

The Heart of the Tree

What does he plant who plants a tree?
He plants a friend of sun and sky;
He plants the flag of breezes free;
The shaft of beauty, towering high;
He plants a home to heaven anigh;
For song and mother-croon of bird
In hushed and happy twilight heard—
The treble of heaven's harmony—
These things he plants who plants a tree.

What does she plant who plants a tree? She plants cool shade and tender rain, And seed and bud of days to be, And years that fade and flush again; She plants the glory of the plain; And plants the forest's heritage; The harvest of a coming age; The joy that unborn eyes shall see—

These things she plants who plants a tree.

What do we plant who plant a tree? We plant, in sap and leaf and wood, In love of home and loyalty And far-cast thought of civic good— Our blessings on the neighborhood, Who in the hollow of His hand Holds all the growth of all our land— A nation's growth from sea to sea Stirs in our heart when we plant a tree.

> Henry Cutler Bunner (1855-1895) adapted by Gwyneth Walker

It is suggested that this poem be read aloud to the audience by members of the chorus before singing the song. (Readers may alternate between various lines of poetry.)

NALKE JWYNETH

The Heart of the Tree for SATB Chorus and Piano

Henry Cutler Bunner (1855 - 1895) G. W. alt. Gwyneth Walker

The Heart of the Tree is based upon the poem (of the same title) by Henry Cutler Bunner (1855-1895). Although the text dates back to an earlier era, the sentiments described are timeless – love, respect and reverence for trees. Our "grounded friends" rise to the sky as a bridge between our rooted, earthly existence and heaven above.

The musical setting juxtaposes choral singing of the three stanzas of the poem with ascending melodic phrases in the accompaniment. These piano interludes are inspired by the image of the tree branches reaching upward – "a shaft of beauty towering high."

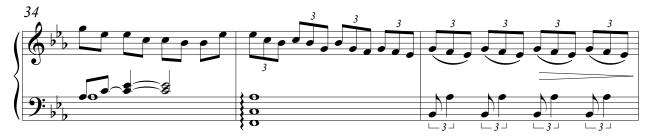


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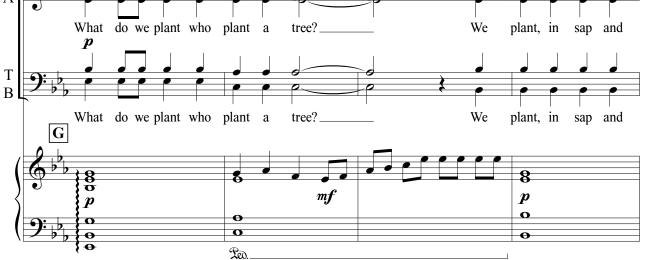


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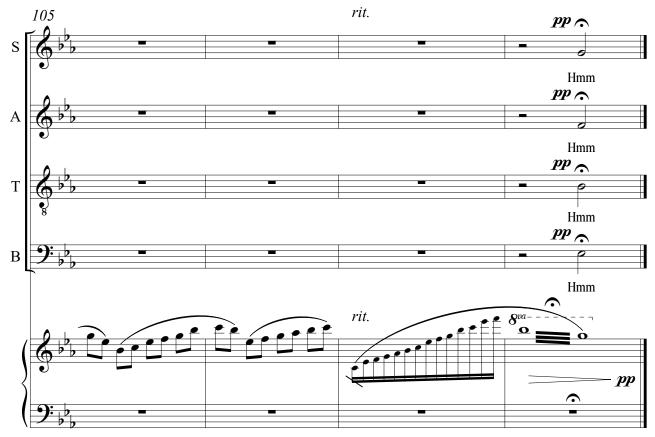


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4:00 | March 15, 2020 New Canaan, Connecticut