

6/12/16

for SSAATTBB divisi voices unaccompanied

by hunter t. johnson

text by hunter t. johnson;

text adapted by htj from the

Pulse Nightclub Facebook Page,

II Samuel 18:33, Genesis 4:10, Traditional

African-American Spiritual

Note: this work features a beloved African American Spiritual "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot." The composer is not of African-American descent, and therefore can never fully claim ownership or understanding of the themes presented by this spiritual. The selection of this spiritual comes from personal experiences had by hunter during the months following the shooting, as it was a featured song for communal singing (in the style presented at the end of this piece) at the 2016 Missouri Choral Director's Association Conference.

htj

Background Notes

in the early morning hours of sunday, june 12th, 2016,
the Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida,
became the site of the deadliest mass shooting
in the history of the United States at that time.

49 innocent people lost their lives to senseless violence.

the composer of this work, hunter t. johnson
is from Orlando. he asked his friends that saturday
to go to Pulse with him following a breakup.
they decided not to go.

by a coin toss, he was not hurt while others were.

this work is dedicated to the victims of the shooting.
it is hunter's attempt to come to terms with the
feelings of despair, hopelessness, and fear
that the tragedy caused for him.

the hope is that by creating something that explains
the feelings of the next morning and that night,
some kind of catharsis can be reached, and a sense
of community and celebration can be found. for this reason,
the audience joins the choir in the end of the work.

text is drawn from the biblical story of
familial violence in Cain and Abel,
the death of David's son Absalom,
a Facebook post made by Pulse during the shooting,
some of the last words of Jesus on the cross,
and a text composed by hunter.

love is our only hope

Performance Notes

The best way to perform this work is to create real contrast between
the shockingly violent sections and those of repose and tranquility.

When cells are designed to be performed out of sync, work extra
hard to ensure that they are truly creating a blur of sound.

Embrace every unique sound created by the choir.

htj

for the reading of the names

read the left column first, then the right.

Stanley Almodovar III, 23 years old
Amanda Alvear, 25 years old
Oscar A Aracena-Montero, 26 years old
Rodolfo Ayala-Ayala, 33 years old
Antonio Davon Brown, 29 years old
Darryl Roman Burt II, 29 years old
Angel L. Candelario-Padro, 28 years old
Juan Chevez-Martinez, 25 years old
Luis Daniel Conde, 39 years old
Cory James Connell, 21 years old
Tevin Eugene Crosby, 25 years old
Deonka Deidra Drayton, 32 years old
Simon Adrian Carrillo Fernandez, 31 years old
Leroy Valentin Fernandez, 25 years old,
Mercedez Marisol Flores, 26 years old
Peter O. Gonzalez-Cruz, 22 years old
Juan Ramon Guerrero, 22 years old
Paul Terrell Henry, 41 years old
Frank Hernandez, 27 years old
Miguel Angel Honorato, 30 years old
Javier Jorge-Reyes, 40 years old
Eddie Jamoldroy Justice, 30 years old
Anthony Luis Laureanodisla, 25 years old
Christopher Andrew Leinonen, 32 years old
Alejandro Barrios Martinez, 21 years old
Brenda Lee Marquez McCool, 49 years old
Gilberto Ramon Silva Menendez, 25 years old
Kimbery Morris, 37 years old

Luis Omar Ocasio-Capo, 20 years old
Geraldo A. Ortiz-Liminez, 25 years old
Eric van Ortiz-Rivera, 26 years old
Juel Rayon Romaguera, 32 years old
Jean Carlos Mendez Perez, 35 years old
Enrique L. Rios Jr, 25 years old
Juan C. Nives Rodriguez, 27 years old
Xavier Emmanuel Seeano Rosado, 35 years old
Christopher Joseph Sanfieliz, 24 years old
Yilmary Rodriguez Solivan, 24 years old
Edward Sotomayor Jr., 34 years old
Shane Evan Tomlinson, 33 tears old
Martin Benitez Torres, 33 years old
Jonathan Antonio Camuy Vega, 24 years old
Juan P. Rivera Velazquez, 37 years old
Franky Jimmy Dejesus Velazquez, 50 years old
Luis Danuel Wilson-Leon, 27 years old
Jerald Arthur Wright, 31 years old

