

Standing Tall
GP - V003-2
SATB, piano

Ellen Gilson Voth

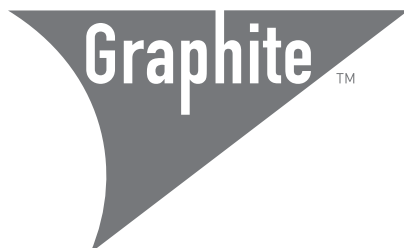
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Ellen Gilson Voth

Standing Tall

for SATB choir and piano

Winner of the 2022 ACDA Pearl Prize



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Text:

I see your buds in springtime,
The fruit you share in summer,
Standing tall against the sky, making a mark on the world.

I see the snow that graces you in winter,
The golden leaves you wear in fall.
You may feel bare branches weighing toward the ground,
Yet I know your strength within.

Your blossoms may fade,
Your leaves may be swept away,
But your roots are strong and your beauty lives on.

We treasure you in springtime
And in the warmth of summer.

We share the loneliness you feel in winter
And in the fading light of fall.

Seasons come and seasons go,
Yet we will always see you standing tall,
Come summer, winter, spring or fall,
Making your mark,
Your beautiful mark on the world.

*- Ellen Gilson Voth and singers from
Handel and Haydn Society Youth Choruses*

From the Composer:

“Standing Tall” was composed in response to an invitation by Dr. Jennifer Kane, Conductor of the Handel and Haydn Society Youth Chorale (Boston, Massachusetts). When Jennifer asked me to compose a piece following the unexpected passing of a family friend of hers, Alexandra Valoras (2000-2018), I was both honored and humbled by her request. From the start I knew the challenge would lie in crafting a piece to reflect Alexandra’s life and potential, and be an edifying experience for singers who did not know Alexandra, as they would learn and premiere the piece. The music needed to be simple and eloquent welcoming singers coming to understand loss and the ways we can show compassion and confidence in life’s value.

Near the Valoras’ home in Grafton, Massachusetts stands an apple tree; in a family blog post, Alexandra’s father described his memories of the tree with Alexandra in years past. In creating text for this piece, I decided to portray four seasons as seen in the tree; in the second stanza, the tree becomes a metaphor for Alexandra, with the word

There is no one in the world like you.

We are better people with you in the world.

Think of those you cherish
And those that cherish you.
You touch our lives in ways you don’t even know.

Tomorrow is always a new and different day.

“you” in place of her name. Dr. Kane and I invited singers from the Youth Chorale to write affirming statements they might share with someone struggling with their self-worth; several of those statements were layered as descant in the second half of the piece.

Wherever performed, we hope “Standing Tall” prompts vital conversation about the fresh start each day offers; the need for deep roots to withstand seasons of promise and of struggle in our lives, often in the order we least expect; and the beauty and inherent worth of every person.

- Ellen Gilson Voth, 2022

Standing Tall

SATB choir and piano

Ellen Gilson Voth and singers from
Handel and Haydn Youth Choruses--Youth Chorale

Ellen Gilson Voth

Freely

Piano

mp *mf*

Ped. ad libitum

The piano introduction consists of two systems of music. The first system is in 4/4 time, starting with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps (D major). The melody begins with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4, and a quarter note E4. The bass line starts with a quarter note G2, a quarter note F#2, and a quarter note E2. The second system continues the melody with a quarter note D4, a quarter note C#4, and a quarter note B3. The bass line features a half note G2 and a half note F#2. Dynamics include *mp* and *mf*. The instruction *Ped. ad libitum* is written below the bass line.

6 ♩ = approx. 78-82

The piano accompaniment for measures 6-9 consists of two systems. The melody in the treble clef starts with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes F#4, E4, D4, and C#4. The bass line in the bass clef starts with a quarter note G2, followed by quarter notes F#2, E2, D2, and C#2. The music is in 4/4 time and D major.

S

mp

I see your buds in spring - time, _____ the fruit you share in sum - mer, _____

A

mp

I see your buds in spring - time, _____ the fruit you share in sum - mer, _____

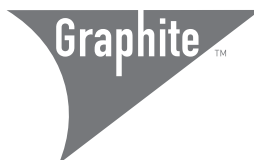
The vocal parts for Soprano (S) and Alto (A) are shown for measures 10-13. Both parts begin with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4, and a quarter note E4. The lyrics are: "I see your buds in spring - time, _____ the fruit you share in sum - mer, _____". The dynamics are marked *mp*.

10

mp

The piano accompaniment for measures 10-13 consists of two systems. The melody in the treble clef starts with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes F#4, E4, D4, and C#4. The bass line in the bass clef starts with a quarter note G2, followed by quarter notes F#2, E2, D2, and C#2. The music is in 4/4 time and D major. Dynamics include *mp*.

