

*“I aim to lure audience members to choral performances that will surprise, delight, move, and transform.”*



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# The Conductor as Composer

## An Interview with Joan Szymko

Debra Spurgeon

Throughout music history, women's choir conductors have struggled with a scarcity of repertoire and have relied heavily upon mixed choir transcriptions, music composed for boy choirs in the church, or on children's chorus repertoire. There has always been a need for repertoire specifically conceived for the high school, collegiate, and adult female choir. In earlier times, conductors such as Nicolai Porpora, Johannes Brahms, and Gustav Holst composed for their own women's ensembles out of necessity. For the past thirty years, conductor and composer Joan Szymko has composed for her ensembles out of necessity as well, amassing a large repertoire of music for women's choirs.

Joan Szymko holds a position of honor in the women's choir realm, in part because of her plentiful and skillfully composed contributions to the women's repertoire, numbering more than eighty works as of this writing. Numerous honor choirs have performed her music at the past five national ACDA conventions, as well as choirs selected for international competitions. In 2010 she was chosen to compose ACDA's prestigious Raymond



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W. Brock Commission, for which she penned "All Works of Love" for SATB choir. Her conducting and composing career began in the early 1980s in Seattle, Washington, and she currently resides in Portland, Oregon, where she conducts the Aurora Women's Chorus. She has recently joined Portland State University as the new director of the auditioned women's choir, Vox Femina. In the fall of 2010, I had the opportunity to interview Joan while she was a visiting lecturer at the University of Mississippi. The following article is based upon that interview and email correspondence during the summer of 2013.

## Would you discuss your childhood, high school, and early musical influences?

I grew up on the Southwest side of Chicago in the 1960s. All of my grandparents were immigrants from Eastern Europe. Dad was Polish and Mom was Croatian. Both were devout Catholics. Growing up in Chicago, nationality was a matter of pride and I was proud to come from Slavic stock. I am the youngest of five children, all born within a span of eight years: four girls and one boy. All of us attended Catholic parochial schools. Formal education was valued, as was exposure to arts and culture. I am so very grateful to my parents for exposing us to the world-class cultural riches the city of Chicago had to offer.

My home environment was very lively and extremely musical. One of my earlier memories is that my sisters and I would often play recordings from a set of LPs: a collection of classical "greatest hits" my mother picked up as a grocery store promo. We'd dance around to orchestral behemoths like Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Español*, and Strauss's *Tales from the Vienna Woods*. We didn't have recordings of current popular music. My father was a classical music lover—that's all he listened to—and my mom loved to sing and play old standards on the piano, mostly by ear. This was the 1960s and folk music was going full steam, so my siblings and I learned to play the guitar. It was also post-Vatican II, and so of course we were "Folk Mass" leaders early on. I will always value that experience as my first taste of song leading. Playing guitar was my introduction to functional harmony. Unfortunately, my childhood piano teacher didn't teach theory beyond key signatures, scales, and arpeggios, and there was not much of a music program at school except band. I begged my parents to let me join. I desperately wanted to play drums, but,

since I'd been taking piano since second grade doing both was not an option, so I stuck with piano.

Music—recorded and live—was playing nonstop in my home and this was really the biggest early influence. As we got older, the kids started bringing new music into the home, although classical piano was the default soundtrack. We all took lessons with the same Dominican Sister. I grew up listening to my sisters practicing Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Bartok, Debussy, and, following in their footsteps, I took on much of the same repertoire. I listened to a wide variety of music from Benjamin Britten to the Beatles, Prokofiev to Peter, Paul and Mary, Gregorian chant, Crosby, Stills and Nash, Leontyne Price, Led Zepelin, *My Fair Lady*, and *West Side Story*. As a teenager, I also admired the great singer-songwriters of the 1970s such as Joni Mitchell, Carol King, Paul Simon, and James Taylor. All of this music permeated my childhood and teenage years and surely has influenced me beyond my conscious knowledge.

## When did you choose a career in music?

Although my parents instilled in all five of their children a love of the arts and provided music lessons for all of us, they didn't encourage me to pursue music as a profession. The thought of becoming a professional musician simply didn't occur to me. However, I had a series of musical encounters during my early high school years that lifted me to a place where the dividing line between the sacred and the ordinary was thin and indiscernible and which led me to reconsider my options. For instance, when I was a sophomore in high school I attended a concert featuring Samuel Barber's *Knoxville Summer 1915*. This symphonic work for orchestra and soprano soloist on a prose text by James Agee blew me away. I was

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struck with awe at the sheer beauty of the music and by how one woman with an enormously expressive voice could hold her own with an orchestra. I was beyond goose bumps. I was almost frightened by the enormity of the feeling that this music aroused in me. At 15 years of age I'd never heard anything like this before—contemporary prose set with such clarity, such intense emotional content, joined to powerful, soaring melodies—and it left me in a puddle. I bought the LP featuring Leontyne Price and listened to it over and over again.

This was just one example of several

similar numinous experiences that led to questions: How could it be that this music left me feeling permeable and vulnerable, but also grounded me, electrified me, embraced me, and elicited tears? How did it do that? What was this force that resided in music and that resided in me? I had to know. So, despite carefully made plans for early entry into college as a pre-med student, I elected to study music instead, much against my parents' wishes and despite my own insecurities and fear of not being "good enough." I was an average pianist with an okay singing voice, but no theory or

ear training background. No matter how afraid or unprepared I was, I knew I was blessed with a keen musical sensitivity, that I had a call to a musical life, and I had to say "yes."

## Would you discuss college and your early career path?

Well, my parents were not exactly thrilled with my new college plans. If I was intent on studying music, and I was, they insisted that I study music education so that I'd be employable upon graduation. I had loved and admired

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# The Conductor as Composer

Sister Justina, my high school choir director, enjoyed accompanying the choir on piano when I wasn't singing *S2*, and I'd demonstrated music leadership qualities. So, I decided on a music education degree with a choral emphasis. I remember feeling pretty overwhelmed and unprepared going into college. My family was going through some tumultuous times and I was young, very naïve, and left a bit to my own devices. Having finished high school as a junior and with a year of community college under my belt, without much parental guidance or support, I began as an 18-year-old sophomore at the Chicago Musical College at Roosevelt University. After one year there, I transferred to the University of Illinois (Urbana) and graduated in 1979. After student teaching, I left the Midwest for Seattle, Washington.

