Robert Casteels

Multitudes

poem opus 127 for 8-part mixed choir S.S.A.A.T.T.B.B. a cappella

Charming, limitless, question

MULTITUDES

Who are you, you ask me, wry grin across plain features trying to be charming.

I find it amusing how you attempt to put a label on something limitless for I am fiery beyond measure, a phoenix in this one-horse town.

My answer is that I give raw honesty to those who are deserving.

I have no time for paper tigers and unpolished silver spoons.

So, dear stranger, the real question here is: who are you to ask?

Duration 4'50"

Performance notes

The tempo of bar 1 to 4 is free. A double barline indicates a tempo change. The tempo increases stepwise: see bar 19, 30, 61, 68, 75, 109, 117 and 131. As long as he respects the tempo gradation, the conductor is welcome to interpret the suggested character stated next to each tempo marking.

Bar 1, 29 and 67 do not need to be beaten through. Their time signatures indicate approximatively the length of a fermata.

Programme notes

Singaporean poet Adam Tie wrote a book of poems entitled *Finders & Keepers*. I choose *Multitudes*, the thirteenth poem of a group subtitled *I am empowered* because sonic ideas immediately sprung to my mind at first reading. The first and last verse encapsulate the idea of identity through self empowerment. The first verse (bar 5 to 18) is a canonic stretto.

This stretto returns at rehearsal letters B, C, D and E, every time in a tighter stretto with a different meaning.

The source of inspiration of each poems was three words given to Adam Tie by strangers. In the book these three words always precede a dedication and the title of a poem. The introduction of the composition quotes these three inspirational words: bar 1 corresponds to bar 29, bar 2 to 56 and 3 to 127.

The stepwise increase in tempo expresses a growing sense of urgency until the coda states the real question.

Words inspire textural intervals: semi-tone on wry (bar 23), charming (bar 29) and raw (bar 97, 99-100), major and minor thirds on all who are you, superimposed fourths on you ask me (19-22) and fiery (61-66), open fifths on honesty (97 and 99-100), spoons (107) and here (128-129), sixths on features (27), amusing (46-53), for I (61-64) and my answer (95-98), a so-called dominant ninth on for (55-60), beyond measure (67), phoenix with the rising glissandi (68-71), deserving (102) and is (130). This ninth chord does not function as a dominant but links to the natural harmonic series.

Bars 71-74 and 117-123 contain a touch of humour that would not be lost on a Singaporean audience.

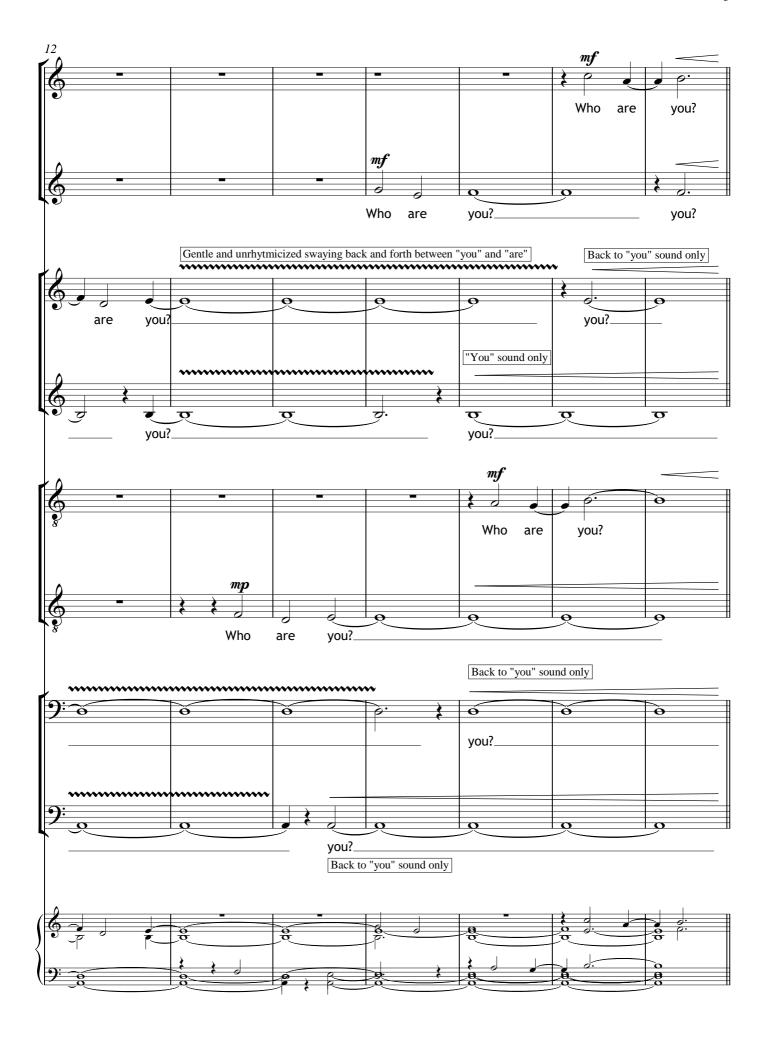
Poet: Adam Tie

poem opus 127 for 8-part mixed choir S.S.A.A.T.T.B.B. a cappella

Composer: Robert Casteels

Introductory and tempo-less





Sceptical = 76