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14

S *mp* Standing tall a-against the sky, mak-ing a mark _____ on the world.

A *mp* Stand-ing tall a-against the sky, mak-ing a mark _____ on the world.

14

18

S

A

T *mp* I see the snow _____ that grac-es you _____ in win - ter, the gold - en leaves _____ you wear in

B *mp* I see the snow _____ that grac-es you _____ in win - ter, the gold - en leaves _____ you wear in

18

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22 *mf*

S You may feel bare branch - es weigh - ing toward the ground, _____

A _____

T *mf*
fall. You may feel bare branch - es weigh - ing toward the ground, _____

B fall.

22

poco accel. ♩ = approx. 88

26 *mf*

S Your blos - soms may fade, your

A *mf* yet I know your strength with - in. Your blos - soms may fade, your

T *mf* Your blos - soms may fade, your

B *mf* yet I know your strength with - in. Your blos - soms may fade, your

26 *poco accel.* ♩ = approx. 88

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30

S
leaves may be swept a - way, but your roots are strong —

A
leaves may be swept a - way, but your roots are strong —

T
leaves may be swept a - way, and your beau-ty lives

B
leaves may be swept a - way, and your beau-ty lives

34

S
your beau-ty lives on and on. *f* *p*

A
your beau-ty lives on, and on, and on and on. *f* *p*

T
on and on, lives on and on and on and on. *f* *p*

B
on and on, lives on and on and on. *f* *p*

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38 *gradual return to tempo primo*

43 ♩ = *approx. 82* *mp*

S There is no one in the world

A We treasure you in spring time, and

T There is no one in the world

B We treasure you in spring time, and

43 ♩ = *approx. 82* *mf*

47 *mf*

S like you. We are better people with you in the world.

A in the warmth of summer. We are better people with you, with

T like you. We are better people with you in the world,

B in the warmth of summer. We are better people with you in the

47

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51 *mp* *mp*

S Think of those you

A you in the world. We share the lone - li - ness you feel in win - ter, and

T in the world. Think of those you

B world. We share the lone - li - ness you feel in win - ter, and

55

S cher - ish, and those that cher-ish you. You touch our lives in

A in the fad - ing light of fall. You touch our lives in

T cher - ish, and those that cher-ish you. You touch our lives in

B in the fad - ing light of fall. You touch our lives in

55 *Freely*

♩ = approx. 70-72

59 *mp*

S ways you don't e - ven know. To - mor - row is al - ways a

A ways you don't e - ven know. To - mor - row is al - ways a

T ways you don't e - ven know.

B ways you don't e - ven know.

♩ = approx. 70-72

59 *mp*

63 *mp*

S new ___ and dif - ferent day. Sea - sons come ___ and sea - sons go, ___

A new ___ and dif - ferent day. Sea - sons come ___ and sea - sons go, ___

T Sea - sons come ___ and sea - sons go, ___

B sea - sons go, ___

63 *mp*

suggesting a return to tempo primo

69

S *mf*
come sum-mer, win - ter, — spring or fall, —

A *mp*
yet we will al-ways see you stand-ing tall, —

T *mf*
come sum-mer, win - ter, — spring or fall, —

B *mp*
yet we will al-ways see you stand-ing tall, —

suggesting a return to tempo primo

69

♩ = approx. 70-72

73

S *mf*
mak-ing your mark, your beau-ti - ful mark —

A *mf*
mak-ing your mark, your beau-ti - ful mark —

T *mf*
your beau-ti - ful mark —

B *mf*
your beau-ti - ful mark —

♩ = approx. 70-72

73

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78

S *mp* on the world. *p*

A *mp* on the world. *p*

T *mp* on the world. *p*

B *mp* on the world. *p*

78

mf

82

mp *rit.* *p*

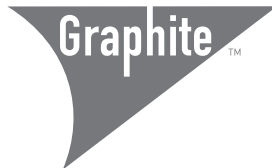
Ellen Gilson Voth



Active as a conductor and composer, Ellen Gilson Voth composes works that reflect her passion for and commitment to high standards of artistry in writing for the human voice. Praised for music that is “superbly crafted for singer and accompanist,” Voth’s works have been commissioned and premiered by a wide range of professional, semi-professional and amateur choirs across the US, and featured at regional and national conferences of the American Choral Directors Association and College Music Society. Her art song and short opera works have garnered national attention as well. An experienced educator and clinician, she regularly presents workshops and coaches emerging composers on the art and craft of composition. Voth received her DMA degree from The Hartt School, University of Hartford, and currently lives with her husband and daughter in West Hartford, CT. To learn more about her work, visit www.ellengilsonvoth.net.

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