

“Be Still, My Heart” is a work for mixed chorus. A few measures long, it is enough to temporarily transport, and uplift us away to a place of warmth and comfort. The music came to me one morning, as I began my writing day for what I thought was going to be a canonic piece for treble voices. I began to improvise on what is the opening phrase; it’s as if the music harnessed my conflicting emotions of hope, longing, despair, worry, and grief. I came back to this opening phrase throughout the day, and for a few days straight, sculpting away like statue taking shape from stone. The music was my own personal hymn for peace and stability during the oncoming second wave of COVID-19. The poetry came second, a short fleeing thought by Rabindranath Tagore that I see—looking back now—fit perfectly on many levels. Looking out my window in rural Ontario, I see pastures, forests, and streams. I find moments of calmness and stability while surrounded by nature as if its purpose is to comfort, to inspire, to cleanse.

—M.E.

Commissioned by Dr. Mark Ramsay for the Exultate Chamber Singers and the Western University Choirs

Be Still, My Heart

S.A.T.B., unaccompanied

Words: Rabindranath Tagore
Music: Matthew Emery

Warm, rubato ♩ = ca. 60

p *mf* *mp*

1 2

Be still, my heart; these

p *mf* *mp*

Be still, my heart; these

p *mf* *mp*

still, my heart;

p *mf* *mp*

still, my heart;

Piano *for rehearsal only*

If desired, to lengthen the piece consider humming or singing through the piece on a neutral vowel first, and then sing a second time with text.

4 *mf* *p* *mf*

5 6 7 8

great trees are prayers. Be still,

great trees are prayers. still,

great trees are prayers. still,

great trees are prayers. still, my

This system contains the first four vocal staves and the piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are in soprano, alto, tenor, and bass clefs. The piano accompaniment is in grand staff. The lyrics are: "great trees are prayers. Be still,". The music features dynamic markings of *mf* and *p*. Measure numbers 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 are indicated above the staves.

poco accel. *f* *mp* *a tempo e poco lento*

9 10 11 12

heart; Be still, my

heart; Be still, my

heart; Be still, my

heart; Be still, my

This system contains the next four vocal staves and the piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "heart; Be still, my". The music features dynamic markings of *f* and *mp*. Performance instructions include *poco accel.* and *a tempo e poco lento*. Measure numbers 9, 10, 11, and 12 are indicated above the staves.

13 *mf* 14 *pp* *rit.* 15 *mp* 16 *mf* 17 18 *mf*

heart; Be still, my heart.

heart; Be still, my heart.

heart; Be still, my heart.

heart; Be still, my heart.

Oct. 26-28, 2020
Dutton, ON

For Review Only

Dr. Matthew Emery is a Canadian composer who “writes with an honesty which enchants” (Vancouver Sun). His music has been performed in 26 countries, and recent performance venues include the Great Wall of China, the White House, and the Musikverein. Matthew has received more than 40 commissions, and his music has been performed by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, Vancouver Chamber Choir, Elmer Iseler Singers, National Youth Orchestra of Canada, National Youth Choir of Canada, European Union Youth Orchestra, Orchestra London, the Art of Time Ensemble, Rolston String Quartet, Dennis Wick Canadian Wind Orchestra, and the Bach Music Festival of Canada Orchestra.

Dr. Emery studied at the University of British Columbia (B. Mus) and the University of Toronto (M. Mus, DMA). Matthew has received more than 30 awards and prizes for his compositions, and his work has been included on 19 albums, including a Juno-nominated disc. His more than 60 publications are found in the catalogs of Pavane Publishing, G. Schirmer, Boosey & Hawkes, Hal Leonard, and many others.

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