——*Pause*——

Akyra Monet Murray, only 18 years old

——*Pause*——

Luis S. Vielma, 22 years old

——*allow for a moment of reflection
before ending the recitation of the
names.*——

for the loved
6/12/16

for SSAATTBB *divisi* voices unaccompanied

hunter t. johnson, Pulse Facebook Page, II Samuel 18:33, Genesis 4:10, Traditional hunter t. johnson

Score for SSAATTBB *divisi* voices unaccompanied. The score is written for Soprano I, Soprano II, Alto I, Alto II, Tenor I, Tenor II, Bass I, and Bass II. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The tempo/mood is *p as if lost* for Soprano I and *p agitato* for Soprano II, Alto I, and Alto II. The lyrics are "Why Pulse? Why Pulse?".

Soprano I: *p as if lost*
Why Pulse? Why Pulse?

Soprano II: *p agitato*
Why Pulse?

Alto I: *p agitato*
Why Pulse?

Alto II:

Tenor I:

Tenor II:

Bass I:

Bass II:

*Each cell to be performed out of sync, with the director cueing where each set of cells should begin.

Why Pulse?

mp terrified
Oh my god, Oh my god

p pleading
Why Pulse?

p pleading
Why, God?

p pleading
Why Pulse?

p desperately
Oh my god

Oh my god

NOT FOR PERUSAL SCORE
NOT FOR USE IN PERFORMANCE
SUPPORT ARTISTS

The musical score is written for a vocal ensemble with 8 staves. The first staff is a treble clef, and the second staff is a bass clef. The third staff is a treble clef, and the fourth staff is a bass clef. The fifth staff is a treble clef, and the sixth staff is a bass clef. The seventh staff is a treble clef, and the eighth staff is a bass clef. The score includes lyrics and musical notation for two parts.

crying
Wh ____ Pulse?

increasingly anxious
Why ____ Pulse? Why ____ Pulse.

PERUSAL SCORE IN PERFORMANCE
NOT FOR USE IN SUPPORT ARTISTS

The musical score consists of eight staves, each with a treble or bass clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The score includes the following elements:

- Staff 1 (Treble Clef):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4. The dynamic *ff* is written above the staff. The phrase "no break" is written above the staff. The lyrics "Why?" are written below the staff.
- Staff 2 (Treble Clef):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4. The dynamic *ff* is written above the staff. The phrase "no break" is written above the staff. The lyrics "Why?" are written below the staff.
- Staff 3 (Treble Clef):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4. The dynamic *ff* is written above the staff. The phrase "no break" is written above the staff. The lyrics "Why?" are written below the staff.
- Staff 4 (Treble Clef):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4. The dynamic *ff* is written above the staff. The phrase "no break" is written above the staff. The lyrics "Why?" are written below the staff.
- Staff 5 (Treble Clef):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4. The dynamic *ff* is written above the staff. The phrase "no break" is written above the staff. The lyrics "Why?" are written below the staff.
- Staff 6 (Treble Clef):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4. The dynamic *ff* is written above the staff. The phrase "no break" is written above the staff. The lyrics "Why?" are written below the staff.
- Staff 7 (Bass Clef):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G2. The dynamic *ff* is written above the staff. The phrase "no break" is written above the staff. The lyrics "Why?" are written below the staff.
- Staff 8 (Bass Clef):** Starts with a whole rest, followed by a half note G2. The dynamic *ff* is written above the staff. The phrase "no break" is written above the staff. The lyrics "Why?" are written below the staff.

