



M. E. Valverde

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Oracle of Spring

*for SATB chorus a cappella*

Du prophet'scher Vogel du,  
 Blüthensänger, o Coucou !  
 Bitten eines jungen Paares  
 In der schönsten Zeit des Jahres  
 Höre, liebster Vogel, du ;  
 Kann es hoffen, ruf' ihm zu :  
 Dein Coucou, dein Coucou,  
 Immer mehr Coucou, Coucou.  
 Hörst du ! ein verliebtes Paar  
 Sehnt sich herzlich zum Altar ;  
 Und es ist bei seiner Jugend  
 Voller Treue, voller Tugend.  
 Ist die Stunde denn noch nicht voll ?  
 Sag', wie lange es warten soll ?  
 Horch ! Coucou ! Horch ! Coucou !  
 Immer stille ! Nichts hinzu !  
 Ist es doch nicht unsre Schuld !  
 Nur zwei Jahre noch Geduld !  
 Aber wenn wir uns genommen,  
 Werden Pa-pa-papas kommen ?  
 Wisse, dass du uns erfreust,  
 Wenn du viele prophezeist.  
 Eins ! Coucou ! Zwei ! Coucou !  
 Immer weiter Coucou, Coucou, Cou.  
 Haben wir wohl recht gezählt,  
 Wenig am Halbätzend fehlt.  
 Wenn wir gute Worte geben,  
 Sagst du wohl, wie lang wir leben ?  
 Freilich, wir gestehen dir's,  
 Gern zum längsten trieben wir's,  
 Cou Coucou, Cou Coucou,  
 Cou, Cou, Cou, Cou, Cou, Cou, Cou, Cou, Cou.  
 Leben ist ein grosses Fest,  
 Wenn sich's nicht berechnen lässt.  
 Sind wir nun zusammen blieben,  
 Bleibt denn auch das treue Lieben ?  
 Könnte das zu Ende gehen,  
 Wär' doch alles nicht mehr schön.  
 Cou Coucou, Cou Coucou,  
 Cou, Cou, Cou, Cou, Cou, Cou, Cou, Cou, Cou.  
 (Mit Grazie in infinitum.)

Cuckoo, thou prophetic bird,  
 Blossom-songster ! hear the word  
 Of a youthful loving pair,  
 In the sweetest time of year,  
 O, thou charming warbler, thou,  
 May they hope ? sing to them now,  
 Thy cuckoo, thy cuckoo,  
 And again cuckoo, cuckoo.  
 Hear! a loving pair demand  
 At the altar soon to stand ;  
 They are in the bloom of youth,  
 Full of love, and full of truth.  
 Say, will it be soon or late ?  
 How long will they have to wait ?  
 Hark ! cuckoo ! hark ! cuckoo !  
 Silent now ? 'tis only two !  
 Mine is not the fault, nor hers,  
 Patience but for two more years !  
 But, when we are one become,  
 Will pa pa papas e'er come ?  
 We'll rejoice if thou but criest,  
 And us many prophesiest,  
 One ! cuckoo ! two ! cuckoo !  
 And again, cuckoo, cuckoo, coo.  
 If we counted rightly, near  
 Half a dozen 'twould appear.  
 Wilt thou, if fair words we give,  
 Say how long we have to live ?  
 True, we fain would, if we can,  
 Live life's very longest span.  
 Coo, cuckoo, coo, cuckoo,  
 Cuckoo, cuckoo, cuckoo, cuckoo, &c.  
 Life is a great jubilee  
 When it cannot reckoned be.  
 If we e'er old age attain,  
 Will our faithful love remain ?  
 O, if that should e'er be o'er,  
 Nought on earth were lovely more:  
 Coo, cuckoo, coo, cuckoo,  
 Cuckoo, cuckoo, cuckoo, cuckoo, &c.  
 (gracefully in infinitum.)

"Frühlingsorakel" translated as "The Oracle of Spring" in *The Poetry of Germany* (1858) by Alfred Baskerville.

#### Composer's Notes

The oracle is a lively bird that sings to announce the arrival of spring. "Madrigal-like" in style, this short work is fitting for seasonal literature depicting springtime. Composed in 2012, during graduate study at San Francisco Conservatory of Music, it is dedicated to the International Orange Chorale of San Francisco (IOCSF.org) who premiered it and subsequently recorded it on their album "Hope in Times of Disquiet."

dur. = ca. 2'30"

Written for the International Orange Chorale of San Francisco (IOCSF.org)

# Oracle of Spring

for SATB chorus a cappella

**Johann Wolfgang von Goethe**  
1749-1832  
translated by  
**Alfred Baskerville**  
(1858)

**Mari Esabel Valverde**  
b. 1987

Lightly, playfully ♩ = ca. 120

*mf*

Soprano



*mf*

Alto



*mf*

Tenor



*mf*

Bass



Piano  
(for rehearsal  
only)



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S youth-ful lov-ing pair, In the sweet-est time of year,

A lov - ing pair, In the sweet-est time of year,

T lov - ing pair, In the sweet-est time of year,

B lov - ing pair, Do, thou charm-ing war - bler, thou,

*p*

*p*

*p*

*mp*

10

S Thy

A May they hope? sing to them now,

T May they hope? sing to them now,

B May they hope? sing to them now,

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

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14

S cou - cou, thy cou - cou, thy cou - - - cou.

