

Commissioned by and for The Master Singers of Lexington,
with the generous support of two anonymous donors.

TEMPLE OF NATURE

*Organic life beneath the shoreless waves, was born and nursed in Ocean's pearly caves.
First forms minute unseen by spheric glass move on the mud or pierce the wat'ry mass.
These, as successive generations bloom new pow'rs acquire, and larger limbs assume;
whence countless groups of vegetation spring and breathing realms of fin, and feet and wing.*

Text from "Temple of Nature" by Erasmus Darwin
(1731 - 1802)

Music by Patricia Van Ness (1951)
Score rev. 19 April 2019

Sempre molto legato; sempre grazioso; senza vibrato.
Dynamic range *p - mf*, using natural dynamics.

$\text{♩} = 40$ approx.

SOPRANO 1
mf
life _____ waves _____

SOPRANO 2
mp
Or - gan - ic life _____ be - neath the shore - less waves, _____

ALTO 1 & 2
mp
Or - gan - ic life _____ be - neath the shore - less waves, _____

TENOR
p
(Or _____ life 'neath (shore waves, _____

BASS
p
(Or _____ life 'neath (shore _____ waves _____

9

S 1 _____ First _____ forms _____ (un _____

S 2 _____ was born and nursed O - cean's caves. First forms _____ un -

A 1 & 2 _____ was born and nursed in O - cean's caves. First forms min - ute _____ un -

T _____ was born nursed (O _____ caves. First forms un -

B _____ born _____ caves. First _____ forms min - ute un -

18

S 1 _____ glass _____ move _____ pierce _____ mass; *mp*

S 2 _____ seen glass _____ move _____ pierce _____ mass; *mp*

A 1 & 2 _____ seen spher-ic glass _____ move on the mud, or pierce the wat - 'ry *mp*

T _____ - seen by spher-ic glass _____ move _____ pierce _____ wat - 'ry *p*

B _____ seen _____ glass _____ move _____ pierce _____ mass; *mp*

A

♩ = 80

25

S 1
lu _____ lu lu lu _____ lu _____ lu _____

S 2
_____ *p* lu lu lu lu lu _____ lu _____ lu lu

A 1 & 2
mass; *p* lu lu lu lu lu _____ lu lu lu lu lu

T
mass;

B



35

S 1
lu _____ *mp* lu lu lu lu _____ lu _____ lu _____

S 2
lu _____ *mp* lu lu lu lu lu _____ lu _____ lu lu

A 1 & 2
lu _____ *mp* lu lu lu lu lu _____ lu lu lu lu lu

T
p lu lu lu lu _____ lu lu _____ lu lu lu

B
p lu lu lu _____ lu _____ lu lu

45 $\text{♩} = 40 \text{ approx.}$ **B** *mf*

S 1 lu bloom

S 2 lu bloom

A 1 & 2 lu These, as suc - ces - sive bloom

T lu These

B lu as suc - ces - sive



52

S 1 new whence

S 2 bloom newpow'rs ac - quire limbs (sume,

A 1 & 2 bloom newpow'rs ac - quire, and lar - ger limbs as - sume,

T gen - er - a - tions bloom newpow'rs ac - quire larg - er (sume,

B bloom new pow'rs (quire (sume,

60

S 1
— groups — and — realms —

S 2
count - less groups — (ta spring, and breath-ing realms —

A 1 & 2
count - less groups groups — veg - e - ta - tionspring, and breath-ingrealms of fin, — and

T
8
(count groups — (ta spring, and — realms of fin and

B
count - less groups_ groups of veg - e - ta - tion spring, and — realms of fin —



69

C ♩ = 80

S 1
— wing. —

S 2
— wing. —

A 1 & 2
feet and wing; (oo) al - le -

T
8
feet and wing; al - le - lu - ia, (oo)

B
— wing. (oo) wing. (oo)

78

S 1 *mp* lu lu lu lu lu

S 2 *mp* lu lu lu lu lu lu

A 1 & 2 *mp* lu - - ia, lu lu lu lu lu lu

T *p* lu lu lu lu lu lu

B *p* lu lu lu lu



D ♩ = 70 approx.

stagger breathing as needed to end

87

S 1 *mp* lu lu Whence count - less
stagger breathing as needed to end

S 2 *mp* lu lu lu Whence count - less
stagger breathing as needed to end

A 1 & 2 *mp* lu lu lu lu lu Whence

T *p* lu lu lu Whence count - less
stagger breathing as needed to end

B *p* lu lu lu Whence count - less count-less

96

S 1
groups of veg - e - ta - tion spring, and breath -

S 2
groups of veg - e - ta - tion spring, and

A 1 & 2
groups veg - e - ta - tion spring and

T
groups spring,

B
groups spring, breath -

104

S 1
- ing realms of fin and feet and wing.

S 2
breath - ing fin and feet and wing.

A 1 & 2
breath - ing realms fin feet and wing.

T
breath - ing realms of fin feet and wing.

B
- ing realms fin and feet and wing.