Lyrics and performance markings include:

- crying* (written above the first staff)
- Why* (written below the first staff)
- Pulse?* (written below the first staff)
- no break* (written above the first staff)
- Why?* (written below the first staff)
- Why?* (written below the second staff)
- Why?* (written below the third staff)
- Why?* (written below the fourth staff)
- Why?* (written below the fifth staff)
- Why?* (written below the sixth staff)
- Why?* (written below the seventh staff)
- Why?* (written below the eighth staff)

f doloroso

1

Why?

f doloroso

Why?

f doloroso

Why?

f doloroso

Why?

f doloroso

Why?

f doloroso

WAV:

f doloroso

Why?

f doloroso

Why?

A musical score for the song 'The Rose Tree'. It is written for a piano in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The score consists of two staves. The melody is played in the right hand, and the accompaniment is in the left hand. The melody starts on a whole note G4, followed by a half note A4, a quarter note Bb4, and a quarter note A4. This is followed by a half note G4, a half note F4, and a quarter note E4. The melody then moves to a new line, starting with a half note D5, a half note C5, and a quarter note Bb4. This is followed by a half note A4, a half note G4, and a quarter note F4. The melody ends with a half note E4 and a quarter note D4. The accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the left hand, starting on a whole note G3, followed by a half note A3, a quarter note Bb3, and a quarter note A3. This is followed by a half note G3, a half note F3, and a quarter note E3. The accompaniment then moves to a new line, starting with a half note D4, a half note C4, and a quarter note Bb3. This is followed by a half note A3, a half note G3, and a quarter note F3. The accompaniment ends with a half note E3 and a quarter note D3.

SOPRANO

desperate, pleading

rit. et decresc. poco

9

7



ALTO

desperate, pleading

rit. et decresc. poco



TENOR

desperate, pleading

rit. et decresc. poco



BASS

desperate, pleading

rit. et decresc. poco



12

pp *a tempo*



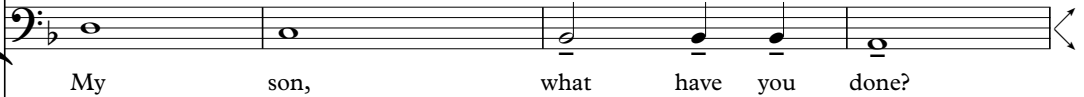
pp *a tempo*



pp *a tempo*



pp *a tempo*



SOPRANO I

*increasingly desperate, crescendo sempre**mf*

What have you done? — What have you done? —

SOPRANO II

*increasingly desperate, crescendo sempre**mf*

What have you done? — What have you done? —

ALTO I

*increasingly desperate, crescendo sempre**mf*

What have you done? — What have you done?

ALTO II

*increasingly desperate, crescendo sempre**mf*

What have you done? — What have you done?

TENOR I

*increasingly desperate, crescendo sempre**mf*

What have you done? — What have you done?

TENOR II

*increasingly desperate, crescendo sempre**mf*

What have you done? — What have you done?

BASS I

*increasingly desperate, crescendo sempre**mf*

What have you done? — What have you done?

BASS II

*increasingly desperate, crescendo sempre**mf*

What have you done? — What have you done?



[illegible]

[illegible]

ALTO *p solo*
mournfully

*p tutti, whispered**

repeat out of sync

TENOR

BASS

*p tutti, whispered**

repeat out of sync

2 a. m. 2 a. m. 2 a. m. 2 a. m.

(*) = cross-notes harshly, whispered without specific pitch

33

p solo
gently

Add one tenor each time, entering
at random, opposing times.
repeat until all tenors have entered

"Would God I had died for thee!" "Would God I had died for thee!"

p *doloroso*
cresc. sempre
34

Musical score system 1 (measures 34-41). The system includes a vocal line and three piano accompaniment staves. The vocal line features a melodic phrase starting with a half note, followed by a series of eighth notes. The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pulse. The lyrics "Pulse" are written under the vocal line.

42 *p* *cresc. sempre, poco a poco*

Musical score system 2 (measures 42-44). The system includes a vocal line and three piano accompaniment staves. The vocal line features a melodic phrase starting with a half note, followed by a series of eighth notes. The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pulse. The lyrics "Pulse" are written under the vocal line.

