

This work was commissioned by Sally Roberts in celebration of the 75th birthday of Don Roberts.

Performance Notes

1. Choruses performing this work should have a minimum number of twenty-four singers. Larger choruses will have the ability to produce a fuller sound in the *divisi* sections.
2. In measures 12–13, separate lines have been provided for solo voices (in the case of smaller choruses) or small groups of singers (preferable when the chorus has more than thirty-two singers). The text of the first line of the poem has been fragmented in those measures so that individual syllables are sung by the indicated solo voices (or small groups). The total sound should always be balanced so that the soloists' (or small group's) text will be clearly heard.
3. The fugal section in measures 26–59 again makes use of the solo/small group voices. In most cases it will be preferable for four solo voices to sing the counterpoint, and for all other singers to sing the blocks of harmony that begin at measure 37. With very large choruses it may be desirable to use four small groups of voices to sing the counterpoint.
4. The opening solo section with two bass (or baritone) soloists is set up as a "call" (soloist 1) and "answer" (soloist 2) section which concludes with the entrance of the tenors in measure 7. To maximize the effect of the call and answer, the two soloists, who begin the piece, should not be standing with the rest of the chorus. Rather, the two soloists should be in opposite corners of the room. The corners where they stand may be in front of the audience, behind the audience, or in a diagonal relationship (in other words, one in the front left corner of the room in front of the audience, and the other in the rear right corner of the room behind the audience) with the chorus positioned in a central location in front of the audience. As the soloists begin to sing, they should walk slowly towards each other (and towards the chorus). At measure 7, when the tenor section of the chorus begins to sing, the two soloists should be close enough to the chorus that they can take their places in it and sing with the bass section in measure 8. During the first 6 measures of the piece, as the soloists are singing, they should pace their "journey" so that they do not have to rush their walking movements. The soloists may sing the two solo parts in measures 1–6 somewhat freely so that the breaks between the "call" of soloist 1 and the "answer" of soloist 2 can be longer than a breath break, and each call and answer pairing may be separated with a slightly longer break. In other words, between measures 2 and 3, 3 and 4, 4 and 5, and 5 and 6, the breaks may be equal to one or two full beats of rest. These larger breaks are not precisely notated in the score because each performance situation will be different, and the pacing of the soloists should be adjusted to fit the specific performance space.

—Frank Ferko

Duration: 6:07

Text

Oh our Mother the Earth, oh our Father the Sky,
Your children are we, and with tired backs
We bring you the gifts that you love.
Then weave for us a garment of brightness;
May the warp be the white light of morning,
May the weft be the red light of evening,
May the fringes be the falling rain,
May the border be the standing rainbow.
Thus weave for us a garment of brightness
That we may walk fittingly where birds sing,
That we may walk fittingly where grass is green,
Oh our Mother the Earth, oh our Father the Sky!

The poem "Song of the Sky Loom," from
Songs of the Tewa by Herbert Joseph Spinden
appears courtesy of Sunstone Press,
Box 2321, Santa Fe, NM 87504-2321.

Frank Ferko (b. 1950)

Information about Mr. Ferko and his work can be found on his website.
www.frankferko.com

Dedicated to Don Roberts on the occasion of his 75th birthday

Song of the Sky Loom

for SATB Chorus (divisi) unaccompanied

Song of the Sky Loom
Tewa Poem

Frank Ferko

Moderately slow ♩ = ca. 66

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass Soli

1. Solo *
mf

2. Solo *
mf

1. Solo

2. Solo

1. Solo

2. Solo

5

1. Solo

2. Solo

1. Solo

2. Solo

B Soli

* See Performance Notes on page 2 for instructions to soloists.

The poem "Song of the Sky Loom,"
from *Songs of the Tewa* by Herbert Joseph Spinden
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mf < *f*

Musical score for Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B), and Piano. The score is in 3/4 time and features dynamics such as *mf*, *f*, *mp*, and *f*. The Soprano part begins at measure 7. The Alto part includes a fermata. The Tenor part features a triplet. The Bass part is labeled "All Basses" and includes a fermata. The Piano part includes a triplet and dynamic markings.

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Sopranos minus the Solo group

11 *p* O _____

**3 Solo Soprano voices/
3 small groups of voices** *p* our _____ Earth _____
(1) (2) (3)

Altos minus the Solo group

p O _____

**3 Solo Alto voices/
3 small groups of voices** * Moth _____
p (1) (2) (3) er the Earth,

**2 Solo Tenor voices /
2 small groups of voices** *p* _____ Sky, -
(1) (2) the _____

**3 Solo Bass voices/
3 small groups of voices** *p* Fa - ther _____
our _____
(1) (2) (3) oh _____

p O _____

p O _____

* pronounced as in "mother"

Somewhat faster ♩ = 80
All sections equally divided.

(Choral unison)

14

mf

S Your chil-dren are we, and with tired backs. We bring you.

mf unis.

Soli Your chil-dren are we, and with tired backs. We bring you.

mf

A Your chil-dren are we, and with tired backs. We bring you.

mf unis.

Aoli Your chil-dren are we, and with tired backs. We bring you.

mf unis.

Toli Your chil-dren are we, and with tired backs. We bring you.

mf

T Your chil-dren are we, and with tired backs. We bring you.

mf unis.

Boli Your chil-dren are we, and with tired backs. We bring you.

mf

B Your chil-dren are we, and with tired backs. We bring you.

Somewhat faster ♩ = 80

mf

17

S — the gifts that you love.

S Soli — the gifts that you love.

