

J O A N S Z Y M K O

LOOK OUT

a setting of poetry by

Wendell Berry

for

SATB CHORUS

&

piano

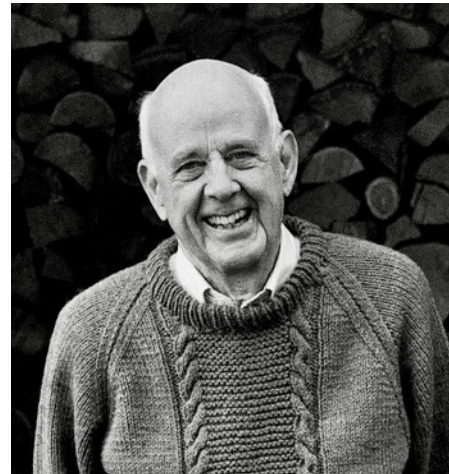
JOAN SZYMKO

Joan Szymko (b.1957) is widely regarded as an outstanding choral composer in North America today. Her works consistently display a discerning, stirring marriage of words and music. The American Choral Directors Association recognized Szymko's lasting impact on the choral arts in North America by selecting her as a recipient of the prestigious Raymond W. Brock Memorial Commission (2010) Notably, her music has been sung on stage or in sessions at every national ACDA conference since 2003. A dynamic conductor, Joan has led choirs in the Pacific Northwest for over forty years. As a visiting artist, Szymko has workshopped her compositions with choirs in academic and festival setting in the US and abroad. As a resident composer and performer with Portland's *Do Jump! Movement Theater*, she created underscoring for major touring productions, earning praise from the New York Times for her "ethereal vocal music." Szymko's catalog of over 150 choral works can be explored on her website: www.joanszymko.com



NOTES from the COMPOSER

Wendell Berry penned "Look Out" as a response to the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, which has been perceived by many as a "war for oil." (Numerous investigations since have confirmed that there was indeed no factual basis to any of the Bush administration's justifications for the incursion.) I have set several poems by Berry; I admire his eloquent and economical use of language. "Look Out" really hit viscerally. It became a potent vessel in which to pour my grief over the seemingly bottomless, soulless greed of those who wield power over land, people, governments, information—over the very future of our children. But Berry's poem, and this choral setting have an arc where the conclusion of the work is really a beginning; a gathering of energy, courage and heart. This is a work of dramatic intensity. Lean in. Focus on tone color and articulation to express the shifting timbre of the narrative: pastoral, foreboding, forewarning and finally, an affirmative call to action.



WENDELL BERRY (b.1934)

"Poet, novelist, and environmentalist Wendell Berry lives in Port Royal, Kentucky near his birthplace, where he has maintained a farm for over 40 years. Mistrustful of technology, he holds deep reverence for the land and is a staunch defender of agrarian values. He is the author of over 50 books of poetry, fiction, and essays. His poetry celebrates the holiness of life and everyday miracles often taken for granted. In 2016, Berry was awarded the Ivan Sandrof Lifetime Achievement Award by the National Books Critics Circle. In 2010, Barack Obama awarded him with the National Humanities Medal." —"Wendell Berry" / www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/wendell-berry

"Over the years, he has called himself an agrarian, a pacifist, and a Christian—albeit of an eccentric kind. He has written against all forms of violence and destruction—of land, communities, and human beings—and argued that the modern American way of life is a skein of violence. He is an anti-capitalist moralist and a writer of praise for what he admires: the quiet, mostly uncelebrated labor and affection that keep the world whole and might still redeem it." —"Wendell Berry's Lifelong Dissent". / Britton-Purdy, Jedediah (September 9, 2019) *The Nation*.

Look Out

by Wendell Berry

Come to the window, look out, and see
the valley turning green in remembrance
of all springs past and to come, the woods
perfecting with immortal patience
the leaves that are the work of all of time,
the sycamore whose white limbs shed
the history of a man's life with their old bark,
the river quivering under the morning's breath
like the touched skin of a horse, and you will see
also the shadow cast upon it by fire, the war
that lights its way by burning the earth.

