

*Commissioned by the Toledo Choral Society
Richard Napierala, Artistic Director
for premiere June 26, 2022
Toledo, Ohio*

PROGRAM NOTES

As Birds in Flight has been created as the Epilogue in the 7-song *Great Lakes Cantata*. To match the Prologue, the text is once again by the Canadian Poet William Wilfred Campbell. As he opens the first poem with words speaking of the future (“I will sing thee a song, O lakes”), now he rises above the waters with refreshed soul, as a bird in flight. Thus, the music begins with a flute solo, portraying the free bird. Solo voices reply, leading to the central phrase, “My heart like a bird doth fly.” Later, the beautiful closing thought comes in the lyrics “’Tis Infinite Love my heart shall meet on waterbirds in flight.”

The Great Lakes is a musical journey across the magnificent five lakes bordering the Eastern US and Canada. Texts by American and Canadian poets have been selected as lyrics for this cantata. The journey moves from East (Lake Ontario) to West (Lake Superior), stopping to explore the unique character of each lake en route.

Although the preliminary form of the cantata was scored for chorus with piano accompaniment, the final version is now orchestrated. Therefore, the composer has enjoyed exploring orchestral colors inspired by the personalities of the lakes.

TEXT

I love thee, lakes, and all thy glorious world,
Blue, wrinkled, mist encircled ‘neath the sky.
And far unto thy realm of waves imperiled
My heart, like a bird, doth fly.

Thou art to me as love to lover sad,
As sun to flower, as husband unto wife;
I think of thee and all the hours are glad,
And gone are pain and strife.

You come to me as cooling drink to one,
Hot parched and faint with never-ending thirst;
My spirit dances on the air and sun,
Forgets the world is cursed.

You know no hate, no death, no sin, no pain,
No woeful partings, bitterness and tears;
But only days that sleep to wake again,
Across the golden years.

From sky and wave I drink thy nectar sweet,
From jeweled brim that stars of heaven light,
When, lo, ’tis Infinite Love my heart shall meet
On waterbirds in flight.

My heart, like a bird, doth fly!

—“*Invocation to the Lakes*,”
William Wilfred Campbell (1860–1918),
from *Lake Lyrics and Other Poems* (1889),
alt. Gwyneth Walker

As Birds in Flight

from *The Great Lakes*

Alto and Baritone Soli, SATB Chorus (divisi), and Piano or Orchestra

“Invocation to the Lakes” by
William Wilfred Campbell (1860–1918)
Canadian Poet

Gwyneth Walker

Freely, as a bird call (flute)

Piano

4 *accel. poco a poco*
cresc. poco a poco

7 *(accel.)*
(cresc.)

10 *(accel.)* *rit.*
(cresc.) *f*

13 *Slightly slower* *rit.*
mf *pp*

attacca

Alto Soloist steps forward to sing

Alto Solo (*rich tone*)*mf* enraptured

16 **A** **Flowing tempo** ♩ = 108

Alto Solo

I love thee, lakes, and

A **Flowing tempo** ♩ = 108
with the excitement of birds in flight

p

Rec.

19

Alto Solo

all thy glo - rious world,

Bar. Solo (*rich tone*)
mf enraptured

Bar. Solo

Baritone Soloist steps forward to sing

Blue,

Rec. *Rec.* *simile*

22

Alto Solo

Bar. Solo

wrin - kled, mist en - cir - cled 'neath the sky.

25 **B**

Alto Solo

Bar. Solo

And far un - to thy realm of waves im -

B

28

Alto Solo

Bar. Solo

pearled

My heart, like a

31

Alto Solo

Bar. Solo

bird, doth fly. I

34 C *rit.*

Alto Solo
love thee, lakes, and all thy glo - rious,

Bar. Solo
I love thee, lakes, and all thy glo - rious,

mf

rit.

Leo. Leo. Leo.

37 **Slowly** **Faster tempo ♩ = 120, with excitement**

Alto Solo
all thy glo - rious world.

Bar. Solo
all thy glo - rious world.

Slowly

Faster tempo ♩ = 120, with excitement

Leo. Leo.

