## JOAN SZYMKO

# Organize, Agitate, Educate!

No.2 from Lifting As We Climb

Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States

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JOAN SZYMKO (b.1957)

With a catalog of over 100 choral works Joan Szymko's music is regularly performed at regional, national and international choral festivals, competitions and conferences. Notably, her music has been presented on stage or in sessions at every National Conference of the American Choral Directors Association since 2003. The ACDA 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). She has been commissioned by all manner of choral ensemble: professional and community choirs, university and high school programs, select children's choirs, LGBTQ choruses and church choirs. Utilizing a familiar music vocabulary, she creates works that are nonetheless fresh and engaging; compelling and inspiring, her text selections are as notable as her music.

Joan Szymko lives and works in the beautiful Pacific Northwest. As resident composer she has enjoyed a fruitful collaboration with Portland-based Do Jump! Movement Theater (1995-present), creating underscoring for both local and major touring productions. A dynamic conductor, she has served on the choral music faculty of Portland State University (2013-15) and most notably, as Artistic Director of Aurora Chorus (1993-2000). As a visiting artist, Szymko workshops her compositions with choirs in a variety of educational and festival settings across the country and abroad. She has presented at regional and national ACDA conferences and was honored to have been invited to present a session on her own music in New Zealand at the 2020 World Symposium on Choral Music.

for more information: www.joanszymko.com.

#### NOTES from the COMPOSER

I accepted the 2020 Dr. Catherine Roma Commission Project commemorating the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment with the understanding that my composition would not only explore the historical fight for women's suffrage, but also speak to present day attacks on voting rights. "Organize, Agitate, Educate" is the stand alone 2nd movement of *Lifting As We Climb*, a choral narrative 30 minutes in length scored for women's choir, narrators (6) piano, drum kit and alto sax. Suffragists come to life and previously hidden voices of African American women fighting for the vote are heard. *Lifting As We Climb* looks back in time, but also explores the present day and anticipates a future that will require a diligent, informed public ready to fight for equality, democracy and the right to vote.

Organize, Agitate, Educate! lyric by Joan Szymko

I ask no favors, I ask no favors for my sex; all I ask of my brethren is that they will take their feet from off our necks! Organize, agitate, educate!

We'll have our rights; see if we don't; and you can't stop us from them; see if you can; You may hiss as much as you like, but it's coming'

Organize, agitate, educate!
We'll win the vote; see if we don't.
It is the emblem of equality,
the guarantee of liberty.
Organize, agitate, educate!
Roll up your sleeves, set your mind to making history,
and wage such a fight for liberty that
the whole world will respect our sex.

To the wrongs that need resistance, To the right that needs assistance, To the future in the distance, give yourselves!

Organize, agitate, educate! Roll up your sleeves, set your mind to making history, and wage such a fight for equality and the guarantee of liberty.

We'll have our rights!

### Organize, Agitate, Educate!

No. 2 from Lifting As We Climb

Lyric created by the composer from quotes by the following: Sarah Grimke, Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth, Carrie Catt, Anna Julia Cooper, Lucy Stone

Joan Szymko







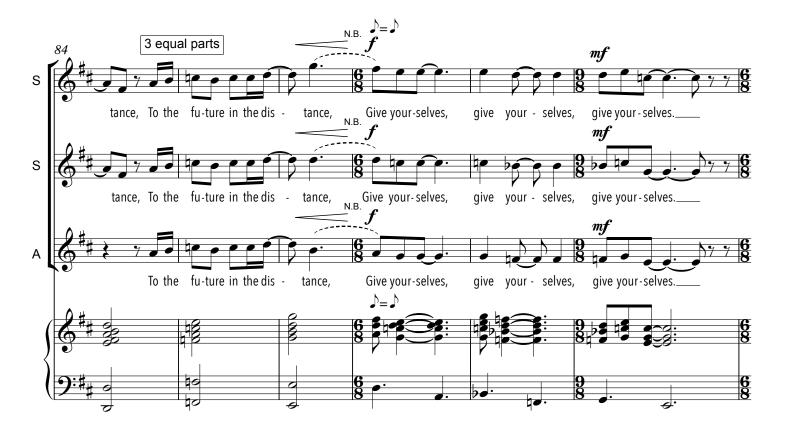












"The electror near all who were shrewd and wise enough to have themselves born



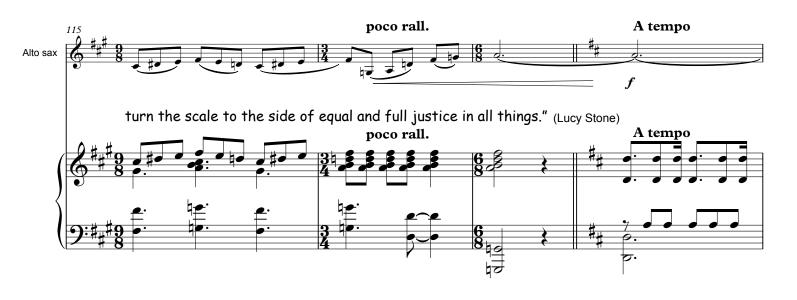
boys instead of girls, or who took the trouble to be born white instead of black." (Mary Church Terrell)













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