

Let Them Not Say

for SSAATTBB choir

Words: Jane Hirshfield (1953 -) | Music: Chris Hutchings (1979 -)

Let them not say: we did not see it.

We saw.

Let them not say: we did not hear it.

We heard.

Let them not say: they did not taste it.

We ate, we trembled.

Let them not say: it was not spoken, not written.

We spoke,

we witnessed with voices and hands.

Let them not say: they did nothing.

We did not-enough.

Let them say, as they must say something:

A kerosene beauty.

It burned.

Let them say we warmed ourselves by it,

read by its light, praised,

and it burned.

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Set to music as part of **#choirsforclimate** - choirsforclimate.com . Please use this piece to raise funds or awareness for environmental causes.

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Let Them Not Say

Music: Chris Hutchings

Words: Jane Hirshfield

Insistent and bitter $\text{♩} = c. 54$

p 3 *mp*

Soprano 1
Let them not say: we did not see it, we did not see it. We saw, we saw.

Soprano 2

Alto 1
Let them not say: we did not see it, we did not see it. We saw, we saw.

Alto 2

Tenor 1
p Let them not say: we did not see it. We saw.

Tenor 2

Bass 1
p Let them not say: we did not see it. We saw.

Bass 2

Insistent and bitter $\text{♩} = c. 54$

p 3 *mp*

for rehearsal only

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Let Them Not Say

10

S 1

S 2 *mp* *mf*
Let them not say: we did not hear it. We heard, we heard, we heard.

A 1 *mp* *mf*
we heard.

A 2 *mp* *mf*
Let them not say: we did not hear it, we did not hear it, we did not hear it. we heard.

T 1

T 2 *mp* *mf*
Let them not say: we did not hear it, we did not hear it, we did not hear it. We heard.

B 1 *mp* *mf*
we did not hear it. We heard, we heard.

B 2 *mp* *mf*
Let them not say: we did not hear it. We heard, we heard.

10 *mp* *mf*

Let Them Not Say

4

19 *mp* 3 *mf* *mp*

S 1 Let them not say: they did not taste it, they did not taste it, they did not taste it.

S 2 Let them not say: they did not taste it, they did not taste it, they did not taste it.

A 1 Let them not say: they did not taste it, they did not taste it, they did not taste it.

A 2 Let them not say: they did not taste it, they did not taste it, they did not taste it.

T 1 Let them not say: they did not, they did not

T 2 Let them not say: they did not, they did not

B 1 Let them not say: they did not, they did not

B 2 Let them not say: they did not, they did not

19 *mp* 3 *mf*

The piano accompaniment features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). It includes a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure of each vocal line and a 5/4 time signature change in the final measure of each line.

Let Them Not Say

24 *f* *p* *cresc. poco a poco*

S 1 We ate, we trem - bled. Let them not say: it was not spo - ken,

S 2 We ate, we trem - bled. Let them not say: it was not spo - ken,

A 1 We ate, we trem - bled. Let them not say: it was not spo - ken,

A 2 We ate, we trem - bled. Let them not say: it was not spo - ken,

T 1 *mp* taste it. We ate, we trem - bled. Let them not say: it

T 2 *mp* taste it. We ate, we trem - bled. Let them not say: it

B 1 *mp* taste it. We ate, we trem - bled. Let them not say: it

B 2 *mp* taste it. We ate, we trem - bled. Let them not say: it

mp *f* *p* *cresc. poco a poco*

(play Gs using RH)

Let Them Not Say

6

29
S 1 not writ - ten. We spoke, we wit - nessed with voi - ces and hands,

29
S 2 not writ - ten. We spoke, we wit - nessed with voi - ces and hands,

29
A 1 not writ - ten. We spoke, we wit - nessed with voi - ces and hands,

29
A 2 not writ - ten. We spoke, we wit - nessed with voi - ces and hands,

29
T 1 was not spo - ken, not writ - ten. We spoke, we wit - nessed,

29
T 2 was not writ - ten. We spoke, we wit - nessed,

29
B 1 was not spo - ken, was not written. We

29
B 2 was not spo - ken, was not written. We

29

The musical score is for the piece "Let Them Not Say". It consists of eight vocal parts (Soprano 1, Soprano 2, Alto 1, Alto 2, Tenor 1, Tenor 2, Bass 1, Bass 2) and a piano accompaniment. The score begins at measure 29. The vocal parts have the following lyrics: S1 and S2: "not writ - ten. We spoke, we wit - nessed with voi - ces and hands,"; A1 and A2: "not writ - ten. We spoke, we wit - nessed with voi - ces and hands,"; T1: "was not spo - ken, not writ - ten. We spoke, we wit - nessed,"; T2: "was not writ - ten. We spoke, we wit - nessed,"; B1: "was not spo - ken, was not written. We"; B2: "was not spo - ken, was not written. We". The piano accompaniment features a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and a 7/4 time signature change.