Like many people, looking back I realize that I did not benefit to the extent I could have from my undergraduate years. Transferring as I did led to a disjointing and subpar experience. However, I was fortunate to work with a few people who inspired me. Doreen Rao at Chicago Musical College was an early role model as a conductor: demanding, exacting, and exuberant. She was the only female conductor I encountered in college, by the way. Also, Bill Olson at University of Illinois, taught me to think about conducting beyond timing and cues. He was a very expressive conductor and he encouraged his students to conduct with our faces as well as our hands and arms.

## **Describe your early conducting and composing experience.**

My relocation to Seattle was more of a personal escape than a planned career move. I wanted out of the Midwest—I needed space away from family pressures in order to become my-

self (clichéd, but true). I looked for high school choral positions, which was all I was really interested in, but they were scarce. At the time, I wouldn't go near a church, so a church position was out of the question. I did some substitute teaching, hated it, and started waiting tables. I didn't drop music completely. I continued to sing and play guitar. And then, out of nowhere, I composed a short cycle of art songs. It came on like an itch that I had to scratch, composing, that is. I hadn't studied composition and had only studied undergraduate music theory. Honestly, I didn't see it coming.

Eventually, somewhere between waitressing and working for minimum wage as an apprentice sailboat rigger, a synchronous event set my life on proper course. I was invited to a house warming party and there was this six-foot Kawai grand piano in the living room. It was just being stored there, so I asked the hosts if I could come by and play it occasionally. I began going regularly to the Bagley Street house to practice. Soon, one of the residents asked if I'd be interested in accompanying the new women's choir she sang in that rehearsed at the house. I said yes. I believe in divine intervention, and I have always viewed this moment as such. I had been adrift. My fragile musical ambitions were buried beneath a ton of grief and anxiety over the challenges of being an "out" lesbian and especially by the resulting, deeply painful rift with my parents.

I didn't last long as the accompanist because I was soon in front of the singers, directing the Seattle Women's Ensemble, a 16-voice non-auditioned lesbian/feminist, peace and social justice choir. This was in 1981 and there were similar women's choruses cropping up all over the country during this time period. Governance was by committee and decisions were made by consensus. As a conductor who was classically

trained within a traditional hierarchical model, you can be sure that I had my struggles. My autocratic tendencies were seriously and openly challenged. At the time it was very aggravating, but now I see it as a very fortunate thing to have had that kind of brutal input so early on in my choral directing career.

From the very beginning I arranged a lot of songs that fit the Seattle Women's Ensemble's mission, and, as a result, learned a lot about scoring for women's voices. My first completely original works were settings that, while sticking pretty closely to the ensemble's social justice ideals, also appealed to me personally: e.g., *As a Woman* (Virginia Woolf quote), *This We Know* (Chief Seattle). Poetry settings like *Song Coming Toward Us* (Carolyn Forché) came later. I cut my teeth on this choir. I worked on my conducting and expanded my knowledge of vocal pedagogy by way of numerous workshops and summer sessions as well as with countless hours in front of the mirror. For much of my time with SWE I was unpaid or received an honorarium, but what I learned about my craft, about myself, and about the world politic was invaluable. SWE was my community, my family. The women challenged me to become a better leader. The repertoire we sang challenged and enlightened me. I grew into a confident conductor.

Sometime in the middle of my tenure with SWE I took an extension course in songwriting through the University of Washington's "experimental college." The teacher, Andrew Buchman was working on his DMA in composition at UW. He recognized something in me and took me under his wing; he encouraged me to seriously explore composing, introduced me to composers in the Washington Composer's Forum and invited me to write an anthem for his church choir. I did return to school, but briefly. I studied composition for a year

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with Gerald Kechley at UW and also took music education courses for teacher recertification. I was fortunate to take a course with music education pioneer Barbara Reader Lundquist that reignited my desire to drum and my interest in African music. I later studied West African hand drumming with the Ghanaian musician who assisted with the course. I also learned about the Shona music of Southeast Africa and played this music while a performer with Anzanga African Marimba Ensemble in the early 90's. (I am quite at home with the polyrhythms of African music and this way of feeling rhythm informs my work.)

In 1987 I took a position with University Baptist Church, an American Baptist Community. UBC had a social justice platform and identified strongly with liberation theology; it was a stop on the "new underground railroad" for refugees fleeing US backed regimes in Central America. It was refreshing to be with people of faith who held progressive values. This was a Christian community where I was welcomed and comfortable. I composed frequently for my mixed choir: short psalm responsorials, anthems, and special programs. UBC still uses the "Common Prayer" and "Benediction" I wrote for congregational singing.

It was also during the late 1980s that I had the opportunity to collaborate on a full length musical. "Cradle and All" (book and lyrics by Ellen Cooper) received full productions in Seattle (1990) and San Francisco (1992). I was smitten. I'd fallen in love with theater: the storytelling, the versatility of actors, and the challenges of creative collaboration. I had begun to think of myself more and more as a composer and needed to satisfy this emerging creative identity outside of the Seattle Women's Ensemble to which I'd been giving a tremendous amount of time and energy.

I wasn't sure how my "new identity" would evolve, but felt that staying on wouldn't let me explore it fully. So, I took a leap of faith. I left the Seattle Women's Ensemble and the city and found a rural outpost where I could focus my attention on composing. Home and studio became a 12' by 24' one room cottage with cold running water and a wood stove, situated in the middle of a horse pasture on Vashon Island, a 15 minute ferry ride from West Seattle. I stayed for two years (1991-93), living very simply off my meager church income amidst

the beauty of Puget Sound. With no wealth and few possessions, I had never felt richer or more satisfied. I've come to see this period on Vashon as time spent "filling the well," because the years that followed were a time of tremendous creative output.

**The Move to Portland: Aurora Chorus, Viriditas Vocal Ensemble, and Do Jump! Movement Theater**

I received a call from conductor David York of Portland, Oregon, early in the



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# The Conductor as Composer

spring of 1993. He led off with, "I hear you're not conducting anymore. What a waste." He inquired about a piece of mine he'd heard the Seattle Women's Ensemble sing at a GALA conference a few years earlier and invited me to come down to Portland to hear the Aurora Chorus sing it. I agreed to go. Aurora was a 100-voice women's community chorus he'd founded a year earlier and it was really taking off. Over the course of the concert weekend, David invited me to conduct my composition, *This We Know*, in the concert, and he then proceeded to lobby me to take over leadership of Aurora. The timing was good. I was ready for something different, but after living on Vashon, I was hesitant about moving back to Seattle. I had a great first impression of Portland: it was friendly, laid back, and quirky. There was even a statue of Joan of Arc, my patron saint, in Coe Circle (a roundabout in NE Portland). I was very tempted. I could continue my work on the new musical I was involved with anywhere, so I said yes and I moved to Portland in

the fall of 1993.