A Cou - cou! Cou - cou! Cou - cou! Cou - - - cou!

T Cou - cou! Cou - cou! And a - gain cou - cou. *f* Hear! a lov - ing pair de - mand

B Cou - cou! Cou - cou! And a - gain cou - cou. Cou - - - cou!

17

S Cou - - - cou! They are in the bloom of youth, *mf*

A *f* At the al - tar soon to stand; They *mf* are Full of love and

T *mf* At the al - tar Full of

B Cou - - - cou! Cou - cou! *f* Full of love, and full of

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20

S Cou - cou! Cou - cou! Cou - cou! Cou - cou! Say, \_\_\_\_\_

A truth. Cou - cou! Cou - cou! Cou - cou! Say, \_\_\_\_\_

T truth. Cou - cou! Say, \_\_\_\_\_ *p* *mf* will it be soon or late?

B truth. Cou - cou! Say, \_\_\_\_\_ *mf* *p* *mf* will it be soon or late?

23

S *p* Hark! cou - cou! Si-lent now? 'tis *p*

A *p* Hark! cou - cou! Si-lent now? 'tis *p*

T *mf* How long will they have to wait? hark! cou - cou! now?

B How long will they have to wait? hark! cou - cou! now?

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Slower  $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 72$ 

27

S *p* on - ly two! *mp legatiss.* Pa-tience but for two more years! Will

A *p* on - ly two! *poco marcato* Cou-cou! Cou-cou! Cou-cou! Cou-cou!

T *mp legato e poco pesante* Mine is not the fault, nor hers, But when we are

B *mp legato* Mine is not the fault, nor hers, But, when [we're]

32

S *mp* pa pa pa - pas e'er come?

A *mp* Cou - cou! Cou-cou! We'll re - jice And a -

T *mf* one be - come, We'll re - jice if thou but \*criest, — One!

B one be - come, We'll re - jice And a -

\*"Criest" is pronounced like "Christ."

**molto rit.**

36 *mf* *mp*

S And us man - y \*\*pro - phe - siest, And a - gain, \_\_\_\_\_

A *mf* *mp* *mf*  
gain Cou! Cou - cou! Cou - cou! Cou - cou! Cou - cou! [and]

T *mp*  
cou - cou! two! cou - cou!

B *mf* *mp*  
gain cou cou two! cou - cou!

**As in the beginning** ♩ = ca. 120

39 *mf*

S If we count - ed right - ly, near Half a doz - en t'would ap - pear.

A If we count - ed right - ly, near Half a doz - en t'would ap - pear Wilt

T *mf*  
If we count - ed right - ly, near Half a doz - en t'would ap - pear. Wilt

B *mf*  
If we count - ed right - ly, near Half \_\_\_\_\_ t'would ap - pear. Wilt

\*\*"Prophesiest" rhymes with the tenors' "criest."

43

S if fair words we give, Say how long we have to live? *p*

A — thou, Say how long we have to live? *p*

T — thou, Say how long we have to live? *p*

B — thou, Say True, we fain would, if we can, *mp*

48

S *mf* Cou! Cou - cou! Cou!

A *mf* Live life's ver - y long - est span. Cou - cou! Cou -

T *mf* Live life's ver - y long - est span. Cou - cou! Cou - cou!

B *mf* Live life's ver - y long - est span. Cou - cou! Cou - cou!

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53

S Cou - cou! Cou! Cou - cou! Cou - - - cou!

A - cou! Cou - cou! Cou - cou! When it can - not reck - oned

T And a - gain cou - cou. [Life's] a great ju - bi - lee it

B And a - gain cou - cou. Cou - cou! Cou - - - cou!

56

S If we e'er old age at - tain, Cou - cou! Cou - cou!

A be. old will love re - main? Cou - cou!

T be Will love re - main? Cou - cou!

B Cou - cou! Will our faith - ful love re - main? Cou - cou!

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59

S Cou-cou! Cou-cou! O, *p*

A Cou - cou! Cou-cou! O, *p*

T O, *p* if that should e'er be o'er, *mf* Nought on earth were love-ly more:

B O, *p* if that should e'er be o'er, *mf* Nought on earth were love-ly more:

62

S *mf* Cou - cou! *p*

A *mf* Cou - cou! *p*

T *p* Cou-cou! Cou-cou! Cou-cou! Cou-cou! Cou-cou!

B *p* Cou-cou! Cou-cou! Cou-cou! Cou-cou! Cou-cou!