

At Home

for SATB choir, flute, clarinet

Commissioned by Laurie Jacobi in honor of Cotty Lowry's 70th Birthday Premiered by The Singers - Minnesota Choral Artists

I. I am at Home (Berry)
II. New Roof (Berry)
III. Good Bones (Singer)
IV. A Place (Berry)
V. Together on the Porch (Berry)



From the Composer:

Writing a piece about home is not a terribly unique venture, but it is one that is so rich and has inspired many poets and composers. This is no surprise, for everyone remembers and celebrates the place where they belong. To me, *At Home* strays from some of the normal tropes of youth, ancestry, and birth home memories and instead moves toward the home we create as adults. Since the piece was commissioned by Laurie Jacobi for her husband Cotty Lowry's 70th birthday, the poetry I chose feels very personal, very specific. From the first movement we know the characters: there is a "you" and "I," the two people occupying this place. But Wendell Berry's poem doesn't immediately join these two people together, he instead asserts his own individuality of where he finds himself at home, and it's alone, out in nature. Yet he still cares for his partner in this poem, wishing for them to stay just as content in their own personal place of belonging.

Cotty Lowry is a realtor, and so Laurie wanted to include moments that described the physicality of houses. The maintenance, the aging, the sense of space. "New Roof" does this so well, combining Berry's love of nature with the grounding element of his house. The rising arpeggios in the winds are constantly searching upwards, let loose from the confines of the house to reach the boundless. "Good Bones" is a commissioned poem from longtime collaborator Julia Klatt Singer, whose language and imagery matches Berry's so well. This ode to an aging house is a delightful metaphor for our own bodies: how they age and how they are loaded up with wisdom, experience and memories. Her flirtatious way of recalling the couple's history is mirrored in the clarinet writing and the harmonies from the choir. (See if you can spot the musical quote, sung by the piano in the hallway.)

"A Place" is full of movement, with the choir singing in a round, and the woodwinds moving from the front of the hall to the back. It's here that Berry tells us that the journey we've been on our whole life has not been a journey at all, but the place we've been seeking. So we find our couple finally at home, "Together on the Porch." After embracing their individuality in the opening movement, they now occupy the same space, in a quiet routine of love and of life. They know they are loved, but they choose to say the words out loud anyway. And not knowing which will be the first to go back into the house is the same as not knowing who will outlive the other. There is no fear, but they find comfort and fulfillment instead in the present time and present place. Not the journey, the place. At home.

- Timothy C. Takach, 2019

Texts:

I. I am at Home

I will wait here in the fields to see how well the rain brings on the grass. In the labor of the fields longer than a man's life I am at home. Don't come with me. You stay home too.

I will be standing in the woods where the old trees move only with the wind and then with gravity.

In the stillness of the trees I am at home. Don't come with me. You stay home too.

- Wendell Berry (Copyright © 2012 by Wendell Berry, from New Collected Poems. Reprinted by permission of Counterpoint Press.)

II. New Roof

On the housetop, the floor of the boundless where birds and storms fly and disappear, and the valley opened over our heads, a leap of clarity between the hills, we bent five days in the sun, tearing free the old roof, nailing on the new, letting the sun touch for once in fifty years the dusky rafters, and then securing the house again in its shelter and shade. Thus like a little ledge a piece of my history has come between me and the sky.

- Wendell Berry (Copyright © 2012 by Wendell Berry, from New Collected Poems. Reprinted by permission of Counterpoint Press.)

III. Good Bones

From the road, all tucked-in and tidy Between the hydrangeas and the twilight sky.

You've always like the old ones best For their charm, their good bones.

Gravity has a way of dropping Everything under the dresser Into the corner

Can't lose your marbles If you know (More or less) where they've gone.

Remember the first place we lived? How there was room for the piano If we left it in the hallway? Remember the winter nights? How we laid awake waiting For the pipes to burst?

We turn up the lights (the bulb's burned out) Add another coat of paint. How many times have you tapped this nail Back into place?

Each wall tells a story.
Each floor sings the mockingbird's song.
Light the candles, dim the lights,
we'll change the bulb another day.

You are wise, appreciate what was once straight now softly curves.

Still standing. Good bones.

- Julia Klatt Singer (Commissioned poem. Used with permission.)

IV. A Place

There is a day when the road neither comes nor goes, and the way is not a way but a place.

- Wendell Berry (Copyright © 1998 by Wendell Berry, from A Timbered Choir. Reprinted by permission of Counterpoint Press.)

V. Together on the Porch

They sit together on the porch, the dark
Almost fallen, the house behind them dark.
Their supper done with, they have washed and dried
The dishes—only two plates now, two glasses,
Two knives, two forks, two spoons—small work for two.
She sits with her hands folded in her lap,
At rest. He smokes his pipe. They do not speak.
And when they speak at last it is to say
What each one knows the other knows. They have
One mind between them, now, finally
For all its knowing will not exactly know
Which one goes first through the dark doorway, bidding
Goodnight, and which sits on a while alone.