45

Musical score system 3 (measures 45-47). The system includes a vocal line and three piano accompaniment staves. The vocal line features a melodic phrase starting with a half note, followed by a series of eighth notes. The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pulse. The lyrics "Pulse" are written under the vocal line.

48

mp cresc. sempre poco a poco

Pulse _____ Pulse

mp anxious, forceful

Eve - ry - one get out of Pulse and keep run-ning Eve - ry - one get out of

spoken, still out of sync, increasingly frantic and fearful

2 a. m.

*diamond-head notes are to be spoken in a middle register, without specific pitch

51

Pulse

Pulse and keep run-ning Eve - ry - one get out of Pulse and keep run-ning

54

Pulse Pulse _____

Eve - ry - one get out of Pulse and keep run-ning Eve - ry - one get out of

57

mf *cresc. sempre, poco a poco*

Pulse

mf *molto agitato*

Pulse and keep run-ning Eve - ry - one get out of Pulse and keep run-ning

mf

mf *terrified, almost shouting*

60

Pulse

Pulse

Eve - ry - one get out of Pulse and keep run-ning Eve - ry - one get out of

63

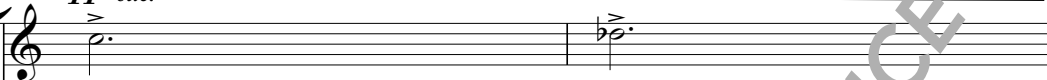
Pulse

Pulse and keep run-ning Eve - ry-one get out of Pulse and keep run-ning and

SOPRANO I

17

66

pp sub.

Pulse

Pulse

SOPRANO II

pp sub.

Pulse

Pulse

pp sub.

Eve - ry - one get out of Pulse and keep run - ning and

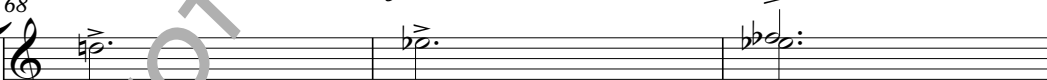
pp sub. *begin with soloist,
add layers out of sync,*

"Would God I had died for

pp sub. *whispered, out of sync*

2

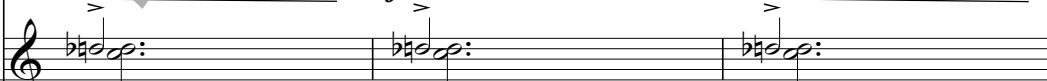
m.

mf

Pulse

Pulse

Pulse

mf

Pulse

Pulse

Pulse

mf

Eve-ry-one get out of Pulse and keep run-ning and Eve-ry-one get out of

mf *increasingly desperate***mf** *spoken desperately, out of sync*

2

a.

m.

71 **f** *panicked, horrified*

Pulse

Pulse

Pulse and keep run - ning oh

Pulse

Pulse

f *panicked, horrified*

f *shouting, out of sync, in a high, chesty register*

74 SOPRANO
ff

Why Pulse? Why Pulse?

ALTO
ff

Why Pulse? Why Pulse?

TENOR
ff

Why Pulse? Why Pulse?

BASS
ff

Why Pulse? Why Pulse?

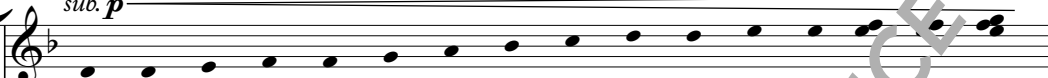
The musical score consists of five staves. The vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) are written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). They all start at measure 74. Each vocal part has four measures of music, corresponding to the lyrics "Why", "Pulse?", "Why", and "Pulse?". The piano accompaniment is shown below the vocal staves. It features chords in both the right and left hands, with some notes marked with accidentals (sharps or flats) in specific measures. The piano part also spans from measure 74 onwards.