York had begun a consortium, the Concord Community of Choirs, with his select mixed choir as the flagship ensemble and with Aurora as the anchor. Concord's mission was peace through music. When I had agreed to come to Portland, it was on condition that Concord Choirs provide me with support in creating a select women's ensemble. I founded Viriditas Vocal Ensemble in 1994 as a member chorus of the Concord consortium. Viriditas is a Latin word coined by Hildegard of Bingen meaning "greening power," the life force that permeates creation, making all things grow, expand, and celebrate. Viriditas Vocal Ensemble's tag line was "the greening power of song." With Viriditas (1994–2002), my intent was to provide an exceptional, eclectic choral experience for singers and audience. Viriditas explored connections between music and ritual and unique collaborations. Programs were highly thematic and aimed to bring down the "fourth wall" between performers and audiences. I

composed prolifically for both Viriditas and Aurora Chorus. Many of my best known works were premiered by these two ensembles.

Less than two years after moving to Portland I began a collaboration with Robin Lane, artistic director of Do Jump! Movement Theater. I composed wordless vocal music to accompany Lane's low trapeze and other aerial ballet choreography. Much of this music was unaccompanied and some accompanied. I often sang lead and had great fun performing with the house band on various instruments, mostly percussion and accordion. Viriditas became Do Jump's house choir and sang countless live performances, notably a 20-minute work, "Openings," which I conducted upstage of the action, in the dark with glow tape on my fingertips! (Viriditas recorded much of this repertoire for my CD of original vocal and choral works composed during my first four years in Portland, also called "Openings.") I worked many Do Jump! shows in Portland as well as on tour. I had the opportunity of a lifetime performing "Openings" and other repertoire with the company for a three week run at the New Victory Theater on Broadway in 2000. I am so grateful for all the opportunities afforded me by my association with Robin Lane. As a composer and collaborator, pit conductor, backstage hand, and as a featured performer on venerable stages on Broadway, the Kennedy Center, and in LA. I don't actively perform with Do Jump! anymore, but I remain associated as a resident composer.

When the Concord consortium of choirs folded in 2001, the Aurora Chorus became its own non-profit arts organization and even more of a focal point for my time and attention. That and other opportunities such as a grant to create "A Choral Conspiracy," an evening of new music for mixed choir

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and atypical accompanying forces, led me to make the difficult decision to let go of the Viriditas Vocal Ensemble. By this time I had several titles with Santa Barbara Music Publishing, my music started showing up at reading sessions, and I was beginning to get commissions.

## Would you discuss your motivation for composing?

Initially, I was motivated to compose because when I began my career in the

early 1980s, I discovered a great void of literature appropriate for women's voices. I saw a lack of creative choral settings that employed intelligent texts of literary merit on universal themes as well as on topics specific to the missions of the choirs I directed. Thirty years ago, much of the published SSA music found in the sheet music store bins was geared toward high school girls' glee: a lot of unsophisticated, often sappy, arrangements of popular music. I couldn't find what I needed so I began to write for my women's choir; vocal arrangements at first,

then setting texts that struck a personal chord with me. So, I came to composing not from an academic background, but from practical, real life experience as a choral conductor. As a conductor I had my own personal composition lab. I developed a style that incorporates my love of language with a focus on lyricism, my innate rhythmic sensibilities, and an insistence on creating interesting lines in all voice parts. I learned to trust my intuition, letting my compositions unfold, while balancing insight with technique and craft. Story telling motivates me



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to compose, as well. As a director, I've been creating highly thematic concert programs since the early 90s; programs that tell a story or that take the audience on a journey and so I've composed a lot of music to meet very specific programming needs. I've also built entire concert programs around a compelling poem I wanted to set.

## What inspires you as a composer?

I love the question American poet Mary Oliver poses, which is both a chal-

lenge and an invitation, "Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?" Her question is a challenge to honestly examine one's priorities, to pay attention, to be present, to kneel down in awe before creation. To quote Rabbi Abraham Heschel, "Just to be is a blessing, just to live is holy." Blessings, holiness, communion, and the yearning for good, these are themes that I have explored over and over again in my choral compositions and that continue to inspire me. Key to my ongoing fascination and preoccupation with matters

of the spirit is that as a choral musician I have witnessed over and over again the power of communal singing to awaken in singer and listener a yearning to be "At one with..." At one with what? I don't know, and I don't need to know the answer. The object of our collective yearning is not so important to me as is illuminating what I think is an illusion of separateness. Dispersing the illusion of separateness is what makes communion possible for the singer and the listener; to enter into communion with that for which they yearn. As an artist, I believe it

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is my role to facilitate this kind of communion. As a choral composer, I must, as this marriage of creative expression with something bigger than one's self is inherent in the choral arts.

Language influences me tremendously. It informs and guides every decision I make. When I compose, I believe I am a vehicle for the poem. I try to be true to the text and try to be authentic. It's a deep listening process. My goal is to compose in such a way that the audience is invited in. I challenge the notion that accessibility and musical integrity are incompatible concepts. Collaboration also inspires me. I have composed choral music to be performed with actors, poets, Taiko drummers, modern dancers, aerialists, and accordion players. I have set texts by fourth graders, 12th century mystics, and Pulitzer Prize winners. As a composer and conductor, I aim to lure audience members to choral performances that will surprise, delight, move and transform.

## **How has your approach to composition evolved over the years?**

Early on, I would start at the beginning and keep going and trust my intuition. I still trust my intuition, but I am now much more concerned with and adept at keeping the overall arc and architecture of a composition in mind while I am composing. I continue to have a predilection for creating choral textures based on rhythm and line. However, as I've composed more SATB music, I've become more interested in conceptualizing works from a harmonic standpoint. Consequently my music today features more shifts of tonal center and a richer harmonic vocabulary.

As I've said, I was compelled to write music. I had this very robust, innate musicality that had not really been tapped by my early music training. When I was in my 20s it forced its way to the surface.

My early work was raw, but well-crafted; well-crafted, but not pedantic. My music has certainly grown in sophistication, but I think the "raw" quality remains in the sense of its seeming natural and unaffected. I had to laugh when I watched a recent Phoenix Chorale promo video and heard Charles Bruffy refer to me as "such a virile and vibrant composer." I've heard my music described as powerful, but I've never been called virile! I think what he was talking about is this raw energy that is palpable in much of my music.

