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Foreword

The songs in this collection have been gathered together from both live performances I have witnessed and manuscripts I have been passed by a performer or scholar. Many versions of the works exist in most cases, and I have selected the words and melody presented to me as a common version. Please forgive therefore any 'inaccuracies' where the content differs from your own experiences, particularly in respect of text and translations.

More than arrangements, here, these songs combine with atmospheric choral effects to create a style and a flavour that enables singers from a particular choral tradition to encounter another in an idiomatic way. The subtleties of historical convention and linguistic detail would be impossible to capture and instead these pieces are impressionistic tributes, each to a particular genre of music and the colours it creates.

I am delighted that in every case where these arrangements have been performed to local people, they have been received with enthusiasm. I hope you too share the joy of this music.

Mike Brewer, March 2010

Performance notes

In every song the attempt is made to create instrumental sounds with voices for a cappella performance. As singers try out the sounds, the flavour of the instruments will emerge. These can be developed in each performance as you wish. Have fun working them out and adding your own; additional creativity and improvisation will enhance the experience.

If instruments are available, it is quite possible to add them, especially to bass parts; percussion accompaniment can be improvised both from the score and freely. However, the pieces are intended to be complete without instruments.

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Faber Music Limited, Burnt Mill, Elizabeth Way, Harlow, CM20 2HX England
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sales@fabermusic.com fabermusic.com

Pokarekare *Maori love song*

Composed by a group of Maori soldiers in the First World War, this song has roots in Europe – possibly the Balkans – and is a love song. Popular worldwide in four time, its original waltz rhythm now sounds refreshing. I have put it in six time here and harmonised it in a variety of ways, initially dispensing with the European texture and then adding it back in. This is by way of a homage to my many visits to New Zealand and my work with its choirs.

The pronunciation here is entirely natural, with an Italianate open sound in the vowels, and no diphthongs anywhere. The music starts with an open texture which becomes increasingly rich as the emotion intensifies.

*They are agitated, the waters of Waiapu,
But when you cross over, girl, they will be calm.
Oh, girl, return to me,
I could die of love for you.
I have written my letter, I have sent my ring,
So that your people can see that I am troubled.
My pen is shattered, I have no more paper,
But my love is still steadfast.
My love will never be dried by the sun;
It will be forever moistened by my tears.*

Holiday danaa *Bengali bird song*

This song comes from the Camden World Song Project, a great initiative to collect and preserve the diverse cultures of children from that part of London. A bird song, it is traditionally sung as a solo piece with simple instrumental accompaniment, and has many verses. In this choral arrangement I aimed to achieve an atmospheric effect through canonic imitation, and made some adjustments to melodic lines later in the song. The mood is gentle and restful.

The tone of these beautiful words requires a low soft palate and a high larynx. It may be best to ask someone from South Asia to demonstrate. The pronunciation is straight forward, and the doubled vowels indicate a longer sound than usual.

*The yellow bird on the branches of the pomegranate tree,
Sweetly sings all afternoon,
And dances to the rhythm of the song.
Its eyes are like two purple beads,
And on its head a bright red crest is most beautiful to see.
Its legs, too, are of the same bright red,
Which also colours the cheeks,
As, with tail up, it dances from one branch to another.*

Molihua *Chinese folksong*

The song of the jasmine flower (Molihua) comes from the 18th century, during the Qianlong Emperor period of the Qing Dynasty. Made famous in the West through a luscious chromatic version in Puccini's *Turandot*, the melody as I have restored it here uses only the five notes of the pentatonic scale.

Here again it may be helpful for a Mandarin speaker to demonstrate. A very bright tone is needed, accompanied by pizzicato 'strings'.

*O good, beautiful jasmine flower,
Sweet-scented, with stems full of birds.
Fragrant and white, everyone praises you.
Let me pluck you down to give to my love,
O jasmine flower, o jasmine flower.*

Pokarekare

Maori love song

(Sopranos 1 & 2, Alto, Tenor, Basses 1 & 2)

arr. Mike Brewer

$\text{♩} = 96$ *p dolce*

SOPRANO 2

Alto

pp

Mm *mm*

4

S2

A

B2

pp

8

S1

S2

A

T

B1

B2

mp

p *p* *p* *p*

closed lips

Oo (www)

ah, *ah.*

ah, *ah.*

Po - ka-re-ka-re a - na nga wai o Wa-i - a - pu, whi-ti a - tu ko-e

hi - ne ma - ri-no a-na e. E hi - ne e, ho - ki mai ra. Ka ma - te

E hi - ne e, ho - ki mai ra. Ka ma - te,

E e ho - ki mai ra. Ka ma - te,

a - hau, i te a-ro - ha e. *Oo (www)*

ah, *ah.* *Oo (www)*

Oo (www)

Tu - hi - tu - hi ta - ku re - ta, tu - ku a - tu ta - ku

Holday danaa

Bengali bird song

(Sopranos 1 & 2, Alto, Tenor, Baritone, Bass)

arr. Mike Brewer

$\text{♩} = 124$ SOLO VOICE *mp*

ALTO

Hol - day da - naa pan - kheer cha - naar,

Tanpura: drone of changing harmonic vowels, stagger breathing
Half baritones join, ideally paired with deep basses

BASS

p

9 ALL

A

daa - lee - mm gach - he - rr daa - lay. _____ Mish - tee shoo - ray doo - poor

Marimba with wooden stick

Bar

p

Dang dang dang dang dang dang dang

B

p

16 HALF S2 *mp*

S2

Bay - goo - nee wron - ge - rr

A

be - laa, naa chhay ta - lay ta - lay. _____ Bay - goo - nee wron - ge - rr

T

p

Dum dum dum dum dum

Bar

p

dang dang, dang dang dang dang dang dang dang dang, dang dang dang

B

p

Molihua

Chinese folk song

(Sopranos 1 & 2, Alto, Tenor, Baritone, Bass)

arr. Mike Brewer

$\text{♩} = 66$ *mp*

SOPRANO 1
Mo - li - hua _____ ya _____ mo - li-hua ya, -

SOPRANO 2
mp
Mo - li - hua, _____ mo - li - hua _____ ya mo -

ALTO
mp
Mo - li - hua _____

TENOR
mp
Mo - li - hua _____

5

S1
ah. _____ SOLO *p*
Hao yi-duo mei - li-di mo - li - hua

S2
- li - hua, - ah. _____

A
Mo - li - hua, _____ ah. _____

T
Mo - li - hua. _____

Bar
mp
Mo - li - hua, _____ ah. _____

B
mp
Mo - li - hua. _____