“I Know Who Holds Tomorrow”: Choral Arrangement for SATB Choir

Nelson Spaulding

College of Fine Arts

Abstract: The purpose of this activity, is to rearrange a previously written song in a twenty-first century style for an SATB (soprano, alto, tenor, bass) choir. This song was originally written by Christian composer Ira Stanphil, and has been performed by other artists in the sixties and seventies. I wanted to take this happy, gospel sounding song and add more emotion and movement to it than what was originally conveyed. By adding sad sounds into a song that was originally full of only happy sounds, I attempted to portray the path one’s life can sometimes take, from the good times to the bad, but always arriving at a happy place. I started out by first changing the harmonic structure of the song, which was the chords in the accompaniment. By changing a few of these happy chords into sad chords, or unresolved chords, I gave emotional momentum to the harmony that complimented the emotional momentum of the melody. After that, I added three-part harmony to the melody line, which resulted in a four-part vocal score. The vocal score occasionally breaks up into more parts as the song progresses, adding further depth to the text or lyrics. After that, I added a piano accompaniment line. The result is a choral arrangement of the piece with a piano accompaniment in the style of a twenty-first century composition. The song has undergone multiple revisions and is still being revised, but it is almost complete. I will be revising this song continually until I feel that the vocal parts are both beautiful, meaningful and performable, and until I feel that the accompaniment line is beautiful, augments the choral and is performable.

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