

ABBIE BETINIS

Spell of the Elements

For SATB double chorus and piano

*Commissioned by the Youth Chorale of Central Minnesota;
Garrett Lathe, founding Music Director*

The Music of Abbie Betinis

web: www.abbiebetinis.com ♦ phone: 612-590-3998 ♦ email: abbie@abbiebetinis.com

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SPELL OF THE ELEMENTS

by Elizabeth Jennings (1926-2001)

Fire and water, air and earth
Contend, unite. A magic birth
Is taking place somewhere not far
Celebrated by a star.

Take the music of the wind,
Take the fingers of a mind
Making, breaking, letting go.
Take the blanket of the snow

And a necklace of the stars,
Take the footsteps of the hours.
All can spell-bind, all can build,
All will come if you have called.

We are subject to a spell.
It is married to free-will.
Come the spring the earth will lie
Lucky under lucky sky.

No determinism has
Power to hold us long. We pass
Into every element,
Come and gone but never spent.

Supplementary text by the composer:

I call the power of the North,
the power to make,
rich Earth create!
Make me steady, strong, serene,
Make my body evergreen!

I call the power of the East,
the Air I take,
breathe, circulate,
Lift me high'r,
Fly, inspire!

I call the power of the South,
the power to grow,
Love, spark my soul,
Burn, crimson Fire,
Fill me with desire!

I call the power of the West,
the power to flow,
Dream Water, deeply know,
Help me move compassionately,
Blend in me!

From the composer:

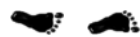
This piece is inspired by the four Classical elements (Earth, Air, Fire, and Water). In it, the voices invoke each element and request of it certain characteristics. The process is similar to, and often associated with, the ancient practice of “calling the directions.” In fact, as the lyrics suggest, each element is associated with a direction, as well as with a color, action and part of the body. As in traditional practice, toward the end of the piece, the elements are thanked and dismissed one by one.

Staging is an important component of this piece. In the score, Choir II turns to face the directions as Choir I calls them out. Indications to turn look like this:



= Face Front (stomp right foot, then left foot).

Note: even if the singer is already facing this direction, he or she should stomp in place, as indicated.



= Face Right (stomp right foot, then left foot)



= Face Back (stomp right foot, then left foot)



= Face Left (stomp right foot, then left foot)

The stage should be set up so that Choir II can stand in a single file line, arranged by voice part (i.e. not in mixed formation). This will make the visual effect of the turning quite stunning. For instance, if Choir I is on risers, Choir II could stand single file on the floor, in front of them and extending on either side. Or perhaps Choir II could extend only on either side of the risers, dividing into two voice parts on each side of Choir I.

Spell of the Elements

For the Youth Chorale of Central Minnesota; Garrett Lathe, founding Music Director

Elizabeth Jennings
(1926-2001)

Abbie Betinis

Distantly, ♩ = 92

S/A
T/B

p, whispered (last time only) ksh _____ tzik tzik kwa
p, whispered (last time only) dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum (tzik tzik) dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik

mf (play first time only)
Ped. (sustain through m. 17)

Distantly, ♩ = 92

Mysteriously (♩ = 92)

S/A
T/B

6 *mp* Fire and wa - - - ter, air and earth Con - tend, u - nite. A

S/A
T/B

tzik tzik kwa ksh _____ tzik tzik kwa tzik tzik kwa ksh _____
dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik

6 *loco* *mp*
(...Ped. sustain...)

12

S/A *n.b.*
mag - ic birth is tak - - - ing place some - where not

T/B

S/A *V*
— tzik tzik kwa tzik tzik kwa ksh tzik tzik

T/B
dum dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum

12 *loco*

(...Ped. sustain...)

17 *p*

S/A
far Cel - - e - brat - - - ed by a star.

T/B

S/A
kwa tzik tzik kwa ksh tzik tzik kwa

T/B
dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik

17 *legato*

(...Ped. sustain...) *Ped. (sustain through m. 33)*

22

S/A

T/B

Sop.

Alto

Ten.

Bass

mp

Take the mu - - - sic of the wind, Take the fin - gers

p

Mm...

tzik tzik kwa ksh tzik tzik kwa tzik tzik kwa ksh

Ph... Ph... Ph...

dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik

22

mf

mp

(...Ped. sustain...)

28

S/A

T/B

Sop.

Alto

Ten.

Bass

of a mind Mak - - - - ing, break - ing, let - ting

(*mm*)

tzik tzik kwa tzik tzik kwa ksh tzik tzik

Ph... Ph... Ph...

dum dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum

28

loco

(...Ped. sustain...)

33 *mf*

S/A *p* And a neck - lace

T/B go. Take the blan - - - ket of the snow

Sop. (mm)

Alto kwa tzik tzik kwa ksh tzik tzik kwa Mm...

Ten. Ph... Ph... Mm...

Bass dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik Mm...

33 *legato* *p*

Ped. (sustain through m. 48)

39 *mf*

S/A of the stars, Take the foot - steps of the hours.