## **How do you approach commissions?**

I consider it a distinct honor and privilege to be commissioned to compose new music. I want to learn about what is most important to the director and the chorus members about creating new work, and as the case may be, the motivation of the donor(s) in contributing to its creation. Also, the purpose of the commission, specific information about the concert theme, and how the piece will function in the program. All of this information helps me hone in on an appropriate text. Because I am so text driven, I prefer to select the texts myself. However, I do welcome text suggestions, and of course always seek approval from the commissioning party before I begin setting a text. Before I begin composing I will know accompaniment options; ensemble specifics such as size, strength and ranges of each section, singers' skill level, etc., and hopefully I will have heard recordings of the choir.

Sometimes arriving at the perfect text is simply serendipitous. I can't think of a more perfect marriage of text and ensemble than when I was commissioned to compose a 25th Anniversary piece for The Congressional Chorus in Washington, D.C. I sent director David Simmons a Kim Stafford poem that had been sitting on my music stand for

months. The poem is in the form of a resolution, as are Congressional bills: "Whereas the world is a house on fire / Whereas the nations are shouting / Whereas hope seems small, sometimes a single bird on a wire left by migration behind / Whereas kindness is seldom in the news / and peace an abstraction / while war is real..." There are several more 'whereas' statements, and then, "Be it therefore resolved a song shall / be my calling—a song / not yet made shall be my vocation / and peaceful words the work / of my remaining days." The choral work is titled *Be It Therefore Resolved*. The other day while reading yet another news article about obstructionism in Washington, I thought about this work and had the image of a flash mob performing it in the Capitol Building.

## **Would you cite some works that you feel represent your overall aesthetic?**

I'd describe my overall choral aesthetic as a loving marriage of music and text, illuminating words that connect the singer and listener to something bigger than themselves. I like to think that my aesthetic is as varied and colorful as it is most certainly rooted in rhythm.

*A Burst of Song* (2010) piano, TTBB, also SSAA or SATB in 3 movements, text by Rabindranath Tagore and commissioned by the New Jersey Gay Men's Chorus. "When the heart is hard and parched, come upon me like a shower of mercy / come with a burst of song" (from No. 1, "A Shower of Mercy"). I think this work is one of the most sublime marriages of music and words that I've composed.

*viva sweet love* (2013) piano, SSAA. Poem by e.e. cummings. A recent, and I think very mature example of my aesthetic featuring vibrant, mixed meter sections contrasting with long languid



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arcs, accompanied by a colorful piano score, all on a sweet, spritely text.

*The Singing Place* (2007) SSAA, piano, poem by Lily Long. The 2008 ACDA Women's Consortium commissioned this work. The piece is very tightly wrought. Musical elements are finely woven together to create a palpable atmosphere.

*Hodie* (1999) SSAA. This is an example of a piece that simply poured out of me and darn near wrote itself. I think it is possibly my most exciting unaccompanied work for women's voices. (See the video of the Hungarian choir; Cantemus

Pro Musica, at [www.SBMP.com](http://www.SBMP.com))

*Illumina la tenebre* (2008) SATB *a cappella* (also SSAA). Composed as an exercise in "deep listening," it also utilizes the full expansive range of the mixed choir on a favorite prayer by St Francis.

The above list is what came off the top of my head. I'd have to add *Nada te turbe*, *The Peace of Wild Things*, *Vivos Voco*, *Herbst*, *Here, Maggie milly molly*, and maybe *It is Happiness*, and *All Works of Love*.

**What are some highlights of the last ten years?**

Wow, the last ten years have absolutely flown by! Career high points over this period are many and would include: witnessing University of Delaware Concert Choir rock the house with *It Takes a Village* in LA (2005 ACDA), composing *Vivos Voco* for San Francisco Girls Chorus' performance at the ICFM World Symposium in Kyoto (2005), composing music for and being a part of Do Jump! Movement Theater's production of *At Such a Dizzy Height*. (2006), being accepted as a Fellow and attending a six week artist residency at the Instituto Sacatar, (Itaparica, BA, Brazil, 2009), attending the Cantemus International Choir Festival in Nyiregyhaza, Hungary

Joan Szymko

Title	Voicing	Pub. Date	Publisher
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**Women**

<i>A la Media Noche</i> (arrangement)	SSAA/piano/flute/percussion	2000	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Adama</i> (arrangement)	SSAA/unaccompanied	2000	Yelton Rhodes Music
<i>African Lullaby</i> (arrangement)	SSA/piano	2008	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>All Winter Long</i>	SSA/flute/frame drum	1993*	joanszymko.com
<i>Always Coming Home</i>	SSAA/cello/piano	2008	Roger Dean Publishing Company
<i>Amazing Grace</i> (arrangement)	SSAA/unaccompanied	2002	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>And You, Muses</i>	SSA, guitar, flute	1980*	manuscript
<i>Angels Singing Out of Tune</i>	SSAA unaccompanied/soprano solo	2001	Treble Clef Music Press
<i>Arise My Love</i>	SA divisi/piano	2004	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>As a Woman</i>	SSA unaccompanied	1993*	joanszymko.com
<i>Ave Maria</i>	SSAA unaccompanied	1999	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>The Beauty of Your Dreams</i>	SSAA/piano	2004	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Benedizione</i>	SSAA/piano	2008	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Blow Thou Winter Wind</i>	SSAA/piano	2002	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Braided Light</i>	SSAA unaccompanied/mezzo solo	1997*	joanszymko.com

# An Interview with Joan Szymko

as special guest and hearing a thrilling performance of *Hodie* sung by the host, Pro Musica Girl's Choir (2010), reading the thank you notes of the Wayzata High School students who gave the 2010 NWACDA premiere of the Raymond W. Brock Commission, *All Works of Love* (2010), being featured alongside Gwyneth Walker in Vox Femina LA's concert, *No Ordinary Women* (2012); the Aurora Chorus's 20th Anniversary Celebration (2012), observing undergraduate contestants rehearse *Nada te turbe* (2013) in the finals of the ACDA conducting competition in Dallas, participating as one of five select composers in the New Dramatists /Nautilus

Theater Composer-Librettist Studio in NYC last spring (2013). And, just this fall, joining the music faculty at Portland State University as director of PSU's women's choir.