SOPRANO I
molto agitato

19

78

sub. p



Oh my god, Oh my god, Why my God? Why hast thou for - sa - ken me?

SOPRANO II

molto agitato

sub. p



Oh my god, Oh my god, Why my God? Why hast thou for - sa - ken me?

ALTO I

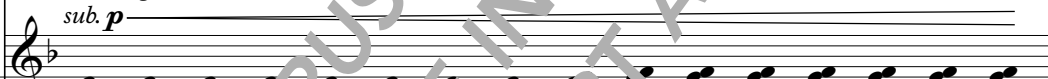
sub. p
molto agitato



Oh my god, Oh my god, Why my God? Why hast thou for - sa - ken me?

ALTO II

molto agitato
sub. p



Oh my god, Oh my god, Why my God? Why hast thou for - sa - ken me?

TENOR I

molto agitato
sub. p



Oh my god, Oh my god, Why my God? Why hast thou for - sa - ken me?

TENOR II

molto agitato
sub. p



Oh my god, Oh my god, Why my God? Why hast thou for - sa - ken me?

BASS I

molto agitato
sub. p



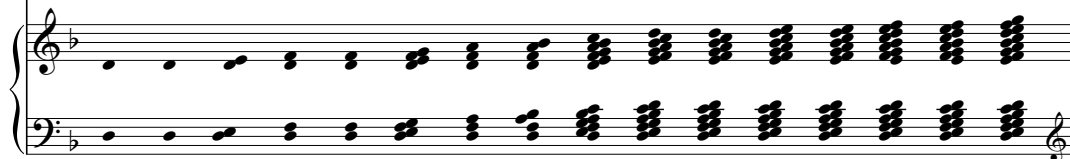
Oh my god, Oh my god, Why my God? Why hast thou for - sa - ken me?

BASS II

molto agitato
sub. p



Oh my god, Oh my god, Why my God? Why hast thou for - sa - ken me?



[illegible]

SOPRANO

desperate, pleading

21

85

rit. poco

ALTO

*desperate, pleading**rit. poco*

TENOR

*desperate, pleading**rit. poco*

BASS

*desperate, pleading**rit. poco*

Piano accompaniment for measures 85-90. The right hand plays a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides harmonic support with chords and single notes. The tempo is marked *rit. poco*.

90

*a tempo***pp**

My God, what have you done?

*a tempo***pp**

My God, what have you done?

*a tempo***pp**

My God, what have you done?

*a tempo***pp**

My God, what have you done?

Piano accompaniment for measures 90-94. The right hand plays a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides harmonic support with chords and single notes. The tempo is marked *a tempo*.

22 SOPRANO I

94

*increasingly desperate, crescendo sempre**mf*

What have you done? What have you done?

SOPRANO II

*increasingly desperate, crescendo sempre**mf*

What have you done? What have you done?

ALTO I

*increasingly desperate, crescendo sempre**mf*

What have you done? What have you done?

ALTO II

*increasingly desperate, crescendo sempre**mf*

What have you done? What have you done?

TENOR I

*increasingly desperate, crescendo sempre**mf*

What have you done? What have you done?

TENOR II

*increasingly desperate, crescendo sempre**mf*

What have you done? What have you done?

BASS I

*increasingly desperate, crescendo sempre**mf*

What have you done? What have you done?

BASS II

*increasingly desperate, crescendo sempre**mf*

What have you done? What have you done?



98

23
lunga

What have you done? _____

Why? _____

What have you done? _____

Why? _____

What have you done?

Why

Pulse?

What have you done?

Pulse?

What have you done?

Why _____

Pulse?

What have you done?

Why

Pulse?

What have you done?

Why _____

Pulse?

What have you done?

Why

Pulse?

pp *a tempo*

My God, what have you done? Why?

ALTO
pp *a tempo*

My God, what have you done? Why?

TENOR
pp *a tempo*

My God, what have you done? Why?