T/B All

Sop. (mm)

Alto (mm)

Ten. (mm)

Bass (mm)

39 *loco*

(...Ped. sustain...)

45 *f*

S/A _____ All ___ will come ___ if you have

T/B _____ can spell - bind, all can build, All ___ will come ___ if you have

S/A Oh... Ah... *f* All ___ will come if you have

T/B Oh... Ah... *f* All ___ will come if you have

45 *pp* *legato*

Fast! Punctuated! ♩ = 184

52 *fp*

Sop. called. _____

Alto *f, gutsy* I call the pow - er of the North, the pow - er to make, ___ rich EARTH ___ cre - ate!

T/B called. _____

S/A called. _____ Hm....

feet *CHOIR II: all* turn as indicated *fp* RIGHT stomp LEFT stomp

T/B called. _____

52 *sfz* *sfz* *rip*

Ped. (sustain through m. 108)

TENORS

mf, gracefully

Alto

57

Make me stead y, — strong, — se rene, Make my bod - y e-ver green! I call the pow - er of the East, the

feet

Ch. II

(mm)

MEN

Hm....

57

(...Ped. sustain...)

Ten.

62

AIR I take, breathe, — cir - - cu - late, Lift me high'r, Fly, — in -

feet

Ch. II

(mm)

62

(...Ped. sustain...)

Ten.

68

BASSES *mf, with passion*

spire! I call the pow - er of the South, the po-wer to grow, — Love, spark my soul,

feet

Ch. II

(mm)

WOMEN

Hm....

68

(...Ped. sustain...)

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84

Sop. me! *mf*

Alto I call the pow er of the North, the pow er to make, rich EARTH cre-ate!

Ten. I call the pow er of the East, the AIR I take, *mf*

Bass I call the

feet

Ch. II

WOMEN (*whispered*) MEN (*whispered*)

dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum

84

sfz *sfz* *ppv*

(...Ped. sustain...)

89

Sop. *mf*

Alto Make me stead-y, strong, se - rene, Make my bod - y e - ver green! I call the

Ten. breathe, cir - - - cu - late, Lift me high'r,

Bass pow-er of the South, the po - wer to grow, Love, spark my soul,

feet

Ch. II

WOMEN MEN

dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum

89

f *ppv*

(...Ped. sustain...)

93

Sop. Dream WA TER, ___ deep - ly know, Help me move com - pas sion ate-ly, ___

Alto pow er of the North, the pow er to make, rich EARTH, ___ cre - ate!

Ten. Fly, ___ in - spire! I call the pow er of the East, the AIR I take,

Bass Burn, crim - son FI - RE, ___ Fill me with de - sire! I call the

Sop.

Alto

Ten.

Bass

93

(...Ped. sustain...)

97

Sop. Blend ___ in me! I call the pow er of the West, the pow - er to flow, ___

Alto Make me stead - y, ___ strong, ___ se - rene, Make my bod - y e - ver green! I call the

Ten. breathe, ___ cir - - - - cu - late, Lift me high'r,

Bass pow - er of the South, the po - wer to grow, ___ Love, spark my soul,

Sop.

Alto

Ten.

Bass

97

(...Ped. sustain...)

101

Sop. Dream WA TER, ___ deep - ly know, Help me move com pas sion ate-ly, ___

Alto pow er of the North, the pow er to make, rich EARTH ___ cre - ate!

Ten. Fly, ___ in - spire! I call the pow er of the East, the AIR I take,

Bass Burn, crim - son FI - RE, ___ Fill me with de - sire! I call the

Sop.

Alto

Ten.

Bass

101

(...Ped. sustain...)

105

Sop. Blend ___ in me! I call the pow er of the West, the pow - er to flow, ___

Alto Make me stead-y, ___ strong, ___ se - rene, Make my bod - y e - ver green! I call the

Ten. breathe, ___ cir - - - cu - late, Lift me high'r,

Bass pow - er of the South, the po - wer to grow, ___ Love, spark my soul,

Sop.

Alto

Ten.

Bass

105

(...Ped. sustain...)

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117

Sop. Dream WATER, — deep - ly know, Help me move com - pas sion ate ly, —

Alto power of the North, the pow er to make, Oh!

Ten. Fly, — in - spire! I call the power of the East, the AIR I take,

Bass Burn, crim - son FI - RE, — Fill me with de - sire! I call the

S/A to free - will. Come the spring the earth will lie Luck - y — und - er

T/B to free - will. Come the spring the earth will lie Luck - y — und - er

(...Ped. sustain...)

loco

p

f

121

Sop. Blend — in me! I call the pow - er of the West, the pow - er to flow, —

Alto (oh...) *pp*

Ten. Oh! *pp*

Bass *pp*

pow - er of the South, the po - wer to grow, —

S/A luck - - - - y sky. *ff*

T/B luck - - - - y sky. *ff*

(...Ped. sustain...)

pp

ff

ff

ff

125

Sop.

Alto

Ten.

Bass

S/A

T/B

Passionately, dramatically

125

ff

Ped. ad lib.

