

NOTES

The Sacred Harp

(Arrangements of Original American Folk Hymns)

Sacred Harp or *Shaped Note* singing is a uniquely American style of music. It evolved in the early 18th. century when traveling choir masters used the FA SOL LA method to teach their mostly Appalachian choirs part singing. Traditionally, the songs are sung through, first using the symbols FA SOL LA MI FA for the pitch names as indicated by the shape of each note.

The music is richly modal with a surging pulse. The melodic nature of each part is stressed over its place in the harmony so that the lines retain a vigorous independence. The lyrics create strong poetic images that match the strength of the music. In performance, the singers often resonate the sound in a slightly nasal fashion with the tenor (the melody) and the soprano often sung by both men and women in octaves. Performances are most often done A Cappella.

In these arrangements, I attempted to retain the characteristic aspects of the style while making it accessible and varied enough to be enjoyable. An excellent grouping for these pieces would be (1) **Soar Away** speaks of man's desire to be more like and ultimately with God, (2) **Sweet Prospect** describes a beautiful hereafter, (3) **Windham** warns of the reality of death, (4) **Evening Shade** presents a resignation that death is indeed inevitable, while (5) **Northfield** brings forth the joy and hope of rebirth when "death itself shall die". When performing as a group, I suggest omitting the second verse in **Sweet Prospect** and verses two and four in **Windham**.

G. S. C.

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Soar Away

(from The Sacred Harp)

S.S.A.T.T.B.

Performance time: 2:00

A. M. Cagle (1935)

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Arr. George S. Clinton

Andante ♩ = 66

Soprano 2
Tenor 2

Alto

Soprano 1
Tenor 1

Bass

Keyboard (rehearsal)

Allegro $\text{d} = 104$

Musical score for voice and piano. The vocal part consists of eight staves of music. The piano accompaniment is in the bass clef staff. The vocal parts are in soprano, alto, tenor, and bass. The tempo is Allegro with $\text{d} = 104$. The lyrics are: La Fa Sol Sol Fa La La, Fa Mi La La La Mi Fa Sol La La Sol Fa Mi Fa, La Mi Fa Fa Mi La Mi La Sol La La La, Fa Sol La La La Sol Fa Mi La La La Sol La.

Musical score for voice and piano. The vocal part consists of eight staves of music. The piano accompaniment is in the bass clef staff. The vocal parts are in soprano, alto, tenor, and bass. The lyrics are: La La La La Fa La Sol Sol Sol Sol La La, La Fa Mi Fa La Mi Sol Fa Fa, La Sol Sol Sol Sol La Fa La Sol La La Sol La, La Fa La Sol Fa Sol La Sol La Mi La La.

La La Mi Fa Mi La Sol La La La
La Sol Fa Mi La Fa La Fa Fa Mi La Sol La Fa
Fa Mi La Sol La La La Sol La Fa
La La Fa Sol La La Fa La La
Fa Mi La Sol La La La

1. 2.

Fa La La Mi La Sol La La
La La Sol Fa Mi Fa Mi La Fa Mi La
La Fa Mi La Sol La Sol La La
La La Mi Fa Sol La La La Fa Sol La
Fa Mi La Sol La La La Fa Sol La

$\text{d} = 66$

A musical score for three voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor/Bass) and piano. The vocal parts are in 3/4 time, and the piano part is in 2/4 time. The vocal entries are staggered, with each voice entering one measure after the previous one. The piano part provides harmonic support with sustained notes and chords. The lyrics are repeated three times.

I want a sober mind, An all sus-tain-ing eye, To
I want a sober mind, An all sus-tain-ing eye, To
I want a sober mind, An all sus-tain-ing eye, To
I want a sober mind, An all sus-tain-ing eye, To

A continuation of the musical score. The vocal parts now enter simultaneously, and the piano part features more complex harmonic progression with eighth-note chords. The lyrics are repeated three times.

see my God a- bove, And to the heav-ens fly.
see my God a- bove, And to the heav-ens fly.
see my God a- bove, And to the heav-ens fly.
see my God a- bove, And to the heav-ens fly.

$\text{♩} = 104$

This section contains four staves of musical notation. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The key signature is one flat. The tempo is marked $\text{♩} = 104$. The lyrics are: "I'd soar a-way a-", "I'd soar a-way a - bove the sky, —", "I'd soar a-way a - bove the sky, —", and "I'd soar a-way a - bove the sky, —". The music consists of eighth and sixteenth note patterns.

This section contains five staves of musical notation. The top three staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The key signature changes to no sharps or flats. The lyrics are: "bove the sky, — I'd fly, — And", "I'd fly, — and fly, — To", "I'd fly, — And fly, — To —", "I'd fly, — And fly, — To", and "I'd fly, — And fly, — To". The music includes various note values such as eighth, sixteenth, and thirty-second notes, along with rests.

fly, To see my God a- bove, I'd fly, to
 see my God a- bove, I'd fly, I'd fly, To __
 see my God a- bove, I'd fly, fly, fly, To __
 see my God a- bove, I'd fly, fly, fly, To __

see my God a- bove. _____

see my God a- bove. I'd __ bove. _____

see my God a- bove. bove. _____

see my God a- bove. I'd __ bove. _____

