

1.3613

Bend - Kyle Pederson

SATB Chorus (divisi) unaccompanied

Bend

Kyle Pederson

PERUSAL SCORE ONLY

LEE NELSON choral series

Program Notes

Bend was selected as a finalist in the 2019 Ithaca College Choral Festival and premiered there as part of the festival. The piece received its Midwest premiere at the ACDA North/North Central regional conference in 2020, performed by the Roosevelt High School Concert Choir, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, directed by Robyn Starks Holcomb. The text is addressed to anyone facing struggles—and it presents an honest affirmation that those struggles are real. Rather than deny the existence of problems or pain, the listener is encouraged to “lean into” the hardship, to name it—and to thereby reduce its power. Textually and musically, the listener is presented with the metaphor of a tree—being whipped by the wind—but built to bend in that wind and ultimately withstand the pressure-filled gales. The power of community is also affirmed—as the listener is encouraged to walk alongside—to bend along with—their neighbor.

Performance Notes

1. The guiding metaphor/visual image during the creation of this piece was of a tree bending in the wind—being batted around low to the ground and then rebounding to an upright position as the wind subsides. Musically, this “bending” is accomplished by the frequent use of pitch slides (mm.1–2, for example), and the extensive use of *rubato* throughout. Frequent indications of *accel.* and *rit.* are included throughout the piece to help convey this feeling of a tree (or a person) being tossed about by various forces and circumstances.

2. Consider looping/repeating the opening four measures (with sopranos humming, rather than singing the words) and having the chorus open the piece with narration. The chorus is encouraged to craft this narration, but one option is to read the text of the piece in its entirety, with the following as a suggestion:

Reader 1: “Bend, don’t break, my child, when the winds blow wild. Lean in, then rest a while.”

Reader 2: “Bend, don’t break, be brave, my child, when the gale and wave rush by.”

Reader 3: “But you will never bend alone.”

Reader 4: “No one should ever bend alone.”

Reader 5: “I’m here with you.”

Reader 6: “I’m here with you.”

Reader 7: “I’m here with you. I’m bending, too.”

Reader 8: “And when the wind subsides, you shall rise.”

Reader 9: “But for now, bend low, my child, bend low.”

—Kyle Pederson

Text

Bend, don’t break
my child
when the winds
blow wild.

Lean in,
then rest a while.

Bend, don’t break
be brave, my child
when the gale and wave
rush by.

But you will never bend alone.
No one should ever bend alone.

I’m here with you,
I’m bending, too.

And when the wind subsides
you shall rise.

But for now
bend low, my child;
bend low.

—Kyle Pederson

Kyle Pederson (b. 1971)

For biographical information visit:
www.kylepederson.com

Catalog No. 1.3613

*Dedicated to honor the grace, hope, and compassion of the Roosevelt High School Concert Choir,
Sioux Falls, South Dakota, who are directed, mentored, and inspired by Robyn Starks Holcomb*

Bend

for SATB Chorus (divisi) unaccompanied

Music and Words by
Kyle Pederson (ASCAP)

With grounded passion and much rubato ♩ = 85

** p*

Soprano
Bend, don't break, my child, my child,

Alto
*** nn p*

Tenor
*** nn p*

Bass
*** nn p*

With grounded passion and much rubato ♩ = 85

Keyboard
(for rehearsal only)

* See the **Performance Notes** for optional narration as an introduction.

** or "nn" or "oo"

*** always use a gradual slide throughout

5

Musical score for measures 5-8. The score is in 4/4 time, with a 3/4 time signature change at measure 6. It features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "when the winds blow wild, blow wild." The piano part includes a bass line and a grand staff.

9

accel.

rit.

Musical score for measures 9-12. The score is in 4/4 time, with a 3/4 time signature change at measure 10. It features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Lean in, then rest a while." The piano part includes a bass line and a grand staff. Performance markings include *accel.* and *rit.*

13 *accel.* *mf* *rit.*

Bend, don't break, be brave, my child,

mf

Bend, — don't break, be brave, my child,

mf

Bend, — don't break, be brave, my child,

mf

Bend, — don't break, be brave, my child,

accel. *rit.*

17 *accel.* *rit.*

when the gale and wave rush by.

mf

when — the gale and wave rush by.

mf

when — the gale and wave rush by. oo —

accel. *rit.*

22 **A** *a tempo*

p
But you will nev - er bend a -

p
O

p
But you will nev - er bend a - lone.

p
O

A *a tempo*

24

lone. No one should ev - er bend a - lone.

No one should ev - er bend a - lone.

O

No, you will nev - er bend a -

26

No, you will nev - er bend a - lone.

lone. O No one should ev - er bend a -

28

rit. **B** ♩ = 75 *f legato*

No one should bend a-lone. I'm here with you, I'm bend-ing, too; I'm

f legato

Here with you, bend - ing, too;

f legato

lone. Here with you, bend - ing, too;

f legato

Here with you, bend - ing, too;

rit. **B** ♩ = 75

37 **C** *accel.* *p*

And when the wind sub-sides, and when the wind sub-sides,

And when the wind sub-sides, and when the wind sub-sides,

p

When the wind sub - sides, when wind sub -

p

Wind sub - sides, sub -

C *accel.*

39 *rit. molto*

and when the wind sub-sides, and when the wind sub - sides, _

and when the wind sub-sides, and when the wind sub-sides,

sides, when wind sub - sides, sub - sides, _

sides, when wind sub - sides, _

rit. molto

41 *ff* *f*

you shall rise, you shall rise,

ff *f*

you shall rise, you shall rise,

ff *f* optional slide

you shall rise, you shall rise,

ff *f*

you shall rise, you shall rise,

43 *mf* *p* **D**

you shall rise. But for now, bend

mf *p*

you shall rise. O bend

mf *p*

you shall rise. O bend

mf *p*

you shall rise. O bend

D

47

low, my child. But for now, bend

low, my child. But for now, bend

low. But for now, bend

low. But for now, bend

51 *mf* *pp*

low, bend low, bend low, bend low.

low, bend low, bend low, bend low.

low, low, bend low.

low, low, bend low.

LEE NELSON choral series

The focus of this series is to provide outstanding choral music appropriate for all state and festival choirs, high school ensembles as well as college/university, and community choirs. The series seeks to promote interesting and innovative works composed by both established and new composers.

Dr. Lee Nelson is the Patricia R. Zahn Chair in Choral Conducting and director of choral activities at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa. Nelson was recently honored with the John O. Chellevold Award for Excellence in Teaching and Service. He conducts the Wartburg Choir and Ritterchor and teaches beginning and advanced conducting and literature at Wartburg. He also serves as the artistic director of Christmas with Wartburg. A highly sought-after conductor, clinician and adjudicator, Nelson has directed all state and honor choirs throughout the United States and Canada. He was invited to conduct the National Festival Chorus at Carnegie Hall in 2011, 2012, and 2014. Under Dr. Nelson's direction, the Wartburg Choir has performed nationally and internationally including an unprecedented performance at the White House and the National Cathedral in Washington, DC. Choirs under his direction have performed at state and regional ACDA conferences in 2007, 2012, and 2014.

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