Come to your windows, people of the world,
look out at whatever you see wherever you are,
and you will see dancing upon it that shadow.
You will see that your place, wherever it is,
your house, your garden, your shop, your forest, your farm,
bears the shadow of its destruction by war
which is the economy of greed which is plunder
which is the economy of wrath which is fire.
The Lords of War sell the earth to buy fire,
they sell the water and air of life to buy fire.
They are little men grown great by willingness
to drive whatever exists into its perfect absence.
Their intention to destroy any place is solidly founded
upon their willingness to destroy every place.

Every household of the world is at their mercy,
the households of the farmer and the otter and the owl
are at their mercy. They have no mercy.
Having hate, they can have no mercy.
Their greed is the hatred of mercy.
Their pockets jingle with the small change of the poor.
Their power is the willingness to destroy
everything for knowledge which is money
which is power which is victory
which is ashes sown by the wind.

Leave your windows and go out, people of the world,
go into the streets, go into the fields, go into the woods
and along the streams. Go together, go alone.
Say no to the Lords of War which is Money
which is Fire. Say no by saying yes
to the air, to the earth, to the trees,
yes to the grasses, to the rivers, to the birds
and the animals and every living thing, yes
to the small houses, yes to the children. Yes.

Commissioned by Women in Harmony of Portland, Maine, Catherine Beller-McKenna, Director

Look Out

To cherish what remains of the Earth and to foster its renewal
is our only legitimate hope of survival. – Wendell Berry

Wendell Berry (b.1934)

Joan Szymko

♩=86 tenderly, legato

S
A
T
B

mp

Come to the win-dow,

♩=86 poco rubato

Pno

mp

6

look out, and see the val-ley tur ning green in re-mem-brance of all springs past and to

10

come, the woods per-fec-ting with im-mor-tal pa-tience the leaves

for perusal only

14 *mf* **poco rit.** **A**

S — that are the work of all of time, Look out and see, the

A — that are the work of all of time, Look out and see, the

T — that are the work of all of time, Look out and see, the

B — that are the work of all of time, Look out and see, the

mf **poco rit.** **A**

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17 **Steadily, a bit slower** ♩=80

S sy-ca more_ whose white limbs shed the his-to-ry of a man's life with their old bark, the

A sy-ca more_ whose white limbs shed the his-to-ry of a man's life with their old bark, the

T sy-ca more_ shed the his-to-ry_ with their old bark,

B sy-ca more_ shed the his-to-ry_ with their old bark,

Steadily, a bit slower ♩=80

20

S *p* rit. *mp*
 riv-er quiv-er-ing un-der the morn-ing's breath and you will

A *mp* *mp*
 riv-er like the touched skin of a horse, and you will

T *mp*
 and you will

B *mp*
 and you will

p *8va* rit.

23 *A tempo* *hold back slightly* *Tempo primo* *poco accel.*

S *mf*
 see al- so the sha-dow_ cast up- on it by fire, the war that lights its

A *mf*
 see al- so the sha-dow_ cast up- on it by fire, the war that lights its

T *mf*
 see_ the sha-dow_ cast up- on it by fire, the war that lights its

B *mf*
 see_ the sha-dow_ cast up- on it by fire, the war that lights its

A tempo *hold back slightly* *Tempo primo* *poco accel.*

mp *mf*

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B ♩=96 misura

27

S way by bur - ning the earth. *f*

A way by bur - ning the earth. *f*

T way by bur - ning the earth. *f*

B way by bur - ning the earth. *f*

B ♩=96 misura

f

Ped.