131

mp

138

Sop.

Alto

Ten.

Bass

p, sotto voce

I thank the pow - er of the North, the

S/A

p

No de - ter - - min - i - sm has _____

T/B

p

No de - ter - - min - i - sm has _____

138

p

143

Sop.

Alto

Ten.

Bass

pow - er to make! *p, sotto voce*

I thank the pow - er of the East, the air I take! *p, sotto voce*

I thank the pow - er of the South, the

S/A

Pow'r to _____ hold _____ us long.

T/B

Pow'r to _____ hold _____ us long.

143

p

147 *P, sotto voce*

Sop. I thank the pow-er of the West, the pow-er to flow!_

Alto

Ten.

Bass

po-wer to grow!_

S/A *mf* We pass In - - - - - to ev - 'ry

T/B *mf* We pass In - - - - - to ev - 'ry

147 *mp*

151

Sop.

Alto

Ten.

Bass

S/A *mp* el - - - e - ment, Come and gone but

T/B *mp* el - - - e - ment, Come and gone but

151

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164 *p* ($\text{♩} = \text{♩}$) Glassy, $\text{♩} = 92$ *rit...*

S/A
nev - er spe...

T/B
nev - er spe...

S/A
spent.

T/B

164 *pp* *legato* Glassy, $\text{♩} = 92$ *rit...*

168 *a tempo* *decresc. al fine* **Mysteriously**

S/A
...nt.

T/B
...nt.

Sop.
a tempo
tzik tzik kwa

Alto
a tempo
ksh ksh

Ten.
a tempo
Ph...

Bass
a tempo
dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik dum tzik tzik

repeat, ad lib niente

168 *a tempo* *ad lib.* *pp* niente

Ped. (sustain to the end)

Also by Abbie Betinis . . .

The Burt Family Carols Series:

Hail, Christmas Day!	SATB or SSAA a cappella	self-published AB-026-C3
He Might Have Come on Clouds of Heaven	SATB a cappella	self-published AB-016-C2
In a Far Judean City	SATB a cappella	self-published AB-009-C1
Prayer for Peace	SATB or TTBB a cappella, s./t. solos	self-published AB-033-C4
Song of the Pines	SATB a cappella	self-published AB-041-C5

Selected Choral Works:

Another Sky Text: Emily Dickinson	SSA, marimba	self-published AB-012-00
The Babe of Bethlehem, arr. Text and tune: William Walker in <u>Southern Harmony</u>	SATB div., a cappella	self-published AB-031-01
Blessed Be the Lord, My Rock Text: Psalm 144	SAB a cappella/organ	Graphite Publishing GP-B004
Build a House (for friends and birds) Text: Háfez	SATB, string quartet	self-published AB-043-00
Carmina mei cordis Text: traditional Latin	SATB div., a cappella	self-published AB-030-01
Cedit, Hyems Text: Prudentius (in Latin)	SATB div., flute	G. Schirmer Cat. No. 50486492
Dormi, Jesu Text: traditional Latin	SATB a cappella	self-published AB-007-01
Jerusalem Luminosa Text: Thomas a Kempis (in Latin)	SA a cappella	Kjos Music Cat. No. 6323
Psalm 126: A Song of Ascents Text: Psalm 126	SATB a cappella	Augsburg Fortress 0-8006-7720
From Behind the Caravan Text: Háfez (in Persian)	SSAA div., viola, oud, hand drums	self-published AB-049-00
Yhinx: An Ancient Greek Love Charm Text: Theocritus & ancient Greek stone (in Greek)	TTBB a cappella, t. t. b. solos	self-published AB-018-01

Reviewed as “most audacious... edgy and thrilling,” the music of Abbie Betinis is being performed increasingly in the United States and abroad. At age 28, Betinis has been commissioned by nearly 40 music organizations including the American Suzuki Foundation, Cantus, Cornell University Chorus, Dale Warland Singers, The Rose Ensemble, The Schubert Club, and the Young New Yorkers’ Chorus. Published by Augsburg Fortress, Graphite Publishing, Kjos, Santa Barbara Music Publishing, and, most recently in G. Schirmer’s *Dale Warland Series*, she has won a Jerome Commissioning Grant (2007), the Esoterics’s Polyphonos Young Composer Prize (2006), the Craig and Janet Swan Composer Prize in Choral Music (2005), and awards from the American Composers Forum, ASCAP, Cambridge Madrigal Singers, and Minnesota Music Educators Association. Betinis holds a BA from St. Olaf College, and MA in music composition from the University of Minnesota. Upon twice receiving the Cynthia Lilley Scholarship from the European American Musical Alliance, she spent two summer sessions in Paris, France, where she studied harmony and counterpoint in the tradition of Nadia Boulanger with faculty from Juilliard and the Paris Conservatory.

Since 2005, Betinis has served as Composer-in-Residence for The Schubert Club in St. Paul, Minnesota. She has also held residencies with The Singers—Minnesota Choral Artists, The Rose Ensemble, and, in 2008, the Saint Paul Conservatory of Music.

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