A — the gifts that you love.
love.

A Soli — the gifts that you Solo voice love.

T Soli — the gifts that you Solo voice love.

T — the gifts that you love.

B Soli — the gifts that you love.

B — the gifts that you love.

3

Ped.

Faster ♩ = 66

20 *p*

S Oh our Moth - er — the Earth, — oh our Fa - ther the

A *p*
Oh our Moth - er — the Earth, — oh our Fa - ther the

T *p*
Oh our Moth - er — the Earth, — oh our Fa - ther the

B *p*
Oh our Moth - er — the Earth, — oh our Fa - ther the

Faster ♩ = 66

p

26

S Sky,

A Sky,

T Solo voice, or small group of voices *mf*

T Then weave for

B Solo voice, or small group of voices *mf*

B Then weave for us a gar - ment of bright - ness, then

B Sky,

mf

Solo voice, or small group of voices *mf*

A Solo voice, or small group of voices

A Then weave for us a

T Solo voice, or small group of voices

T us a gar - ment of bright - ness, bright - - -

B Solo voice, or small group of voices

B weave for us, weave for us a gar - ment of

Solo voice, or small
group of voices *mf*

33

S
Soli

A
Soli

T
Soli

B
Soli

Then weave for us a gar -

gar - ment of bright - ness, then weave, — then weave — for us —

- ness, gar - ment of bright - ness then weave for us a

bright - ness, a gar - - ment, then weave for us

36 *p*

S
May the warp

Soli
- ment of bright - ness, then weave for us a gar - ment of bright - ness,

A
p
May the warp

A
Soli
— a gar - ment of bright - ness,

T
Soli
gar - ment, a gar - ment of bright -

T
p
May the warp

B
Soli
(upper notes optional)
a gar - ment,

B
p
May the warp

Soli (reduction)

(upper bass notes optional)

Chorus (reduction) *p*

39

S
be the white _____ light _____ of

S
Soli

A
be the white _____ light _____ of

A
Soli
then weave for us _____ a gar ment, a gar - ment of

T
Soli
- ness,

T
be the white _____ light _____ of

B
Soli
then weave for us a gar - ment, a gar - ment of bright -

B
be the white _____ light _____ of

42

S
morn - - - - ing,

S
then

A
morn - - - - ing,

A Soli
bright - ness, weave, - - - weave - for us a gar -

T Soli
then weave for us a gar - ment of bright-ness,

T
morn - - - - ing,

B Soli
ness, - - - then weave for us a - gar - ment of bright - ness,

B
morn - - - - ing,

45

S May the weft be the red

Soli weave for us a gar - - ment of bright - ness, then

A May the weft be the red

Aoli - ment, weave for us a

Toli a gar - - ment of bright - ness, a gar -

T May the weft be the red

Boli then weave for us a gar - ment of bright - ness, -

B May the weft be the red

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48

S
light of eve - -

S
Soli
weave for us a gar-ment,

A
light of eve - -

A
Soli
gar - ment of bright - ness, then weave for us a gar -

T
Soli
- ment of bright - ness,

T
light of eve - -

B
Soli

B
light of eve - -

51

S
ning, *unis.* May the

S
Soli

A
ning, *unis.* May the

A
Soli
- ment of bright-ness, a gar - - ment of bright - ness, of

T
Soli

T
ning, May the

B
Soli
then weave for us a gar - - ment of

B
ning, May the

54

S
fring - es be the fall -

S
then

A
fring - es be the fall -

A
Soli
bright - ness, then weave for us a gar - ment of

T
Soli
then weave for us a gar - ment of bright - ness,

T
fring - es be the fall -

B
Soli
bright - ness, a gar - ment of bright - ness, weave for

B
fring - es be the fall -

Piano accompaniment staves with triplets and other musical notations.

57

S
- - ing rain,

Soli
weave for us a gar - - ment of bright - ness,

A
- - ing rain,

A
Soli
bright - ness, a gar - ment, a gar - ment of bright - ness,

T
Soli
then weave for - us a gar - - ment of bright - ness;

T
- - ing rain,

B
Soli
us a gar - - ment of bright - ness;

B
- - ing rain,

Broadly ♩ = ca. 56
All sections equally divided.

61 *mf*

S May the bor - der be the stand - - ing rain - bow. Thus

A May the bor - der be the stand - - ing rain - bow. Thus

T May the bor - der be the stand - - ing rain - bow. Thus

B May the bor - der be the stand - - ing rain - bow. Thus

Broadly ♩ = ca. 56

68

S weave for us a gar - ment of bright - ness — That we may walk fit - ting - ly -

A weave for us a gar - ment of bright - ness — That we may walk fit - ting - ly -

T weave for us a gar - ment of bright - ness — That we may walk fit - ting - ly -

B weave for us a gar - ment of bright - ness — That we may walk fit - ting - ly -

74

S — where birds sing, That we may walk fit-ting-ly — where grass is green, —

A — where birds sing, That we may walk fit-ting-ly — where grass is green, —

T — where birds sing, That we may walk fit-ting-ly — where grass is green, —

B — where birds sing, That we may walk fit-ting-ly — where grass is green. —

80 *f* *molto rall.*

S Oh our Moth - er — the Earth, — oh our Fa - ther the Sky!

A Oh our Moth - er — the Earth, — oh our Fa - ther the Sky!

T Oh our Moth - er — the Earth, — oh our Fa - ther the Sky!

B Oh our Moth - er — the Earth, — oh our Fa - ther the Sky!

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