From the very beginning, I have been so fortunate to have had choirs with which to actively explore composing, and blessed to have had an outside purpose, a need to fill. I still compose for my own choirs today and I still think of choral composing in the context of "service." I think of composing as a vocation, a calling. And, gratefully, I compose because I still feel called to do so.

The following publishers handle

Szymko's works: Viriditas Music, Santa Barbara Music, Roger Dean Music, earthsongs, Treble Clef Press and Yelton Rhodes Music. She is a member of the Independent Music Publishers Cooperative <[www.imp.coop](http://www.imp.coop)>, an Internet Web site that connects conductors directly with composers to purchase music. Her own Web site is <[www.joanszymko.com](http://www.joanszymko.com)>.



## Repertoire List

Publisher #	Duration	Text	Commission
SBMP 304	4'30"	Spanish, a traditional Puerto Rican carol	Aurora Chorus
YR7204	2'30"	traditional Israeli song	Viriditas Vocal Ensemble
SBMP 809	2'	traditional African and African American tunes/words	Aurora Chorus
VMP057	1'15"	Native American	Viriditas Vocal Ensemble
15/2447R	5'45"	Ursula K. LeGuin	Aurora Chorus
SBMP 437	2'20"	John Newton	Aurora Chorus
	6'	Sappho, translation by Mary Barnard	Seattle Women's Ensemble
TC-175	3'20"	Lord Byron	Viriditas Vocal Ensemble
SBMP 552	3'50"	Song of Solomon & "At the River" adapted by the composer	Renaissance City Women's and Men's Choirs & the Indianapolis Women's and Men's Choruses as a gift to GALA Choruses Festival VIIe International, Montréal
VMP037	2'10"	Virginia Woolf	Seattle Women's Ensemble
SBMP 292	4'00"	traditional Marian prayer	Viriditas Vocal Ensemble
SBMP 564	5'00"	quotes of Eleanor Roosevelt adapted by the composer	Indianapolis Women's Chorus
SBMP 799	3'30"	Francis of Assisi (in Italian)	Pleiades Vocal Ensemble
SBMP 428	2'00"	William Shakespeare	Aurora Chorus
VMP014	4'00"	wordless song	Do Jump! Movement Theater



# The Conductor as Composer

Title	Voicing	Pub. Date	Publisher
<i>Bright Morning Star</i> (arrangement)	SSAA unaccompanied	2000	Yelton Rhodes Music
<i>A Burst of Song</i>	SSAA/piano	2011	joanszymko.com
<i>Call</i>	SSAA/taiko drums(2)	1997*	joanszymko.com
<i>Circle</i>	SSAA divisi	2001	Treble Clef Music Press
<i>Come Dance and Sing</i>	SSA unaccompanied	2010*	joanszymko.com
<i>Come Pretty Love</i> (arrangement)	SSA unaccompanied	2003	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Despertar al Amor</i> [Awaken to Love]	SSAA/cello/piano/ large frame drum or surdo	2012	joanszymko.com
<i>Eagle Rounding Out the Morning</i>	SSAA/piano/optional trio	2011	joanszymko.com
<i>Eli, Eli</i>	SSAA/cello/soprano solo	2011	joanszymko.com
<i>Et in terra pax</i>	SSAA unaccompanied	2002	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
“Eternal Winter” (from <i>Songs of Experience</i> )	SSAA (soprano solo)/cello/piano	2002	joanszymko.com
<i>Everything She Touches</i>	SSAA/piano	2007	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Ffe Mwe, Mwe Ffe</i> (they are us and we are them)	SSAA/djembe/shaker	2013	joanszymko.com
<i>Finding Her Here</i>	SSAA unaccompanied	2005*	joanszymko.com
<i>Fire Burn Bright</i>	SSA/piano	2011	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>For the Beauty of the Earth</i>	SSAA/piano	2013	joanszymko.com
<i>The Freshness</i>	SSAA/harp (or piano)	2001*	joanszymko.com
<i>Gamaya</i>	SA, piano, alto saxophone	2011	joanszymko.com
<i>The Giver of Stars</i>	SSAA/piano	2010	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Go Out in Joy</i>	SSAA/piano/hand clapping	2012	joanszymko.com
<i>Here</i>	SSAA/violin/piano	2008	Roger Dean Publishing Company
<i>Hodie</i>	SSAA unaccompanied	2000	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>I AM</i>	SSA/violin/cello/flute	2002*	joanszymko.com
<i>I Dream a World</i>	SSA/piano	2006	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>I Lift My Eyes</i>	SSAA/piano	2006	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Illumina la tenebre</i>	SSAA	2010	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>In My Quiet Place</i> ( No.2, This Wonderful Feeling)	SSAA/marimba	2001	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>It Is Happiness</i>	SSAA/vn/vc/ fl/ob/cl/bsn/piano (also available for vn/vc/fl/pno)	1995*	manuscript (currently unavailable)
<i>It Takes a Village</i>	SSAA/soloist/hand percussion	2000	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>A Kiss of Blessing</i>	SSAA/piano	2011	joanszymko.com
<i>Lay Me Low</i> (arr.)	SSA unaccompanied	2013	joanszymko.com
<i>Light, Beauty, Peace</i>	SSA, piano	2011	joanszymko.com
<i>Like a Mountain</i> (arrangement)	SSAA/piano	2005*	joanszymko.com

