

## AS ON WINGS

*commissioned by Quintessential Vocal Ensemble, Susan Quinn music director*

composer's note:

This commission request was for ...*something inspired by the Newfoundland connection to 9/11 ... We remember it well - dozens of planes and thousands of "refugees" literally descending on Newfoundland's shores with nowhere to go, and the people took them all in. Susan's school became a shelter for hundreds of people; teachers and students all volunteered to help...* (Michael Rosales, General Manager of QVE).

I was struck by the richness of the phrase “as on wings” from Gibran: while the attacks of the day came on wings, another reality was that people needing refuge also came on wings to the shelter of Newfoundland. The experience was profound for both host and stranger, whose new relationships—in yet another meaning of the phrase—was elevating “as on wings”.

In the best instances, as in this case, distinctions between giver and receiver become beautifully blurred and confused, and the poignant interplay between them is humbling and bonding. Historically we are all refugees of sorts, wherever we live; hosts have been strangers, and strangers become hosts - it is these beautiful entanglements that inspired me.

*The strangers who dwell with you  
shall be as your own people.  
Love them as you love yourselves,  
for you also were strangers in this land.*  
Leviticus 19:34 (adapted LE)

*I ... saw these huge planes coming,  
one at a time, through the Narrows  
and I thought  
how  
after hundreds of years  
people are still seeking the shelter of our harbour.*  
Leslie Kennedy, English teacher, Holy Heart High School, St John's NL;  
excerpt from an email to Susan Quinn, director of QVE and Music teacher at Holy Heart

*for life giveth unto life  
you, the giver,  
and you, receiver,  
rise together on the gift  
as on wings*  
The Prophet, by Khalil Gibran (adapted LE)

*As on Wings* was premiered by QVE on 24 May 2014, at Carnegie Hall, NYC.

for Susan Quinn and Quintessential Vocal Ensemble

# As On Wings

Text compiled and adapted from  
Leslie Kennedy (by permission)  
Khalil Gibran (PD)  
Leviticus 19:34 (PD)

Music by: Leonard Enns

Adagio ♩ = 56 c.

Soprano

Alto

Tenor *mf*

Bass *mf*

The strang-ers who dwell with you shall be as your own peo - ple. The

The strang-ers who dwell with you shall be as your own peo - ple. The

5

S

A *mf*

T

B

The strang - ers who dwell with you shall be as

strang - ers who dwell with you shall be as your own

strang - ers who dwell with you shall be as your own

8 *poco f*

S I saw \_\_\_\_\_ these huge planes com - ing, one at a

A your own peo - ple. \_\_\_\_\_ *mf* The strang - ers \_\_\_\_\_ who dwell with you \_\_\_\_\_

T peo - ple. \_\_\_\_\_ *mf* The strang - ers \_\_\_\_\_ who dwell with you \_\_\_\_\_

B peo - ple. \_\_\_\_\_ *mf* The strang - ers who dwell with you

11

S time through \_\_\_\_\_ the nar - rows, and I thought, how, \_\_\_\_\_

A \_\_\_\_\_ shall be as your own peo - ple. \_\_\_\_\_ Love \_\_\_\_\_ them, \_\_\_\_\_

T \_\_\_\_\_ shall be as your own peo - ple. \_\_\_\_\_ Love \_\_\_\_\_ them,

B shall be as your own peo - ple. Love them,

15 *piu f*

S  
how af - ter hun - dreds of years peo - ple are still seek - ing the shel - ter,

A  
love, — love — them as you

T  
love, — love — them as — you

B  
love them as you love your -

18 *mf*

S  
the shel - ter of a har - bour. —

A  
love your - selves, love them. as you love your - selves for you —

T  
love your - selves, love them. as you love your - selves for you —

B  
selves, — love them. as you love your - selves for you —

22 *mf* *ten.* 3

S seek-ing the shel - ter, seek-ing the shel-ter of har -

A al - so were strang - ers in this land. *mp*

T al - so were strang - ers in this land. *mp*

B al - so were strang - ers in this land. *mp*

27 **Largo** ♩ = 46 c.

S bour.

A (sustain the "a" of "land") *p*

T (T2 sustain the "a" of "land") *p* *mf* [T1:] for life giv - eth un - to life, \_\_\_\_\_

B (sustain the "a" of "land") *p*