

Dragon Dance

SA children's choir, piano



Elizabeth Alexander

Seafarer Press

Dragon Dance

Behold the Chinese dragon, the toast of New Year's Day,
With legs of nearly every shape and size.
They dance in all directions, and in such disarray,
I fear she'll fall apart before my eyes!

The head goes left and the tail goes right,
The feet go fast and the body goes slow,
The front end pushes and the back end pulls and there seems to be no plan —
But hey, no matter! The dragon stays together.

Some feet are wearing sandals, or moccasins, or pumps,
Or boots with laces trailing on the ground.
The dragon bends and stretches, her body sags and humps,
But somehow that old reptile gets around.

Bravo! She goes to and fro without vertigo,
Though we all know there is no status quo below —
But hey, no matter 'cause the dragon stays together.

I marvel at this dragon cavorting in the street,
This multi-ped made up of such extremes.
I wonder how she functions with all those different feet?
What keeps the beast from splitting at the seams?

The head goes left and the tail goes right,
The feet go fast and the body goes slow,
The front end pushes and the back end pulls and there seems to be no plan —
But hey, no matter! The dragon stays together.

Elizabeth Alexander

Lyric © 2004 by Elizabeth Alexander

for Ruth Gibson

Dragon Dance

SA and piano

Jaunty swing rhythm

Elizabeth Alexander

Pno

Chords: Bm7(b5) A7/C A7/C# D7 G7 C

mp

4/4

The piano introduction consists of four measures. The first measure has a whole note chord Bm7(b5). The second measure has a whole note chord A7/C. The third measure has a whole note chord A7/C# with a melodic line starting on D4. The fourth measure has a whole note chord D7 with a melodic line continuing from the previous measure. The fifth measure has a whole note chord G7 with a melodic line continuing. The sixth measure has a whole note chord C with a melodic line continuing. The piece ends with a whole rest in the treble clef and a half note G2 in the bass clef.

5 Tutti mp

1. Be - hold the Chi - nese dra - gon, the toast of New Year's Day, with
feet are wear - ing san - dals, or moc - ca - sins or pumps, or

Pno

Chords: C9 Eb7 C9 Gb7

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped.

The piano accompaniment for the first vocal line consists of four measures. The first measure has a whole note chord C9. The second measure has a whole note chord Eb7. The third measure has a whole note chord C9. The fourth measure has a whole note chord Gb7. The piano part features a steady eighth-note bass line with a dotted quarter note on the off-beats. Pedal marks and asterisks are placed below the bass line.

10 Tutti

legs of near - ly ev - ery shape and size. They
boots with la - ces trail - ing on the ground. The

Pno

Chords: C9 Eb7 D7 G7(#5)

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped.

The piano accompaniment for the second vocal line consists of four measures. The first measure has a whole note chord C9. The second measure has a whole note chord Eb7. The third measure has a whole note chord D7. The fourth measure has a whole note chord G7(#5). The piano part continues with the eighth-note bass line. Pedal marks and asterisks are placed below the bass line.

14 Tutti

dance in all di - rec - tions and in such dis - ar - ray I
dra - gon bends and stretch - es, her bod - y sags and humps, but

Pno

Chords: C9 Eb7 C9 Gb7

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped.

The piano accompaniment for the third vocal line consists of four measures. The first measure has a whole note chord C9. The second measure has a whole note chord Eb7. The third measure has a whole note chord C9. The fourth measure has a whole note chord Gb7. The piano part continues with the eighth-note bass line. Pedal marks and asterisks are placed below the bass line.

2

18 1. *mf*

Tutti

fear she'll fall a - part be - fore my eyes! The

Pno

C⁹ Eb⁷ G⁷ Eb⁷

* Ped. * Ped. *

22

Tutti

head goes left and the tail goes right, the feet go fast and the bod-y goes slow, the

Pno

F C/E Ebdim⁷ Dm G⁷sus⁴

mf

26

Tutti

front end push-es and the back end pulls, and there seems to be no plan,

Pno

C⁶ Cm(ma⁷)/B Gm⁷/Bb A⁷ A^{b7} A⁷

30 *mp*

Tutti

but hey, no mat-ter! The dra-gon stays to - geth - er! 2. Some

Pno

Bm⁷(b⁵) A^{b7}/CA⁷/C# D⁷ G⁷ C

35 ^{2.}

Tutti

some - how that old rep - tile gets a - round.

C⁹ Eb⁷ G⁷

Pno

* Ped. * Ped. *

39 *mf*

Tutti

Bra - vo! she goes to and fro with - out ver - ti - go!