- Wendell Berry (Copyright © 1998 by Wendell Berry, from A Timbered Choir. Reprinted by permission of Counterpoint Press.)

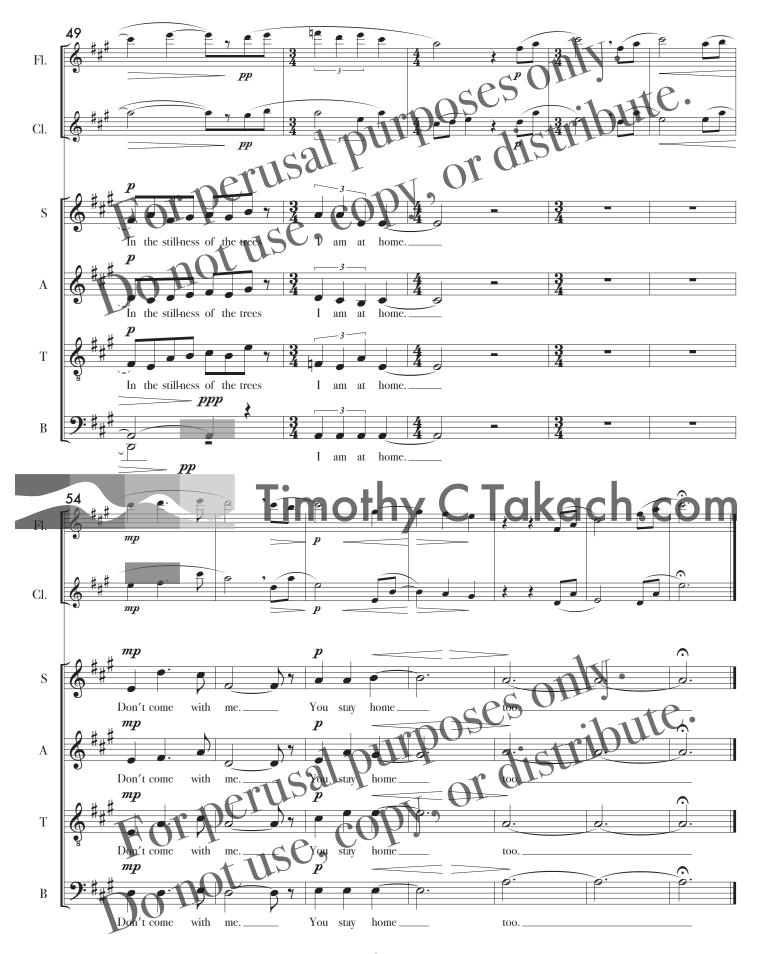
At Home











II. New Roof



information and to order scores please visit TimothyCTakach.com











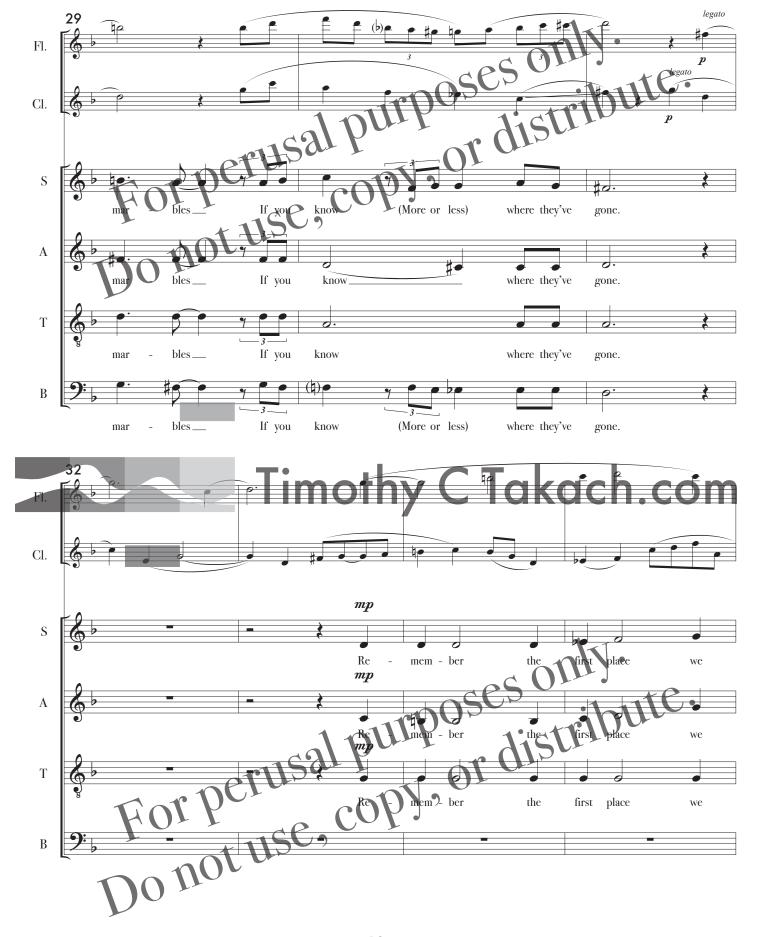
III. Good Bones













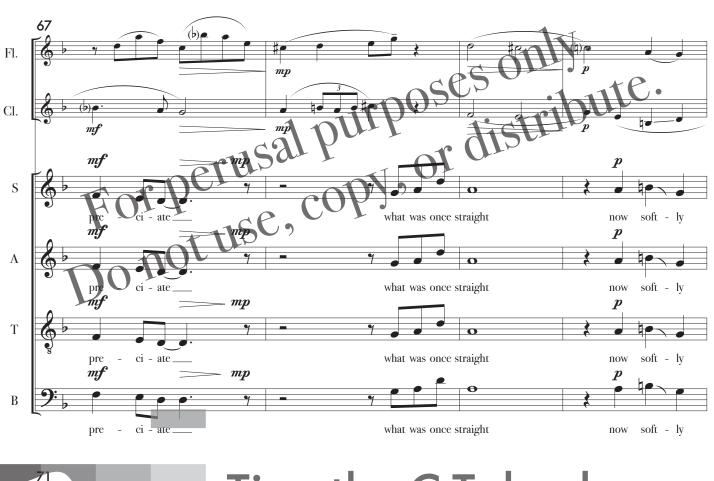














IV. A Place





V. Together on the Porch for 2-part voices, flute, clarinet











Reviewed as "gorgeous" (Washington Post) and "stunning" (Lawrence Journal-World), the music of Timothy C. Takach has risen fast in the concert world. Applauded for his melodic lines and rich, intriguing harmonies, Takach has received commissions from the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, St. Olaf Band, Cantus, Pavia Winds, Lorelei Ensemble, VocalEssence, the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, The Rose Ensemble, and numerous other organizations. His compositions have been performed on A Prairie Home Companion, The Boston Pops holiday tour, multiple All-State and festival programs and at venues such as the Library of Congress, Kennedy Center and Royal Opera House Muscat. He is a co-creator of the theatrical production of All is Calm: the Christmas Truce of 1914, by Peter Rothstein.

Takach studied music composition at St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN, and has frequent national work as a composer-in-residence, presenter, clinician and lecturer. He is a full-time composer and lives in Minneapolis with his wife and two sons.

(earthsongs)

(Graphite Publishing)

(Graphite Publishing)

(Graphite Publishing)

(Lorelei Ensemble)

(Colla Voce)

(Graphite Publishing)

(Graphite Publishing)

