

Voices Rising United

Perusal Score
Not for performance

AJ Harbison

This is a perusal score only.
For performance materials, please send a request to store@ajharbison.com.
Thank you for your interest in my music!

Voices Rising United

for SSAA chorus and piano

AJ Harbison

Program Notes

Voices Rising United is based on the story and words of Malala Yousafzai, the young Pakistani activist, advocate for women's rights and education, and the youngest person ever to be nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. Michael Robert Patch, the conductor and artistic director of the Kansas City Women's Chorus, commissioned the piece in the fall of 2013. The text, adapted from Malala's own words, was written by Kansas author and poet Debra Seely. The music utilizes harmonies idiomatic to pop music, as well as vocal sound effects and spoken elements. The Kansas City Women's Chorus premiered the piece on May 31, 2014, at the Folly Theater in Kansas City, Missouri.

Performance Notes

The singers of the three musical solos (in measures 18-19, 54-57, and 118-120) should remain in the ensemble during the solos, and should not come to the front of the stage or be amplified apart from the ensemble in any way.

The same should apply to the whispering soloists (in measures 11-18 and 82-84). If there is concern about the whispered solos being heard (taking into account the size of the ensemble and the performance space), two alternative techniques may be used. First, more singers may be added to each part to increase the volume; however, care should be taken that the overall volume of the whispers be soft enough to be almost covered by the piano and choir.

Second, a technique similar to the spoken elements in measures 97 and following may be employed, in which one soloist whispers the word in rhythm as notated, and other members of the same section whisper the word *ad lib* for a measure or two, finishing before or slightly overlapping with the next whispered text. If this second technique is used, all of the whispering soloists should whisper the unison text in rhythm as notated at the end of the phrase (measures 18 and 84).

Duration: ca. 4 minutes 30 seconds

Composed for Michael Robert Patch and the Kansas City Women's Chorus

Voices Rising United

by Debra Seely

Inspired by the story and words of Malala Yousafzai

I cry out – not to scream
but to give voice to those who are voiceless.
We take up pen and book, our strongest armaments.

We grasp the value of our power
to speak only when we are made speechless,
and the power of our words is made clear.

Together We Raise Our Voices.
Hear Our Mighty Voice.
Embrace the Power of our Voices United.

inspired by the story and words of Malala Yousafzai
composed for Michael Robert Patch and the Kansas City Women's Chorus

Voices Rising United

Debra Seely (2013)

AJ Harbison (2014)

Musical score for Soprano, Alto, and Piano. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 72. The Soprano part starts with *fp* (staggered breaths) and dynamic markings *mf*, *p*, and *f*. The Alto part starts with *sh* and *fp* (staggered breaths) and dynamic markings *mf*, *p*, *mf*, and *f*. The Piano part is marked *p* and features a *quasi-improvisatory* section with a 7-measure phrase and a 3-measure phrase.

PERUSAL SCORE ONLY

Musical score for Solos, Soprano, Alto, and Piano. The Solos part is marked *pp* and includes the lyrics **lis - ten* and *pp speak*. The Soprano and Alto parts are marked *p*. The Piano part is marked *p* and features a *quasi-improvisatory* section with a 7-measure phrase and a 3-measure phrase. The final piano part is marked *pp* 8^{vb}.

* Whisped by four different soloists (two sopranos and two altos, represented by the pitches F5, C5, G4 and D4, respectively), softly enough to be almost covered by the piano and choir. The final "listen!", even at *mezzo forte*, should still be whisped.

14

Solo

Sopranos

S.

A.

Piano

pp pow-er

pp words

mf lis-ten

mf lis-ten

mf lis-ten!

mf lis-ten!

mf lis-ten

mf lis-ten

mf sh

mp

mf

p

mf

PERUSAL SCORE ONLY

(8)...

broadening

p *mp* *p*

broadening

mf *p* *mf*

20 Slightly faster ♩ = 84

Soprano I

Soprano II

Alto I

Alto II

Piano

mp *mf* *mp* *p*

I cry out

mp *mf* *mp* *p*

I cry out

p smoothly, almost like a chant, with staggered breaths

Ma - la - la Ma - la - la Ma - la - la Ma - la - la Ma - la - la

p smoothly, almost like a chant, with staggered breaths

Ma - la - la Ma - la - la Ma - la - la Ma - la - la Ma - la - la

Slightly faster ♩ = 84

pp

25

S. *mp* *mf* *mp* *p* *mf*
I cry out not to

S. *mp* *mf* *mp* *p* *mf*
I cry out not to

A. Ma - la - la Ma - la - la Ma - la - la Ma - la - la I cry out not to

A. Ma - la - la Ma - la - la Ma - la - la Ma - la - la I I cry out not to

Piano

PERUSAL SCORE ONLY

31

S. *f* *mf* *mf* *f* *mp*
scream not to scream

S. *f* *mf* *mf* *f* *mp* *mp*
scream not to scream but to give

A. *f* *mf* *mf* *f* *mp* *mp* *mf*
scream not to scream but to give voice

A. *f* *mf* *mf* *f* *mp*
scream not to scream

Piano

37

S. *p* voice - less but to give voice to those who are

S. *mf* *mp* *pp* *n* *p* voice to those who are voice - less voice - less but to give voice to those who are

A. *pp* *pp* *p* *voice ah ah but to give voice to those who are

A. *pp* *p* ah ah but to give voice to those who are

Piano *p*

PERUSAL SCORE ONLY

43

S. *f* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *f* voice - less We take up pen and book, our strong - est ar - ma - ments.