Let Them Not Say

33 *mf* *rit.* *mp* *Almost immobile* $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 45$

S 1 we spoke, we wit - nessed. Let them not say: they did no - thing,

S 2 we spoke, we wit - nessed. Let them not say: they did no - thing,

A 1 we spoke, we wit - nessed. Let them not say: they did no - thing,

A 2 we spoke, we wit - nessed. Let them not say: they did no - thing,

T 1 we spoke, we wit - nessed. Let them not say: they did no - thing,

T 2 we spoke, we wit - nessed. Let them not say: they did no - thing,

B 1 spoke, we wit - nessed. Let them not say: they did no - thing,

B 2 spoke, we wit - nessed. Let them not say: they did no - thing,

33 *mf* *rit.* *mp* *Almost immobile* $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 45$

Let Them Not Say

8

38

S 1 they did no - thing, they did no - thing, they did

S 2 they did no - thing, they did no - thing, they did

A 1 they did no - thing, did no - thing, did

A 2 they did no - thing, did no - thing, did

T 1 did no - thing, did no - thing, did

T 2 did no - thing, did no - thing, did

B 1 did no - thing, did no - thing, did

B 2 did no - thing, did no - thing, did

38

The musical score consists of nine staves. The top eight staves are vocal parts for Soprano 1 (S 1), Soprano 2 (S 2), Alto 1 (A 1), Alto 2 (A 2), Tenor 1 (T 1), Tenor 2 (T 2), Bass 1 (B 1), and Bass 2 (B 2). The bottom staff is the piano accompaniment. The score is in the key of D major and 4/4 time. The lyrics are: 'they did no - thing, they did no - thing, they did'. The piano part features a rhythmic accompaniment with chords and melodic lines in both hands.

Let Them Not Say

43 *f accel.* *mp f*
S 1 no - thing. we did ³ not - e - nough.

43 *f mp*
S 2 no - thing. We did ³ not - e - nough,

43 *f mp*
A 1 no - thing. We did ³ not - e - nough,

43 *f mp f*
A 2 no - thing. we did ³ not - e - nough.

43 *f mp f*
T 1 no - thing. We did ³ not - e - nough,

43 *f mp*
T 2 no - thing. We did ³ not - e - nough,

43 *f mp f*
B 1 no - thing. We did ³ not - e - nough,

43 *f mp*
B 2 no - thing. We did ³ not - e - nough,

43 *f mp mp f*
Piano accompaniment with *accel.* markings and triplets.

Let Them Not Say

10

* - hold as long as possible while avoiding staggered breathing

Angrily $\text{♩} = c. 54$ *rit.* *mf* **Transfixed** $\text{♩} = c. 42$ *mf* *p*

S 1
Let them say, as they must say some thing: a ke-ro-sene beau-ty,

S 2
Let them say, as they must say some thing: a ke-ro-sene beau-ty,

A 1
Let them say, let them say, as they must say some-thing: (hum)

A 2
Let them say, let them say, as they must say some-thing: (hum)

T 1
Let them say, let them say, let them say, (hum)

T 2
Let them say, let them say, let them say, (hum)

B 1
Let them say, let them say, let them say, (hum)

B 2
Let them say, let them say, let them say, (hum)

Angrily $\text{♩} = c. 54$ *rit.* *f* **Transfixed** $\text{♩} = c. 42$ *mf* *p*

53 *f* *mp* *cresc. poco a poco*
 a ke - ro - sene beau - ty. It burned, it burned, it

53 *f* *mp* *mf*
 a ke - ro - sene beau - ty. it

53 *f* *mp* *cresc. poco a poco*
 a ke - ro - sene beau - ty. It burned, it burned, it

53 *f* *mp* *cresc. poco a poco*
 a ke - ro - sene beau - ty. it burned, it

53 *f* *mp* *cresc. poco a poco*
 a ke - ro - sene beau - ty. It burned, it burned, it

53 *f* *mp* *cresc. poco a poco*
 a ke - ro - sene beau - ty. It burned, it burned, it

53 *f* *mp* *cresc. poco a poco*
 a ke - ro - sene beau - ty. It burned, it burned, it

53 *f* *mp* *cresc. poco a poco*
 a ke - ro - sene beau - ty. It burned, it burned, it

