

Vocal Score

JS 020

8 minutes, 15 seconds

Your children (are not your children)

for TTBB Choir and Four-Hands Piano

Text by
Khalil Gibran

Music by
Joshua Shank

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Joshua Shank

Note from the composer

In the early stages of writing this piece I concluded that the simpler I kept the music, the closer it would be to the intention of Lebanese poet Khalil Gibran's amazing text about the stewardship of raising a child. In the writing I attempted to represent this by taking a melodic idea and "growing" it one note at a time until it became the entire line of text; slow, repetitive development that eventually yields what is hopefully something beautiful. Not a bad metaphor for parenthood, I think.

Your children (are not your children) was co-commissioned by the American Choral Directors Association of Minnesota and the Minnesota Music Educators Association for Dr. Angela Broecker and the 2010 Minnesota All-State Mixed Choir. It was originally scored for two four-hands pianos but I adapted it so the piece can be performed with only one piano. The tenor-bass version was commissioned in 2013 by the Boston Gay Men's Chorus (Reuben M. Reynolds III, conductor).

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The Text

On Children

By Khalil Gibran (1883-1931)

Your children are not your children.
They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.
They come through you but not from you,
And though they are with you yet they belong not to you.
You may give them your love but not your thoughts,
For they have their own thoughts.
You may house their bodies but not their souls,
For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow,
which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.
You may strive to be like them,
but seek not to make them like you.
For life goes not backward nor carries with yesterday.

(Adapted by the composer)

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“This illegal copy will self destruct in 5...4...3...”

Co-commissioned for the Minnesota All-State Mixed Choir as a special project in the year 2010 by the American Choral Directors Association of Minnesota and the Minnesota Music Educators Association; TTBB version commissioned by the Boston Gay Men's Chorus (Reuben M. Reynolds III, conductor)

Your children (are not your children)

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Softly (♩ = ca. 76)

mp

Tenor 1
Your chil - dren are not your chil - dren.

Tenor 2
Your chil - dren are not your chil - dren.

Bass 1
Your chil - dren are not your chil - dren.

Bass 2
Your chil - dren are not your chil - dren.

9 Always moving forward (♩ = ca. 135)

mf

Your chil - dren are not your chil - dren

Your chil - dren are not your chil - dren Your chil - dren are not

Your chil - dren are not your chil - dren Your chil - dren are not your chil - dren

Your children are not your chil - dren Your chil - dren are not your chil - dren Your chil -

14

Your chil - dren are not your chil - dren Your chil - dren Your chil-dren are not
 your chil - dren Your chil-dren are not your chil - dren Your chil-dren are not
 Your chil-dren are not your chil - dren Your chil-dren are not your chil-dren Your chil-dren are not
 dren are not your chil - dren Your chil - dren are not your chil - dren Your chil-dren are not

19

your chil - dren
 your chil - dren
 your chil dren They are the
 your chil - dren They are the

32

(3+3+2+2)

They are the sons and daugh-ters of Life's long-ing sons and daugh-ters of Life's
 They are the sons and daugh-ters of Life's long-ing sons and daugh-ters of Life's
 sons and daugh-ters of Life's long-ing They are the sons and daugh-ters of Life's
 sons and daugh-ters of Life's long-ing They are the sons and daugh-ters of Life's

35

long-ing for it - self.

long-ing for it - self.

long-ing for it - self.

long-ing for it - self.

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8

mf

T

you from you not from you but not from you

mf

B

you from you not from you but not from you

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52

you but not from you through you

you but not from you through you

56

but not from you come through you but not from you

but not from you come through you but not from you

60 *sub. f* They come through you but not from you They come through you *f*

They come through you but not from you They come through you

66 **69** but _ not from you

but _ not from you

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81 *f no vibrato* They come through you but not from you. They are with you yet

They come through you but not from you. They are with you yet

90 they be-long not to you, they be-long not to you, they be-long not to you, they be-long not to you.

they be-long not to you, they be-long not to you, they be-long not to you, they be-long not to you.

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95 **97** *mp* You, You may, Tacet

103
T1
8
You may house You may house their, You may house their bo - dies You may
T2
8
You may house You may house their, You may house their bo - dies You may

112
8
house their bo - dies but *mp* You may house their bo - dies but not but not
house their bo - dies but *mp* but not

121
8
You may house their bo - dies but not their *mf* You may house their
You may house their *mf*

128
8
bo - - - dies but *f* not their souls.
bo - - - dies but *f* not their souls.

134
T
8
mf no vibrato
For their souls dwell, their souls dwell in the
B
8
mf no vibrato
For their souls dwell, their souls dwell in the

140

house of to - mor - - - row which you can - not

house of to mor - - - - row which you can - not

145

vis - it, you can - not vis - it, not e - ven in your

vis - it, you can - not vis - it, not e - ven in your

150

152

dreams.

dreams.

154

T1 You may give,

T2 You may give,

B1 You may give,

B2 You may give,

161 *mp*

You may give them,

mp

You may give them,

mp

You may give them,

mp

You may give them,

168 *mp* bring out -----

You may give

mp

You may give them your,

mp

You may give them your,

mp

You may give

173 *mf*

them your, You may give them your

mf

You may give them your

mf

You may give them your

mf

them your, You may give them your

180 *f* love, _____ *f robust* But not your thoughts,

love, _____ *f robust* But not your thoughts,

love, _____ *f robust* But not your thoughts,

love, _____ *f robust* But not your thoughts,

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186 but not your thoughts. You may give them your love but

but not your thoughts. You may give them your love but

but not your thoughts. You may give them your love but

but not your thoughts. You may give them your love but

194 A quiet revelation
(♩ = ca. 80)
mp

190 not your thoughts, your thoughts, For they *mp*

not your thoughts, your thoughts, For they *mp*

not your thoughts, your thoughts, For they *mp*

not your thoughts, your thoughts, For they *mp*

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199 A little more motion (♩ = ca. 90)

195

T *mf* warmly *mp*

have their own thoughts. They have their own thoughts. You may strive to be like

B *mf* warmly *mp*

have their own thoughts. They have their own thoughts. You may strive to be like

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201

T

them but seek not to make them like

B

them but seek not to make them like

209 Heading towards the end (♩ = ca. 104)

207 *rit.*

T you.

13

B *rit.*

you.

13

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224 *mf*

T

For life goes not back - ward

B *mf*

For life goes not back - ward

229

mf

nor _____ tar - ries with _____ yes - ter -

nor _____ tar - ries with _____ yes - ter -

234

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day. _____ Your chil - dren are not your

day. _____ Your chil - - - dren are not your

240

chil dren _____ they are the sons and daugh-ters of Life's

chil - dren _____ they are the sons and daugh-ters of Life's

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246

long - ing _____

long - ing _____

251 $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

T1 *f* for it - self.

T2 *f* for it self.

B1 *f* for it - self.

B2 *f* for it - self.

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258 $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

ff oh*

ff oh*

ff oh*

ff oh*

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260

T

B

*Or other neutral vowel

Minneapolis, April 2010
Single piano version: Austin, August 2013
TTBB version: Muscatine, December 2013