

# Hope Is The Thing With Feathers

Text by Emily Dickinson  
Music by Christopher Tin

B O O S E Y & H A W K E S

CONCERT  
MUSIC

FOR

CONCERT  
CHOIR

BOOSEY & HAWKES

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## PROGRAM NOTES

*Hope Is the Thing With Feathers* was commissioned by my alma mater, Palo Alto High School, in celebration of their centennial. It's a setting of Emily Dickinson's poem by the same name and borrows a melody from a string orchestra piece of mine called "Flocks a Mile Wide," originally composed as the score for director Deborah Dickson's documentary *The Lost Bird Project*.

Like the film that the source piece was composed for, *Hope Is the Thing With Feathers* is a meditation on the fragility of nature, as well as our own hand in its destruction. Its elegiac tone lends itself to occasions of honoring and remembrance; but deep within its downy melodic layers beats a warm heart of hope, like the song of a small bird in a storm.

## TEXT

*"Hope" is the thing with feathers -  
That perches in the soul -  
And sings the tune without the words -  
And never stops - at all -*

*And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -  
And sore must be the storm -  
That could abash the little Bird  
That kept so many warm -*

*I've heard it in the chilliest land -  
And on the strangest Sea -  
Yet - never - in Extremity,  
It asked a crumb - of me.*

## DURATION

Ca. 4 minutes 5 seconds

## ABOUT THE COMPOSER

**Christopher Tin** is a two-time Grammy-winning composer of concert works, film, and video game scores. *Time* magazine describes his work as "rousing, anthemic," while *The Guardian* calls it "joyful" and "an intelligent meeting of melody and theme." With his music exceeding 100 million views on YouTube, he is one of the most listened-to and performed hybrid artists straddling the contemporary classical and media worlds. He is also an in-demand collaborator, working with artists from a wide range of genres, including Lang Lang, Alan Menken, Danny Elfman and the Soweto Gospel Choir.

His choral works include his celebrated Swahili setting of The Lord's Prayer, *Baba Yetu*. Originally composed as the theme for the video game *Civilization IV*, it became the first piece of video game music ever to win a Grammy, and has been performed everywhere from Carnegie Hall, to primetime TV shows like *America's Got Talent*, to the historic signing of Mozambique's peace accords. Likewise, his definitive recording with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Soweto Gospel Choir has been licensed for use by organizations as varied as Premier League Football and The Vatican.

His albums have garnered considerable acclaim; his debut release *Calling All Dawns* won the 2011 Grammy for Best Classical Crossover Album, and his sophomore release *The Drop that Contained the Sea* debuted at #1 on the Billboard Classical Charts. His third album, *To Shiver the Sky*, was funded by the highest grossing classical music Kickstarter campaign of all time.

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Commissioned for the Centennial Celebration for the Palo Alto High School Campus

# HOPE IS THE THING WITH FEATHERS

SSATBB a cappella

Text by  
Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

Music by  
Christopher Tin

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 50$

*mp*

Soprano 1  
"Hope", \_\_\_\_\_ "Hope", \_\_\_\_\_

Soprano 2  
"Hope", \_\_\_\_\_ "Hope", \_\_\_\_\_

Alto  
*p*  
"Hope", \_\_\_\_\_ "Hope", \_\_\_\_\_

Tenor  
*p*  
"Hope", \_\_\_\_\_ "Hope", \_\_\_\_\_

Baritone  
*mp*  
"Hope", \_\_\_\_\_

Bass  
*mp*  
"Hope", \_\_\_\_\_

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 50$

Piano  
(for rehearsal only)

Oh, *mp* *mf*  
 Oh, *mp* *mf*  
 “Hope”, *mp* *mf* Oh,  
 “Hope”, *mp* *mf* Oh,  
 “Hope”, *mp* *mf* Oh,

Oh, *mp* *mf* “Hope”  
 “Hope” *mf*  
 “Hope” *mp* *mf* is the  
 Oh, *mp* *mf* “Hope” is the  
 “Hope” *mp* *mf* is the  
 “Hope” *mp* *mf* is the  
 “Hope” *mp* *mf* is the  
 “Hope” *mp* *mf* is the

10

“Hope”,

thing with feath-ers that perch-es in the soul And sings the

\*thing with feath-ers that perch-es in the soul And sings the

thing with feath-ers that perch-es in in the soul sings the

thing with feath-ers that perch-es in the soul sings the

thing with feath-ers that perch-es in the soul sings the

13

And sings the tune

tune with-out the words

And sings the tune with-out the words

tune with-out the, with-out the And nev-er stops at

tune with-out the, with-out the words Oo,

tune with-out the words Oo,

\* Sing F# if Sop. I singing high A

16

*p* And sweet - est in the Gale is heard *mp*

*p* And sweet - est in the Gale is heard *mp*

*p* And sweet - est in the Gale is heard *mp* And

all in the Gale is heard *mp*

And sweet - est in the Gale is heard *mp*

And sweet - est in the Gale is heard

19

*p* And sore must be the storm *mf* That could a - bash the lit - tle *mp*

*p* And sore must be the storm *mf* That could a - bash the lit - tle *mp*

*p* sore must be the storm *mf* That could a - bash the lit - tle *mp*

*p* And sore must be the storm *mf* That could a - bash the lit - tle *mp*

*p* And sore must be the storm *mf* That could a - bash the lit - tle *mp*

*p* And sore must be the storm *mf* That could a - bash the lit - tle *mp*

And sore must be the storm the lit - tle

22

*f* Bird That kept so man - y warm

*f* Bird That kept so man - y warm

*f* Bird That kept so man - y warm

*f* That could a - bash the Bird *mp* That kept so warm *mf*

*f* That could a - bash the Bird *mp* That kept so warm *mf*

*f* Bird the Bird man - y warm

25

*mp* I've heard

*mp* I've heard

*mp* I've heard it in the chill - est land

*mp* I've heard it in the chill - est I've heard it in the

*mp* I've heard it in the chill - est land

I've heard

And on the strang - est Sea Yet nev - er in ex - trem - i - ty It

And on the strang - est Sea Yet nev - er in ex - trem - i - ty It

And on the strang - est Sea Yet nev - er in ex - trem - i - ty It

land on the strang - est Sea Yet nev - er in ex - trem - i - ty

And on the strang - est Sea Yet nev - er in ex - trem - i - ty

And on the strang - est Sea Yet nev - er in ex - trem - i - ty nev - er in ex -

asked a crumb "Hope" is the

asked a crumb "Hope" is the

asked a crumb of me.

It asked a crumb of me.

It asked a crumb of me.

tre - mi - ty a crumb of me.



33

“Hope”, “Hope”

thing “Hope” is the thing with

thing “Hope” is the thing with

“Hope” is the thing with

“Hope” is the thing is the thing with

“Hope”, “Hope” with

“Hope”, “Hope” with

*mp* *mf* *dim.* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

36

feath - ers with

feath - ers with feath - ers with

feath - ers with feath - ers with

feath - ers with feath - ers with fea... with feath - ers with

feath - ers with feath - ers

fea... with feath - ers

*mf* *mf* *p* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*