53 *f* *mp* *cresc. poco a poco*
 a ke - ro - sene beau - ty. It burned, it burned, it

53 *f* *mp* *cresc. poco a poco*
 a ke - ro - sene beau - ty. It burned, it burned, it

(small notes can be omitted if your hands aren't huge)

Let Them Not Say

12

Declamatory $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 48$

58 *f* *ff* *ff* *f*

S 1 burned. Let them say, let them say we warmed our - selves by it,

S 2 burned. Let them say, let them say we warmed our - selves by it,

A 1 burned, it burned. Let them say, let them say we warmed our - selves by it,

A 2 burned, it burned. Let them say, let them say we warmed our - selves by it,

T 1 burned. Let them say, let them say we warmed our - selves by it,

T 2 burned. Let them say, let them say we warmed our - selves by it,

B 1 burned, it burned. Let them say, let them say we warmed our - selves by it,

B 2 burned, it burned. Let them say, let them say we warmed our - selves by it,

58 *f* *ff* *ff* *f*

Declamatory $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 48$

Exultant

S 1
63 read by its light, read by its light, read by its light, praised,

S 2
63 read by its light, read by its light, read by its light, praised,

A 1
63 read by its light, read by its light, read by its light, we

A 2
63 read by its light, read by its light, read by its light, we

T 1
63 read by its light, read by its light, light, praised,

T 2
63 read by its light, read by its light, light, praised,

B 1
63 read by its light, read by its light, light, praised, we

B 2
63 read by its light, read by its light, light, by its light, we

Exultant

The piano accompaniment features a 3/4 time signature and includes markings such as *mf*, *cresc.*, and *f*. It includes triplets and various chordal textures. The tempo and mood are indicated as **Exultant**.

Let Them Not Say

* - hold as long as possible while
avoiding staggered breathing

Insistent and bitter $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 54$
p (sopranos can omit this phrase if needed)

rit.

ff *fff* *p*

S 1
praised, _____ praised, _____ and it _____ burned.
p (sopranos can omit this phrase if needed)

S 2
praised, _____ praised, _____ and it _____ burned.
p (sopranos can omit this phrase if needed)

A 1
praised, _____ we _____ praised, _____ and it _____ burned.

A 2
praised, _____ we _____ praised, _____ and it _____ burned.

T 1
praised, _____ we _____ praised, _____ and it _____ burned.

T 2
praised, _____ we _____ praised, _____ and it _____ burned. _____ it

B 1
praised, _____ we _____ praised, _____ and it _____ burned, _____ it _____ burned, _____ it

B 2
praised, _____ *rit.* we _____ praised, _____ and it _____ burned, _____ it _____ burned, _____ it

Insistent and bitter $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 54$
p

Let Them Not Say

Two endings are given: choose either page 15 (strictly timed, may be better if you have 1-2 singers per part) or page 16 (aleatoric, recommended for larger choirs)

accel.

S 1 *f* it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned. *fff* *

S 2 *mf* it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned. *fff* *

A 1 *mf* it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned. *fff* *

A 2 *mp* it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned. *fff* *

T 1 *mp* it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned. *fff* *

T 2 burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned. *fff* *

B 1 burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned. *fff* *

B 2 burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned, it burned. *fff* *

accel. *cresc.* *fff* *

Let Them Not Say

16

accel. poco a poco

20"-25"

10"-15"

All parts other than bass 2: repeat the boxed phrase freely and independently, but with the second note ('burned') becoming slightly shorter each time, aiming to reach a length of about 2 beats by the end (the word 'it' is always 1 beat long). Start approximately 5 beats after the previous part. Each singer enters independently; try not to synchronise until the last 2 notes.

Bass 2 should stay in a 5/4 pulse, together, with a gradual accelerando.

All parts should synchronise at the end for the final 2 notes: the last note should be held for as long as possible without staggered breathing. It may be helpful for the conductor to count down the last few bass 2 repetitions as a warning to finish.

mf *cresc.* *it burned,* *fff* *it burned.*

mf *cresc.* *it burned,* *fff* *it burned.*

mf *cresc.* *it burned,* *fff* *it burned.*

mp *cresc.* *it burned,* *fff* *it burned.*

mp *cresc.* *it burned,* *fff* *it burned.*

p *cresc.* *it burned,* *fff* *it burned.*

p *cresc.* *burned, it burned,* *fff* *it burned.*

p *cresc.* *burned, it burned,* *fff* *it burned.*

p bisbigliando *cresc.* *fff*