

Calgary Girls Choir-Espresso, Elaine Quilichini, Artistic Director

# Syrinx

for S.S.A. Voices and Piano

Words by  
JULETA SEVERSON-BAKER

Music by  
MARK SIRETT

**Andante** (♩ = 82)

PIANO

*p* *pp*

Three or four very soft  
8va

4 purple finch birdcalls. Please see performance note at bottom. -----

## Note from the Poet:

Humans use the vocal folds of their larynxes to produce the variety of sounds needed in singing. The vocal folds move to partially, completely or variously interrupt air flow and vibrate at different tensions in order to create different pitches. Then, of course, the rest of the singer's body helps resonate, amplify and shape the tones into beautiful music. Songbirds' larynxes are mostly used to close off and protect their lungs when swallowing food or water. The unique organ a bird has, which they use to produce vibration and therefore sound, is called a syrinx. It rests below their bronchial split, at the part of their airway closest to their lungs. The syrinx is an elegant organ that can activate muscles on just one side of the trachea or the other, or both sides because it is right where the bird's bronchi branch into two. I think it is wondrous that birds evolved to manage unmatched beauty in their songs by vibrating air into sound with complex and subtle muscle action on the tissues and membranes of their trachea, so close to their lungs. It's as if the primary purpose of their exhalations was to make music!

## Performance Note:

The bird song should replicate as best as possible the high, soft and sweet call of the purple finch. There are some excellent examples on YouTube that may be used as a guide.

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7 SOPRANO 1 *p* in soft blue\_ dawn, one pur-ple

S1

SOPRANO 2 *p* in soft blue\_ dawn one pur-ple

S2

ALTO *p* in soft blue\_ dawn one pur-ple

A

*p* *pp* *p*

11 finch one pur-ple finch

S1

*mp*

finch one pur-ple finch

S2

*mp*

finch one pur-ple finch

A

*mp*

11 *mp*

14

S1 on the li-lac's the li - lac's

S2 on the li-lac's the li - lac's

A the li - lac's

14

17 rit. **Andante** (♩ = 82) *p*

S1 bare branch

S2 bare branch

A bare branch

17 rit. **Andante** (♩ = 82) *p*

20 **A Poco più mosso** (♩ = 86)

*p*

S1  
a ti - ny puff of

S2  
*pp*  
hoo hoo hoo hoo hoo hoo hoo

A  
*pp*  
hoo hoo hoo hoo hoo hoo hoo

20 *8<sup>va</sup>* **A Poco più mosso** (♩ = 86)

*pp*

23 *mp*

S1  
air flut-ter-ing be - lief

S2  
hoo hoo hoo hoo loo loo loo loo la la la la

A  
hoo hoo hoo hoo loo loo loo loo la la la la

23

26 *mf*

S1 flut-ter-ing be - lief and the air -

S2 *mf* flut-ter-ing be - lief

A *mf* flut-ter-ing be - lief

26 *mf*

29 *rit.*

S1 be-comes de-light be-comes de -

S2 and the air be-comes de-light be-comes de -

A be-comes de - light be-comes de -

29 *rit.*

**B** *Animato* (♩=108)

S1  
light

S2  
light

A  
light

**B** *Animato* (♩=108)

35

S1  
the way rain - drops di - vide\_

S2  
the way rain - drops di - vide\_

A  
the way rain - drops di - vide\_

35

38

S1  
light the way rain - drops di - vide

S2  
light the way rain - drops di - vide

A  
light the way rain - drops di - vide

38

41

S1  
light in - to co-lour in - to co-lour in - to

S2  
light in - to co-lour in - to co-lour in - to

A  
light in - to co-lour in - to co-lour in - to

41

44 *f* *mf*

S1  
co - lour \_\_\_\_\_ song as free as flight \_\_\_\_\_ as flight

S2  
co - lour \_\_\_\_\_ song as free as flight free as flight

A  
co - lour \_\_\_\_\_ song as free as flight free as flight

44 *f* *mf*

48 *f* *ff* *rit.*

S1  
song \_\_\_\_\_ as free \_\_\_\_\_ as flight \_\_\_\_\_

S2  
song \_\_\_\_\_ as free \_\_\_\_\_ as flight \_\_\_\_\_

A  
song \_\_\_\_\_ as free \_\_\_\_\_ as flight \_\_\_\_\_

48 *f* *ff* *rit.*



**C** Tempo I° (♩ = 82)

S1

S2

A

**C** Tempo I° (♩ = 82)

*subito p*

55 SOLO **meno mosso** *p*

put a-way your di-a-grams that old

S1 *p*

hm

S2 *p*

hm

A *p*

hm oh

55 *pp* **meno mosso**

8va

59

SOLO *mp*  
 tight-ness in your throat in ear-liest light ear-liest

S1 *mp*  
 oh in ear - liest

S2 *mp*  
 oh in ear - liest

A *mp*  
 in ear - liest

59

62 *mf*

SOLO *mf*  
 light, just lis - ten

S1 *mf* *pp* *whisper* *whisper*  
 light, just lis - ten lis - ten lis - ten

S2 *mf* *pp* *whisper*  
 light, just lis - ten lis - ten

A *mf* *pp* *whisper* *whisper*  
 light, just lis - ten lis - ten lis - ten

62

A few choristers improvise very soft purple  
finch birdcalls for approx. 20 seconds.  
Please see performance note on first page.

66 **D** Poco più mosso (♩ = 84)

*p*

S1 a ti-ny lift of

S2 *pp* hoo hoo hoo hoo hoo hoo hoo

A *pp* hoo hoo hoo hoo hoo hoo hoo

**D** Poco più mosso (♩ = 84)

66 *p*

70

S1 air qui-ver-ing be - lief a

S2 hoo hoo hoo hoo loo loo loo loo la la la la

A hoo hoo hoo hoo loo loo loo loo la la la la

70

73 *mp* *rit.* *mf*

S1  
 song as free free as flight free as flight

S2  
 song as free free as flight free as flight

A  
 song as free free as flight free as flight

73 *mp* *rit.* *mf*

**E** **Andante** (♩ = 80) *f.* *mf*

S1  
 leave your dark - est hours you have al-ways been held

S2  
 leave your dark-est hours you have al-ways been held

A  
 leave your dark-est hours you have al-ways been held

**E** **Andante** (♩ = 80) *f.* *mf*

80

S1 *f*  
trust the air trust your mu-sic trust trust

S2 *f*  
trust the air trust your mu-sic trust trust

A *f*  
trust the air trust your mu-sic trust trust

84

S1 *ff*  
and take flight

S2 *ff*  
and take flight

A *ff*  
and take flight

84 *ff*

8<sup>va</sup>