



HOPE IS THE THING WITH FEATHERS

for SATB chorus a cappella

[2020]

Premiered by

Modern Sound Collective - Kai Leung, artistic director

Official Selection of the 2024 MSC Call for Scores

text by

EMILY DICKINSON

music by

RÉMI ST-JACQUES



Modern
Sound
Collective

ABOUT THE PIECE

This poem spoke to me as to how volatile and fragile hope can be in harsher times of one's life. I aimed to depict such fragility with the exposed altos while the others blend shyly. The harsher times are depicted by the moving melodic lines moving from one voice to another, as if to carry the bird of hope like the winds coming from various parts, trying to take the bird away from its destination, before ending to a calmer and more stable progression towards a clear and bright but unusual cadence, like the last rays of a setting sun.

PERFORMANCE INDICATIONS: As a mere suggestion, it would be desirable to sing with as close as possible to the general British pronunciation, especially to keep the rhyme of certain words (like "soul" and "all"), which wouldn't be sufficiently convincing if sung in a General Northern American pronunciation.

ORIGINAL TEXT

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

"Hope" is the thing with feathers

*"Hope" is the thing with feathers -
That perches in the soul -
And sings the tune without the words -
And never stops - at all -*

*And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -
And sore must be the storm -
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm -*

*I've heard it in the chilliest land -
And on the strangest Sea -
Yet - never - in Extremity,
It asked a crumb - of me.*

PRINTING

Choral scores distributed by *MSC Presents* are formatted for saddle-stitch 8.5x11 printing.

MSC Presents

MSC Presents, launched in 2023 by Toronto's Modern Sound Collective (artistic director: Kai Leung), is a progressive new publication label serving as a professional distribution platform for the music of MSC-affiliated composers. Offering an extremely competitive royalty rate to its artists, this initiative aims to create accessible opportunities for growth and collaboration for the many talented young choral composers in the GTA and beyond.

ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Originating from a northern suburb of Montreal, Canada, **Rémi St-Jacques** first began learning the piano at the age of 10 and composition by the age of 15. After a stay at a musical camp, he decided to pursue undergraduate studies in composition. Graduating in 2015 at University of Montreal with a bachelor's in music writing.



FB: [Rémi St-Jacques, Compositeur/Composer](#)
Youtube: [@stjacquesremi](#)
Soundcloud: [Rémi St-Jacques, composer](#)

In composition, he won several prizes and honourable mentions in choral composition performed in Canada, as well as in the United States, France, Czech Republic, England and Italy. Most recently, in May 2023, he earned the Marie-Bernard prize, a recognition prize by Alliance Chorale du Québec to highlight one's contribution to the choral repertoire.

After discovering his passion for choral music, he attended workshops in choir conducting, held by the Alliance Chorale du Québec. This passion led him to complete a master's degree in choral conducting at Université de Sherbrooke, studying with the conductor and composer Robert Ingari. To this day, he conducts five choirs in the Greater Montreal Area.

MSC Presents:
Premiered by
Modern Sound Collective - Kai Leung, artistic director

HOPE IS THE THING WITH FEATHERS

text by
EMILY DICKINSON

for SATB chorus a cappella

music by
RÉMI ST-JACQUES

$\text{♩} = 72$
mp **p** **p**

SOPRANO
oh oh mm Hope is the

ALTO
mp **mf** **p**
oh oh Hope is the thing,

TENOR
mp **p** **p**
oh oh mm Hope is the

BASS
mp **p** **p**
oh oh mm Hope is the

Piano
(for rehearsal only)
 $\text{♩} = 72$

7 **mp** **p sempre**

S. thing, the thing with fea - thers that per - ches

A. the thing with fea - thers that per - ches

T. thing, the thing with fea - thers that per - ches

B. thing, the thing with fea - thers that per - ches

Pno.

11

S. *mp* *mf*
in the soul and sings the tune with -

A. *mf*
in the soul and sing the tune with -

T. *mp* *mf*
in the soul and sings the tune with -

B. *mp* *mf*
in the soul and sings the tune with -

Pno.

16

S. *mf*
-out the words and ne - ver stops, and ne - ver stops, and

A. *mf*
-out the words and ne - ver stops, and ne - ver stops, and

T. *mf*
-out the words and ne - ver stops, and ne - ver stops, and

B. *mf*
- out the words, and ne - ver stops, and ne - ver stops, and

Pno.

FOR PURCHASE ONLY at modernsoundcollective.ca

20 22

S. *p*
ne - ver stops at all. And sweet - est, in the Gale, is

A. *p*
ne - ver stops at all. And sweet - est, in the Gale, is

T. *mf* *p* *mp* *mf* *p*
ne - ver stops at all. And sweet - est, in the Gale, is heard,

B. *p* *mp*
ne - ver stops at all. And sweet - est, in the Gale, is

Pno.

25

S. *mp*
heard, and sore must be the storm that could a - bash

A. *mp*
heard, and sore must be the storm that could a - bash

T. *mp*
and sore must be the storm that could a - bash the

B. *mp*
heard, and sore must be the storm that could a - bash the

Pno.

(stagger breathe to bar 32)

(stagger breathe to bar 34)

(stagger breathe to bar 34)

(stagger breathe to bar 34)

29 *mf*

S. the lit - tle Bird that kept so ma - ny warm.

A. the lit - tle Bird that kept so ma ny warm.

T. lit-tle Bird that kept so ma - ny warm.

B. lit - tle Bird that kept so ma ny warm.

Pno.