40 Soloists step back to join chorus **All Women unis. mf** D

S
A
Thou art to me as

D

Leo. simile

43

S
A

love to lov - er — sad,

p *mf*

T
B

... sad, As

add Basses *mf*

Tenors

46

S
A

T
B

sun to flower, as hus - band un - to wife;

49

S
A

I think of thee and all the hours are

(mf) **E**

T
B

E

52

S
glad, _____

A
glad, _____

T
(mf)
glad, _____

B
(mf)
And gone are pain and strife, and

gone are pain, and

And gone are pain and strife, and

ped. _____ *with slight pedal*

56

S
p **F**
You come to me as cool - ing drink to

A
p
You come to me as cool - ing drink to

T
p
gone are pain and strife.

B
p
gone are pain and strife.

F *pulsing*

60 *unis. mf*

S
one, My *mf*

A
one, My *mf*

T
hot parched and faint with nev - er - end - ing thirst; *mf*

B
hot parched and faint with nev - er - end - ing thirst; *mf*

mf

64 **G** *light and sparkling*

S
spir - it danc - es on the air and *light and sparkling*

A
spir - it danc - es on the air and

T

B

G

66 *rit.*

S
sun, _____

A
sun, _____

T
unis. (mf)
For - - gets the world is cursed, for -

B
unis. (mf)
For - - gets the world is cursed, for -

rit.

69 *(rit.)* **Slower** **[H] accel. poco a poco**

S
p
You know no hate, no

A
p
You know no hate, no

T
gets the world is
cursed. _____

B
gets the world is
cursed. _____

(rit.) **Slower** **[H] accel. poco a poco**

*Cue-sized notes are for rehearsal only

with pedal

73 (accel.)

S death, no sin, no pain,

A death, no sin, no pain,

T *unis. p* no woe - ful part - ings, bit - ter - ness and

B *unis. p* no woe - ful part - ings, bit - ter - ness and

(accel.)

77 (accel.) *mf* I

S But on - ly days that sleep to wake a -

A But on - ly days that sleep to wake a -

T *p* tears; Ah

B *p* tears; Ah

(accel.) I

12

80 *(accel.)*

S gain, A - cross the gold - en

A gain, A - cross the gold - en

T *mf* a - cross the gold - en, cross the gold - en

B *mf* a - cross the gold - en, cross the gold - en

(accel.)

ped. 3 3 3 *simile* 3 3 3

83 *a tempo* (♩ = 120)

S *f* years.

A *f* years.

T *f* years.

B *f* years.

a tempo (♩ = 120) *celebratory* [Theme]

f

with pedal

K

87 *p* *mf cantabile*

S Ah From sky and wave I

T *unis. p* Ah

B

mf

3 3 3 3

90

S drink thy nec - tar sweet, Ah

T sweet, From jew - elled brim that

B From jew - elled brim that

mf *mf*

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

L Ecstatic

93

S A

light, When, lo, 'tis

T

stars of hea - ven light, When, lo, 'tis

B

stars of hea - ven light, When, lo, 'tis

f >

f >

f >

L Ecstatic

96

S A

In - fin - ite Love my heart shall meet

T

In - fin - ite Love my heart shall meet

B

In - fin - ite Love my heart shall meet

98

S
A

T

B

on wa - ter - birds in

on wa - ter - birds in

on wa - ter - birds in

5 5 3 3 3 3

Ped. Ped. Ped.

101 **M**

S
A

T

B

flight.

flight.

flight.

M

Ped. Ped. Ped.

(as birds in flight)

104

unis. p

S As wa - ter - birds, wa - ter - birds,

A *p* in flight, in flight,

T *unis. p* As wa - ter - birds, wa - ter - birds,

B *unis. p* in flight, in flight,

p

rit. *simile*

107

cresc. *rit.* (wings) **N** Slower, triumphantly

S wa - ter - birds, ah my heart, like a

A *cresc.* wa - ter - birds, ah my heart, like a

T *cresc.* wa - ter - birds, ah my heart, like a

B *cresc.* wa - ter - birds, ah my heart, like a

f **N** Slower, triumphantly

cresc. *f*

110

S doth fly!

A bird, unis. fly,

T bird, doth fly,

B bird, doth fly,

bird, fly,

rit.

113

S fly! *ff*

A fly! *ff*

T fly! *ff*

B fly! *ff*

cresc. *ff* *rit.*

cresc. *ff* *rit.*

cresc. *ff* *rit.*

cresc. *ff* *rit.*

cresc. *ff* *rit.*

8va-