

Ellen Ruth Harrison

MUSIC IS

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for SATB chorus

Text by Joshua McGuire

Music Is was commissioned by Kate Tombaugh in 2017 for the inaugural year of the *Poco a Poco Summer Music Fest* in Streator, Illinois. Kate's indomitable spirit and enthusiasm were an inspiration for this work, as was the wonderful text that she commissioned from Joshua McGuire. It has so many layers and interconnections, and yet it is so direct and powerful. Musical ideas flowed forth from me in response. The rhythm of the text, its beautiful imagery, and the ideas it presents were very inspiring.

The words 'music is' appear three times in the poem: at the beginning, slightly after the middle and at the end, here reversed to be 'is music'. The musical setting of these words appears frequently throughout the piece, either as principal or secondary material. Its distinctive irregular meter makes it easy to recognize, unifies the work and creates musical continuity. Most importantly, however, it creates a feeling of joy that music is a part of the world and a part of our lives.

Duration: circa 3 minutes
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MUSIC IS

Music is
all we love

and cannot grasp:
fire tongue -
river gloss -
summit pitch -
sunset tone -

music alone
speaks
the silent word
inside the world.

And when
we find ourselves

alone music
is
the friendship
we have known:

singing silence –
stinging joy –
the years that pass
inside a day –

all we want to say
and all we can't

is music.

-- Joshua McGuire

MUSIC IS

for Kate Tombaugh and the poco a poco Summer Fest Choir

Joshua McGuire

Ellen Ruth Harrison (2017)

Joyful

♩ = 84-88

SOPRANO *p* Mu-sic is mu-sic is _____ mu-sic is _____ all we love _____ *mp*

ALTO *p* Mu-sic is mu-sic is _____ mu-sic is _____ all we love _____ *mp*

TENOR

BASS

Piano (for rehearsal only) *p* _____ *mp*

9 *p* mu-sic is mu-sic is _____ all we love and can-not grasp _____ and

p mu-sic is mu-sic is _____ all we love and can-not grasp _____ and

p mu-sic is mu-sic is _____ all we love and can-not grasp _____ and

p _____

17 *mf* *p* *mp*

can-not grasp: _____

can-not grasp: _____ mu - sic is _____

can-not grasp: _____ mu - sic

mp mu - sic is mu - sic is _____

23 *mp*

fire___ tongue___ ri - ver gloss___ sum-mit pitch___

fire___ tongue___ ri - ver gloss___ sum-mit pitch___

is mu - sic is___ ri - ver gloss___ sum-mit

mu - sic is___ ri - ver gloss___ sum-mit

29

sun-set tone music is all we love music a -

sun - set tone music is all we love music

sun - set tone

36

lone speaks the si - lent word speaks the

lone speaks the si-lent

a - lone speaks the si-lent word

mu - sic a - lone speaks

43

si - lent word in - side the world.

word in - side the world in - side the world.

the si - lent word

And

mp

p

mp

48

mu - sic is the friend - ship

mu - sic is the friend - ship we have

mu - sic is the friend - ship

when we find our - selves a - lone mu - sic is the

p

p

p

poco

p

54

we have known: known we have known the friend-ship we have known: we have known: friend-ship we have known we have known:

60

sting-ing joy sting-ing joy sing-ing si-lence sting-ing joy sting-ing joy sing si-lence sting joy sting joy

66

the years that pass in - side a day all

the years that pass in - side a day all we

mp joy

mp joy

mp

69

we want to say and all we can't is mu - sic

want to say and all we can't is mu - sic

mp *p*

mp *p*

p

p

mp *p*

73

mp

is mu - sic
 mu - sic is mu - sic is
 mu - sic is mu - sic is
 mu - sic is mu - sic is

rit. ♩ = 60

78

mf *f* *p*

is mu - - sic.
 mu - - sic.
 mu - - sic.
 is mu - - sic.