



Song
Has a Bird for
Rhythm

Text by
Michel Khalil Helayel

Music by
Giselle Wyers





About the composer

Giselle Wyers (she/her/hers) is the Donald E. Petersen Endowed Professor of Choral Music at the University of Washington, where she conducts the award-winning University Chorale and teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in choral conducting and music education. University of Washington Chorale has performed at NAFME and ACDA conferences as well as collaborating with Seattle Symphony and internationally acclaimed performing and visual artists. Wyers also conducts Concord Chamber Choir, an adult community chorus within the Columbia Choirs community, and the professional project choir Solaris Vocal Ensemble, which specializes in the performance of contemporary American choral works. As a guest conductor, Wyers has led honor choirs in Canada, New York, Georgia, Connecticut, Nebraska, Texas, Washington, Idaho, plus six all-state choruses (to date) in Kansas, Missouri, Alaska, Wisconsin, Nevada, and Northwest ACDA. She has conducted semi-professional ensembles across the United States and Europe. Wyers' catalog includes 25 commissioned choral works, with performances across the globe. Wyers is especially dedicated to composing works that aim to make the world a better place through awareness of modern social, political and environmental issues.

Website: gisellewyers.com

Composer Notes

"Song Has a Bird for Rhythm" is the fourth movement of a larger work originally written for strings, piano and choir entitled *And All Shall Be Well*. The text is derived from a book by Lebanese poet Michel Khalil Helayel entitled *Song: A Name for Life* (trans. Cerven). Helayel describes birds as spiritual creatures that fly and reside near the boundary between physical and heavenly worlds. The poem also uses birds symbolically to imagine humankind's striving for freedom, "carrying story lines" through generations into the best future possible ("Is not the future in song?") This piece should be sung with vigor, optimism and joy, as a call to action for all humankind to embrace that which is best and most noble in society.

PREVIEW

Text

Song has a bird for rhythm
Song lives in blue sky
Birds never abandon song
Song birds who carry story lines from our hands
Birds who record their symphonies in the seeds of days to come
Song is the rhythm of the wind
Song birds who carry story lines from our hands
Birds who record their symphonies in the seeds of days to come
The high seas of nostalgia
Song runs through the veins
Beats in the ground of words
Song has a bird for rhythm
Song lives in blue sky
Birds never abandon song
Is not the future in song?

Ranges



— Michel Khalil Helayel (translated by Laura Cerven)



recording and rehearsal tracks available at sbmp.com

Commissioned by the Vashon Island Chorale by Jo Ann Bardeen
in memory of her parents, John and Alice Arthur. Gary Cannon, conductor.

Song Has a Bird for Rhythm

Michel Khalil Helayel,
Trans. Laura Cerven

Giselle Wyers

The musical score is written in 2/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It begins with a tempo marking of quarter note = 76. The vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and Piano accompaniment are shown. The lyrics are: "Song has a bird for rhythm". The piano part includes the instruction "crisp and light".

PREVIEW

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1746-3

8

thm Song lives in blue sky

thm Song lives in blue sky

11

Song has a bird for rhy - thm Song lives in blue sky

Song has a bird for rhy - thm Song lives in blue sky

mf Song, bird, rhy - thm, Song, blue

mf Song, bird, rhy - thm, Song, blue

14

f

Birds nev - er a - ban - don song

f

Birds nev - er a - ban - don song

8 sky Birds nev - er a - ban - don song

sky Birds nev - er a - ban - don song

f

18

Birds nev - er a - ban - don song

Birds nev - er a - ban - don song

Birds nev - er a - ban - don song

Birds nev - er a - ban - don song

f

23 *mf*

Song birds_ who car - ry sto-ry lines_ from our hands_

26

Birds who re - cord_ their sym - pho - nies_ in the

PREVIEW

29

seeds_ of days_ to come ___

mp

Song is the rhy-thm of the wind

mp

Song is the rhy-thm of the wind

33

mf

Song is the

Song is the rhy-thm of the wind

Song is the rhy-thm of the

mf

Song is the

Song is the rhy-thm of the wind

Song is the rhy-thm of the

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36

rhy-thm of the wind Song is the rhy-thm of the wind

wind Song is the rhy-thm of the wind

rhy-thm of the wind Song is the rhy-thm of the wind

wind Song is the rhy-thm of the wind

mf

39

f
Song birds... ry sto-ry lines... from our hands...

mf
Song is the rhy-thm of the wind Song is the

mf
Song is the rhy-thm of the wind Song is the rhy-thm of the

mf
Song is the rhy-thm of the wind Song is the rhy-thm of the

42

f
Birds who re - cord their sym - pho - nies in the

mf
rhy - thm of the wind Song is the rhy - thm of the wind

mf
wind Song is the rhy - thm of the wind

mf
wind Song is the rhy - thm of the wind

45

seeds of days to come

Song is the rhy - thm of the wind

Song is the rhy - thm of the wind

Song is the rhy - thm of the wind

49

mf > > > > >

The high seas of nos - tal - gia _____

mf > > > > >

The high seas of nos - tal - gia _____

mf > > > > >

The high seas of nos - tal - gia _____

mf > > > > >

The high seas of nos - tal - gia _____

53

f > > > > >

The high seas of nos - tal - gia _____

f > > > > >

The high seas of nos - tal - gia _____

f > > > > >

The high seas of nos - tal - gia _____

f > > > > >

The high seas of nos - tal - gia _____

f > > > > >

The high seas of nos - tal - gia _____

57

Ah Ah Ah Ah

Song runs through the Song runs through the Song runs through the Song runs through the

mf *mf* *mf* *mf*

62

veins Beats in the ground of words Song runs through the

veins Beats in the ground of words Song runs through the

veins Beats in the ground of words Song runs through the

veins Beats in the ground of words Song runs through the

mf

PREVIEW

66

veins Beats in the ground of words Beats in the ground of words

veins Beats in the ground of words Beats in the ground of words

veins Beats in the ground of words Beats in the ground of words

veins Beats in the ground of words Beats in the ground of words

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70

Song runs through the veins Beats in the ground of words

Song runs through the veins Beats in the ground of words

Song runs through the veins Beats in the ground of words

Song runs through the veins Beats in the ground of words

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74 *f*

Beats in the ground of words _

f

Beats in the ground of words _

f

Beats in the ground of words _

f

Beats in the ground of words _

79 *mf*

Song has a bird for rhy - thm _____ Song lives in blue sky _

mf

Song has a bird for rhy - thm _____ Song lives in blue sky _

mf

Song has a bird for rhy - thm _____ Song,

mf

Song has a bird for rhy - thm _____ Song lives in blue sky

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86

mf

Song has a bird for rhy - thm Song lives in blue sky

lives in blue sky Song has a bird for rhy - thm Song lives in blue sky

Song lives, Song, bird, rhy - thm, Song, blue

Song lives, Song, bird, rhy - thm, Song, blue

90

f
Birds nev - er a - ban - don song
f
Birds nev - er a - ban - don song
f
sky Birds nev - er a - ban - don song
f
sky Birds nev - er a - ban - don song

94

Birds nev - er a - ban - don song
Birds nev - er a - ban - don Ah
Birds nev - er a - ban - don song
Birds nev - er a - ban - don song



98 *molto cresc.* *ff*

Ah Is not the fu-ture in song?

molto cresc. *ff*

Is not the fu-ture in song?

molto cresc. *ff*

Ah Is not the fu-ture in song?

molto cresc. *ff*

Ah Is not the fu-ture in song?

molto cresc.

PREVIEW

104 *non rit.*

non rit.