# An Interview with Joan Szymko

Publisher #	Duration	Text	Commission	
	YR4321	4'00"	traditional American Folk Song	Seattle Women's Ensemble
	VMP030	7'00"	Rabindranath Tagore (excerpts from Gitanjali)	New Jersey Gay Men's Chorus (original TTBB version)
	VMP040	4'45"	Alla Renée Bozarth	Aurora Chorus
	TC-192	2'30"	Hadewijch, trans. Jane Hirshfield	Viriditas Vocal Ensemble
	VMP047	2'30"	traditional Shaker song	Aurora Chorus
	SBMP 492	2'20"	traditional Shaker song	Aurora Chorus
	VMP033	4'15"	Buddah, traditional Camino greeting, Teresa of Ávila	Cantabile Women's Chorus - Kinston, Ontario
	VMP028	5'30"	Joy Harjo ("Eagle Poem")	Grand Rapids Women's Chorus
	VMP016	2'50"	Hannah Szenes (Senesh)	Aurora Chorus
	SBMP 493	3'20"	Hymnus Angelicus (Gloria) from the Ordinary of the Mass	Aurora Chorus
	VMP005	3'45"	William Blake	Regional Arts and Culture Council
	SBMP 738	4'40"	traditional Wiccan	Aurora Chorus
	VMP053	3'15"	Bantu saying, Gandhi, Mother Teresa	Aurora Chorus
	VMP007	4'45"	Jayne Relaford Brown	Anna Crusis Women's Choir, Philadelphia
	SBMP 966	2'30"	Oaken Logs (trad. from British Isles)	revision created for Milwaukee Choral Arts
	VMP052	3'30"	Folliot S. Pierpoint	Aurora Chorus
	VMP003	5'00"	Jalalud'din Rumi (trans by Coleman. Barks)	Aurora Chorus
	VMP036	4'30"	Bhradaranyaka Upanishad — I.iii.28	Aurora Chorus
	SBMP 956	4'30"	Amy Lowell	Namasté Women 's Choir
	VMP027	4'30"	Isaiah 55:12	San Francisco Girls Chorus
	15/2446R	5'15"	Wendell Berry ("The Wild Geese")	Aurora Chorus
	SBMP 336	3'	vespers antiphon for Christmas Day	Viriditas Vocal Ensemble
	VMP039	5'20"	Catherine DeVink ("The Womanly Song of God")	Aurora Chorus
	SBMP 613	3'	Langston Hughes	Pacific Youth Choir & Aurora Chorus
	SBMP 658	3'30"	Psalm 121 & Thich Nhat Hanh	Aurora Chorus
	SBMP 955	4'30"	Francis of Assisi (in Italian) from the Book of Numbers 6:24-26)	Treble version created for the Northwestern College Women's Chorale
	SBMP 362	3'19"	Mary Whitney	Peninsula Women's Chorus
		20'	Mary Oliver	Aurora Chorus
	SBMP 328	3'50"	West African adage adapted by the composer	Aurora Chorus
	VMP031	4'00"	Rabindranath Tagore	New Jersey Gay Men's Chorus
	VMP056	2'15"	Trad. Shaker	Aurora Chorus
	VMP017	2'50"	Chinese adage	Julie Earnest for Aurora Chorus
	VMP043	4'	Naomi Littlebear Martinez	Aurora Chorus



# The Conductor as Composer

Title	Voicing	Pub. Date	Publisher
<i>Listen Closely</i>	SSAA/solo/piano	2007*	joanszymko.com
<i>Lorica</i>	SSAA/piano/fl	2008	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>maggie and milly and molly and may</i>	SSAA/piano	2005	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>My Soul Magnifies the Lord</i>	SSAA unaccompanied	2008*	joanszymko.com
<i>Nada te turbe</i>	SSAA unaccompanied	2000	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>O Lux Beatissima</i>	SSAA unaccompanied	2011	joanszymko.com
<i>On Holding On</i>	SSAA unaccompanied	1991*	manuscript
<i>Only Light, Only Love</i>	SSAA unaccompanied	2008	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Open Up and Let Her Through</i> (arr.t, music by Betsy Rose)	SSAA/piano/flute	2002*	manuscript
<i>Openings</i> (4 mvts.)	SSAA chorus, mezzo-sop solo, trio (sop,mezzo,contralto), hand perc., jazz band marimba,guitar,	1995*	manuscript
<i>Peace Like a River</i> (arr., traditional)	SSAA/piano	2002	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>The Peace of Wild Things</i>	SSAA/piano	2004	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Pendulum</i>	SSAA/piano	2002	Yelton Rhodes Music
<i>Purple Night</i> (No.3 This Wonderful Feeling)	SSAA/marimba	2000	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Quite Regularly Gay</i>	SSAA (optional soprano solo)/piano	2012	joanszymko.com
<i>Red and Green</i> (arr.,song by Maddy Prior)	SSAA/piano/low tom	1998*	joanszymko.com
<i>The Roses</i>	SSAA/accordion (or opt. piano)	1995	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>saboo</i> (No.1, This Wonderful Feeling)	SSAA	2001	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Shape Note Hymns for Christmas</i> (arrangement)	SSAA/piano	1995	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>She Who Makes Her Meaning Clear</i> (Gamba Adisa)	SSAA/clave/shekere	2008	joanszymko.com
<i>Simply Love</i> (arr.,song by Holly Near)	SSA/piano	1988	manuscript
<i>Sioux Prayer</i>	SSA unaccompanied	1989*	joanszymko.com
<i>Song Coming Toward Us</i>	SSAA/cello/piano	1987*	joanszymko.com
<i>The Singing Place</i>	SSAA/piano	2007	earthsongs
<i>There Are No Farewells</i>	SSAA/piano	2001	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>This We Know</i>	SSAA/oboe/cello	2000	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>This Wonderful Feeling</i>	SSAA/marimba	2001	Santa Barbara Music Publishing

# An Interview with Joan Szymko

Publisher #	Duration	Text	Commission
VMP044	4'10"	Steven Walters	Aurora Chorus
SBMP 800	2'20	Celtic in origin, attributed to St Patrick Viriditas	Vocal Ensemble
SBMP 588	3'20	E.E. Cummings	VIVA VOCE!
VMP048	2'20"	adapted from the Magnificat (inclusive language version in English)	Treble version for Orange County Women's Chorus
SBMP 334	4'15"	Teresa of Avila (in Spanish and English)	Viriditas Vocal Ensemble
VMP018	3'45"	Anonymous hymn text: "Veni Sancte Spiritus" (12th Century) and "Veni Spiritus" (10th Century)	University of Mississippi Women's Glee
	10'	text in entirety: "hold on"	Seattle Women's Ensemble / in collaboration with modern dance choreographer Llory Wilson
SBMP 840	4'30"	Martin Luther King Jr.	Wellesley College Choir
	4'20"	Betsy Rose	Aurora Chorus
	20'	wordless song	Do Jump! Movement Theater
SBMP 417	3'50"	traditional	Aurora Chorus
SBMP 561	4'50"	Wendell Berry	Bella Voce Women's Choir of Reno, Nevada
YR7206	4'	Amanda Harter & Christopher Behrens	Vox Femina Los Angeles
SBMP 363	3'20"	Mary Whitney	Peninsula Women's Chorus
VMP032	2'45"	Gertrude Stein, excerpts from the essay "Miss Furr and Miss Skeene"	Portland Lesbian Choir
VMP055-W	3'	Maddy Prior	Aurora Chorus
SBMP 293	3'20"	G. Stein	Viriditas Vocal Ensemble
SBMP 361	1'45"	Adriana Madrigal	Peninsula Women's Chorus, Patricia Hennings, director
SBMP 176	2'40"	traditional: "Star in the East" Aurora Chorus and "Wondrous Love"	
VMP008	4'45"	Audre Lorde	MUSE: Cincinnati's Women's Choir
	3'15"	Holly Near	Seattle Women's Ensemble
	1'10"	Traditional Lakota Sioux	University Baptist Church, Seattle; treble version for Aurora Chorus
VMP041	6'	Carolyn Forché	Seattle Women's Ensemble
S-305	6'25"	Lily A. Long	2007-08 ACDA Women's Composition Consortium
SBMP 427	5'35"	poem by May Sarton	Aurora Chorus
SBMP 333	5'50"	Chief Seattle (scripted by Ted Perry)	Seattle Women's Ensemble
SBMP 362, 362, 363 3'20"	1'45"/ 3'20" / 3'20"	poems from Bay area children's poetry workshop	Peninsula Women's Chorus



