

SAUNDER
CHOI

RELEASE

for TTB(B) choir and piano

SAUNDER CHOI *music*



PROGRAM NOTES:

When I got the commission to write a tenor-bass honor choir piece, I thought it was a wonderful opportunity to address our flawed perspectives of masculinity. We have traditionally thought of gender identities in the binary with little space to acknowledge its expansive spectrum. I invited trans, queer femme, two-spirit poet Amir Rabiya to reflect on what masculinity means to them. At the heart of it, *Release* speaks of emotional vulnerability as a source of strength and power.

The ostinato in the piano represents rigidity and the idea of society's *fixed* thinking. It is intermittently interrupted by an alternate yet constant figure that goes against the beat, creating a polyrhythmic blur. The ostinato eventually concedes to a more fluid gesture when the *weighted jacket* is taken off.

Release was commissioned by the California Choral Directors Association for the 2023 All-State Tenor-Bass Honor Choir. The premiere was given at the California Music Educators Association (CASMEC) Conference in Fresno on February 2023.

TEXT:

Blundering through adolescence
antsy to escape locker room brawls
Sometimes the halls of school swallow you
and spitball you against the wall

You learn how to make a fist
Before you learn to sift through emotions
The translation of boy or man—*fixed*
cumbersome, leaden, difficult to shift

Are you tired yet?
There comes a time, in the quiet,
where waves of sorrow meet
the shore of possibility

Take off that weighted jacket
& wade into the sea, float on your back
& gaze at the expanse of sky,
Cry—let salt commingle with salt

Release Release Release
There is a refuge in vulnerability
strength in redefinition

-Amir Rabiya

commissioned by the California Choral Directors Association
for the 2023 TTBB All-State Honor Choir

Release

for TTB(B) with piano

Amir Rabiyyah

Saunder Choi

Con moto $\text{♩} = 72$

Tenor 1

Tenor 2

Bass/Baritone

Piano

p sempre legato

pedal accordingly

4

Pno.

mp

8

Pno.

11

Pno.

mf

vd

14

Pno.

17

T1. *mp marc.*

Blun - - de-ring blun-de-ring through a - do-le-scence.

T2. *mp marc.*

Blun - - de-ring blun-de-ring through a - do-le-scence.

B. *mp marc.*

Blun-de-ring, blun-de-ring.

Pno.

p

21

T1. Ant - sy, Ant - sy, ant - sy.

T2. Ant - sy, ant - sy.

B. Ant - sy, ant - sy to es - cape lock - er room

Pno.

25

T1. *legato* Swal - low. Some-times the halls of school

T2. *legato* Swal - low. Some-times the halls of school

B. *legato* brawls. Swal - low. Some-times the halls of school_

Pno.

29 *mf* *poco f marc.*

T1. *mf* *poco f marc.*
swal - low you and spit - ball, spit - ball,

T2. *mf* *poco f marc.*
swal - low you spit - ball,

B. *mf* *poco f marc.*
swal - low you spit - ball,

Pno. *mf* *poco f*

33

T1. spit - ball you a - gainst the wall.

T2. spit - ball you a - gainst the wall.

B. spit - ball.

Pno. *mf*

37

T1.

T2.

B.

Pno.

41

T1.

T2.

B.

Pno.

B

mf marc.

Blun-de-ring.

mf marc.

Blun - de - ring.

mf marc.

Blun - de-ring

mf legato

45

T1. Ant - sy. Ant - sy. Swal - - low.

T2. Ant - sy. Ant - sy. Swal - - low.

B. Ant - sy. Swal - - low.

Pno.

49

T1. *poco f* Spit - ball. Spit - ball. *sf* Fixed,

T2. *poco f* Spit - ball. *sf* Fixed,

B. *poco f* Spit - ball. Spit - ball. *mf* You learn how to make a fist_

Pno.

53

T1. *sim.*
fixed, fixed, fixed, fixed,

T2. *sim.*
fixed, fixed, fixed, fixed,

B. — be-fore— you learn to sift through e - mo - tions

Pno. *sf*

58

T1. fixed, fixed, fixed, fixed,

T2. *mf* *sf*
fixed, fixed The trans - la - tion of boy or man fixed,

B. *mf* *sf*
The trans - la - tion of boy or man

Pno.

63

T1. fixed, fixed, fixed, fixed,

T2. fixed, fixed, fixed, fixed,

B. cum-ber-some, lead-en, dif-fi-cult to shift.

Pno.

