef and contain lyrics: 'burn n'n'n'...' and 'n'n'n'...'. The bottom six staves (T1-B2) are in bass clef and contain the lyrics: 'not ev-'ry-thing.. is... lost.'. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings like 'pp' (pianissimo). A large, semi-transparent watermark 'PREPARED BY' is visible across the center of the page.

102

S1. n'n'n'... n'n'n'... /ŋ/ *ppp*

S2. n'n'n'... n'n'n'... /ŋ/ *ppp*

S3. n'n'n'... n'n'n'... /ŋ/ *ppp*

A1. n'n'n'... n'n'n'... /ŋ/ *ppp*

A2. n'n'n'... n'n'n'... /ŋ/ *ppp*

A3. n'n'n'... n'n'n'... /ŋ/ *ppp*

T1. lost. *p*

T2. lost. *p*

T3. lost. *p*

Bar. *pp* vocal fry /ə/

B1. *pp* vocal fry /ə/

B2. *pp* vocal fry /ə/