# The Conductor as Composer

Title	Voicing	Pub. Date	Publisher
<i>To Know the Dark</i>	SSA/piano	2007	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Todo o meu ser</i> [All of My Being]	SSAA (opt. solo)/piano/ hand percussion (conga, clave, pandeiro)	2011	joanszymko.com
<i>Under One Sky</i>	SSAA/alto solo/piano	1995*	joanszymko.com
<i>Variations on a Theme by Rilke</i>	SSAA/piano	1999	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Viriditas</i>	SSAA unaccompanied	2000	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>viva sweet love</i>	SSAA/piano	2013	joanszymko.com
<i>Vivos Voco</i>	SSAA/piano/handbells	2006	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Waly, Waly</i> (arr.)	SSAA unaccompanied	2001	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>We Are a Circle</i> (arr., song by Rick Humoris)	SSA/hand percussion	2006*	joanszymko.com
<i>Why Oh Why</i> (arr., song by Holly Near)	SSAA unaccompanied	2000	Yelton Rhodes Music
<i>Wing Away</i>	SSAA unaccompanied	2000	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>With the Animals (I Look Long and Long)</i>	SA/piano	2003*	joanszymko.com
<i>Woman Am I</i>	SSA unaccompanied	2000	Yelton Rhodes Music
<i>Wynken, Blynken, and Nod</i>	SSA/piano	2000	joanszymko.com
<i>Yemaya Assesu</i> (arrangement)	SSA/percussion	2003*	joanszymko.com
<i>Ye Jaliya-o</i>	SSAA/percussion	2007	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>You Are the Music</i>	SSAA/piano	2008	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>You Have Struck a Rock</i>	SSAA/opt. hand drum	1984*	joanszymko.com

<b>SATB (Mixed)</b>			
<i>All Works of Love</i>	SATB/piano	2010	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>At Such a Dizzy Height</i>	SATB/tenor solo/cello/violin/piano	2006*	joanszymko.com
<i>Be It Therefore Resolved</i>	SATB/piano/cello/violin/tenor, baritone, mezzo soli	2012	joanszymko.com
<i>The Call</i>	SATB/SSA unaccompanied	2002	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Carpe Diem</i>	SSAATBB/tambourine	2009	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Come Pretty Love</i> (arrangement)	SATB a cappella	2010	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Ich Lebe Mein Leben</i> (No.1, Ein grosser Gesang)	SATB (tenor, soprano solos)/ 2 bassoons	2002*	joanszymko.com
<i>Eli, Eli</i>	SATB/cello/soprano solo	1994, 2012	joanszymko.com
<i>Entro en la vida</i>	SATB/brass quintet/timpani/piano	2005*	joanszymko.com
"Eternal Winter" (from <i>Songs of Experience</i> )	SATB (soprano solo) / piano/cello	2011	joanszymko.com
<i>The Freshness</i>	SATB/harp (or piano)/narrator	2001	joanszymko.com

# An Interview with Joan Szymko

Publisher #	Duration	Text	Commission	
	SBMP 754	2'40"	poem by Wendell Berr	Aurora Chorus
	VMP025	3'45"	Orpingalik quoted by Danish explorer Knud Rasmussen; translated into Portuguese by Ferrand	Composed while a Fellow at Instituto Sacatar; Itaparica, Brazil
	VMP050	4'30"	Judith Barrington	Pacific Northwest Women's Choir Festival 1995
	SBMP 294	3'	Denise Levertov	Viriditas Vocal Ensemble
	SBMP 295	3'30"	Hildegard of Bingen, translated G. Uhlein	Viriditas Vocal Ensemble
	VMP034	4'00"	E.E. Cummings	Belle Voce Women's Chorus (Oregon State University)
	SBMP 615	4'	medieval bell inscriptions and Julian of Norwich	San Francisco Girls Chorus for their performance at the World Symposium on Choral Music 7
	SBMP 364	2'50"	traditional Scots ballad	Aurora Chorus
	VMP045	3'	Richard Humoris	Aurora Chorus
	YR4321	4'	Holly Near	Aurora Chorus
	SBMP 332	3'	Szymko	Seattle Women's Ensemble
	VMP013-W	4'20"	Walt Whitman (from "Leaves of Grass")	Saly Hersh, mezzo-soprano & Pam Pond, soprano
	YR7205	2'30"	anonymous	Aurora Chorus
	VMP006	3'20"	Eugene Field	Christina Hubbard, mezzo-soprano; ssa choral version for Aurora Chorus
	VMP046-W		traditional Afro-Cuban	Aurora Chorus
	SBMP 734	4'15"	traditional west African (Mandika language) and Catherine deVink	Original SATB version for Central Bucks High School-West Choir
	SBMP 804	4'45"	Amy Lowell	Miami University Choraliers, 2008
	VMP051	3'	South African women's cry of resistance	Seattle Women's Ensemble
	SBMP 942	5'30"	Mother Teresa of Calcutta	2010 ACDA Raymond W. Brock Memorial Commission
	VMP026	9'00"	Marc and Bella Chagall / adapted by Robin Lane	Do Jump! Movement Theater
	VMP029	4'15"	Kim Stafford	The Congressional Chorus
	SBMP 455	4'40"	George Herbert	Opus 7 - Seattle, WA
	SBMP 862	4'45"	Horace, Odes 1.11 (in Latin; English text by the composer)	Northwest Chamber Choir - Seattle, WA
	SBMP 966	2'	traditional Shaker song	
	VMP038	5'30" / 5'	Rainer Maria Rilke	Regional Arts & Culture Council (Portland area)
	VMP015	2'30"	Hannah Szenes ("A Walk to Caesarea")	Aurora Chorus
	VMP042	3'50"	Teresa of Avila (in Spanish and English)	First Unitarian Church - Portland, OR
	VMP004	3'45"	William Blake ("Holy Thursday")	Regional Arts and Culture Council
	VMP002	5'00"	Jalalud'din Rumi (translated by Coleman Barks)	Aurora Chorus