32 Tutti

S A T B

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Come to your win - dows, peo - ple of the world, look out at what - e - ver you

ped. simile

37

Sop/Ten *mf*

see wher - e - ver you are, and you will see dan - cing up - on it that

mf

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50 **C** poco meno mosso *mp*

A see that your place, wher - e - ver it is, your house, your

C poco meno mosso *p* *mp*

55 *mp* *mf* *f* **Più mosso**

S your shop, your for - est, your farm bears the sha - dow_ of its des -

A gar - den, your shop, your for - est, your farm, de -

T your for - est, your farm, bears the sha - dow_ of its des -

B your for - est, your farm, de -

mf *f* **Più mosso**

61 *quasi recitativo* rit. *mf* ♩=84

Alto Solo

which is the e - co-no-my of greed

S *f*
truc - tion by war de - struc-tion by war

A *f*
struc - tion de - struc-tion by war

T *f*
truc - tion by war de - struc-tion by war

B *f*
struc - tion de - struc-tion be war

rit. ♩=84

mp

66 *mp* *mf* *accel.*

Alto Solo

which is plun - der which is the e - co - no - my of wrath which is

accel.

mf

71 $\text{♩} = 96$

Alto Solo
S
A
T
B

fire, which is fire.
which is fire, which is fire.
which is fire, fire.
which is fire, fire.
which is fire.

f
mf *f*
mf *f*
mf *f*
f

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77 **D** *Intense, dramatic, poco marcato*

S
A
T
B

The Lords of War sell the earth to buy fire, they sell the
The Lords of War sell the earth to buy fire, they sell the
The Lords of War sell the earth to buy fire, they sell the
The Lords of War sell the earth to buy fire, they sell the

D *Intense, dramatic*

80

S
wa - ter and air of life to buy fire.

A
wa - ter and air of life to buy fire.

T
wa - ter and air of life to buy fire.

B
wa - ter and air of life to buy fire.

div. *ff* $\text{♩} = 84$

Piano accompaniment with *ff* dynamics and $\text{♩} = 84$ tempo marking.

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84

Alto Solo
They are lit - tle men grown great by wil - ling - ness to drive what - e - ver ex - ists in - to its

mf

Piano accompaniment with *mf* dynamics.

88

Alto Solo
per - fect ab - sence. Their in - ten - tion to des - troy a - ny place is

S/A unison
Their in - ten - tion to des - troy a - ny place is

mp *p* *mp* *pp* *mp*

Piano accompaniment with dynamics *mp*, *p*, and *mp*.

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99

S

A

T *mf*

B

world is at their mer-cy, _____ the house-holds of the far-mer and the ot-ter and the owl are at their mer-cy. _____

Legato

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103

S *p* *mp*

A *p* *mp*

T *mp* *p*

B *p*

They have no mer-cy. _____ They have no

They have no mer-cy. _____ They have no

They have no mer-cy. _____

They have no mer-cy. _____

mp *p*

107 *poco rit.* ♩=76 *p* *pp*

S mer-cy. They have no mer-cy.

A mer-cy. They have no mer-cy.

T They have no mer-cy.

B They have no mer-cy.

poco rit. ♩=76 *mp* *p* *pp*

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111 *Tutti* *Alto* *Legato but with crisp articulation* *mp*

A Ha-ving hate, they can have no mer-cy. Their

115 *Add Bass (8ve unison)* *mp* *mf*

A greed is the ha-tred of mer-cy. Their pock-ets jin-gle with the small change of the

118 *p* *mf* *f* **F**

S Their pock-ets jin-gle_ with the small change of the poor.

A poor. Their pock-ets jin-gle_ with the small change of the poor.

T Their pock-ets jin-gle_ with the small change of the poor.

B poor. Their pock-ets jin-gle_ with the small change of the poor.

mp *mf* **F**

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123 *f* **Più mosso** = 100 *f*

S Their po-wer__ is the wil-ling-ness to des - troy ev-ery thing__ ev-ery thing for

A Their po-wer__ is the wil-ling-ness to des - troy ev-ery thing__ ev-ery thing for

T Their po-wer__ is the will=ing -ness to de-destroy ev-ery-thing__ ev - ery-thing for

B Their po-wer__ is the wil-ling-ness to des - troy ev-ery thing__ ev-ery thing for