33 *f* *mf*

S. I've heard it in the chil - lest land and

A. I've heard it in the chil-lest land and on the strang - est

T. I've heard it in the chil-lest land and on the strang-est

B. I've heard it in the chil - lest land and

Pno.

34

FOR PURCHASE ONLY at modernsoundcollective.ca

37

S. on the strang-est Sea, yet, ne - ver, in Ex -

A. Sea, yet, ne - ver, yet ne - ver, in Ex -

T. Sea, yet, ne - ver, yet ne - ver, in Ex

B. on the strang-est Sea, yet, ne - ver, yet, ne - ver, in Ex -

Pno.

41

S. -tre - mi-ty, it asked a crumb of me. *Un poco meno mosso* (♩ = 63) **46**

A. -tre - mi-ty, it asked a crumb of me. Hope is the *p mp p mp*

T. -tre - mi-ty, it asked a crumb of me. *p mp p*

B. -tre - mi-ty it asked a crumb of me. *p*

Pno. *rit.* *Un poco meno mosso* (♩ = 63) **46**

47 *p* *mp* *p*

S. *oh* *oh*

A. *mf* *p* *mp*

thing with fea - thers, and sings the tune with-out the

T. *p* *mp* *p*

oh that per-ches in the soul *oh*

B. *p* *mp* *p*

oh

Pno.

52 *mp*

S. *mp*

and ne - ver stops, and ne - ver

A. *mf*

words, and ne - ver stops, and ne - ver

T. *mp*

and ne - ver stops, and ne - ver

B. *mp*

and ne - ver stops, and ne - ver

Pno.

FOR PAPER USAL ONLY purchase copies at modernsoundcollective.ca

57

rit.

S. stops and ne - ver stops at all.

A. stops, and ne - ver stops at all.

T. stops, and ne - ver stops all.

B. stops, and ne - ver stops at all.

Pno.

FOR PERUSAL ONLY
purchase copies at
modernsoundcollective.ca

FOR PERUSAL ONLY
purchase copies at
modernsoundcollective.ca

FOR PERUSAL ONLY
purchase copies at
modernsoundcollective.ca



MSC  CATALOG
presents

Works Available as of **January 15th 2025**
[start your search at modernsoundcollective.ca/store]

LISTED ALPHABETICALLY BY TITLE
CLICK TITLES FOR DIRECT LINKS & SCORE VIDEOS
VOICINGS INDICATE MAXIMUM DIVISI SPLITS WITHIN EACH WORK

Danial Sheibani	<u><i>The Affable Enigma</i></u>	SSSAAATTTBB a cappella	Rūmī	3 min	2021	MSC0009
Sami Anguaya	<u><i>Dawn, Where Are You Now?</i></u>	SSAATTBB, piano, 2 woodblocks	Sami Anguaya	4 min	2024	MSC0013
Kai Leung	<u><i>Generation 2.5</i></u>	SSAATTBB a cappella	Kai Leung	7 min	2024	MSC0014
H. Zack Ferns	<u><i>Gratitude</i></u>	SATB a cappella	L.M. Montgomery	4 min	2024	MSC0017
Rémi St-Jacques	<u><i>Hope is the Thing with Feathers</i></u>	SATB a cappella	Emily Dickinson	3.5 min	2020	MSC0019
Michael Nunes	<u><i>L.</i></u>	SSAATTBB a cappella	Erica Kath	3 min	2019	MSC0018
Sami Anguaya	<u><i>Lying Awake, Waiting</i></u>	SSAATTBB a cappella	Tom Robinson & Sami Anguaya	4 min	2022	MSC0001
Nicholas Wanstall	<u><i>May This Place</i></u>	SSAATB a cappella	Nicholas Wanstall	3 min	2018	MSC0006
Hirad Moradi	<u><i>Ah, Moon of My Delight!</i></u>	SSAATTBB a cappella	Omar Khayyam	8 min	2022	MSC0015
Nicholas Wanstall	<u><i>Le Pont Mirabeau</i></u>	SATB, soloist, & piano	Guillaume Apollinaire	4 min	2024	MSC0016
Madox Terrell	<u><i>Remember</i></u>	SSAATTBB a cappella	Christina Rossetti	2.5 min	2020	MSC0010
Carol Kayee Mak	<u><i>The Sirens' Song</i></u>	SSATBB & piano	William Browne	5 min	2019	MSC0008
Emily Green	<u><i>Somewhere in Space</i></u>	SSAA & percussion trio	Edith Södergran	3.5 min	2023	MSC0002
Elizabeth Legierski	<u><i>Spring and Fall</i></u>	SSAATTBB a cappella	Gerard Manley Hopkins	3 min	2018	MSC0007
Francesca Hauser	<u><i>That Shadow, My Likeness</i></u>	SSAATTBB & piano	Walt Whitman & Christina Rossetti	4 min	2024	MSC0013
Tyrese Walters	<u><i>This is Not Love</i></u>	SSAATTBB a cappella	Elsa Gidlow	3 min	2024	MSC0020
E.K.R. Hammell	<u><i>Too Still for Dreams</i></u>	SSAATTBB & piano	A.E. Wetherald	4.5 min	2022	MSC0003
Francesca Hauser	<u><i>Twilight</i></u>	SSAATTBB & piano	Sara Teasdale	3.5 min	2022	MSC0004
Emily Green	<u><i>What the Silence Offers</i></u>	SSAATTBB, soloist, & amplified speaker	Erica Kath	9 min	2022	MSC0012
Kai Leung	<u><i>When David Heard</i></u>	SSAATTBB a cappella	2 Samuel 18:33	3 min	2022	MSC0005