F C/E Ebdim⁷ Dm G⁷sus⁴

Pno

mf

43

Tutti

Though we all know there is no sta - tus quo be - low,

C⁶ Cm(ma⁷)/B Gm⁷/Bb A⁷ Ab⁷ A⁷

Pno

47 *pp*

Tutti

but hey, no mat - ter, 'cause the dra - gon stays to - geth - er! 3. I

Bm⁷(b⁵) Ab⁷/CA⁷/C# D⁷ G⁷ C

Pno

pp

Opal Palmer Adisa, poet • Paul Adams, technological hero • Stephen Alexander, lyric consultant • Ginny Allen, Agile coach and friend • The great people at American Composers Forum • Yehuda Amichai, poet • A. R. Ammons, poet • Jennifer Anderson, conductor and composer advocate • Scott Bates, poet • Abbie Betinis, initiator of collaborative endeavors • Beth Norton, conductor and composer advocate • Dennis Blubaugh, more than just a music dealer • Michael deVernon Boblett, poet • Edna Busby, my first piano teacher • Ray Bradbury, writer • Augustin Cadena, translator • Norbert Capek, minister and advocate for religious freedom • Jessica Corbett, editor • David Cummings, poet • Philip Dacey, poet • Catherine Dalton, composer and serum partner • Emily Dickinson, poet • Evelyn Dudley, poet and caregiver • Rob Eller-Isaacs, minister and composer advocate • Ralph Waldo Emerson, philosopher and poet • Louise Erdrich, writer • David Allan Evans, poet • Sophia Lyon Fahs, writer • Richard M. Fewkes, minister and writer • Sasha Gertler, poet • Jack Gallagher, composer and teacher • Paul Gerike, proofreader • Jocelyn Hagen and Michael Hagan, founders of Graphite Marketplace • Steve Harper, just about everything • Steve Harkins, web designer • Edie Hill, composer and friend • Langston Hughes, poet • Margaret and George Heald, piano technician • Karel Husa, composer and teacher • David Ignatow, poet • Kabir, mystic • Linda Kachelmeier, composer and serum partner • Ruth Palmer, conductor and composer advocate • Joan Wolf Prefontaine, poet • Paul Rardin, conductor and composer advocate • Kalidasa, poet • Steve Kaul, recording engineer • Søren Kierkegaard, philosopher and poet • Dorothy Knost, piano teacher • Ben Krywosz, artistic director of Nautilus Music-Theater • Denise Levertov, poet • George Ella Lyon, poet • Jonathan Machen, vocalist • Dawna Markova, writer • Anne Matlack, conductor and composer advocate • Nancy Menk, composer advocate • Edna St. Vincent Millay, poet • Jane Ramseyer Miller, conductor, composer, social activist • Joe Mish, conductor and composer advocate • J. David Moore, composer • Gerald Rich, poet • Carl Sandburg, poet • friend • King Sigismund III, religious reformer • Ann Silsbee, composer, poet and friend • Simon Alexander-Adams, sounding board, fellow creative, and awesome son • Steven Stucky, composer and teacher • Rabindranath Tagore, poet • Sister Peronne Marie Thibert, teacher and writer • Oliver Alexander-Adams, unconventional thinker and light of my life • Howard Thurman, civil rights leader and writer • Everyone whose work supports the Association for Unitarian Universalist Music Ministries • Charles Varney, high school choral director • Anna Vonhuben, illustrator and graphic designer • Nancy White, poet • John Greenleaf Whittier, poet • Theodore Chickering Williams, poet • Daniel Winter, pianist and teacher • Nancy Wood, poet • Yehudi Wyner, composer and teacher

**A lot of hard work
and creativity went
into bringing this
music to you...**



**...and some of it
was even mine.**

**This page has been intentionally omitted.
(You know why.) A complete perusal score may be
purchased through any music store or dealer.**

Elizabeth Alexander

Seafarer Press

The Music of Elizabeth Alexander
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67 *mf*

S The head goes left and the tail goes right, the

A Bra - vo! she goes to and

Pno *mf* Eb7 F C/E

70

S feet go fast and the bod - y goes slow, the front end push - es and the

A fro with - out ver - ti - go! And well I

Pno Ebdim7 Dm G7sus4 C6

73

S back end pulls, and there seems to be no plan, but hey, no

A know there is no sta - tus quo be - low, but hey, no

Pno Cm(ma7)/B Gm7/Bb A7 Ab7 A7 Bm7(b5)Ab7/C A7/C#

6

77

S mat - ter! The dra - gon stays to - geth - er!

A mat - ter, 'cause the dra - gon stays to - geth - er!

Pno

D⁷ G⁷ C

Composer's Note: In 1990, my friend Ruth Gibson wrote a column which introduced me to the amazing disorderly legs of the Chinese dragon. Like this mythical beast, our families, and communities — indeed our whole world — sometimes seem to be on the brink of flying apart, yet most of the time they continue to hang together in a most miraculous, chaotic way.

Cover Art: "Dragon Dance"

Created especially for this publication by Jonathan Machen

Jonathan Machen lives in Boulder, Colorado with his wife and two young children. He takes his inspiration from the people around him and the beauty of the Rocky Mountains and the American Southwest. Jonathan also manages the Solstice Center LLC, a healing arts facility in Boulder. Other loves are playing with his kids, playing guitar, backpacking, skiing, bicycling and kayaking.



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