# The Conductor as Composer

Title	Voicing	Pub. Date	Publisher
<i>Gamaya</i>	SAB, piano, alto saxophone	2011*	joanszymko.com
<i>The God Who Only Knows Four Words</i>	SATB/soprano solo/hard shoe dancer	2002*	manuscript
<i>Hear Me! We Are One</i>	SATB/piano	1991*	joanszymko.com manuscript
<i>Herbst</i> (No.2, Ein grosser Gesang)	SATB (alto solo)/piano	2002*	joanszymko.com
<i>How Did the Rose</i>	SATB/piano	2004	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>I Lift My Eyes</i>	SATB/piano	2006	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>I Dream a World</i>	SATB/piano	2007	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Illumina la tenebre</i>	SATB unaccompanied	2009	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>It Takes a Village</i>	SATB (soloist)/ hand percussion	2000	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Let the Children Come</i>	SATB/piano	1991*	manuscript
<i>My Soul Magnifies the Lord</i>	SATB unaccompanied	2008*	manuscript
<i>Nada te turbe</i>	SATB/cello	2001	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>The Peace of Wild Things</i>	SATB/cello	2006	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Red and Green</i> (arr.,song by Maddy Prior)	SATB/piano/low tom	2013	joanszymko.com
<i>Remembering</i>	SATB/oboe/cello	2013	joanszymko.com
<i>Sioux Prayer</i>	SAB unaccompanied	1989	joanszymko.com
<i>Songs of Experience</i>	SATB/double bass/ alto & bass solos/kazoos	2002*	joanszymko.com manuscript
<i>There Shall Be a Christmas Day</i>	SATB unaccompanied	2011	joanszymko.com
<i>To Build a Swing</i>	SATB/piano/violin	2002*	joanszymko.com
<i>To the Holy Spirit</i>	SATB/piano	2008	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Todo o meu ser</i> [All of My Being]	SATB (opt. solo)/piano/ hand percussion (conga, clave, pandiero)	2009*	joanszymko.com
<i>Ubi Caritas</i>	SAATB unaccompanied	1999	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>Until</i>	SATB unaccompanied	2002*	joanszymko.com
<i>We Are Clay</i>	SAB/piano/opt. flute	1990*	joanszymko.com
<i>Where Is the Door to the Tavern?</i>	SATB/double bass/ pitched bottles or acordion	2002*	joanszymko.com
<i>Ye Jaliya-o</i>	SATB/percussion	2007	Santa Barbara Music Publishing

## Men

<i>Ave Maria</i>	TTBB unaccompanied	1999	Santa Barbara Music Publishing
<i>A Burst of Song</i>	TTBB/piano	2010*	joanszymko.com
<i>A Kiss of Blessing</i>	TTBB/piano	2010*	joanszymko.com
<i>I Look Long and Long</i>	TBB/piano	2011	joanszymko.com

# An Interview with Joan Szymko

Publisher #	Duration	Text	Commission
VMP036	4'30"	Brhadaranyaka Upanishad — I.iii.28	Aurora Chorus
	3'45"	Hafiz, translated by Daniel Ladinsky	Regional Arts & Culture Council (Portland area)
	3'15"	Traditional: Omaha Tribe	University Baptist Church, Seattle
VMP001	4'	Rainier Maria Rilke	Regional Arts and Culture Council
SBMP 548	4'30"	Hafiz, translated by Daniel Ladinsky	First Unitarian Church - Portland, OR
SBMP 691	3'30"	Psalm 121 & Thich Nhat Hanh	Aurora Chorus
SBMP 613	3'	Langston Hughes	
SBMP 861	4'30"	St Francis of Assisi (Umbrian dialect)	First Unitarian Church - Portland, OR
SBMP 331	3'50"	West African adage adapted by Szymko	
	3'15"	Mark 10: 13-16, adapted by Szymko	University Baptist Church, Seattle
	2'20"	adapted from the Magnificat (in English)	First Unitarian Church - Portland, OR
SBMP 399	4'15"	Teresa of Avila (in Spanish and English)	Viriditas Vocal Ensemble
SBMP 692	4'50"	Wendell Berry	commissioned as SSAA by Bella Voce Women's Choir of Reno, Nevada
VMP055	3'	Maddy Prior	
VMP035	4'30"	Joan Borysenko	The Phoenix Chorale
VMP010	1'30"	Traditional Lakota Sioux	University Baptist Church, Seattle
	3'30"; 2'40"; 3'45"	William Blake ( "The Fly," "The Garden of Love," "Holy Thursday")	Regional Arts & Culture Council (Portland area) The Fly dur; The Garden dur; Holy Thursday dur
VMP011	4'00"	Joyce Kilmer ( "Wartime Christmas")	
VMP023	3'00"	Hafiz, translated by Daniel Ladinsky	Regional Arts and Culture Council
SBMP 838	3'30"	Wendell Berry	the American Guild of Organists
VMP024	3'45"	Orpingalik (quote) translated into Portuguese by I.Ferrand	Composed while a Fellow at Instituto Sacatar; Itaparica, Brazil
SBMP 291	4'30"	final hymn, Latin Office for Maundy Thursday	the Concord Community of Choirs
VMP058	3'30"	Hafiz, translated by Daniel Ladinsky	Regional Arts & Culture Council (Portland area)
VMP009	2'30"	Isaiah 64:8	University Baptist Church, Seattle
VMP022	1'30"	Hafiz, translated by Daniel Ladinsky	Regional Arts & Culture Council (Portland, Oregon region)
SBMP 726	4'15"	traditional West African (Mandika language) with Catherine deVink quote; adapted by Szymko	Central Bucks High School-West Choir
SBMP 358	4'	traditional Marian prayer	
VMP020	7'	Rabindranath Tagore	New Jersey Gay Men's Chorus
VMP021	4'00"	Rabindranath Tagore	New Jersey Gay Men's Chorus
VMP013	4'15"	Walt Whitman (from "Leaves of Grass")	