

LET'S WALK TOGETHER

I don't know, either,
But let's walk together.
We'll make home
And then we'll get there.

Daniel Simpson

As the VOCES8 Foundation started a project to commission composers to reflect on the year 2020, I was compelled to write to my good friend Dan Simpson, to ask whether he would be willing to write a short text from which the composers could draw inspiration. I think the resulting text, that I was lucky enough to set to music, has given us scope to be inventive and to connect emotionally and musically with words that resonate with all of us.

When I had finished my draft, I sent Dan the score (with a dash of trepidation as always!) and he replied: 'I love how the hymn turns into the cascading section. It feels like people at a comfortable walking pace, carrying on conversations that wind and flow, people who enjoy walking and talking together. Then you come back to the hymn quality, but there are still flowing lines. It's really beautiful.' His words speak better than I could, I'm sure.

As I set Dan's words to music, it was these ideas that I wanted to convey; these moments of interaction, of moving with a shared purpose, of the real physical connection that we lost in 2020. The soloist doesn't stand alone but encourages others to join a shared path. The cascading lines rise with an idea of growth, of re-building, and the hymn-like quality gives us a sense of togetherness. There are moments of fragility but also moments of great strength.

In 2020, perhaps more than any other moment in my lifetime, we have had to face the challenge on a global scale to remain together in the face of isolation. As choral singers, we thrive on that sense of togetherness. Let us hope, for that is another vital word at the moment, that we can be making music together before too long.

Paul Smith, October 2020

*Commissioned by VOCES8 for their LIVE from London – Christmas 2020 festival,
and first performed by them at the VOCES8 Centre, London, on 5th December, 2020
and live-streamed globally as part of a set of six new works.*

Duration: 2'45"

Let's Walk Together

Daniel Simpson

Paul Smith

Andante $\text{♩} = 48$ *doubt turns to hope*

Baritone Solo

Soprano 1

Soprano 2

Alto 1

Alto 2

Tenor 1

Tenor 2

Bass 1

Bass 2

mp I don't know ei - ther, *p* I don't know ei - ther,

mp I don't know ei - ther, *p* I don't know ei - ther,

mp I don't know ei - ther, *p* I don't know ei - ther,

mp I don't know ei - ther, *p* I don't know ei - ther,

mp I don't know ei - ther, *p* I don't know ei - ther,

mp I don't know, ei - ther, *p* I don't know, ei - ther,

mp I don't know, ei - ther, *p* I don't know, ei - ther,

7

S

S

A

A

T

T

B

B

mp I don't know ei - ther, I don't know, But let's walk to - ge - ther,

mp I don't know ei - ther, I don't know, But let's walk to - ge - ther,

mp I don't know ei - ther, I don't know, But let's walk to - ge - ther,

mp I don't know ei - ther, I don't know, But let's walk to - ge - ther,

mp I don't know ei - ther, I don't know, But let's walk to - ge - ther,

mp I don't know, ei - ther, I don't know, But let's walk to - ge - ther,

mp I don't know, ei - ther, I don't know, But let's walk to - ge - ther,