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FULL SCORE

Spirit of Africa

For SATB Choir, Piano and Percussion (optional)



Photo: David Fanshawe, East Africa

Music: Liz Lane
Words: Jennifer Henderson

Spirit of Africa

Programme note

Spirit of Africa is written as a companion piece to David Fanshawe's *African Sanctus* and is inspired by the colours and symbolic meanings of the flags of Egypt, Sudan, Uganda and Kenya, the countries visited by David during his travels recording music for *African Sanctus* in 1969-1973.

The words and music of the five movements trace a journey through the day, with the colour white for daybreak mist, green for morning freshness, red for midday heat, gold for sunset and black for night; each with its own mood and character, hopes and fears.

Spirit of Africa is dedicated to David and his wife Jane.

Liz Lane and Jennifer Henderson, May 2012

www.lizlane.co.uk

1.

Promise of daybreak veiled in the early mist,
hidden in shadows that cling to the night;
Earth turning slowly toward a new journey
into the morning, unknown, beyond sight.
Birdsong dispelling the silence of waiting,
lifting the darkness with wings taking flight;
spray from the waterfall showering diamonds,
carving the rock face with ribbons of white.
Sweet is the air in the breath of the morning,
spirit of purity, radiant light!

2.

Dance, my friends, dance with the Earth,
dance with the spring time of the year's rebirth;
dance with the sunshine, dance with the breeze,
dance with the butterflies, dance with the bees.

Sing, my friends, sing with the hills,
sing with the river the rain cloud fills;
sing with the green grass, sing with the trees,
sing with the birds and the fish in the seas.

Love, my friends, love all the living,
love the whole world, the goodness of giving;
love all the beauty the Earth imparts,
love with the spirit of joy in your hearts!

3.

Our world is set in endless motion,
spinning at a breathless pace,
whirling, twirling, ever turning
round the burning sun in space,
every planet rolling, bowling,
in an everlasting race.

Here on Earth the hours grow hazy,
all the living resting, lazy,
shelter from the midday sun,
seeking somewhere in the shade,
dozing, sleeping, every one
waiting for the heat to fade.

But waking or dreaming, for all who have breath
the journey continues from birth until death.
Like the stars in the heavens, so, under the skin
runs the blood of our forebears, the blood of our kin.
As the wind from the hills and the flood on the plains,
may the spirit of fellowship flow in our veins!

4.

They have travelled all day long
on the dusty track to the pool
with their thirst overwhelming.

Now at last in the cool
of evening, the soft air mellow
while the light fades, and the sky
is aflame with golden yellow,
their rippled reflections dapple
the water. But hesitating,
listening, some instinct warning
there might be danger waiting –
so close to the precious gift
they pause on the very brink –
but surely the spirit of justice
demands that all at sundown may drink.

5.

Nightfall: darkness suddenly descending,
the final curtain at the day's ending.

Hunter stalks hunted, secrecy and fear
lurk in the shadows while the stars appear.
The world is sleeping, turned away from light,
enfolding all the creatures of the night.
What dramas play unseen, what tales are told
that no one hears, what tragedies unfold?
But the Earth wakes, the journey never ends,
turning from darkness when the sun ascends.
The hope for a new day shall never cease,
spirit of unity, promise of peace.

INSTRUMENTATION:

SATB Choir

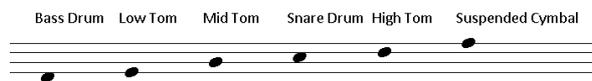
Piano

Percussion 1 (Optional): Timpani, Djembe

*Percussion 2 (Optional): Tom-Toms (4), Suspended Cymbals (2),
Bongos, Congas, Bass Drum, Tambourine*

Percussion 3 (Optional): Drum Kit

Drum Kit Legend



Duration: 10 minutes

Commissioned by the Cheltenham Music Festival with the friendly support of Ernst von Siemens Foundation. First performed by the Bournemouth Symphony Chorus, Maureen Brathwaite and BackBeat Percussion Ensemble on Thursday 12th July 2012 at Cheltenham Town Hall as part of the 68th Cheltenham Music Festival.