BASS
pp *a tempo*

My God, what have you done? Why?

Why? Why? Why? Why?

Why? Why? Why? Why?

Why? Why? Why? Why?

Why? Why? Why? Why?

111 *a tempo*
pp

oh God, My son, Why my son? My God,

a tempo
pp

oh God, My son, Why my son? My God,

a tempo
pp

oh God, My son, Why my son? My God,

a tempo
pp

oh God, My son, Why my son? My God,

119 *p*

They were our friends, our neighbors our brothers, sisters, and lovers,

p

They were our friends, our neighbors our brothers, sisters, and lovers,

p

They were our friends, our neighbors our brothers, sisters, and lovers,

p

They were our friends, our neighbors our brothers, sisters, and lovers,

125 *mf* *hushed* *unis.*

we loved them; how could you take them a way?

we loved them; how could you take them a way?

we loved them; how could you take them a way?

we loved them; how could you take them a way?

we loved them; how could you take them a way?

130 *pp* *very, very slowly*

— we loved them. I loved them(mm) (mm)

— we loved them. I loved them(mm) (mm)

— we loved them. I loved them(mm) (mm)

— we loved them. I loved them(mm) (mm)

137 SOPRANO & ALTO

TENOR & BASS

(mm)

Hold the above harmony, for about 5 seconds. Then begin to hum and repeat the opening bars of "Swing Low Sweet Chariot" in unison

The names and ages of all 49 victims of the Pulse Shooting are to be read. Luis S. Vienna's name will be read last.

After the names are finished, begin singing on text.

Next, 1/3 of the choir holds the melody while 2/3 of the choir improvises over them. Improvisation should always be tonal, and should primarily include echoes and responses, as well as standard harmonies. A descant may be created if so desired.

When it feels right, the conductor will turn and invite the audience to sing along with the choir. This will continue to a climactic volume and back down into nothingness. Once the conductor, choir, and audience are satisfied, the conductor will cut off the audience members and signal the choir to return to humming the melody. Repeat on a hum several times, fading into silence.

The conductor should hold his hands up for several seconds afterwards, encouraging silence to fill the space.

Biography

hunter t. johnson (he/him) is a dynamic young composer with a rapidly growing catalog of choral works, art songs, and chamber pieces. He takes inspiration from issues of social justice and conflict, working to give voice to sentiments and ideas that he feels are ignored in everyday life. In composing vocal works, he seeks poetry and texts that range from those that explore nature and beauty to those that examine social issues such as self-harm, suicide, and other traditionally avoided topics. He has completed commissions for art songs and choral works, including several works for Grammy Award-winning soprano Christine Brewer. Other commissioning ensembles include Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Webster Groves, MO; the Webster University Choroplex; and the Lindenwood University Concert Choir under the direction of Pamela Griggs.

An active choral musician, hunter has performed with and conducted groups in concerts across the United States. He is one of the co-founders and the conductor of the choral ensemble *catenary*. hunter's composition *Stars* was awarded the 2017 Missouri Choral Director's Association Opus Award, which recognizes an outstanding choral composition by a Missouri-based composer. His works have been performed by the Webster University Chamber Singers, Concert Choir, and Women's Chorus under his direction as well as that of Drs. Trent A. Patterson and Stuart Chapman Hill.

hunter holds a Bachelor's of Music Degree in Composition from Webster University in St. Louis, Missouri, where he studied composition with Dr. David Werfelmann and Kim Portnoy.

visit huntertjohnson.com for more information

visit thetrevorproject.org to volunteer for the LGBTQIA+ Community
visit GLAAD.org for information and resources for LGBTQIA+ Allyship
for materials relating to African American spirituals, consider reading
Way Over in Beulah Lan' by Dr. Andre J. Thomas and *In Their Own Words* by Dr. Eileen Guenther.

hunter t. johnson is not an expert on spirituals from the African American tradition, and encourages that you search for original source materials and resources created by experts to whom that tradition is personal to improve your understanding of them.