

JS-114 / Step By Step / SAB a cappella / dur: 3:00

JOAN SZYMKO

STEP BY STEP

the longest march can be won



JOAN SZYMKO (b.1957)

Joan Szymko is widely regarded as an outstanding composer of choral music in America today. With a catalog of over 100 choral works in print, her music is sung regularly at choral festivals and competitions across North America and abroad and for nearly two decades has been heard on stage or in sessions at every National Conference of the American Choral Director's Association. The ACDA recognized Szymko's lasting impact on the choral arts in North America by selecting her as a recipient of the prestigious Raymond W. Brock Memorial Commission in 2010. Szymko has composed for professional, church, LGBTQ, children's and all manner of academic and community choirs. Her 2016 commissioned oratorio, *Shadow and Light*, a major new addition to the repertoire for chorus and orchestra, shines a compassionate light on the suffering of those journeying through life with Alzheimer's dementia.

Szymko's embodied approach to sound, dedication to craft, and insistence on quality texts— all relate to her focus as a conductor and are reflected in her choral compositions. Her settings do not have a readily recognizable, "sound" but consistently display a discerning, insightful marriage of words and music. Her primary intention is to always illuminate and magnify the words she sets.

Joan lives and works in Portland, Oregon in the beautiful Pacific Northwest. A dynamic conductor, she workshops her compositions with choirs in a variety of educational and festival settings across the country and abroad.

For more about Joan, see www.joanszymko.com.

NOTES

The song, *Step By Step* is steeped in the history and culture of American folk and social justice music. Composer and pianist Waldemar Hille (1908-1995), an American folk song historian and social activist, found the words to the preamble of the constitution of the first mineworkers union in the United States which had been written in 1870. He shared them with folk musician—and now, folk legend— Pete Seeger (1919-2014) hoping that Pete would find a tune to go with the words. Seeger found the perfect match: "The Praties They Grow Small," a traditional Irish song written during the Great Irish Potato Famine of the 1840's. The message of the lyrics can be summed up as "we are always stronger together" — as true for worker's unions as for any shared struggle for social justice!

Follow the phrasing pattern as indicated in the opening tutti unison throughout the arrangement. The pitch range of primary melody is modest, (D-Bb) and so *Step By Step* is well suited for the middle school / Jr High choir.

LYRICS

Step by step, the longest march
can be won, can be won.
Many stones can form an arch,
singly none, singly none.
And by union what we will
can be accomplished still.
Drops of water turn a mill,
Singly none, singly none.

STEP BY STEP

Preamble to the constitution of the
American Miners Union (1870)
Traditional Irish melody

arrangement by
Joan Szymko

♩=52 Tutti Unison
mf

Step by step the long-est march can be won, can be won, Ma-ny stones can

6 *mp* *mf*

form an arch, sing-ly none, sing-ly none, And by u-nion what we will can be ac-

12 *p* *mp* *mf*

com plished still Drops of wa - ter turn a mill, sing -ly none, sing - ly none.

17

S *mf* Ma-ny stones can

A *mf* Step by step the long-est march can be won, can be won, *N.B.*

B *mf* Step by step the long-est march *mp* Ma-ny stones can

22

S form an arch, sing-ly none, sing-ly none. And by u-nion what we will ac-

A *for perusal only* sing-ly none, sing-ly none. And by u-nion what we will can be ac-

B form an arch, sing-ly none. And by u-nion what we will can be ac-

28

S com plished still. wa - ter turn a mill, sing - ly none, sing - ly none.

A com plished still. Drops of wa - ter turn a mill, sing - ly none, sing - ly none.

B com plished still. Drops of wa - ter turn a mill, sing - ly none, sing - ly none. *N.B.*

33 *mf* N.B. ,
 S Step by step the long - est march can be won,
 A *mf* N.B.
 Step by step the long - est march
 B *f* *mf* *mp*
 Step by step, _ step by step, _ step by step, _ step by step, _ step by step,

38
 S can be won_ Ma-ny stones can form an arch, sing-ly none, sing-ly none_
 A can be won, can be won_ Ma-ny stones can form an arch, _ sing-ly none,
 B step by step, _ step by step, _ step by step, _ step by step, _ step by step, _

43 *f*
 S And by u - nion what we will can_ be ac - com - plished still
 A And by u - nion what we will can_ be ac - com - plished still
 B And by u - nion what we will can_ be ac - com - plished still

for perusal only

rit. ..

mf *mp*

47

S Drops of wa - ter turn a mill, — sing - ly none, sing - ly none, sing - ly none, //

A Drops of wa - ter turn a mill, — sing - ly none, sing - ly none, sing - ly none, //

B Drops of wa - ter turn a mill, — sing - ly none, sing - ly none, sing - ly none, //

52 **A tempo** *mf* *mp* N.B. *mf*

S Step by step long-est march — can be won. — Ma-ny stones can

A *mf* N.B. *mf* for perusal only Step by step the long-est march — can be won, can be won —

B *mf* *mp* Step by step the long-est march — Ma-ny stones can

57

S form an arch, — sing - ly none, sing - ly none — And by u - nion

A — sing - ly none, — sing - ly none — And by u - nion

B form an arch, — sing - ly none — And by u - nion

61 *f* will

S what we will can be ac - com - plished still.

A what we will can be ac - com - plished still.

B what we will can be ac - com - plished still.

64 *mf* *mp*

S Drops of wa - ter turn a mill, sing - ly none, —

A Drops of wa - ter turn a mill, sing - ly none, —

B Drops of wa - ter turn a mill, —

for perusal only

68 *rit.* *pp* //

S sing - ly none, sing - ly none.

A sing - ly none, sing - ly none.

B *p* *p* *pp* // sing - ly none, sing - ly none, sing - ly none.