S. *f* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *f* voice - less We take pen and book, our strong - est ar - ma - ments.

A. *f* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *f* voice - less take up pen and book, our strong - est ar - ma - ments.

A. *f* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *f* voice - less take up pen and book our strong - est ar - ma - ments.

Piano *mf* *p* *f*

* Whispered by alto I section

50

S.

S.

A.

A.

Piano

8^{va}

PERUSAL SCORE ONLY

56

S.

S.

A.

A.

Piano

(8)

61

S. *p mp f mf*
 grasp we grasp the val - ue of our pow - er to speak

S. *pp pp mp f mf*
 *grasp grasp our pow - er to speak

A. *Tutti pp < p > pp pp mp f mf*
 grasp grasp our pow'r to speak

A. *pp < p > pp pp mp f mf*
 grasp grasp speak

Piano *p mf*

(8).....

PERUSAL SCORE ONLY

65

S. *mf ff* (staggered breaths through measure 74) (n.b.)
 our pow - er to speak speak speak

S. *mf ff* (staggered breaths through measure 74) (n.b.)
 our pow - er to speak speak

A. *mf ff* (staggered breaths through measure 74) (n.b.)
 our pow - er to speak speak

A. *mf ff* (staggered breaths through measure 74) (n.b.)
 our pow - er to speak speak speak

Piano *mf f n*
 slowly release keys through two beats

slowly release keys through two beats

*Whispered by soprano II section

71

S. *mp* *p*
We

S. *mp*

A. *mp* *p*
speak speak speak Ma - la

A. *mp* *p*
speak Ma - la

Piano

pp
PERUSAL SCORE ONLY

77

S. *mf*
grasp the va - lue the va - lue of our pow - er to speak on - ly when we are made

S. *p* *mf*
speak on - ly when we are made

A. *p* *mf*
Ma - la Ma - la speak Ma - la - la Ma - la - la

A. *p* *mf*
Ma - la Ma - la speak Ma - la - la

Piano

82

Solos

pp *mf* *pp*

**speech - less speech-less speech-less speech-less

speech less speech - less speech less speech-less

mp *p* *mf* *p*

S. speech - less and the

mp *p* *mf* *p*

S. *speech-less and the

mp *p* *mf*

A. la la la

mp *p* *mf*

A. la

Piano

PERUSAL SCORE ONLY

86

S. *pp* *p* *mf* *mp*

pow - er of our words the pow - er⁴ of our words is made clear

pp *p* *mf* *mp*

S. pow - er the pow - er of our words is made clear

p *pp* *p* *mf* *mp*

A. words the pow - er of words is made clear

p *mf* *mp*

A. the pow - er of words is made clear

Piano

* Whispered by soprano II section

** Whispered by the same four soloists as the opening (two sopranos and two altos). Each word should be whispered as before, regardless of the dynamic.

91 *p*

S.

S.

A.

A.

Piano

p

7

7

3

3

like an echo

pp

3

8^{vb}

PERUSAL SCORE ONLY

95 *p*

S.

S.

A.

A.

Piano

ppp

(8)

Together We Raise Our Voices.

p Together We Raise Our Voices.

p Together We Raise Our Voices.

p Together We Raise Our Voices.

(staggered breaths) *n* *p* *mf* *p*

sh

(staggered breaths) *n* *p* *mf* *p*

sh

* The sopranos should be divided into four parts (notated as one part above and below each soprano staff). At each entrance, cued by the conductor, the section should speak (not whisper) the boxed text once together. Following the first statement of the text, each individual soprano should repeat the text ad lib, asynchronously, until the end of the horizontal line.

101

S. *mf* *p* *mf* Hear Our Mighty Voice.

S. *mf* *p* *mf* Hear Our Mighty Voice.

A. *mf* *p* *mf* Hear Our Mighty Voice.

A. *mf* *p* *mf* *p* Hear Our Mighty Voice.

Piano *ppp*

PERUSAL SCORE ONLY

109

S. *f*

S. *f* *n* *p* sh

A. *p* *mf* *p* *n*

A. *mf* *p* *n*

Piano *p* *8^{vb}*

115

Soprano solo
mp

Solo

ah ah ah

p

mf

p

p * Embrace the Power of our Voices...

p Embrace the Power of our Voices...

mp Embrace the Power of our Voices...

mf Embrace the Power of our Voices...

Piano

PERUSAL SCORE ONLY

(8)...

121

f *p* *mp*

S. ***U - nit - ed.*

f *mp* *n*

S. ***U - nit - ed.*

f *mp*

A. ***U - nit - ed.*

f *mp*

A. ***U - nit - ed.*

Piano

* As the sopranos; spoken, not whispered.
** Spoken, not whispered.