

J O A N S Z Y M K O

# SEED

a setting of *Declaration*, a poem

by

Elsa Gidlow

for

SATB chorus & piano



### JOAN SZYMKO

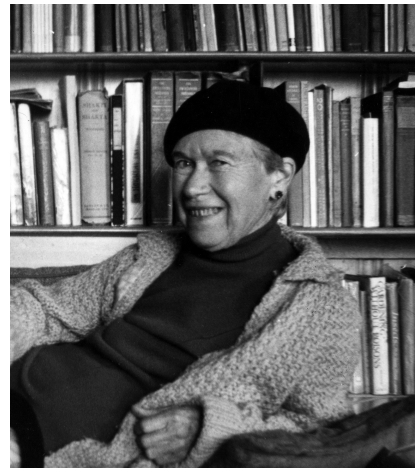
Joan Szymko (b.1957) is widely regarded as an outstanding choral composer in North America today. Her works consistently display a discerning, stirring marriage of words and music. The American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) recognized Szymko's lasting impact on the choral arts in North America by selecting her as a recipient of the prestigious Raymond W. Brock Memorial Commission (2010). 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 workshops her compositions with choirs in academic and festival settings 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](http://www.joanszymko.com)

### ELSA GIDLOW (1898-1986)

"Elsa Gidlow was a British-born, Canadian-raised, American poet, freelance journalist, philosopher. Elsa triumphed over childhood poverty, lack of formal education, and family tragedy to become a pioneering lesbian poet, bohemian free spirit, spiritual mystic, and an apostle of Eastern philosophies. By being true to her nature, she remained decades ahead of her time. She wrote *On A Grey Thread* (1923), the first volume of openly lesbian love poetry published in North America, when she was 23. In the 1950s, Gidlow helped found a bohemian community in Marin County, California. The community became known as Druid Heights, the name she had given to her land.

In 1962 she, along with Alan Watts, formed the Society of Comparative Philosophy. She provided Alan a place to live and write during the last years of his life. Elsa was the author of thirteen books and appeared as herself in the documentary film, *Word Is Out: Stories of Some of Our Lives* (1977). Completed just before her death, her autobiography, *Elsa, I Come with My Songs* (1986), recounts eight decades of her life story."

—"Elsa Gidlow & Druid Heights" [www.poet-warrior.com](http://www.poet-warrior.com)



### Declaration

*I am a seed in the dust,  
A live root bedded in night,  
And I am filled with a lust  
for something the worms call light.  
From what seed-pod I was blown  
Matters little to me,  
Why and by whom I was sown  
Or what the reaping may be.  
I only wait for my hour  
When I shall be done with night,  
When I shall thrill into flower  
And drink till I die of light.*

– from *On A Grey Thread* (1923)

SEED

Joan Szymko

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Poem, "Declaration" from *On a Grey Thread* is in the public domain

**Meno mosso** **Tempo primo** **poco accel.**

S. *mp*  
I am a seed in the dust.

A. *mp*  
I am a seed in the dust.

T. *mp*

B. *mp*

**Meno mosso** **Tempo primo** **poco accel.**

Pno. *mp*

**A tempo** **Meno mosso**

S. *mf* *mp*  
I am a seed, I am a seed in the dust. A

A. *mf* *mp*  
I am a seed, I am a seed in the dust. A

T. *mp* *mf* *mp*  
I am a seed, I am a seed in the dust.

B. *mp* *mf* *mp*  
I am a seed, I am a seed in the dust.

Pno. *mf*

ped. simile

**Tempo primo**

S. live root bed-ded in night, And I am filled with a lust for some - thing

A. live root bed-ded in night, And I am filled with a lust for some - thing

T. And I am filled with a lust for some - thing

B. And I am filled with a lust for some - thing

Pno. *mp* *p* *p*

**Più mosso**  $\text{♩} = 82$

S. some - thing the worms call light.

A. some - thing the worms call light.

T. some - thing call light.

B. some - thing call light. *pp* Mm

Pno. *p*

**Più mosso**  $\text{♩} = 82$

19

S. *p* *mp*  
Mm

A. *mp* *mf*  
From what seed-pod I was blown Mat-ters lit-tle to

T. *p* *mp*  
Mm

B. *p* *mp*  
Mm

Pno. *mp*  
ped. simile

23

S. *p* *mp*  
Mm Why and by whom I was

A. *mp*  
me,

T. *p* *mp*  
Mm Why and by whom I was

B. *p*  
Mm

Pno. *mf* *mp*

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poco accel. . . . .