67

T1. *mp* fixed, fixed. Are you

T2. *mp* fixed, fixed. Are you

B. *sf* fixed. Are you

Pno. *mp*

C

71 *mf*

T1. ti - red yet? Are you ti - red yet?

T2. ti - red yet? Are you ti - red yet?

B. ti - red yet? Ti -

Pno. *mf*

76 *mp*

T1. There comes a time,

T2. There comes a time,

B. red yet. There comes a time,

Pno. *mp*

80

T1. *mf*
— in the qui - - - et, where— waves of

T2. *mf*
— in the qui - - - et, where— waves of

B. *mf*
— in the qui - - - et, — where waves of

Pno. *mf*

85 *mf*

T1. *mf*
sor - row meet the shore of

T2. *mf*
sor - row meet the shore of

B. *mf*
sor - row meet the shore,

Pno. *mf*

89

T1. *mp*
pos - si - bi - li - ty, the shore.

T2. *mp*
pos - si - bi - li - ty, the shore.

B. *mp*
the shore.

Pno. *p*

94

rit. *p*

T1. *p*
the shore.

T2. *p*
the shore.

B. *p*
the shore.

Pno.

D

Meno mosso $\text{♩} = 63$

Tenor solo:

p *espressivo*

3

99

T. Solo

pp stagger breathe

Take off that weight-ed jack - et and

T1.

hmm

pp stagger breathe

T2.

hmm

pp stagger breathe

B.

hmm

Pno.

pp

105

T. Solo

wade in - to the sea, float on you back and gaze at the ex - panse of

T1.

ooh

T2.

ooh

B.

ooh

Pno.

111 *mf*

T. Solo sky, cry- cry-

T1. *mp*

T2. *mp*

B. *mp*

Pno.

poco rit. **E** a tempo

117 *f*

T. Solo

T1. *mf* *espressivo* 3
Take off that weight - ed jack - et and

T2. *mf* *espressivo* 3
Take off that weight - ed jack - et and

B. *mf* *espressivo* 3
Take off that weight - ed jack - et and

Pno. *mf* *legato* 3 3 3 3 3 3
pedal accordingly

121

T1. wade in - to the sea, float on your back and

T2. wade in - to the sea, float on your back and

B. wade, _____ and float on your back,

Pno.

125

T1. gaze at _____ the ex - panse of sky, _____ *poco f*

T2. gaze at _____ the ex - panse of sky, _____ *poco f*

B. gaze at _____ the sky, _____ *poco f*

Pno.

129

T1. cry— cry—

T2. cry— cry—

B. cry— cry—

Pno.

132

T1. *mp* let salt com - min - gle with

T2. *mp* let salt com - min - gle with

B. let salt com - min - gle with

Pno. *mp*

137

T1. salt. Re -

T2. salt. Re -

B. salt. Re -

Pno. *p*

F 141 *poco f*

T1. lease. Re - lease. There is

T2. *poco f* lease. Re - lease. There is

B. *poco f* lease. Re - lease. There is

Pno. *poco f*

145

T1. re - fuge in vul - ne - ra - bi - li - ty.

T2. re - fuge in vul - ne - ra - bi - li - ty.

B. re - fuge in vul - ne - ra - bi - li - ty.

Pno.

149

T1. Re - lease. Re - lease. There is

T2. Re - lease. Re - lease. There is

B. Re - lease. Re - lease.

Pno.

153

T1. strength in re - de - fi - ni - tion.

T2. strength in re - de - fi - ni - tion.

B. There is strength in re - de - fi - ni - tion.

Pno.

157

T1. Blun - de - ring.

T2. Let salt co - min - gle with salt.

B. Re - lease.

Pno.

G

mp

mp

mp

162

T1. Ant - sy. Spit - ball. *poco f*

T2. Let salt co - min - gle with salt. *poco f*

B. Re - lease. Re - lease, *poco f*

Pno. *poco f*

166

T1. Swal - low. *p*

T2. Swal - low. *p*

B. re - lease. *p*

Pno. *mp*

H

mp lightly

Re - lease.

mp lightly

Re - lease.

mp lightly

Re - lease.

dim. poco a poco

175

T1.

T2.

B.

Pno.

179

rit.

p *pp*

T1. Re - lease. *p* *pp*

T2. Re - lease. *p* *pp*

B. Re - lease. *p* *pp*

Pno. *pp*