

M. E. Valverde

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Crossing
for TTBB chorus and piano

About the Poet

Amir Rabiya is a queer, trans, mixed race, disabled poet, educator, and librarian currently living in Central Pennsylvania. They are the author of *Prayers for My 17th Chromosome*, published by Sibling Rivalry Press in November 2017, and co-editor of *Writing the Walls Down: A Convergence of LGBTQ Voices*, published by Trans-Genre Press in October 2015. Amir writes about living with chronic pain and illness, war, trauma, spirituality, healing, redemption—and speaks on silenced places. Their other works have been published in *Mizna*, *580 Split*, *Flicker and Spark: A Contemporary Queer Anthology of Spoken Word and Poetry*, *Enizagam*, *Troubling the Line: Trans and Genderqueer Poetry and Poetics*, *The Asian American Literary Review*, *Kweli Journal*, *Sukoon*, *Collective Brightness: LGBTIQ Poets on Faith, Religion and Spirituality* and more. Amir is a three-time VONA (Voices of our Nations) fellow. They were a finalist in the 2008 Joy Harjo Poetry contest, the 2012 Enizagam poetry contest, and the Atlanta Review's 2013 poetry contest.

Amir has travelled extensively all over the United States leading workshops and sharing their stories and poems. In 2009, Amir had the privilege of being an STP with June Jordan's Poetry for the People program at UC Berkeley where they supported emerging poets develop their craft and deepen their voice. Amir has participated in residencies at the Kimmel Nelson Harding Center in Nebraska, the Guapamacáaro Center for Art and Ecology in Michoacán, Mexico, and more. For more information or to contact Amir, visit www.AmirRabiya.com.

*We bridge broken wood,
repair the rotten slats that creak.
We restore the lifeless vine,
braid vitality from decay.
The way of crossing is never easy,
someone always looks down. We tremble
knowing how far we can fall. We question
who or what will cushion us. We feel our frailty.
We love, as tremors rock earth,
bound in devastation & slow transition.
We love, the way erosion
paints complex striations.
Vulnerable, the way exposed mountains
remember being covered by the ocean.
How we love, through each disaster,
Praise us, how much we risk with every reach.*

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Composer's Notes

"Crossing" is a musical setting of "Risk" by the disabled, mixed race, transgender, queer poet Amir Rabiya. Commissioned by Seattle Men's Chorus for their concert series "Born This Way," this work concerns the risk of coming out of the closet and the brave act of choosing love over and over again. The rickety, unsure bridge, from which some "look down" and fall to their demise, is a metaphor for the daunting process of coming out as L, G, B, T, or Q or trans-amorous; but once this bridge is crossed, there is abounding love to be had and replicated.

dur. = ca. 4'

Commissioned by Seattle Men's Chorus, Paul Caldwell, Artistic Director

Crossing

for TTBB chorus and piano

Amir Rabiya
b. 1978

Mari Esabel Valverde
b. 1987

Andante, resolutely ♩ = ca. 72

mf

The musical score is written for a TTBB chorus and piano. It features five staves: Tenor 1, Tenor 2, Bass 1, Bass 2, and Piano. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked 'Andante, resolutely' with a quarter note equal to approximately 72 beats per minute. The dynamic marking is *mf* (mezzo-forte). The lyrics 'We' are written under the vocal staves. The piano part is marked *mp legato, poco a poco cresc.* (mezzo-piano, legato, gradually increasing in volume). A large diagonal watermark reading 'Not authorized for performance!' is overlaid across the score.

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5

T 1
bridge — bro - ken wood, re - pair the rot - ten slats that creak.

T 2
bridge — bro - ken wood, re - pair the rot - ten slats that creak.

B 1
bridge — bro - ken wood, re - pair the rot - ten slats that creak.

B 2
bridge — bro - ken wood, re - pair the rot - ten slats that creak.

Pno. *mf*

9

T 1
We re - store the life - less vine, braid

T 2
We re - store the life - less vine, braid

B 1
We re - store the life - less vine, braid

B 2
We re - store the life - less vine, braid

Pno. *mp*

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13

T 1

8

vi - ta - li - ty vi - ta - li - ty from de -

T 2

8

vi - ta - li - ty vi - ta - li - ty from de -

B 1

vi - ta - li - ty vi - ta - li - ty from de -

B 2

vi - ta - li - ty vi - ta - li - ty from de -

Pno.

cresc. *mf*

f rit.

17

A tempo

T 1

cay.

T 2

cay.

B 1

cay

B 2

cay

Pno.

f cantabile *rub.*

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all tenors

p poco sotto voce, espress.

21

T *8* some - one

all basses

p poco sotto voce, espress.

B The way of cross - ing is nev - er eas - y,

Pno. *sub. p* *L.H.*
the heartbeat

25

T *8* al - ways looks down. We trem - ble know - ing how

B We trem - ble

Pno.

29

T *8* far we can fall. We ques - tion

B We ques - tion who or

Pno.

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33

T 8 We feel our

B 8 what will cushion us. We feel our

Pno.

37

T 1 *fz* frail ty. *mf* gallantly We

T 2 *fz* frail ty. *mf* gallantly We

B 1 *fz* frail ty. *mf* gallantly We

B 2 *fz* frail ty. We

Pno. *mf*

Sea *

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41

T 1
love, as trem - ors rock the earth, bound in dev - as - ta - tion [and]

T 2
love, as trem - ors rock the earth, bound in dev - as - ta - tion [and]

B 1
love, as trem - ors rock the earth, bound in dev - as - ta - tion [and]

B 2
love, as trem - ors rock the earth, bound in dev - as - ta - tion [and]

Pno.

45

T 1
slow tran - si - tion. We love, the way e -

T 2
slow tran - si - tion. We love, the way e -

B 1
slow tran - si - tion. We love, the way e -

B 2
slow tran - si - tion. We love, the way e -

Pno.

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49

T 1
ro - sion paints com - plex stri - a - tions. Vul - nera -

T 2
ro - sion paints com - plex stri - a - tions. Vul - nera -

B 1
ro - sion paints com - plex stri a - tions. Vul - nera -

B 2
ro - sion paints com - plex stri - a - tions. Vul - nera -

Pno.

fz

53

T 1
ble,
mf *tenor or bari. solo, tenderly*

T 2
ble, the way ex - posed — moun - tains re - mem - ber be - ing

B 1
ble,
mf

B 2
ble,

Pno.
mf col canto

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57 *opt. (non div.)*

T 2
cov - ered by the o - - - cean.

Pno.

60 *f*

T 1
Oh! How we love, through each dis - as - ter

T 2
Oh! How we love, through each dis - as - ter

B 1
Oh! How we love, through each dis - as - ter

B 2
Oh! How we love, through each dis - as - ter

Pno. *f*

Freely, introspectively ♩ = ca. 63

rit.

cresc.

p *espress.*

64

T 1
Praise us, how

T 2
Praise us, how

B 1
Praise us, how

B 2
Praise us, how

Pno.

67

T 1
much we risk with eve-ry reach. We love.

T 2
much we risk with eve-ry reach. We love.

B 1
much we risk with eve-ry reach. We love.

B 2
much we risk with eve-ry reach. We love.

Pno.

p

cresc. al fine

f