34 *mf*

S. *mf*

A. *mf*

T. *mf*

B. *mf*

8 I on - ly wait,

I on - ly wait,

34 *mf*

Pno. *mf*

poco accel.

36

S. *f*

A. *f*

T. *f*

B. *f*

8 I on - ly wait for my hour

I on - ly wait for my hour

36

Pno. *f*

ped. simile



♩=70

38

S. hour I on - ly

A. hour, I on - ly wait,

T. I on - ly wait,

B.

Pno.

40

S. wait, I on - ly wait for my

A. I on - ly wait, I on - ly wait for my

T. I on - ly wait, I on - ly wait for my

B.

Pno.

*mf*

*f*

perusal only

42

S. hour, I on - ly wait for my

A. hour,

T. hour, I on - ly wait for my

B. I on - ly wait for my hour,

Pno.

42

rit. . . . . Tempo primo

44

S. hour,

A. I am a seed,

T. hour,

B.

Pno.

44

rit. . . . . Tempo primo

Ped.

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53 **Tempo primo**

S. *p* *mf* *mp*  
And I am filled with a lust, filled with a

A. *p* *mf* *mp*  
And I am filled with a lust, filled with a

T. *p* *mf* *mp*  
live root bed-ded in night, And I am filled with a lust, filled with a

B. *p* *mf* *mp*  
live root bed-ded in night, And I am filled with a lust, filled with a

53 **Tempo primo**

Pno. *p* =80

**Più mosso**

57

S. *p*  
lust for light.

A. *p*  
lust for light.

T. *p*  
lust for light.

B. *p*  
lust for light.

**Più mosso** =80

57

Pno. *p*  
ped. as before

60

S.

A. *mp* *mf*  
I on - ly wait for my hour. When I shall be done,

T. 8

B. *mp*  
When I shall be done,

Pno. 60 *mp*

63

S. *mp*  
I shall be done with night,

A. *mp* *p*  
I shall be done night,

T. *mp* *p*  
I shall be done with night,

B. *p*  
I shall be done with night,

Pno. 63 *mp* *p* *cresc.*  
Ped. 3 3 3

66

S. *mf* *f*

A. *mf* *f*

T. *mf* *f*

B. *mf* *f*

Pno. *mf* *f*

When I shall thrill in - to flow - er

68

S. *mf* *f* *mf*

A. *mf* *f* *mf*

T. *mf*

B. *mf*

When I shall thrill in - to flow - er And drink till I die, drink till I

When I shall thrill, till I

When I shall thrill And drink till I

Pno. *cresc.* *mf*

ped. simile

perusal only

**accel.**

71

S. *f* drink till I die

A. die And drink till I die And *f*

T. 8 die And drink till I die

B. die thrill in - to flow'r And *f*

71 **accel.**

Pno. 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

74  $\text{♩} = 100$

S. drink till I die of

A. drink till I die of

T. 8 drink till I die of

B. drink till I die, I die of

74  $\text{♩} = 100$

Pno. 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

**Tempo primo**  
♩ = 60

77

S. *mf* *mp* *mf*  
light, \_\_\_\_\_ light, light. \_\_\_\_\_

A. *mf* *mp* *mf*  
light, \_\_\_\_\_ light, light. \_\_\_\_\_

T. *mf* *mp* *mf*  
light, \_\_\_\_\_ light, light. \_\_\_\_\_

B. *mf* *mp* *mf*  
light, \_\_\_\_\_ light, light. \_\_\_\_\_

**Tempo primo**  
♩ = 60

77

Pno. *mf* *mf*  
Ped. *mp*

6 6

berusai only