Più mosso ♩=100
Unrelenting, aggressive

f *ff*

130

S know-ledge which is mo-ney_ which is po-wer_ which is vic-to-ry_ which is

A know-ledge which is mo-ney_ which is po-wer_ which is vic-to-ry_ which is

T know-ledge which is mo-ney_ which is po-wer_ which is vic-to-ry_ which is

B know-ledge which is mo-ney_ which is po-wer_ which is vic-to-ry_ which is

rit. *f*

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135

S ash-es sown_ by the wind. Leave your win-dows and go out,

A ash-es sown_ by the wind. Leave your win-dows and go out,

T ash-es sown_ by the wind. Leave your win-dows and go out,

B ash-es sown_ by the wind. Leave your win-dows and go out,

G accel. A tempo ♩=100 *Briglier hopeful sempre f*

f *sempre f*

143

S
peo-ple of the world, peo-ple of the world,

A
peo-ple of the world, peo-ple of the world,

T
peo-ple of the world, peo-ple of the world,

B
peo-ple of the world, peo-ple of the world,

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148

S
go in - to the streets, go in - to the fields, go in - to the woods,

A
go in - to the streets, go in - to the fields, go in - to the woods,

T
-

B
-

for perusal only

152

molto rit. *Meno mosso*
mf *p*

S go in - to the streets, go in - to the fields, go in - to the woods_ and a-long the

A go in - to the streets, go in - to the fields, go in - to the woods_ and a-long the

T go in - to the streets, go in - to the fields, go in - to the woods_ and a-long the

B go in - to the streets, go in - to the fields, go in - to the woods_ and a-long the

molto rit. *Meno mosso*
mf

(roll very slowly)

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156 $\text{♩} = 82$ *mp* *mf* *poco rit.* *mp* *p*

S streams. Go to-geth-er go a-lone. //

A streams. Go to-geth-er go a-lone. //

T streams. go a-lone. //

B streams. go a-lone. //

$\text{♩} = 82$ *p* *mf* *poco rit.* *p*

161 *Determined*
A tempo *mf* *f*

S Say no to the Lords of War _____ which is Mo- ney_ which is

A Say no to the Lords of War _____ which is Mo- ney_ which is

T _____ which is Mo- ney_ which is

B _____ *f*

Determined
A tempo *mf* *poco a poco cresc.*

_____ which is

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165 *ff* *poco rit.* *f* **H** A tempo

S Fire, which is Fire. _____ Say no by sa - ying

A Fire, which is Fire. _____ Say no by sa - ying

T Fire, which is Fire. _____ Say no by sa - ying

B Fire, which is Fire. _____ Say no by sa - ying

ff *poco rit.* *f* **H** A tempo

169

S
yes to the air, to the earth, to the trees,

A
yes to the air, to the earth, to the trees,

T
yes to the air, to the earth, to the trees, yes — to the gras-ses,

B
yes to the air, to the earth, to the trees, yes — to the gras-ses,

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174

S *mf* yes to the riv - ers, — *rit.* to the birds *mp* and the a - ni - mals and *molto rall.* e - v'ry liv - ing thing, *p* //

A *mf* yes to the riv - ers, — *mp* to the birds and the a - ni - mals and e - v'ry liv - ing thing, *p* //

T *mf* — — — — — *mp* to the birds and the a - ni - mals and e - v'ry liv - ing thing, *p* //

B *mf* — — — — — *mp* to the birds and the a - ni - mals and e - v'ry liv - ing thing, *p* //

mf *rit.* *molto rall.*

178 **Slower** $\text{♩}=76$ rit. A tempo poco rit.

S

A *Gently mp*
yes to the small hou - ses, _____

T

B *Gently mp*
yes to the small hou - ses, _____

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$\text{♩}=76$ rit. A tempo poco rit.

p mp

182 **Meno mosso** $\text{♩}=68$ *mp* *p* *mp*

yes, yes, yes to the chil- dren. _____

yes, yes, yes to the chil- dren. _____

Meno mosso $\text{♩}=68$

186

S *p*
yes to the chil - dren. Yes.

A *p*
yes to the chil - dren. Yes.

T *p*
yes to the chil - dren. Yes.

B *p*
yes to the chil - dren. Yes.

p
for perusal only