

ALEC ROTH

Unborn

Solo Tenor, SATB Choir, Organ*
and Processional Drum

*or harp or other instruments ad libitum

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UNBORN

The Mind – *Dhammapada* 1.1 (part), 11.146

Pali, 4th century BC, English translation by Vikram Seth

The mind precedes all states of being –
They are ruled by the mind,
They are made of the mind.

What is laughter, what is joy
When everything is burning?
Enclosed in darkness
Do you not seek a lamp?

Child of Son, of Daughter – Vikram Seth

Child of son, of daughter,
Tombed and wombed in water,
Flesh to bind and bound me,
Darkness all around me,
Neither seen nor seeing,
Being and not being,
In my world's cessation
Lies my re-creation.

Better than a Thousand – *Dhammapada* 8.100-102

Pali, 4th century BC, English translation by Vikram Seth

Better than a thousand meaningless words
Is a single word that brings peace.

Better than a thousand meaningless verses
Is a single verse that brings peace.

And if one should recite a hundred verses,
All filled with meaningless words,
Better is a single word of truth
That brings peace.

Unborn – a processional introit, is adapted from Part 1 of the oratorio *The Traveller* by Alec Roth and Vikram Seth, commissioned jointly by the Salisbury, Chelsea and Lichfield Festivals and premiered in Salisbury Cathedral, 31 May 2008. This stand-alone version with flexible instrumentation was made for Jeffrey Skidmore and Ex Cathedra, who gave the first performance at a Christmas Candlelight concert at St John's, Smith Square, London, 17 December 2008.

Duration: 5 minutes approx.

Unborn is recorded by Samuel Boden (tenor) and Ex Cathedra, directed by Jeffrey Skidmore, on Orchid Classics ('Joy in the Morning', ORC100008).

for Jeffrey Skidmore & Ex Cathedra

Unborn

A PROCESSIONAL INTROIT
for Solo Tenor, SATB Choir, Organ
(or harp or other instruments ad libitum)
and Processional Drum

Vikram Seth

Alec Roth

INTRODUCTION (OPTIONAL)* Slow, free, improvisatory

ORGAN or other instrument (e.g. Harp or Violin) ad libitum *

pp (distant, mysterious)

* N.B. This opening instrumental solo is optional and may be omitted.
If it is not used, begin directly with the Tenor solo at letter A.

A RECIT. (senza misura)

SOLO TENOR

7

The mind pre - cedes all states of

13

be - ing - they are ruled by the mind, they are made of the mind. What is

Più animato
f

19

laugh - ter, what is joy when e - v'ry - thing is burn - ing?

23

En - closed in dark - ness do you not seek a lamp?

Meno mosso
mp
Allargando
cresc.

Child of Son, of Daughter

B Andante lento
(♩ = ca. 50)

CHOIR (in procession, approaching from the distance)

27

S
A
T
B

Child of son, of daugh - ter, tombed and wombed in
Child of son, of daugh - ter, tombed and wombed in
Child of son, of daugh - ter, tombed and wombed in
Child of son, of daugh - ter, tombed and wombed in

PROCESSIONAL DRUM

[only if Choir needs support]

32

wa - ter, flesh to bind and bound me, dark-ness all a - round me, nei-ther
wa - ter, flesh to bind and bound me, dark-ness all a - round me, nei-ther
wa - ter, flesh to bind and bound me, dark-ness all a - round me, nei-ther
wa - ter, flesh to bind and bound me, dark-ness all a - round me, nei-ther