

AT THE SPRING DAWN

Music by Joan Szymko and words by Angelina Weld Grimké. Premiered by Jubilate.

*I watched the dawn come,
Watched the spring dawn come.
And the red sun shouldered his way up
Through the grey, through the blue,
Through the lilac mists.
The quiet of it! The goodness of it!
And one bird awoke, sang, whirred,
A blur of moving black against the sun,
Sang again -afar off
And I stretched my arms to the redness of the sun,
Stretched to my fingertips,
And I laughed.
Ah! It is good to be alive, good to love,
At the dawn,
At the spring dawn.*

Angelina Weld Grimké

Joan Szymko (b.1957) is widely regarded as an outstanding choral composer in North America today. Her works consistently display a discerning, stirring marriage of words and music.

The American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) recognized Szymko's lasting impact on the choral arts in North America by selecting her as a recipient of the prestigious Raymond W. Brock Memorial Commission (2010) Notably, her music has been sung on stage or in sessions at every national ACDA conference since 2003. A dynamic conductor, Joan has led choirs in the Pacific Northwest for over forty years.

As a visiting artist, Szymko has workshopped her compositions with choirs in academic and festival setting in the US and abroad. As a resident composer and performer with Portland's Do Jump! Movement Theater, she created underscoring for major touring productions, earning praise from the New York Times for her "ethereal vocal music." Szymko's catalog of over 100 choral works can be explored on her website: www.joanszymko.com.