Selected vocal works by Timothy C. Takach:

A Worshipper and a Man And I Saw

As the Sunflower Turns on Her God

At Home (ca. 16')

The Darkling Thrush

Fragile

Listen to the Apples

MOMENTS IN FILM: A Mural of Change

MOMENTS IN FILM: Insidious MOMENTS IN FILM: Flying Solo

Neither Angels, Nor Demons, Nor Powers

Nubes Oriebatur: the eruption of Vesuvius

One Boy Told Me

Ragnarök

Su Rahva Koda (The House of Your Kindred)

This Alien Landscape

This Amazing Life

And I Saw

Bahihii Waaliidkay Dhaqay

Cassiopeia Duende

How to Triumph Like a Girl

There is No Rose

Torn Map

Empty

Goodbye, Then

I Will Howl

Kin

Luceat Eis

Mad

Original Harmony

Rough Beast

Salve Regina

Things I Didn't Know I Loved

Helios (ca. 65')

The Longest Nights (ca. 21')

This is How You Love (ca. 35') composed with Jocelyn Hagen

True North (ca. 16')

We, the Unknown (ca. 40')

Where Beauty Comes From (ca. 16')

SATB a cappella SATB div. a cappella

SSAATBB div, Sop. solo, SSATB soli, a cappella

SATB, flute, clarinet

SATB, SAT soli, a cappella

SATB, hand drum

SATB div. a cappella

SATB, piano

SATB, piano

SATB, piano

SSATBB a cappella

SSATBB a cappella

SATB, piano

SATB div. a cappella

SSAATTBB a cappella

SATB, crotales, suspended cymbal, bass drum

SA(T)B, piano

SSAA div. a cappella

2-part, piano

SSA a cappella

SSAA, floor toms

SSA, piano

SSAA, SS soli, a cappella

SA, piano

TB (opt. div), piano, opt. djembe

TBB choir, Bb clarinet, piano

TBB choir, piano or cello

TB, piano

TTTBB a cappella

TB, piano

TTBB a cappella

TTBB, percussion

TBB semi-chorus, TTBB a cappella

TTBB a cappella

SATB a cappella

SATB, piano or string quartet

SATB div. a cappella

SATB, chamber orchestra

TTBB, soloists, chamber orchestra

TBB, 2-part, SSAA, SATB; piano

